

**Development of Teaching & Research Linkages with Universities in China
Report**

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China has become a global leader in textile and apparel production, and it was important for the NCSU College of Textiles to develop teaching and research linkages with universities in China. Since the College of Textiles had no established linkages with China, this funded project provided an opportunity for the College to take a proactive position in developing teaching, research and extension activities with universities in China.

RESULTS & BENEFITS

Drs. Hodge and Cassill traveled to Hong Kong and China in May 2004 to meet with university, industry and government personnel to establish the teaching and research linkages outlined in this project. A follow-up trip to Hong Kong and China by Dr. Cassill took place in January 2005.

Identification of key institutions for NCSU textile programs

A target listing of China universities was compiled. From this listing, faculty was contacted at selected universities and agreed to meet with Drs. Hodge and Cassill during their time in Hong Kong/China.

Visits were made to three university sites during May 2004:

1. Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Institute of Textiles & Clothing)
2. Donghua University (Textile Technology and Fiber Science area)
3. Donghua Fashion Institute (Textile and Apparel Management area; Textile Product Design and Development)

Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Institute of Textiles & Clothing)

We were able to visit with the faculty at their campus in Kowloon. We toured their labs and teaching facilities. The campus is an excellent location for exchange of both graduate and undergraduate students. The courses would transfer into our programs and the location would provide students with an opportunity to interact with global industries located in China. We discussed our graduate and undergraduate programs. They have more opportunities for students that are focused in apparel manufacturing given the globalization of the industry. They also have good support from the government and from local industry. We met over 15 faculty members.

Also while in Hong Kong, Mr. William Chu, Director for the State of North Carolina Asia/Pacific Office, arranged for us to meet with over 20 textile executives.

Donghua University

While in Shanghai, China we visited the Donghua University campus in the city. Again we had the opportunity to meet with many of the faculty and discuss our graduate and undergraduate programs. Exchange students to this campus would need to be able to speak Chinese. They had

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an impressive fashion design program and their students produced a fashion show for the Textile Institute conference.

Additional discussions took place with faculty attending the Textile Institute conference.

Development of exchange and distance education programs with China institutions.

During each visit, information was shared with the faculty and administration about NCSU College of Textiles' programs, including distance education offerings. In addition, Dr. William Oxenham, Associate Dean of the College, was in attendance, and could answer specific questions about the potential (and implementation) of exchange programs. Beginning discussions included:

- ◆ Exchanging faculty for special courses/ lectures,
- ◆ Establishing sponsorship for China students (and faculty) to study at NC State,
- ◆ Distance management education programs, and
- ◆ Technology transfer programs.

Curriculum development – expansion of scope, knowledge and cultural diversity.

Two programs most closely aligned with the College's Textile and Apparel Management program were Hong Kong Polytechnic and Donghua Fashion Institute. Drs. Hodge and Cassill were able to talk about specific teaching programs at NCSU, and the plans for curriculum development in the undergraduate Textile and Apparel Management area (including three new undergraduate concentrations). Follow-up communication with faculty at these two institutions has occurred via electronic means, to share our new undergraduate curriculum program. The Global Scholars option developed for each of the three new undergraduate concentrations provides an opportunity for students to enroll in curriculum at these two universities. Catalogs of curriculum content for the universities were provided and these catalogues are in place in our library for our students who are interested in study abroad experiences (Cassill has responsibility for the Global Scholars program).

Graduate applications

Graduate information was shared by Dr. Hodge. He described our graduate programs and the application process.

For fall 2005 we have had 6 applications from China from the universities listed below:

- Donghua University Shanghai China (3applicants)
- Fudan University Shanghai, China
- Soochow University SuZhou, China
- National Chengchi University Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

In fall 2004 we had 5 applications from China one of whom is now enrolled in our master's of science in textiles program.

Increased industry engagement through identification of business development issues.

With the elimination of quota January 1, 2005, several class projects and a large graduate research project have focused on global competitiveness issues related to China and analysis of development trends in the region's textile and apparel industries/markets. Projects included information about the textile and apparel industries in China, their size, structure, products, market characteristics, and their technological and business capabilities—as well as market competitiveness and economic competitiveness analyses (for use by U.S. companies).

Another return on investment (ROI) from this funded project has been the dialogue that Drs. Hodge and Cassill (and their students) have had with numerous global companies regarding business development issues. Company representatives from various countries (U.S., Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, China, Pakistan, India, African countries...) have discussed business development issues, including product, marketing, sourcing, and design/ development. Three graduate students have worked closely with U.S. based companies in sharing their study results, as some of these U.S. based companies are in the process of business development opportunities with China-based companies.

NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, we see the real potential of:

- The development of joint research programs with Hong Kong Polytechnic and Donghua Fashion Institute (discussions are in process)
- The development of joint educational programs, with first steps in distance learning programs from NC State
- The development of a Regional textile and apparel conference joining industry and academe

We will market our distance education program (Textile Off Campus Programs: TOP) to international students. This is an excellent way for students to get started in the program and to minimize the number of semesters they need to study full time in the United States. The Master of Textiles degree may be obtained entirely by distance education.

After visiting these universities we are better able to advise our undergraduate and graduate students on study abroad opportunities. Hong Kong Polytechnic is an ideal location for our students who do not speak a Chinese language. After discussions with there faculty I believe we can identify more courses that would be transferable into our program. After meeting with executives in Hong Kong we should be able to develop internships for interested students. Based on our observations we should also be able to develop faculty lead study opportunities for students wanting to know more about China. These would be in the format of two to three week summer courses where we would visit textile and apparel manufacturing, design, and logistics locations.

We plan to approach the following for financial support for the above three opportunities:

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- Governmental sources (Commerce: US Department of Commerce, NC Department of Commerce; National Science Foundation “International Opportunities for Scientists and Engineers”)
- Foundations (e.g., Carnegie Corporation)
- Industry support (e.g., NCSU Textile Foundation, individual companies).

SIGNIFICANCE

The program has provided an opportunity to assist the development of textile and apparel education in China (for NCSU students) and in the United States (at NCSU). This information has already provided a greater understanding of the industry and dynamics of conducting business with China industry, and will continue to assist the College faculty in working with North Carolina companies to compete globally with China, thereby enhancing the US economy (especially North Carolina). China is a key trading partner and an understanding of the region and its textile and apparel industries will provide economic benefits for North Carolina's textile and apparel companies.

For the College of Textiles, these efforts have provided an extension of our international outreach into a region where our College has little experience and knowledge. The project has allowed important contributions to our teaching and research programs, providing both the depth and diversity of program content.

With China's entry into WTO, the elimination of quotas in 2005, and China's core competency as a low cost source for textile and apparel production, the project will also build knowledge of local developments with opportunities for the US industry.