

Report on the CALA 21st Century Librarian Seminar Project at Northeast Normal University held from July 2-4, 2007, Changchun City, Jilin Province

August 3, 2007

CALA Participants/Presenters:

Haipeng Li, Oberlin College, Team Leader

Qi Chen, Argosy University Chicago

Allison Zhang, Washington Research Library Consortium

Hosting institution: Northeast Normal University

Sponsors: Chinese American Librarians Association

Northeast Normal University Libraries

Northeast Normal University School of Library and Information Science

Jilin Provincial Higher Education Library Commission

The three day conference was held in the city of Changchun where the climate was moderate and the NENU campus beautiful. 116 librarians and information professionals from all over China participated in the conference, whose theme was “Collaboration and Development of Chinese and American Libraries: Theories and Practices of Academic Librarianship” (2007 中美图书馆合作与发展国际学术研讨会) Participants came from 11 Provinces and cities (Beijing, Tianjin, Jilin, Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Inner Mongolia, Sichuan, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shandong, Shaanxi, and Hong Kong), representing 36 universities and 2 provincial library commissions.

Ten broad topics were discussed at the conference in more than 20 sessions. Each topic presentation was followed by a discussion session which involved many participants and many interesting and challenging questions. The topics are as follows:

1. Digital Libraries
2. Library Consortia: Overview and Case Studies
3. Academic Library Management
4. Web Development
5. Reference Services
6. Professional Development
7. Information Literacy
8. Virtual Reference Services
9. Library School Curriculum
10. Information Commons

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. Specifically attendees appreciated the seminar focus being on the practical aspects and case studies. They wanted to know how American libraries work in the real world. Comments also reflected participants’ appreciation to the fact that they were very much impressed by how thoroughly and seriously these presentations were prepared and conducted by CALA members/presenters.

All three CALA presenters worked very hard to make the conference successful. Each had put in much time preparing multiple presentations, rich in both content and format. Presentations were lively and engaging. This conference had an interesting format: NENU turned the structure of the conference into the “American way” where we were asked to be in total control of the schedule, moderating, presenting, and leading the discussions. Basically the three of us had the entire stage for the three day period, which worked very well. We also scheduled an open forum in one of the free evenings where more than 30 people attended a followup discussion on the various issues brought up in the conference.

Representatives from several institutions at the conference expressed serious interest in hosting similar CALA projects at their institutions/libraries in the future. These include:

Jilin Province: Beihua University (北华大学)

Jiangsu Province: Nanjing University (南京大学)

Shaanxi Province: Xi'an Jiaotong University (西安交通大学), Northwest Agricultural University (西北农林科技大学)

Shandong Province: Shandong University (山东大学), Weihai University (威海大学)

In addition, negotiations are continuing with Beijing Normal University (北京师范大学), Shihezi University (石河子大学) in Xingjiang region and Inner Mongolia University (内蒙古大学).

See attached:

1. Conference Schedule
2. Conference report from NENU
3. Participants' reports

Submitted by

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