

The Center in Action **Spring 2006**



Confucius Institute to offer online K-12 and adult Chinese language instruction

MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon shakes hands with Madam Xu Ling, director general of China's National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, after signing a 10-year agreement to form the Michigan State University Confucius Institute. The first such institute to offer Web-based courses, the MSU center will help Michigan high school students meet new graduation requirements, which include a foreign language and an online learning experience. Photo by Kurt Stepnitz, University Relations.

The US-China Educational Research Center in partnership with China's National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language will establish a Michigan State University Confucius Institute which will provide online Chinese language courses for K-12 and adult learners.. The center joins an expanding global network of Confucius Institutes, part of the Asian nation's broad strategy to promote the study of the Chinese language and greater understanding of its culture and history.

400,000 instructors. Online classes for Michigan and nationwide high school students will be available this fall. Courses for primary school students and adult learners will be phased in.

The institute's curriculum will be co-developed with one of the world's largest universities, the China Central Radio and Television University in Beijing, which serves some 2 million online learners with

"This institute will dramatically expand the capacity of schools in Michigan and nationwide to provide training in Chinese language and culture," said University Distinguished Professor of education Yong Zhao, who will head the institute. "Today, such training is often not available because of a shortage of qualified teachers, insufficient numbers of students in any given school to support hiring a full-time teacher and a paucity of high-quality online learning options. The institute's content and technology together address each of these gaps."



Delegation from China Central Radio and TV University visited the Center



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Delegation from China Central Radio and TV University (CCRTVU) visited the US-China Center in mid-April. The delegation was headed by Dr. Xunyun Yu, Vice-President of CCRTVU and accompanied by councils from the Consulate General in Chicago, People's Republic of China. Partnership agreement was confirmed to establish the Confucius Institute at Michigan State University. Delegation members also visited Michigan Virtual University/High School to discuss detailed collaboration on the course delivery through Michigan Virtual High School. During their visit, the delegation members met Dr. Lou Anna Simon, President, Michigan State University, Dr. Kim Wilcox, Provost, Michigan State University, Dr. Carloe Ames, Dean, College of Education, Dr. Jeff Riedinger, Acting Dean, International Studies and Programs, Dr. Chris Geith, Director, MSU Global, and Mr. Jamey Fitzpatrick, President, Michigan Virtual University/High School. Further collaboration and exchange was discussed.



Education for Global Citizenship Project (EGC)

May 15th saw the announcement of not two, but three, EGC Schools that will start in Michigan for the fall of 2006. The US-China Center is proud to announce that Bay City Public Schools, the City of East Lansing, and the Lansing School District are the designated sites to launch EGC Schools in the US.. Of additional interest is the fact that both Bay City Public Schools and the Lansing School District have committed to grow the preschool into the elementary grades. This means that in the fall of 2007 the EGC school model will expand into Kindergarten, with an additional grade being added each year. To learn more about EGC Schools, please visit the EGC website (<http://ott.educ.msu.edu/egc/home.asp>).

At the founding EGC School, the 3E International Kindergarten, enrollment season is approaching. Teachers and administrators in Beijing hosted a very successful event at Beijing's Chateau Regalia housing development where a large group of families participated in hands-on science and art activities. Word is getting out in Beijing about 3E, and we look forward to welcoming new students to the school for fall of 2006. Please visit the school's website at www.3eik.com.

The summer will be full of professional development activities, including teachers from our new schools as well as teachers from China. Finishing touches are being put on the curriculum framework and curricular materials, such as Zhima Jie (Sesame Street in Chinese) episodes that we are repackaging in thematic collections with Chinese subtitles. Next year promises to be an exciting year as we work with our new partners to bring the EGC model to life in Michigan and refine and expand the EGC model at our flagship school in Beijing.



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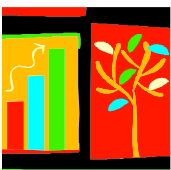
Delegation from Yunnan University visited the Center

Delegation of professors from Yunnan University, headed by Dr. Tong Li, Dean of School of Software, visited the US-China Center in March, 2006. The delegation sought to establish educational partnership between School of Software, Yunnan University and the Center for Teaching and Technology at Michigan State University, directed by Dr. Yong Zhao. Their successful visit resulted in educational partnership agreement on educational cooperation and exchange: exchange of faculty members, exchange of students, exchange of academic information, joint organization of conferences, seminars and workshops, and joint research and development.



Delegation from China's Office of Chinese Language Council International visited the US-China Center

Delegation from China's Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban) (former the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language) visited the US-China Center on April 22-24th. The delegation was headed by Li Xu, Director-General, Hanban and accompanied by councils from the Consulate General in Chicago, People's Republic of China. The delegation members also visited Michigan Virtual University/High School. On April 24th, after breakfast at the President's House, a 10 year's agreement to form the Confucius Institute at Michigan State University was signed by President Simon and Director-General Xu (see attached document for reference, edition)



"Why Johnny Can't Count" and "Can Asians Think": Explaining the Gap between America and China

This book will examine why Chinese students outperform their American counterparts. It will analyze from five perspectives: teaching, learner and learning, curriculum, administration, and community. In the chapters about the US educational system, the authors deal with how the American school system fosters creativity, individualism, and



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professionalism in its students and allows teachers the freedom to creatively plan and teach. At the same time, it identifies aspects of the system that contradicts that notion and how these contradictories play in the big picture of the system. In the chapters about China, both advantages and disadvantages of Chinese exam-oriented education system are identified. In addition, it is believed that the uniformed curriculum and single standard of student evaluation may result in lack of intrinsic motivation, flexibility and creativity. The draft of the book has been compiled and under review.

The Center in Action is the quarterly newsletter of the **US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence**. The newsletter is designed to document and disseminate information on the Center's activities.