

they get the chance, it will change their lives and their future contribution to community and country.

One of our local boroughs, Luton, is far from being the most economically prosperous in Britain. However, it is in the top five areas in England for young people who progress to higher education after completing A Levels or Equivalents. The University of Bedfordshire's significant contribution to that life-changing opportunity is something of which to be very proud.

The University's place in the public square of debate, discourse and discovery is important to me as a leader of a significant civic institution. At Bedfordshire we have the capacity to drive forward big ideas, following through our own efforts but also as a forum for others.

I've instigated a series of public policy lectures at the University, starting with the former UK Home and

Education Secretary of State, David Blunkett MP. It is vitally important that we combine the creativity nurtured on campus with challenge and perspective from outside. The next speaker will be John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons.

Starting with David, the series brings thought-leaders into conversation with the University in a public forum where we can advance real impact at a local and national level. I hope to see many of you at this and future events in the series.

There is a challenging future for higher education in the UK. We are not immune to those challenges at the University of Bedfordshire. But I am confident that our commitment to high-quality teaching and the best learning environment and experience possible, will ensure that we achieve further success for staff, students and our communities.

Cross-cultural collaboration with China

M. James C. Crabbe, Faculty of Creative Arts, Technologies and Science, University of Bedfordshire

Abstract

ASPIRE – Access, Scholarship, Partnership, Innovation, Respect and Employability – comprises a value system and a series of norms that underpin many aspects of cross-cultural teaching, learning and research. Cross-cultural sensitivity and exchange is at the core of a global system of higher education (HE), where we can understand, respect, and learn from the strengths of HE in each nation. Collaboration with leading institutions in China over a period of four years has necessitated respect of and sensitivity to cultural differences, innovation in ideas of communication, and growing partnership networks, of crucial importance in developing pedagogy and research, and all areas of learning, from the arts and the creative industries to science and technology. Exchange is of paramount importance, to enhance understanding and respect, and for us to become both culture- and task-oriented.

Keywords: pedagogy, research, culture, creativity, inspiration, critical thinking

Introduction

It is no coincidence that the University of Bedfordshire, with its strong and widening international partnerships, has **ASPIRE – Access, Scholarship, Partnership, Innovation, Respect and Employability** – at the core of its values. ASPIRE comprises a value system and a series of norms that underpin many aspects of cross-cultural

teaching, learning and research. Cross-cultural sensitivity and exchange is at the core of a global system of higher education (HE), where we can understand, respect, and learn from the strengths of HE in each nation.

My collaboration with leading institutions in China over a period of over four years has necessitated respect of and sensitivity to cultural differences, innovation in ideas of communication, and growing partnership networks, as well as in cutting edge research.

Creativity and critical thinking: Task-oriented or culture-oriented?

China is trying to develop its own pedagogy, free from Russian and Western models (Liu and Lin, 2008). In doing so, it needs to embrace new forms of creativity and critical thinking. In 2009, after I had given a lecture on creativity to staff and students at China University of Communications in Beijing, the Head of Department told me: 'We have a different definition of creativity; it is not the same as yours.'

This difference is underpinned by a major cultural distinction. We in the West tend to be task-oriented, and the Chinese tend to be culture-oriented. There have been many attempts by writers and researchers in the West to embrace China's culture. One example may illustrate some pitfalls. In 1820, Robert Morrison published 'A dictionary of the Chinese language'. In his

attempt to introduce Chinese culture to Westerners, he adopted a culture-oriented approach, incorporating information from selected Chinese works. However, despite his excellent intentions, there were three important factors he could not disguise:

1. His Protestant mission;
2. His view of cross-cultural communication between China and the West;
3. The patronage of the East India Company. The book was printed at the East India Company's press.

It is very difficult, perhaps impossible, for the Westerner to embrace Chinese culture completely. It is not for nothing that carvings in Chinese on the Gate to Chinatown, Boston, USA, state 'Propriety, Righteousness, Integrity, and a Sense of Shame'. Confucianism conceptualizes shame as an emotion as well as a human capacity that directs the person inward for self-examination and motivates the person toward socially and morally desirable change.

It is this very function and power of shame that Confucianism values and fosters (see e.g. Bell, 2008). The common Western association of shame as being harmful to a person's health does not appear to be part of the Confucian aspiration.

To try to develop creativity in education in China, it may be helpful to think of Self-fulfilment – the expression of one's personal creativity within a harmonious context (see e.g. Crabbe, 1999). Creativity is important in all aspects of pedagogy, from science to the arts, from social science to business (Crabbe, 2010). Artists use their creativity in one way, scientists in another, investors in another. They are all wrestling with their imaginations to produce ideas that are better and more beautiful than what already exists and what they already know.

Education in the creative industries in China

The Creative Industries in China are similar to those in other countries, and include: advertising, architecture, arts, antiques, computer and video games, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, music, performing arts, publishing, software, TV and radio (Wei, 2009). The creative economy is not just another sector alongside agriculture, manufacturing and services, but a transformation of all sectors. It transforms the ways in which all organisations acquire, use and trade ideas. The result is a 'creative ecology' based on groups of people in high-energy environments.

Educational programmes in the creative industries need to balance teaching of technological skills and thinking skills (Ryan and Switzer, 2001; Huang, 2009), and critical and creative thinking (Table 1). In China, it is a re-working of that balance that may help in developing highly qualified men and women, which are currently lacking in these important areas of businesses (e.g. Chen, 2012; Yi and Zhang, 2012).

In developing cultural awareness about China at a distance, there can in my view be no better way than reading the four Chinese classics of literature (Table 2). They provide an insight into Chinese culture and into the way that the Chinese treat each other that can be recognised even today.

From pedagogy to research

Immersing oneself in Chinese culture has many benefits, not just in developing teaching and learning, but also in collaborative research. My own links with Fudan University in Shanghai have resulted in several peer-reviewed research papers (e.g. Luo *et al.*, 2009; Jin *et al.*, 2011; Yang *et al.*, 2012; Zheng *et al.*, 2013), with others planned for the future.

As we continue to work with China on all aspects of higher education, we need to understand each other as much as possible, and 'to educate as the practice of freedom' (Friere, quoted in Maylor, 2012). Exchange is of paramount importance, and to engage in social contact outside educational institutions (Li, 2012) to enhance understanding and respect, and to become both culture- and task- oriented. It is that aspect of exchange that the University of Bedfordshire is developing with its students that should reap such rewards in cultural understanding in the future.

Critical thinking	Creative thinking
Analytic	Generative
Vertical	Lateral
Probability	Possibility
Focused	Diffuse
Objective	Subjective
Verbal	Visual
Linear	Associative
Reasoning	Richness, novelty
Yes, but...	Yes, and...!

Table 1. Critical thinking and Creative thinking. Adapted from Harris (2002).

- *Water Margin* 水浒传 水滸傳 Shuǐ hǔ zhuàn
14th century
- *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* 三国演义 三
國演義 Sān guó yǎnyì 14th century
- *Journey to the West* 西游记 西遊記 Xī yóu jì
16th century
- *Dream of the Red Chamber* 红楼梦 紅樓夢
Hóng lóu mèng 18th century

Table 2. The Four Chinese classics of literature.

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Volunteer tourism and architecture students: What motivates and can best prepare them?

Ramsey Awad, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

Justine Chambers, University of NSW, Sydney, Australia

Julie Jupp, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

Abstract

This paper explores student attitudes toward volunteering in the context of university-led building development programs, raising questions about the practice of volunteering and its contribution to community development. Focusing on students undertaking tertiary education in Western countries, this literature-based study firstly explores the perceptions and motivations behind volunteering, and

secondly discusses its developmental impact on low-income communities.

Keywords: volunteer tourism, developing communities, architecture students, pedagogical requirements.

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, travelling to volunteer has grown in popularity throughout the developed world. Within the rising volunteer tourism phenomenon,