

Professional Development Grant Final Report

The 23rd Association of Chinese Professors of Social Sciences
in the United States (ACPSS) International Conference

October 20-22, 2017
High Point University
High Point, North Carolina, U.S.A.

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November 2, 2017

Restatement of Professional Enhancement

I first got into contact with the Association of Chinese Professors of Social Sciences in the United States (ACPSS) in 2001, when I was still a graduate student at Sichuan International Studies University in Chongqing, China. During that summer, many professors of the association were on a tour of Chinese universities giving public lectures. I attended several of the lectures and became deeply fascinated with the knowledge and unique perspectives that I had seldom seen in Chinese universities. It was the first time I learned that the aggressor in the Korean War was not the United States, but North Korea. This is also one of the reasons why I chose to pursue doctoral studies in the United States. After I completed my Ph.D. degree in history at Wayne State and got the tenure-track position at Tech, I decided to join the organization. I found the experience truly rewarding because this organization is interdisciplinary with members coming from fields such as history, political science, communication, literature, sociology, education, and philosophy etc. It provides a valuable opportunity for me to see how scholars of other fields study China and creates ample opportunities for collaboration.

The theme of this year's conference is "Coping with the Challenge of Globalization." In line with this theme, I presented a paper entitled "*Da Waixuan* (Big Foreign Propaganda): The Global Projection of China's Soft Power," which studies how the Chinese government projects its "soft power" in the world, particularly North America, through the expansion of its state-owned media and Confucian Institutes. This is an ongoing project I plan to turn into a journal article. As a junior scholar and a historian, I was hoping to get feedback from senior scholars, particularly those from other fields such as communication and political science.

Brief Review

My panel had two historians, a political scientist, and an English professor. It was well attended and among the audience there was a professor of communication from University of Bridgeport. I was thrilled to find that she had touched upon my topic in her

own research. She gave me very useful feedback and suggested a few important works for further reading. Moreover, since my topic has to do with Confucius Institutes, I was fortunate to meet with two professors who work as directors of Confucius Institutes. I benefited a lot from their perspectives as insiders.

Besides my own panel, I also attended other panels about Chinese legal history, philosophy, and literature among other topics. Since a lot of scholars come from China and have convenient access to primary sources, it is beneficial to learn about their research. The presentations and informal conversations have provided me with unique insights about the current political developments in China as well. Besides broadening my vision, these experiences would keep me up with the field and enrich my own research.

Summary of Outcomes and Experiences

By incorporating the feedback from scholars at the conference, my article has become stronger. I have submitted it to the *Journal of Information Policy* for review.

During the business meeting of ACPSS, I had the honor to be nominated and elected to the Board of Directors of ACPSS. Serving on the board would enable me to get into closer contact its members. Getting involved in organizing different activities would also help me serve our own department, the school, and the university better.

Getting to know professors from China also creates opportunities for collaboration and educational exchanges. In the summer of 2018, for example, the Communication University of China in Beijing is going to invite professors of this association to give public lectures. I hope to bring in more opportunities of this kind to the faculty at Tech. I also hope these exchanges would lay the foundation for our study-abroad program.

Being part of this organization has also opened a variety of useful information. For example, a professor from Notre Dame recently posted in the forum that her university has opened a Master's program in Global Affairs with full scholarship and stipends. I am very happy to pass along the information to our colleagues and students.

Conclusions and Recommendation

In conclusion, attending this conference has proven to be tremendously beneficial to my professional development in general and my research project in particular. I really appreciate the support of the university through the Professional Development Grant. I am also very proud to be a representative of Tech in academic conferences.

In the long run, I am hoping that we can host the annual conference of ACPSS on our campus because it would enhance the reputation of Tech for promoting serious research and global education. It would also benefit our faculty and students either as organizers or participants.