

**George Bush China-U.S. Relations Conference:
Development, Energy, and Security
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RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE FINAL REPORT

Session Title: Developing Institutional and Program Capacity in Student Affairs

Co-Chairs: U.S.: **Dr. Bryan R. Cole**, Professor, Department. of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development. Chinese: **Dr. Song Xiaoping**, Assistant President, Xi' An Jiaotong University

Other Collaborators: **Dr. Xiaobo Yang**, Assistant Director, Office of International Affairs, Chinese National Academy of Educational Administration; **Dr. Yang Zhenbin**, Director General, Department of Moral and Ethical Cultivation, The Ministry of Education of China; **Dr. Zhongfeng Hu**, Professor and Vice Dean, School of Public Administration, South China Normal University; **Dr. Ouyang Kang**, Professor and Vice President Huazhong University of Science and Technology; **Dr. Gwen Dungy**, Executive Director, National Association of Student Personnel Affairs; **Dr. Gregory Dennis**, Associate Professor of Higher Education, Old Dominion University

Session Summary: The Roundtable focused on the growing concerns of Chinese higher education in addressing student developmental needs as well as how American higher education can better meet the developmental needs of Chinese students attending American universities. Key to the field of student affairs is the development of the student. Student Affairs and student development theory are very new concerns in Chinese higher education. The student issues presented by a rapidly growing higher education system coupled with the increasing openness of the Chinese society present major challenges for Chinese higher education in ensuring that students are provided with the best possible student development experiences in conjunction with a high quality academic experience. Accordingly, this Roundtable identified critical issues facing Chinese higher education in understanding and meeting the developmental needs of its students and issues facing American higher education in meeting Chinese student developmental needs. Specific areas addressed included keynote sessions on the “The State of Student Affairs in China and the U. S.” respectively and work sessions addressed (1) the relationship between academics and student development, (2) the impact of environmental forces on student development, (3) student mental health, (4) learning theory and student involvement in the institution, (5) implications of the “millennial” student in the U. S. and the “one child” policy in China, (6) the role of American higher education in developing a deeper understanding of Chinese students attending American universities and how they can best benefit from their U. S. educational experiences, and (7) current issues and future needs in student affairs.

The session concluded with a discussion and proposal of future collaboration that is outlined below.

Findings/Recommendations:

1. Student Affairs in China is an emerging field and needs foundational research to inform student development theory and practice in China

2. Research in understanding the student as a “whole learner” and how to integrate and enhance academic preparation is a high need area in China
3. Research in the area of student mental health is a significant need in both countries
4. Selected faculty in China need to be trained in student affairs administration in order to develop academic programs and build capacity throughout the country
5. There is a need to identify foundational literature and other resource material to support the research and development of student affairs in China
6. Research is needed in the U.S. to identify more effective strategies for identifying and meeting the academic and developmental needs of Chinese students attending U. S. institutions

Future Collaboration:

1. A suitable student affairs training program will be set up for Chinese University administrators. The delegation of the Program will be organized and funded by the Moral Education Department, Ministry of Education, China. The initial program will be for three weeks and have approximately 20 participants from Chinese higher education institutions. Faculty from Texas A&M University Student Affairs program will develop and deliver the training program.
2. A series of classic books in the student affairs field will be translated from English to Chinese. U.S. colleagues will recommend and select relevant books in student affairs for translation. The Moral Education Department of the Chinese Ministry of Education will provide oversight and guidance to the whole translation work including securing appropriate copyright releases. The International Education Study Department of NAEA (National Academy of Education Administration) will be the organizer of the translation and publishing work and will coordinate participation from multiple institutions and establish an editorial committee.
3. At the publishing time (2008), a research seminar will be held to celebrate the publication and exchange ideas and practices in student affairs for China-U.S. colleagues in student affairs. As the result of the seminar, additional research agendas will be identified. A book of proceedings will be published and disseminated based on papers presented at the research seminar.
4. A research project addressing a Comparative Case Study of Modern University administration System will be conducted. The study will compare and contrast the university administrative systems of Texas A&M University and Xi’ An Jiaotong University. Dr. Xiaobo Yang, Associate Director of the International Affairs Office of the NAEA will be in charge of the project and will collaborate with university officials from both universities. The Project is sponsored by the Scientific Research Foundation for the Returned Overseas Chinese Scholars, Ministry of Education, China. The project will focus on internal policies and practices of university administration.