



SPRING CONFERENCE REPORT

Forum for American/Chinese Exchange at Stanford
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The Spring Half of FACES 2015-2016 Annual Conference was held at Peking University from March 18th to March 22nd. Many things distinguish the year of 2016 from that of 2006. When FACES Beida first hosted FACES China session a decade ago, the person-to-person communication between youth of the two countries was still a rare scene. Wechat and Facebook groups were unimaginable due to the absence of accessible technology. Most of our U.S. delegates had zero command of Chinese. The 2016 conference marks the rapid development of each Chapter during the ten year interim.

Following last year's initiation of Parallel Forum/Academic Activities, this year's conference introduced more controversial topics in social sciences. In academic design, we allowed delegates the space to voice themselves fully, under certain guidelines. By facilitating more off-campus events, we endeavored to present delegates with a multifold China; delegates experienced the traditional and modern. Despite these changes, we adhered to our high standards in speaker profile and conference service.

Looking back, for more than a decade, we have continuously carried on the FACES mission of "On Common Ground". The shared memory created here, the knowledge learned and the connections formed, all became a part of our delegates and our organization. Year after year, the momentum to forge U.S.-China relations continues to grow.

MESSAGE FROM CO-PRESIDENTS

The great global influence of U.S.-China relations is what inspires FACES Beida to move forward. We firmly believe by channeling students, we're building connections essential to the future of U.S. and China, and even, to that of the entire world. We're sincerely hoping through our efforts, youth from United States, China and other parts in the world will be able to make greater accomplishments together.

People are at the core of FACES. What characterizes FACES people is the ability to think of the unconventional, and the outstanding skills to execute. Such ability and skill are not usually inborn, but are formed and sharpened in the intensive exchange of ideas at a platform like FACES, or, by organizing an event from the very beginning as a staff of FACES.

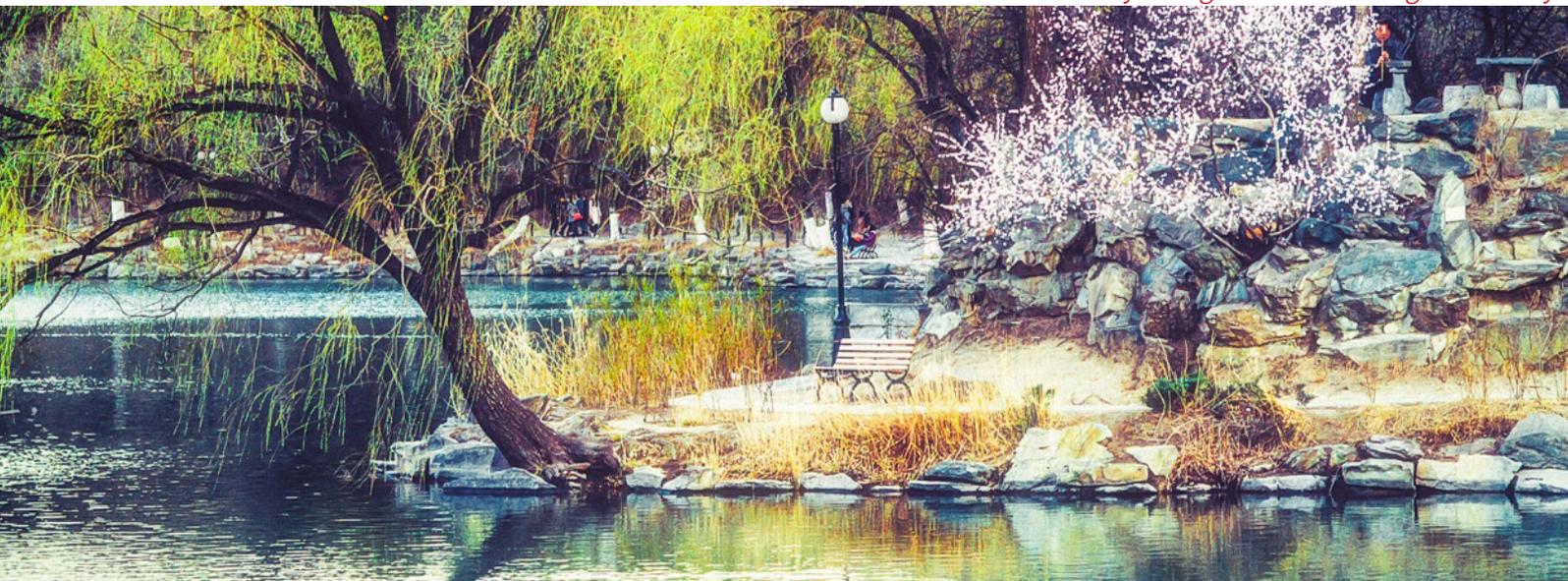
For Beida staff, joining FACES is a chance to re-examine ourselves not only as students, citizens loyal to our country but as future leaders and global citizens. Here, we are also getting ready in hands and minds to fulfill the duties of our definition of "self". Ultimately, through this exhausting yet rewarding experience, we are all better prepared for this fast changing and more integrated world.

Kathy Yicun Tang
Co-President, FACES Beida
Class of 2017, Yuanpei College

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2016.4

Photo by Jiang Chao at Peking University



GENERAL SPEECHES

Prof. Zhang Shiqiu: Examine Haze in Beijing from Environmental and Economic Perspectives

The opening speech of FACES Beida conference was held on the morning of March 19th at Stanford Center at Peking University. The speech centered on a very technical aspect of China-U.S. relations. As the world's two largest economies and energy-consuming countries, China and the U.S. share weighty responsibility in seeking long-term solutions to environmental problems around the globe. Currently, air pollution in China is a major concern for both government officials and Chinese citizens. We hereby invited Professor Zhang Shiqiu, expert on haze and environmental sciences, to shed light on the topic.

She delivered to our delegates a highly informative speech explaining how air pollution has changed in China in recent years and its economic implications.



Professor Zhang presented to us many exclusive data from local research institutes and provided a complete picture of the situation. She also specified the challenges Chinese government is facing right now and pointed out the influences haze has on economic conditions. Our delegates gained much knowledge concerning haze and discussed with Professor Zhang potential cooperation between China and the U.S., an area waiting to be fully explored by practitioners.

Prof Yuan Ming: New cultural landscape in IR

We were honored to have the presence of Professor Yuan Ming at Stanford Center at Peking University on the afternoon of March 19th. Professor Yuan, Dean of Yenching Academy and Vice President of the Institute of International and Strategic Studies, delivered a detailed and in-depth speech to the students on the topic of “the new cultural landscape in the international relations”. She talked about the self-identity for young people, including “who are we” and “who am I”. She brought up different examples in places around the world and analyzed the same problem in it: the more we young people experience, the more confused about the future we are. Additionally, she talked about the cultural consideration in the new era. For instance, how Chinese traditional art spreads in this modern world. Professor Yuan said hopefully, “you are the future”.

After Professor Yuan's Speech, I kept wondering about “Who am I” and “Who are we”, and I was inspired to place my future in a broader context.

by a Chinese Delegate

In the Question and Answer part, one U.S. delegate brought up a question: how does Prof. Yuan think of the culture of Central Asia? Yuan shared a story about one of her students from Tadjikistan who researched on the country's drug trade and did a fantastic job. This example illustrated young people from all countries could have a terrific and meaningful life, leaving a deep impression on all the delegates and the staff.



Prof. Gao Haihong and Prof. Xu Jianguo: The Underlying Message and Effect of Renminbi Being Added to SDR

Renminbi (RMB) joining the SDR currency basket has drawn wide attention and FACES invited Professor Gao Haihong, Director of the Research Center for International Finance, and Mr. Xu Jianguo, Associate Professor at National School of Development of Peking University, to the general speech session on the morning of March 20th, to share their ideas on SDR and RMB internationalization.

Professor Gao pointed out that the inclusion of RMB is a milestone for both the reform of international monetary system and China's financial opening up and reform. After analyzing the current world monetary system, she emphasized that RMB internationalization is a work in progress and a market choice in essence.

Professor Xu was also concerned about the current U.S.-based monetary system. Having detected the existing problems, he discussed three possible directions of reform and delineated the evolving multi-currency system. Professor Xu concluded his speech by comparing China's financial status to that of U.S. in the early 20th century and pointed out that RMB internationalization is progressing slowly yet steadily.



Professor Wang Suolao: Analyze China's Presence in Middle East

On March 21st, Professor Wang Suolao (Director of Center for Middle East Studies, PKU) presented a speech on the topic "China's Role in the Current Upheaval in the Middle East". Professor Wang focused on explaining the strategic relation between China and Middle-East, which is quite different from an alliance but a relationship that both parties can benefit from in economics, politics, and energy-related cooperation. By Professor Wang's explanation, delegates acquired a better understanding of China's basic principle and diplomatic policies to Middle East countries: China fully support Arabian countries to pursue their own path of development, stability and unity, with no intention of interfering or seeking for spheres of influence.



The lecture was followed by a Q&A session, in which Professor Wang stated that China advocates stable political transitions in Middle Eastern countries, which is relatively less detrimental to economical development.

Furthermore, China has no intention to interfere in the process directly and respects the will of Middle Eastern people.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Media Meets Internet

On the afternoon of March 19th, FACES delegates had their first Academic Activity at the Spring Conference. Associate Professor Wang Xiuli, from School of Journalism and Communications, moderated the event.

The activity was warmed up by questions like “What is your main source of information” and “How do you categorize different kinds of media”. Our delegates had different standards for classification. Next, delegates got the chance to play roles as news reporters or freelancers and to try making comments on a clip of the movie Caught in the Web. All four groups of delegates came up with creative ideas to do their report, and everyone had fun in this role-play sessions. Two more case studies based on reading materials brought people to think and discuss deeply on how media influence our ideas, especially our perception of another country. Finally, after these case studies, our delegates proposed insightful suggestions on how to promote the mutual perception of people in both U.S. and China. And, Professor Wang summed up the whole activity.



When we advocate mutual trust, we sometimes forget why realistic concerns top the agenda in real life situation--1% of possibility is enough to make an aggressive move.

by a Chinese Delegate

Government Building Simulation

The second academic activity was held on the morning of March 21st. Delegates were divided into two groups--delegates from U.S. and from China. Each group was given an imaginary island composed of different kinds of tribes and needs to establish a new government. The two lands were separated from one intact island due to geographic tectonic reason.

Chinese delegates adopted group discussion all through the way to discuss the duty of a government and how to elect representative of two tribes under population disparity. Meanwhile, the U.S. delegates had a group discussion and then divided into three groups, each responsible for settling one function of the government--foreign policy, domestic political system, and education and social service.

After the intensive discussion, each group had a presentation on what government they had decided to establish. A heated discussion was instigated during the comment session. Delegates shared their main considerations about political systems, resources issues and foreign policy. They focused on the relation of two islands. Immigration, population mobility, and even nuclear weapon security issues were discussed.

Language and its Cultural Context

The last academic event of this year's spring conference examined China-U.S. relations from a new domain: language. Languages are indispensable to the exchange of ideas. In terms of cultural exchange between the U.S. and China, the prevalence of English and its influence has triggered a heated discussion among our delegates. Some said that English dominance is the legacy of England's worldwide colonization, a remnant of imperialism. Some noted that the trend is slowly reversing, as more Americans now learn Mandarin. One American delegate suggested that some parts of FACES conference should be in Chinese and that Chinese delegates should be encouraged to express themselves fully in their mother tongue. We believe that language equality should be developed and tended to not only by FACES, but by everyone interested in China-U.S. relations.



This is my favorite part. Too often the differences between U.S. and China are covered or misrepresented in reaching consensus. I'm glad to have had a candid talk with my Chinese fellows on this topic.

by a U.S. Delegate

FIELDTRIPS

MARCH THROUGH TIME

The first city exploration of FACES conference began under the guidance of a carefully-written schedule. Delegates were dispatched into 5 groups to explore Beijing's busy streetscapes. Each delegation is headed by a FACES Staff to ensure the smooth conduction of impromptu, informal interviews with locals in the following areas: The Olympic Park, Beilugoxiang, Dazhalan, Gulou, and Jingshan Park – a diverse selection of sights that reflect both the traditional and modern sides of Beijing. Before the Field visits started, delegates were gathered to visit the Beijing City-Planning Exhibition Hall. Prof. Shi Mingzheng, director of Stanford Center at PKU and an urban expert himself, gave the group a detailed introduction by reviewing the city model.

During the interviews, the delegates enjoyed the saturated city view, and also examined the citizens' insights on some of the most significant US-China-related events; the President Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972 and the 1999 United States' bombing on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade are two examples. Many delegates voiced that they had received more adequate response when topics shifted to Premier Zhou's passing away, or Nine Eleven.

Reports from the trips took various forms, including selfies, interview videos, group pictures, etc. During Reflection, delegates reflected and zealously discussed outcomes.



TENCENT



On March 21st, FACES delegates visited Tencent's Beijing Office at Zhongguancun. During this fieldtrip, delegates were first introduced the history and the product line of Tencent at the exhibition gallery. This was followed by a panel session held by Tencent M&A Department. At the panel, Teresa Chen, Senior Associate at Tencent and Alumna of Peking University Guanghua School of Management, shared insights with delegates about the landscape of China's IT industry and Tencent's development strategy. Later on, the guest speaker had a vivid discussion with delegates about the "Online to Offline" (O2O) conception. The case examined the "take-rate issue" of Didi Taxi and Meituan. Delegates were asked to compare and contrast product uniqueness, market competition, organization costs, government regulations, among other things.



Collaborative Project is a conventional component of FACES Annual Conference. Each year, delegates form teams at the Fall Conference, and reconvene at the Spring Conference to present on a project concerning U.S.- China relations. Collaborative Project is a platform where delegates apply ideas generated within the grounds of the conference, a progression from the white board to the real world.

On the noon of March 20th, delegates gathered together at the Stanford Center; they were excited to share their ideas and teamwork with everyone present. Six groups presented their on-going activity plans. This year's collaborative projects manifested FACES delegates' concern for a variety of issues, from social awareness of LGBTQ, to the difficulty overseas students encounter when searching for a job, and even touched on cultural difference in sports. Some teams even presented their preliminary outcomes, due to the stretch of time available between the conferences to problem-solve.

Project Overview

Comparing Public Official's Social Media

While social media facilitates the communication between government and the public, it also challenges governance in many aspects. This project compared social media in Mainland China, Hong Kong and United States and outlined issues key to the social media strategy of government.

COLLABOTATIVE PROJECTS

Varsity Camp: Basketball China & U.S.

Inspired by their high-school and college experiences, FACES delegates came up with the idea to hold a U.S.-China Youth Basketball Sports Camp. By engaging in the cross-cultural sport of basketball, working in a team and visiting the other country, youth from both countries could gain teamwork spirit and take a meaningful break from their compacted academic schedule.



Help Overseas Chinese Students Find Job in China

Excel in China aims to bring back the overseas talents to opening positions in China. Since winter 2015, the Wechat Platform has already issued 39 posts and attracted 293 subscribers.

LGBTQ Awareness: Tong Tong

Given China's low social tolerance of LGBTQ, Tong Tong (同通) aims to enhance social awareness of LGBTQ issues in China through mediums such as blogs and wechat to provide information, foster community and encourage dialogue.



Social Impact Indicator

Core to the concept of social impact indicator is the energy consumption tracking that caught FACES delegates' interest. The indicator uses quantitative and on-time assessment of energy consumption and presents the analysis to the users in a clear visual format.

China-Japan Program

The China-Japan Youth Program targets youth of both countries who speak conversationally the language of the other. By crossing over the language barrier, the program aims to enable genuine and in-depth conversation over both personal and controversial topics.

ALUMNI-DELEGATE SOCIAL EVENTS

The Alumni-Delegate Social is a staple event at the FACES conference throughout the years. At this year's conference, our delegates and alumni enjoyed a wonderful night at downtown Beijing. Our alumni from consulting, finance, journalism and law shared their experience and stories in Beijing and around the world with our delegates.



I really enjoyed meeting the FACES alumni. My motivation for participating in the conference is to be part of this amazing alumni group.

by a U.S. Delegate

CITY TRIP

Delegates visited Yuan Mingyuan and beloved the gorgeous cherry blossom.





**ON
COMMON
GROUND**



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