

Interim Report Cover Sheet

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Title of Project – Women in China: Internationalizing the Humanities and Professional Studies

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Women in China: Internationalizing the Humanities and Professional Studies
Interim Performance Report Narrative, Year 2

Overview

Following one year dedicated to public lectures, scholarly discussions, extensive readings, and a one-week study trip to China, our interdisciplinary NEH faculty cohort members have been able to make significant progress toward internationalizing the Humanities and Professional Studies at Mount St. Mary's College. The following report provides a description of the activities and accomplishments of our Women in China project in its second year, during the 2013-2014 academic year.

Our faculty have strengthened, enriched, and enhanced their courses at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels as well as designed new courses in order to open the door to a new world for the students of Mount St. Mary's. By creating this interdisciplinary bridge for the 21st century, we are helping to transition our students into global citizenship which embraces, understands, and appreciates the world and all of its residents. We successfully created or revised the courses listed below.

Undergraduate Humanities Courses:

East Asian History and Civilizations (HIST 150, Summer 2013) – This course examines the major trends in the development of civilization in East Asia from prehistory to the present with a specific focus on China, Japan, and Vietnam. The major revisions for this course entailed increased time devoted to the study of China, and a focus on the integral concept of *yin-yang*. Students also visited the Hsi Lai Temple, a Buddhist temple in nearby Hacienda Heights.

A Comparative Study of Female Poets from China and America (ENG 126, Fall 2013) – Expanding from the initial American framework to a comparative approach, this new course explored how female authors in China and the United States have been able to express themselves in their respective societies, and how their challenges have differed and converged.

Moral Values and Ethical Decisions (PHI 21, Fall 2013, Spring 2014) – This course surveys prominent ethical theories which can be utilized in decision making, and was enriched by the addition of Confucian and Buddhist ethical theories.

Introduction to Philosophy (PHI 15, Fall 2013, Spring 2014) – This course covers three traditional Western philosophical topics, and has been enhanced with the new addition of Eastern principles, specifically exploring aspects of Buddhism and Taoism, such as karma and no-self.

Theory of Knowledge (PHI 152, Fall 2013) – This course addresses the concept of knowledge, and was modified with the addition of a unit on Buddhist epistemology.

Why Women Writers and Queens? (CULT 117, Fall 2013) – This course analyzes how women have portrayed themselves and how they have been portrayed through time, and was revised with its inclusion of *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck and *Encounters with Women Writers* by Annie Dillard.

Cultural Models and Global Realities (CULT 107B, Spring 2014) - A new course which focuses on intercultural dynamics within global sociopolitical communities, including an ethnographic field assignment. Students observed a cultural activity, wrote a report about the experience, and gave an oral presentation in class.

Graduate Humanities Courses:

Culture and History (HUM 264, Fall 2013) – This course was revised with the inclusion of a female perspective and an emphasis on peasant revolts and political change, particularly peasant rebellions in 19th century Taiping and Nien uprisings, and the rebellions before the 1949 Communist Revolution.

Landscapes and Timelines with an Emphasis on China (HUM 271, Spring 2014) – This course explores an intersection of culture and geography, time and space, and past and present, with a focus on China. Its perspective is global yet intimate, exploring cultural literacy, understanding, enlightenment, and comprehension.

Why Women Writers and Queens (CULT 280, Summer 2013) – This course analyzes how women have portrayed themselves and how they have been portrayed through the ages. It was revised with the inclusion of *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck and *Encounters with Women Writers* by Annie Dillard. Students also took a field trip to The Huntington Library, where they toured *Liu Fang Yuan*, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance, one of the largest Chinese gardens in the world outside of China. The course included content from the initially planned course entitled Special Topics: Chinese Poetry from the Middle Ages.

History of China's Women (HUM 269, Fall 2013) – Two of the books students read in this course, *Inner Quarters* and *Engendering the Revolution*, were initially discussed at the NEH Women in China public lecture series. Students wrote research papers on women's issues, which are pending publication on the China Resource Network (CRN) of Mount St. Mary's website. They also visited the Chinese garden at The Huntington Library.

Professional Courses:

American and Chinese Management: A Comparison (BUS 183, Fall 2013) – This newly revised seminar offered an interweaving of both Chinese and American management theory and behavior. This particular approach opened a deep discussion of wide-ranging topics such as corruption, pollution, motivation, innovation, and economic development.

Global Education in China (EDD 199/EDD 299, Spring 2014) – Designed specifically for educators who wanted to venture more deeply into Chinese culture, this course included pre-trip class meetings, readings and a nine-day tour of China, complete with visits to historical sites, observations of Chinese classrooms, and dialogues with students and teachers in local K-8 schools in Nanjing and Beijing. Prior to their trip, students attended a banquet in the predominantly Chinese-American suburb of Monterey Park with the entire NEH faculty cohort and Zhang Jing, our visiting scholar from Gannan Normal University, where they participated in

meaningful exchanges. Both faculty and students expressed their appreciation for the experience, particularly as few had visited the city before.

Adaptation Nursing: Childbearing Family/Practicum (Nursing 160/161, Fall 2013) – The Adaptation Nursing courses on theory and practice drew on an interweaving of Chinese history, literature, and philosophy thanks to this project. Students researched and reflected on using acupuncture, acupressure, and Chinese herbs in the childbearing family.

Patient/Client Management: Geriatrics (PT 476, Fall 2013) – This course focuses on the assessment and management of aging older adults, and was enriched substantially by providing the philosophical foundation of t'ai chi, which enabled students to serve their patients more adeptly. T'ai classes were taught by three masters, and open to the entire Mount community. In addition, an online discussion board assignment was modified for students to find local t'ai chi centers. One student commented, 'Having experienced t'ai chi today, I would recommend it as a safe and effective exercise form for robust elderly patients.'

Additional Accomplishments

Our faculty cohort conducted a panel presentation at the College during our Fall 2013 Convocation, giving MSMC President Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson, Provost Dr. Wendy McCredie, faculty members, and staff, a glimpse into the important intercultural study and exchange they embarked upon. Using slides of photographs they had taken, each professor described their experiences in China as they related to the courses they would be teaching in the fall and spring. They also discussed the process of their studies throughout the first year, including the trip to China, the insights gained from each of their various experiences, and their project goals.

As a part of expanding the project's visibility, co-directors Dr. Montserrat Reguant and Dr. Julie Feldman-Abe, gave a poster presentation of the NEH Women in China Project to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission team, which visited Mount St. Mary's in September 2013. Dr. Reguant and Dr. Feldman-Abe also presented this poster at the annual conference of NAFSA: Association of International Educators Conference in San Diego, California, in May 2014.

In addition to the curricular revisions and additions, another successful outcome of this grant has been the creation of a new minor in Asian Studies. The NEH faculty and visiting scholar Zhang Jing will serve as the instructors. We are delighted to continue offering Korean, Chinese, and Japanese language instruction courses, and we are currently creating a major in Cultural Studies. The plan for this new major has been presented to the College's curriculum committee for consideration and approval.

As proposed in our project application, this year also included the development of the China Resource Network (CRN). Through the College's Center for Cultural Fluency's website, this is a comprehensive online resource particularly for faculty from the Humanities and professional disciplines to continue the dialogue of infusing the Humanities into coursework, and for the community at large who may be interested in developing a similar project at their institution as well as gaining insight into and knowledge of Chinese culture. This online network will be

completed this summer and will include a compendium of film, art, exhibits, book reviews, and MSMC student projects. The CRN will also feature an ongoing calendar of local Chinese cultural events, video lectures, links to China-related online sites, and faculty reflections and recommendations based on their China-related scholarship. We are currently working with the College's Office of Institutional Technology to create a social media platform to enable this interactivity.

Two different assessments were administered to measure the impact of this faculty development project: the IDI quantitative assessment and qualitative reflective essays. On the IDI assessment, there was only a slight increase in development in the faculty's intercultural sensitivity from the test they were given prior to their trip to China, and the test following their return. One implication of this result may be that more practical experience with China is necessary in order to increase intercultural sensitivity. As well, one limitation of this assessment is that it was administered at the end of Year One, before faculty had the summer to do extended preparation for their classes.

There was, however, significant growth on the survey question asking faculty to assess their knowledge about China, as a result of the faculty development project – a figure which grew from the pretest level of 28% to 100% reporting they “somewhat” or “strongly agreed” that their cultural sensitivity had increased following the China trip. Furthermore, in the reflective essays, faculty members overwhelmingly reported increased knowledge and awareness of Chinese culture, cultural sensitivity, and competency as a result of this project.

As a result of this project generously supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, our MSMC faculty cohort members who engaged in this project have gained greater comprehension and awareness of Chinese culture, and are using Humanistic perspectives and understanding to profoundly enhance and enrich their courses, especially in non-Humanities classes. Through a multidimensional approach to learning – both experiential and theoretical – these faculty members have experienced a significant transformation in the way they approach teaching. They are now able to engage students and increase subject matter comprehension, through new lenses. This project has also fostered greater faculty interaction and interdisciplinary collaborations, which will ultimately inform a higher number of courses and impact even more students. MSMC is therefore opening its consciousness to new and innovative pedagogies, and an even wider, broader palate of cultures and nations to embrace.