UCL & China

UCL is London’s research and teaching powerhouse. It addresses the world’s problems through the application of its expertise, spanning the sciences, arts, humanities, social sciences and biomedicine. The university derives great strength from its global perspective: from collaborations with academic centres of excellence around the globe; the many international staff and students who study at UCL; the reservoir of knowledge and learning drawn from around the world.

UCL, and indeed the entire western world, owes a significant debt to China. Over 500 years before the West, China was developing science and technology in a number of fields, including the production of cast iron, the creation of fine porcelain and silk, the development of the magnetic compass and early navigation. Today, our links with China are thriving, and students from China make up the largest national group among our lively international student population.

I was pleased to visit China in 2003, to launch a joint venture between Peking University and UCL, the new International Centre for Chinese Heritage & Archaeology, which will have offices and activities in both institutions. As the first such venture between the UK and China, the centre is the latest development in a long and fruitful relationship between UCL and Chinese universities.

UCL collaborates with China in a number of research initiatives, including the Institute of Child Health’s long-running research programme with Zhejiang University; a joint teaching programme between UCL’s Faculty of Engineering and the Qilu University of Technology; an agricultural pollution programme run between China Agricultural University and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. It is a priority for me to strengthen these relationships and build new ones for the benefit of both UCL and China.

Professor Malcolm Grant
President and Provost of UCL

Essential information

UCL at a glance
15,000 students – a third of them graduate students – from more than 140 countries
More than 750 students from P.R China, whose preferred subjects are Engineering, Mathematical & Physical Sciences, Architecture and Laws
3,900 staff, including more than 4,000 academic and research staff
10 Nobel Prize-winning staff and former students
70 academic departments from Archaeology to Zoology

Useful contacts
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www.ucl.ac.uk

Prospective undergraduate and graduate students
Admissions & General Enquiries
T +44 (0)20 7679 3000
F +44 (0)20 7679 3001
www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students

Other graduate study enquiries
Graduate School
T +44 (0)20 7679 7040
F +44 (0)20 7679 7043
E graduateschool@ucl.ac.uk

Former UCL students
Alumni Relations
T +44 (0)20 7679 7677
F +44 (0)20 7679 0117
E alumni@ucl.ac.uk

Potential supporters
Fundraising
T +44 (0)20 7679 7670
F +44 (0)20 7679 0117
E fundraising@ucl.ac.uk

Media
Media Relations
T +44 (0)20 7315 1821
F +44 (0)20 7916 8526
E media@ucl.ac.uk
Did you know that …

UCL has a Pro-Provost for China?
Professor David Norrie, Pro-Provost for China, has developed UCL’s strategy for expanding academic and research links with China. He advises the President and Provost of UCL on major trends in China’s higher education. He says: “Since the opening up of the Chinese economy in 1978, China’s higher education and science and technology capacity has blossomed, and UCL’s China strategy is to establish strong links with China’s top universities and forge partnerships between our leading research centres and similar centres of excellence in China.” Professor Norrie visits China regularly in connection with his position as honorary professor of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and member of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment & Development. He is the main contact point for visiting Chinese academics and researchers.

UCL has long-standing research links with archaeology in China?
Professor Xia Nai, Director of Beijing’s Institute of Archaeology, studied for his PhD at UCL in the 1950s. A number of archaeological research projects have continued to link UCL and China since then. This research relationship has recently been cemented with the establishment of the joint Peking University and UCL International Centre for Chinese Heritage & Archaeology, with offices and activities in both London and Beijing.

UCL collaborates with China to study climate change?
UCL’s Environmental Change Research Centre (ECRC) and the Department of Geography at China’s Lanzhou University run a longstanding joint research project. Dr Jonathan Holmes (ECRC), who has conducted research and taught at Lanzhou University, said: “Lanzhou has a long history of research into environmental change, especially the examination of lake sediments, and UCL is very strong in that area.” Other climate change collaborations are run by UCL’s Professor Peter Sammonds, who worked with the Chinese Academy of Sciences on the influence of climate change on ice sheet dynamics, glacier melt and its implications for sea-level rise, and Professor David Norrie, who collaborated with the academy to conduct research into the reduction of greenhouse emissions from Chinese crop production.

UCL provides scholarships for Chinese students?
Students from China are eligible for UCL Undergraduate Open Scholarships, UCL Faculty Scholarships and UCL Pathfinder Scholarships, with a value of £3,000-£5,000. Graduate scholarships for students from China include those sponsored by UCL alumni Mr Winston Chu (Lawes 1960) and Mr Simon Li (Lawes 1950).

UCL works for the conservation of Chinese wildlife?
Academics from UCL’s Department of Economics have researched options for the conservation of the giant panda in Sichuan province. Professor Tim Swanson and Dr Andreas Kortenaken have looked at ways of keeping the panda’s natural habitat available, rather than conserving the species in pens or cages. Their research showed that eco-tourists and other foreign travellers were happy to pay a surcharge to provide a suitable habitat for the pandas and to aid the overall conservation of China’s natural habitat and wildlife.

UCL academics have supported policy formation in China’s State Council?
Over the last decade, UCL academics have contributed to policy in several fields. In UCL’s Department of Economics, Professor Jeremy Warford has advised on the use of pollution taxes and other economic instruments, while Professor Tim Swanson has helped formulate eco-tourism and water pricing policies and Professor David Norrie has advised on agricultural sustainability and control of agricultural pollution.

UCL has a thriving student Chinese Society?
Established under the recognition of UCL’s student union, the Chinese Society is one of UCL’s largest international societies. The society runs a series of annual events, and aims to promote Chinese culture among the UCL community, welcoming all undergraduate and postgraduate students from any ethnic background at UCL – including, of course, the 713 Chinese nationals currently enrolled on degree courses at UCL. Alumni of UCL, who are now in China can keep in touch with the university through the UCL Alumni Contact in China, Xuehui Long (Geography 1998), who runs the UCL China Office, or through K K Chu (Lawes 1960), who is President of the UCL Alumni Hong Kong Club.

UCL is assessing the health needs of China’s migrant population?
There are 120 million internal migrants in China, and the number is rising. City governments have been urged to identify, the health, social and educational needs of migrant populations in order to ameliorate their poor living and working situations. UCL’s Centre for International Child Health is working with Zhejiang University’s Department of Social Medicine to determine the health needs of migrant workers and their children in Zhejiang Province, and to compare these with settled urban and rural dwellers. They are collecting data on health status, including reproductive health and mental wellbeing, as well as blood tests for HIV and hepatitis, and migrant workers’ access to healthcare and working conditions.

London’s first university

UCL is London’s first and largest multi-faculty university and was the third to be established in England after Oxford and Cambridge. Founded in 1826, UCL challenged the social exclusivity, religious restrictions and academic constraints of Oxbridge, becoming the first university to admit students of any race, class or religion, and the first to welcome women on equal terms with men. This commitment to inclusivity continues today as UCL actively encourages under-represented groups to take up study and work at the university.

UCL’s radical approach did much more than widen access to higher education: it introduced academic disciplines required by the emerging industrial and commercial society. For instance, it became the first English university to offer the systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine, subjects in which it still excels today.

Its academics helped to shape the modern world. Among their breakthroughs were the identification of hormones and vitamins, the discovery of the inert gases, including neon, and the invention of the thermionic valve, which made radio and modern electronics possible.

The university was global in perspective even then. Students from outside the UK were there from the start, and in 1837 UC appointed the UK’s first Professor of Chinese. Today, students and academics are able to use Chinese text characters in their managed computer services, an aid to teaching, research and interaction with students and researchers in P R China.

The university’s breadth of excellence fosters the creation of teams of specialists dedicated to finding practical solutions to today’s and tomorrow’s problems. Challenging the boundaries of knowledge, creative individual researchers from diverse disciplines bring together their expertise to solve difficult problems.

The globalization of environmental, economic, social and policy issues has been matched by UCL’s multidisciplinary, problem-solving strategy. Collaboration with networks of individuals and groups around the world is a natural extension of its interdisciplinary approach.

Together, the university and its partners are enhancing the intellectual, cultural, social and technological wellbeing of people throughout the world.

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