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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## From Shanghai to Dayton

**07.18.2007 | Students, International** "This is a good opportunity to be here with a good chance to study," said Jin "Iris" Caihong, who arrived July 1 with a dozen other Shanghai Normal University classmates to complete their undergraduate degrees at UD. "We were a little bit worried because we've never been out of the country before."

While the Chinese students may have started their American learning experience with baseball, the year is likely to end with excellent job prospects from U.S., Chinese and international companies, according to Scott Segalewitz, chair of UD's engineering technology department. Joseph Saliba, the dean of UD's School of Engineering, recently returned from meetings with

companies in China who were enthusiastic about the UD students.

This year's group of students is the second crop from a budding partnership between UD and Shanghai Normal University. The students study for three years in Shanghai and one year at the University of Dayton, earning degrees from both schools. Along the way, they develop crucially important skills in an international setting, Segalewitz said.

As the first year of the partnership ended this May with dual graduations, Segalewitz said organizers were unsure whether companies and students would find value in the unique program. Chinese students and their parents must pay \$25,000 in tuition, room and board expenses, without a student loan system like that available in the U.S.

After talking with companies in China earlier this summer, Segalewitz said it's clear that the gamble for UD, SHNU and the students will pay off.

"Companies were extremely enthusiastic about these students with a U.S. education," he said. "The rate of job offers to students in the joint program was 80 to 90 percent, compared to 50 percent for the students who just took the Chinese-only program."

And those who graduated last year formed a solid bond with UD, he said. Half of the 12 students enrolled last year want to return to UD for graduate studies, he said.

Jin said she checked with last year's group of students about their experience here. "They said the people of UD were all very kind and helpful."

Amy Anderson, director of UD's Center for International Programs, said the program is also paving the way for new partnerships with companies both here and in China. Companies who do business internationally are eager to hire engineers, or train their own engineers to succeed in an increasingly global workplace.

"Engineers may have to get used to the fact that while they work here, their work day is on Asia time," she said. With the growth of manufacturing overseas, she said "engineering is happening where the manufacturing takes place.

"That means that employees need to be flexible and those that have international experience will have an advantage in this very dynamic environment," she said.

With the success of the first class, Anderson said more discussions are in the works about creating innovative partnerships among the University, SHNU, Chinese companies and local companies.

In the meantime, the new cohort of Chinese students are finding their ways around campus, discovering that American watermelons are three times the size of Chinese melons, and starting their intensive summer program.

Through July, they'll work on polishing their English skills, learning about U.S. communication styles, and how to be an American student.

"We help them get used to our style of report-writing and discussion and group projects,"

Segalewitz said.

Tina Manco, partnership and exchange coordinator for UD's Center for International Programs, said the introductory sessions include teaching students about class participation and making presentations – skills not required in Chinese universities but essential for success in American classrooms.

Manco said students also will receive more help in American customs and culture.

"We're adding a little more this year and will work with them on using the telephone," she said.

At a welcoming reception the just-arrived students, still a little travel weary and jet-lagged, introduced themselves to engineering faculty and international program staff.

Many said simply they were happy to be at the University to learn new things and make new friends.

Yu "Allen" Bingqian didn't need to wait for the classes to start. He was ready to start making new friends through a universal language.

"I can play the piano, so if we have the time, we can communicate," he said.

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