

Chinese Student Explains Cultural Differences

By Joe Kupec

Before she came to the United States, Xiao-Qing-Zhu had to write a paper explaining the cultural differences between China and the United States.

"I thought I was well-prepared for culture shock, but I wasn't! The pace of life is faster here than ours in China. We live more relaxed."

She smiled then added, "there is also a vast difference in the foods here and in China but fortunately, I know how to cook for myself."

Xiao-Qing-Zhu, pronounced Shou-Cheen-Choo, was teaching English and American Culture at the Central Institute of Finance and Banking in Beijing.

"I love teaching very much and after spending 10 months teaching I realized that my students were asking me questions about American society that I could not answer.

Xiao-Qing is working on her masters degree in the American studies program at Penn State Harrisburg.

While here, she said she hopes to absorb as much of American culture as possible by observing and living in it.

She sees classroom discipline, information and the computer as major differences between Chinese and American undergraduate educations.

Xiao-Qing said that class discussion is unusual in China.

A Chinese instructor lectures and the students respectfully listen.

Students with questions must see the instructor after class for answers.

"Ten years ago, foreigners in Beijing were largely ignored by people on the street."

Xiao-Qing-Zhu was "amazed" at the size of Heindel Library and the amount of information available to the students.

While the libraries she used in China did have some English language books, newspapers, and magazines, the selection available did not compare to the periodical section at Penn State Harrisburg, she said.

Delivery of newspapers and magazines to Chinese libraries is another problem; *Time* magazine arrives two weeks late in China.

Computers are the other major differences she sees in the two education systems.

"Here, it seems that learning is controlled by technology -- the computer is essential in helping the student do work. I'm hoping to learn to use the computer to be able to learn more in a shorter time."



Joe Kupec

Xiao Qing Zhu takes a break in front of the Olmsted Building.

Personal computers are rare in most Chinese universities and Xiao hopes to take one back with her.

As an undergraduate, Xiao enjoyed painting and translating childrens' stories from English to Chinese in her spare time.

"Now I don't think I'll have time. I am too busy gathering knowledge."

Xiao-Qing is keeping a journal of her experiences here and writes to her husband and family about living in the United States.

Young people in China are especially interested in Western culture, she said.

Students are the driving force behind many of the cultural changes in China today.

Five years ago, a couple on a date would not even hold hands. Public displays of physical affection in China were discouraged. Now they are common.

Ten years ago, foreigners in Beijing were largely ignored by people on the street. At the time, few students were learning English.

Today, visitors will find many students approaching them to practice their English.

Fashion presents the greatest cultural change in China.

In the past, people wore the same kind of clothing -- plain styles and little color.

Ten years later, Western fashions have become extremely popular with people between the ages of 18 and 35.

This age group is more open minded and willing to try new things.

Vietnamese Students' Club Is Strong and Thriving

By John Yagecic

One of the newest and most successful clubs at Penn State Harrisburg is the Vietnamese Students' Club.

The Vietnamese Club was originally formed in 1972, but soon folded due to low membership.

The new club, however, organized by Vietnamese students last semester, is strong and thriving.

The Vietnamese Club holds official meetings once or twice a month, depending on need, but its 25 members get together every week to sample Vietnamese cooking, participate in a variety of sports, and enjoy each other's company.

Club adviser Mu Guidarelli said one of the club's most important functions is to "strengthen the bonds" shared by its members.

The club is not limited to entertainment activities.

Vice President Quang X. Duong said, "We often meet to discuss our problems and look for solutions, or even to just do homework together."

My Guidarelli described the club as a "Vietnamese fraternity/sorority."

The Vietnamese Club's future plans include a fund-raising dance at the Capital Union Building, a T-shirt sale, and a possible field trip.

Club President Thanh-Mai Tran expressed concern over the club's financial strength.

"We need these fund-raisers to be successful," Tran said, "in order to carry out the activities planned."

What does the Vietnamese Club want to see in the future?

"We'd like as many new members as possible," stated Duong.

Turnover in the club is high and to insure stability, new leaders are needed.

Prospective members should contact the Vietnamese Club for more information and the date of their next meeting.

T-shirts should go on sale sometime in October; anyone interested in purchasing one should contact the club via the mailboxes in W-216 Olmsted.

Scholarship Announced for International Students

Washington, D.C. -- The seventh annual International Student Scholarship Competition -- a nationwide essay competition for international students studying in the United States -- is now underway, said Tom St. Denis, vice president of International Underwriters/Brokers, Inc., sponsor of the competition.

First prize is \$1,500 to be used for academic or professional advancement.

International Underwriters/Brokers, Inc., also will award \$350 to the International Student Office of the first-place winner.

Deadline for the competition is Dec. 1.

International students interested in entering must submit an essay of no more than 1,500 words on the topic:

"Important cross-cultural clues are often found in humor. Compare humor in your country with humor as you find it in America. Include examples of humorous situations resulting from cross-cultural misunderstandings, either in the U.S. or on your first visit back to your home country."

Additional scholarships will be awarded to a second-place winner (\$1,000); a third-place winner (\$500) and five honorable mention recipients (\$100 each).

The competition is open to all full-time foreign students enrolled in a prescribed degree or certificate-granting program at an accredited high school, junior college, college or university within the United States.

Also eligible are students enrolled in an English training program who plan to pursue higher education in the United States.

For additional information, rules and entry forms, write: Essay Competition Coordinator; DSD Communications, Ltd.; 10805 Parkridge Blvd., Suite 240; Reston, VA 22091.

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Escape to the Big Apple!

The International Affairs Association (IAA) is sponsoring a one-day bus trip to New York City Friday, Oct. 21.

Highlights of the trip include a tour of the United Nations, a tour of a Mission to the U.N., and an afternoon seminar to be held at Columbia University concerning "Patriarchy and Ethnic Divisions in Soviet Central Asia."

There will also be time to "do your own thing."

The bus will depart the Olmsted Bldg. parking lot Oct. 21 at 6:00 a.m. Departure time from NYC is 8:00 p.m. with arrival back on campus at approximately midnight.

The cost of tickets is \$15. Tickets will be sold the week of Oct. 5 in the Lion's Den.

Additional questions may be directed to Lori Howe or Denise Lasco at 948-1955.

**The Ukranians are Coming!
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... See them October 29