Center for Chinese Studies

THE POWER

Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan began formally with the establishment of an Oriental Civilizations Program in 1930, at which time U-M also boasted the largest number of enrolled Asian students in the country. In 1961, the Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) was established and has since become one of the nation’s most prominent centers devoted to a deeper understanding of China, past and present.

The CCS is the premier place on the University of Michigan campus to gain access to resources on China, including leading scholars, ongoing projects, and funding for faculty and student research. It houses experts in nearly every major facet of Chinese studies ranging from history, literature, religion, art history, politics, and economics, to law and public health.

Also, the CCS has benefited from strong university-level support so that Michigan can boast one of the finest arrays of China-related resources...
in the nation. The University of Michigan’s Asia Library houses the largest collection of materials in Chinese of any institution between the U.S. coasts. A complete photographic collection of the major works held in the National Palace Museum in Taiwan is available for study through the Asian Art Archives in the University’s History of Art Department, and the University of Michigan Museum of Art houses a range of masterpieces from China dating from Neolithic times to the present.

THE OPPORTUNITIES

Since its inception, the Center for Chinese Studies has served a wide range of constituencies. Primary among these are students and faculty at the University. Many faculty associates have engaged directly in public service, appeared as commentators on China in the national and international media, and provided expert testimony at Congressional hearings. Quite a few have assumed leadership roles in scholarly and exchange organizations at the national level or have served, inter alia, as consultants to the State of Michigan, the U.S. Department of State, the World Bank, and even the White House. Indeed, three faculty associates have assumed charge of policy toward China and related areas on the National Security Council under three different Republican and Democratic presidents.

The wide disciplinary range of faculty associates enables the CCS to offer a unique interdisciplinary master’s degree, which provides specialized training in Chinese studies while also preparing students to make effective use of both social science and humanistic methodologies. The CCS also offers joint degrees with the Ross School of Business, the Michigan Law School, and the Ford School of Public Policy. Thus the Center serves as a major intellectual hub for understanding China, serving both the University community and the public at large.

THE IMPACT

The University of Michigan’s scope and quality make it an ideal base for the research, training, and other activities necessary to understand China and its impact. The CCS, with new endowment funding, seeks to develop fully the capabilities necessary to enhance local, national, and international understanding of China and to train major scholars and practitioners of the future. With named endowed support, the CCS can lead the nation in teaching, research, and service to the community, locally, nationally, and internationally.

PROGRAMMING FUND

$3M endowed / $150,000 annually

Programming and the support to expand China visibility is a core component of a successful area center. This fund will assist in funding the CCS annual conferences, as well as seminars and guest lectures. Expansion of the Center will require full-time additional staff support, which will be covered through this fund. It could also cover a “Knowing China” series that is open to the entire campus and expanded community. U-M faculty would coordinate a series of accessible lectures related to China and present them as a package. Participating faculty would receive small stipends from the program fund. This series would provide an accessible introduction to Chinese society, government, and economy, as well as how Chinese higher education is embedded within these structures. Also, it would provide a brief overview of China’s historical trajectory and its future challenges related to the environment, energy, and rapid social and demographic change. This series may be of particular value to faculty and students in various U-M schools that are directly engaged in activities in China.
U-M FACULTY RESEARCH SUPPORT

$3M endowed / $150,000 annually

CCS seeks to encourage cutting edge research by its own faculty and to provide some research space for work on CCS-supported projects to take place so as to maximize the synergies among faculty, students, and visitors from major research efforts.

STUDENT TRAVEL GRANTS

$1.5M endowed / $75,000 annually

Sending our students to China requires resources. With the expanding interest in China, we seek student travel grants. This funding will enable students to participate in a wide array of experiences in China or with Chinese institutions and organizations all over the world.

NAMED ENDOWED DIRECTOR

$2.5M endowed

All named area centers seek to have an endowed directorship as a fundamental component. The prestige of an endowed director creates an ongoing recruitment advantage and the ability to attract senior scholars. Visionary, hard-working leadership has propelled the CCS to prominence, and a gift to establish a named endowed directorship would enable the Center to attract and retain a world-acclaimed scholar for this important region.

NAMED GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

$1M endowed each / $50,000 annually each

Graduate fellowships are critical for training the next cohort of scholars of China. We seek to expand funding for Graduate Fellowships to students from across the University. These fellowships will be awarded to incoming graduate students who expect to focus their graduate work or professional school education on this area of the world. Expansion of the fund would allow us to build a large, multidisciplinary cohort of students and foster their individual research as well as encourage group collaboration.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS PROGRAM

$2M endowed / $100,000 annually

We envision a high-profile, highly selective visitor program that would attract mid-career or senior China specialists from the U.S. or other governments (including diplomatic corps), business, international organizations, etc. One or two of these fellows would visit for a semester, or perhaps a shorter timeframe. CCS would require each Fellow to give at least one major talk during his/her tenure, to take part in CCS academic activities, and to meet with graduate students and/or faculty.

FACULTY RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE FUNDS

$1M endowed / $50,000 annually

It is advantageous for the Center to be able to provide hiring support for positions in some social science departments and professional schools. While CCS already supports LSA faculty hired via the FASAC positions, CCS should extend its support to faculty in units in which area expertise is needed but traditionally less emphasized in the hiring and promotion processes. Such support would allow faculty to devote more of their time to teaching and research on China and would broaden our course offerings and breadth of scholarship.

POST-DOCTORAL PROGRAM

$1.5M endowed each / $75,000 annually each

We aspire to create a highly competitive post-doctoral program for scholars in Chinese Studies in both the humanities and social sciences. This could be a one- or two-year program that may include teaching at the undergraduate or graduate level. Fellows would meet on a weekly basis in a seminar to present ongoing work.

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