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Chinese language skills net career opportunities for study abroad alumna

WMU music professor discovers database of rare Russian viola sonatas
Confucius Institute brings new Chinese Instruction and Research Collection to Waldo Library

Local access to a broad range of contemporary Chinese language instructional materials, including books and videos, is now available at Western Michigan University’s Waldo Library through a new Chinese Instruction and Research Collection established by the Confucius Institute.

The new collection, which resides on the library’s lower level, includes more than 1,000 titles donated to WMU by Beijing Language and Culture University Press and Hanban, a unit of China’s ministry of education.

A book exhibition and opening ceremony hosted by the Confucius Institute at WMU April 8 to 10 to showcase the new collection welcomed than 100 educators and community members from across southwest Michigan to peruse the more than 300 books on display and to attend informational sessions on implementing the materials in the classroom.
Designed to serve as resource for WMU faculty and students interested in China or studying Chinese, as well as a resource for the local community schools and teachers, the collection greatly expanded Waldo Library’s catalog of materials about China and the Chinese language.

Confucius said, ‘I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand,’ -” said Scott Garrison, associate dean, University Libraries, at the opening ceremony April 8. “The audio, video, and textual materials that our Chinese partners have graciously donated to our library will help WMU and local students chart a course for their own futures as global citizens. The collection offers our entire community within WMU and Kalamazoo-at-large a new and very valuable opportunity to learn a great deal.”

“The late President Diether Haenicke often said that the center of any university is its library; and, the heart of the library is its book collection,” said Associate Dean Woods, a 27-year veteran of international education at WMU, at the opening ceremony. “This gift of books is from the heart of the Chinese people given to the heart of our University and it represents an investment in the people of our region, particularly the children. In a time when library acquisitions are cut back, this generous donation will provide substance and encouragement to those seeking to learn and to teach Chinese.”

Confucius Institute Director Dr. Wang echoed Wood’s remarks on the significance of WMU having such a collection by explaining that the books represented more than just an opportunity to learn Chinese language. “Not only will the books and reading materials help teachers expand knowledge and skills, but the books will also lend to better understanding and increased friendship between Americans and Chinese,” Wang said.
BLCU Press representatives hosted informational break-out sessions on April 9 and 10, which were well attended by local teachers, school administrators and students interested in teaching or studying Chinese. Designed to provide information according to language-learning level, each session offered attendees the chance to review level-appropriate textbooks, to receive suggestions for implementing the curriculum, as well as the opportunity to ask questions of the press’ representatives. Participants were able to purchase books and other teaching materials directly from the publisher.

This event was sponsored by the Confucius Institute at WMU, Chinese Language International Council (Hanban), the BLCU Press, Waldo Library and the Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Education. **Story by Jaime LeBlanc-Hadley**

**Event photo gallery**

**Event news on Hanban.org**
Dr. Diether Hans Haenicke

May 19, 1935 to February 15, 2009

Dr. Diether H. Haenicke, president emeritus and distinguished professor at WMU, served as the University's fifth president from 1985 to 1998, and also served one year as interim president in 2006-07 during the national search that brought President Dr. John M. Dunn to Kalamazoo. During Dr. Haenicke’s original 13-year presidency, WMU experienced significant growth in research, private support and enrollment. The University conducted a successful $62 million capital campaign and several major buildings were constructed, including the Student Recreation Center, University Computing Center, Lee Honors College, Gilmore Theatre Complex and Schneider Hall, home of the Haworth College of Business. Other major facilities were renovated and expanded, including Waldo Library, Read Fieldhouse and Waldo Stadium. More than $180 million was committed to the University during Dr. Haenicke’s two presidencies from cash, in-kind donations, pledges, and deferred and private grants.
Dr. Haenicke championed increased research at WMU, which greatly elevated recognition and ranking of the University as a research institution. WMU honored his efforts in 1999 at the dedication of Dr. Diether H. Haenicke Hall, a four-story, 94,800-square-foot science research facility. It features more than 60 laboratories and two specialized teaching areas that support advanced research and teaching for the departments of biological sciences, chemistry, geosciences and psychology.

A lifelong advocate of study abroad programs and international students, Dr. Haenicke's passion for global learning was celebrated in 1998 when the University gathered its international operations under one umbrella organization and named it for him. The **Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Education** is responsible for the global and international studies major, area studies courses, Universitywide internationalization of academics and faculty, and the offices of Study Abroad, International Admissions and Services, and the Center for English Language and Culture for International Students.

Dr. Haenicke also directed in 1998 WMU’s successful application to Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious honor society, to authorize a campus chapter of that organization at WMU, making the University one of fewer than 100 public institutions in the nation so honored.

A widely respected scholar, Dr. Haenicke was the author of more than 200 publications and papers on literature, history, academic administration, international study and educational finance. He was honored in 2002 by colleagues around the globe who created a Festschrift in honor of his 65th birthday on the Wayne State University campus. A Festschrift is a rare academic honor in which professional colleagues collect and publish one or more volumes of essays or articles to celebrate the lifetime achievement of a distinguished academic colleague.
Following his first tenure as president, Dr. Haenicke returned to the faculty in 1998 and officially retired from WMU as president emeritus in 2004. It was during this time that he was able to enjoy his “first love” of teaching students. He returned to the presidency in 2006, after being asked by WMU trustees to take the position on an interim basis while the University sought a new president.

Dr. Haenicke came back as though he had never left. He was, as one colleague put it “a guardian angel,” who preserved the University till Dr. John M. Dunn arrived in fall 2007. During his second presidency, Dr. Haenicke reinvigorated the institution’s reputation for student service and embraced the use of technology to stay in touch with students and hear their views. When Dr. Dunn took the reins in 2007, Dr. Haenicke knew the university was in good hands again. He returned to private life in 2007 at age 72 with more than 1,500 Facebook “friends.”

At Dr. Haenicke’s student-hosted retirement party April 8, 1998

From Germany to the United States

Born on May 19, 1935 in Hagen, Germany, Diether Hans Haenicke was the sixth of eight children born to Erwin and Helene Haenicke. He was raised and grew up near the Werra River in Witzenhausen, a small town which bordered communist East Germany until the German reunification. It was here that Diether faced as a child the grim realities of fascism and the Second World War.

While Nazism pervaded the nation and reached into his idyllic small town, Diether found solace in books and music. Not surprisingly, his intellectual parents had similar interests. His father would often play portions of records for Diether and his siblings, and demand that they name the composer, the symphony, and its movement before dinner would be served.

As the war ended, and poverty and despair loomed over Germany, Diether continued to immerse himself in his studies. Having attended the Volksschule primary school and the Mittelschule secondary school, Diether went on to the Gymnasium, or high school, in nearby Bad Sooden-Allendorf. Diether loved school and would often tell his children that he looked forward to classes, exams, and even homework.

Lotte, Harry, Helene and Diether Haenicke
Following the completion of his required courses of study, Diether entered his studies in higher education at the Universities of Goettingen, Marburg, and Munich. His major fields of study were German and comparative literature, history, psychology and philosophy. He went on to earn his doctorate from the University of Munich, where he graduated magna cum laude in 1962. (Photo: Diether in September 1956)

It was in that year that Diether met and married a young American student named Carol Colditz, to whom he was married for 46 years, and with whom he spent his very last moments. Their life together was spent in universities, with eccentric friends, lively parties, and unforgetable laughter.

Carol and Diether had two children, Jennifer and Kurt, who enjoyed and benefited from the experience of being raised in a household that was anything but all-American. Nevertheless, Diether officially became a U.S. citizen in 1972, and was deeply patriotic towards the country he considered to be the greatest in the world. In fact, Diether was known for his arguments with Europeans who derided America. It was never a good idea to tell him that his adopted country “had no culture.”

Diether’s career in U.S. academia began in earnest when he came to the United States as a Fulbright lecturer in the early 1960s and accepted a position teaching German language and German literature at Wayne State University’s Junior Year Program. Although he had always imagined that he would spend his life as a professor, it became evident that Diether had both the acumen and desire to move into higher education administration. He ascended from department chair to dean and provost at Wayne State University, before moving in the early 1970s to a Big-10 campus—Ohio State University—where he served as dean and academic vice president and provost.
Poised to move on to a major university presidency, Diether became interested in a job opening in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Many colleagues advised him to look elsewhere, but Diether clearly fell in love with Western Michigan University from his first visit there. It was a place, as he said, that he “could get his arms around.” Diether accepted the position of WMU president in 1985, and spent the rest of his career there despite offers and inquiries from some of the nation’s biggest and most famous institutions. Diether adopted WMU much in the fashion he had adopted America—with fierce pride and loyalty.

A proud and active member of the Kalamazoo community, Diether served as board member for numerous civic, arts and charitable organizations, including Bronson Methodist Hospital, the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Greater Kalamazoo United Way. Shortly after his 1998 retirement, Diether began writing a popular weekly column in the Kalamazoo Gazette, which he continued into 2009. A collection of his weekly columns, "Wednesdays with Diether," was published in book form by the Gazette in 2003.

Dr. Diether H. Haenicke, age 73, died on Sunday, February 15, 2009 in Kalamazoo. A community celebration of his life was held on February 26, 2009 in Miller Auditorium.

Photos provided by Carol Haenicke, Kahler Schuemann and WMU University Relations.
Post-Cold War Russia has provided WMU political science professor Dr. Jim Butterfield with an exceptional model for conducting research on transition environments and the role civic initiative plays in defining the public agenda and addressing collective action dilemmas.

With a Fulbright joint research and teaching grant secured for the 2009-2010 academic year, Butterfield took a sabbatical to continue conducting research about the opportunities and challenges small businesses face in southern Russia—a research interest sparked more than 20 years ago when he was a graduate student at the University of Notre Dame. He also taught comparative politics at Saratov State University, which was his No. 1 destination choice to conduct his research and teach because of the relationship he helped WMU forge with the Russian university in the mid-90s.

“The country was somewhat of an enigma to us during the Cold War, and my gut instincts in college were that our demonizing of the Soviet Union was probably based as much in ignorance as in meaningful assessments of what it was about,” Butterfield said. “The near knee-jerk distrust was equally shared by both sides, something I discovered firsthand as a graduate student doing field research.”

Saratov State University
As an undergraduate at Indiana University, Butterfield began studying the Russian language and continued as a graduate student at Notre Dame. Learning the language helped him receive an International Research and Exchanges Board grant for 1986-87—the only way to conduct field research in the Soviet Union at the time because of the country’s restrictions limiting scholarly exchanges.

“In 1986, at the beginning of the perestroika era, it was apparent that the Soviet Union was attempting to change,” he said. “Gorbachev was new in his position and was testing his ideas of glasnost, perestroika, and by 1987, competitive politics. I'm generally interested in transition environments and the role civic initiative plays in defining the public agenda and addressing collective action dilemmas. In the time I've been studying this society, it has gone through the reform era of perestroika, the collapse of communism and the Soviet bloc, the turbulent 90s of democratization and marketization, and the last decade of capitalist consolidation and simultaneous democratic decline. It's always a moving target. This is what makes transition environments so fascinating: the institutional flux, the high level of uncertainty, and the corresponding high potential—either for things to work out well or to work out very badly.”

Butterfield said civic initiative in Russia has been weak since the economic turmoil of the 1990s and the decline of democratic institutions over the last decade has weakened it further. However, he said there are business associations in the small and medium enterprise sector that work to represent the interests of small businesses in reducing red-tape, fighting predatory practices among local and regional officials, and advocating for policies that promote small business development. These associations appear to counter the trend of weakened civic initiative, and Butterfield’s research is investigating exactly what kind of relationship the associations are forging with local authorities.

“Dr. Butterfield, center, with Russian colleagues
Professor Tatiana Kharlamova (left) and Professor Galina Lashkova

My research is a combination of a review of federal and local legislation regarding small business development and interviews with leaders of business associations and members of the provincial legislature and government,” said Butterfield, a WMU political science professor since 1988. “The Russian small and medium enterprise sector has the potential to employ over half of the Russian population and contribute substantially to gross domestic product. As it stands now, the sector contributes roughly the
same as the oil and gas sector, to the surprise of many. Yet the potential for growth is still far from exhausted. The main obstacles are clumsy processes, difficulties in acquiring locations and property and predatory practices by local and regional officials.

He noted Saratov as a perfect place to conduct his research because in many ways it’s a typical Russian region with all the promise and problems one finds across modern Russia. With its government in the hands of the ruling party, Saratov is under pressure to both promote development and fight corruption—two policies of the federal government—yet the city’s leaders are part of the patronage network that underpins much of country’s corruption. The patronage network constricts fair practices, reduces competition and sponsors the granting of fraudulent government contracts.

“There is democratic formalism here, yet loads of evidence that the democratic processes are corrupted and dysfunctional,” he said. “It makes for an interesting environment to study public advocacy and interest-group lobbying.”

In a country like Russia, some might think it would be difficult to poke and prod officials and academics about corruption. To the contrary, Butterfield says that corruption is a major focal point of the associations and that there is a surprising amount of cooperation between them and some government agencies.

“Everyone is quite willing to talk,” he said. “The riddle of how better to promote small and medium enterprise development is one that many in Russia are wrestling with, so it’s a topic they are generally very willing to talk about. Many of the association leaders have been on study trips to the United States, where they’ve met leaders of chambers of commerce and specialists on small-business development, so interacting with an American researcher is something most are comfortable with. Some are a little surprised that a Russian-speaking American has come all this way to learn about developments in provincial Russia, but that leads them to be even more cooperative. American academics have been poking around post-Soviet Russia for nearly two decades now, and the novelty for their Russian counterparts has worn off in many cases. Some scholars have found it a challenge to get time with officials and even other academics. But it hasn't been a problem for me.”

Butterfield’s primary research focus is to understand how the local environment restricts and permits associations and businesses to react in a limited democracy. He is not in any way trying to influence his research environments.

“I'll certainly share my findings with Russian specialists with whom I'm working, but I am not in a position to influence the environment here,” he said. “I'm interacting with business leaders who are trying to do just that.”

Teaching

When Butterfield wasn’t researching small-business associations, he was teaching a semester of comparative politics to fourth-year students at Saratov State University. The class covered democratization, including transitions to and consolidation of democracy, nationalism and ethnicity. This is the first time since Butterfield began conducting research in Russia that he’s had the opportunity to simultaneously interact extensively with Russian students.
"One of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of my sabbatical in Russia was the opportunity to get to know Russian students," he said. "They are very similar to students at WMU. Some have a clear idea of their career interests, some don’t; some are highly motivated, some significantly less so; some are highly intelligent, while others are above average; some work to put themselves through college, while others do not; some participate freely in class, while others are more introverted. They all share the same intellectual curiosity and excitement about the future that students exhibit everywhere."

One significant difference he has noted, however, is that the students are all the same age. They entered college together and take the same courses lockstep with one another throughout their program. There are no non-traditional students or “super-seniors”.

“I'm also giving presentations at the invitation of one or another department,” he said. “I've given lectures on American government, the American system of higher education, graduate education in the United States, environmental policy and alternative energy technologies, and a comparison of U.S. and Soviet societies in the 1950s and 1960s. I was also invited to give a paper as part of a one-day conference in the regional legislature on principles of justice and constitutional law. At the invitation of the Tajikistan Academy of Sciences, I spent a week in Tajikistan as well, giving lectures on American foreign policy, transitions to democracy, recent reforms in Russian history education in schools, and American graduate education.”

At WMU, Butterfield has also served as associate director of the Haenicke Institute for Global Education from 2000-2003 and chair of the International Education Council of the Faculty Senate from 2003-2007.

Visit Dr. Butterfield’s website: http://homepages.wmich.edu/~butterfi/

WMU offers study abroad programs in Russia at Saratov State University in the fall, spring and summer II. Fields of study include Russian language and culture. http://international.wmich.edu/content/view/754/356*42

Story by Nate Coe
Two WMU global studies alumni receive awards to study international policy at Monterey Institute

An academic year abroad in China instilled a desire to focus their graduate studies on that country and its language for Western Michigan global studies alumni Daniel Hadley (2010) and Jaime LeBlanc-Hadley (2009), who have received significant awards to study at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California beginning in fall 2010. Although both alumni will be students in the same program, their concentrations will be different: Hadley will focus on international trade policy; LeBlanc-Hadley will focus on international development policy. Both students were awarded merit scholarships by MIIS of $10,000 each, per year.

Married during their undergraduate studies, the awards will assist the couple in advancing the Chinese language skills and cultural understanding they bolstered during completion of their bachelor’s degrees with an academic year of study at Beijing Language and Culture University in 2008-2009.

Additionally, LeBlanc-Hadley is one of only 20 students nationwide awarded a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship by the United States Department of State to support her graduate studies. She will receive up to $50,000 annually toward tuition and mandatory fees, a living stipend, and reimbursement for books. The fellowship will also cover some travel for a domestic summer internship between the first and second year of graduate school, and an overseas internship in the summer following the second year.

“Many student dreams of receiving a full fellowship to attend graduate school,” LeBlanc-Hadley said. “Being awarded such a prestigious
fellowship and the opportunity to serve in the U.S. Foreign Service is at the top end of what I’ve dreamed about for my future. My experiences as a Global and International Studies major at WMU, coupled with my study abroad experience in China, are what really drove me to set my sights on the Foreign Service as a career goal. I cannot imagine a higher honor than being a representative of my country overseas, and although I naturally would like to serve in China or Taiwan during my service, it's exciting to know I could serve anywhere in the world with our Foreign Service.”

The goal of the Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs fellowship program is to attract outstanding students who enroll in two-year master's degree programs in public policy, international affairs, public administration, or academic fields such as business, economics, political science, sociology, or foreign languages, who have an interest in pursuing a career with the Department of State. As a condition for receiving the fellowship, LeBlanc-Hadley will serve in the U.S. Foreign Service for a minimum of three years following her graduation from MIIS.

In addition to merit scholarships to cover tuition and fees, Hadley and LeBlanc-Hadley were both awarded full fellowships by MIIS to attend the Middlebury College Chinese School in summer 2010. The competitive fellowships cover tuition, fees, housing and food. The college's language schools are renowned for their intensive study of foreign languages in combination with their enforcement of a “language pledge,” which requires students to study and speak 24 hours a day exclusively in the language of the school. As participants in the Chinese School, Hadley and LeBlanc-Hadley will receive an academic year's worth of undergraduate instruction in Chinese for successful completion of the program.

“It was very important to me that I not only study international trade policy in an academically challenging program, but that I also attend a program that will help me gain the practical skills necessary to work effectively in an international career,” Hadley said. “Although some graduate programs in this field require their students to have advanced foreign language skills, MIIS is unique insofar that it not only requires students to have advanced proficiency, but also to continue studying their foreign language in a professionally relevant context during the program.”
Dr. Donald G. McCloud, dean of the Haenicke Institute for Global Education and director of the Global and International Studies undergraduate major program, said Hadley and LeBlanc-Hadley are among the very top of new undergraduates nationwide.

“Jaime and Dan have found in our global studies program a broadly challenging curriculum that along with their studies has introduced them to the vast complexity of our contemporary world,” McCloud said. “They, of course, have accepted the challenges and actually done the work. Their very impressive fellowship awards were won against national competition, and WMU should justly be proud of Jaime and Dan’s accomplishments.”

Both Hadley and LeBlanc-Hadley gained professional experience working at WMU’s Haenicke Institute for Global Education during the 2009-2010 academic year: LeBlanc-Hadley served as the assistant for International Institutes and Centers and played an integral role in launching the Confucius Institute at WMU; Hadley provided administrative support for the institute’s senior management.

Their commitment to their work in the classroom, as well as in the office, was witnessed many times over by Dr. Xiaojun Wang, Confucius Institute director and professor and head of WMU’s Chinese language program.

“I have seen how diligently Jaime and Dan are learning Chinese language and culture,” Wang said. “Not only am I proud of their achievements, but I am also very happy to see the good examples that they set up for our students at WMU. Learning Chinese is a big challenge for most American college students. However, where there is a will, there is a way. I believe that constant dripping water can wear away a stone and their successful story is just beginning.”

CELCIS updates name and website

CELCIS is now the The Center for English Language and Culture for International Students
Instead of the beaches of Cancun or Cozumel, 45 WMU international students traveled to Washington D.C. for spring break February 28 to March 5 on a trip planned by the International Programming Office.

The group departed Kalamazoo in a tour bus at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, February 28 and arrived in D.C. that evening. The bus stopped about every two hours, giving the students the opportunity to set their feet down in each of the states they traveled through to reach the nation’s capital. Carolyn Mack, tour guide for the trip, presented a brief history of each area before every stop.

The group toured many of the city’s most famous sites, including the White House, the Capitol, the Supreme Court, and Arlington National Cemetery. A bonus of their visit to the Supreme Court was that the students had the opportunity to sit in and listen to a Supreme Court trial underway.

“I had a great time during the Washington D.C. trip,” said Marlies Hagge, a senior from Germany majoring in general business. “I met so many new people, made new friends and just loved our group spirit. We visited the Capitol and the White House, and many of the memorials in the city. The free days ended up to be the best days of the trip. A very diverse group of us from France, Germany, Iran, Afghanistan and the Dominican Republic decided to visit the National Gallery of Art. It’s one of the many free museums in town; we spent some amazing hours viewing all the wonderful art in that gallery."

The group also enjoyed a D.C. illuminated tour, which is done after dark and features many of the monuments, buildings and memorials. The drive-by tour included the 9-11 Memorial at the...
Pentagon, United States Navy Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial, Iwo Jima Memorial, WWII Memorial, Kennedy Center, the Capitol and the White House.

On day three, the students took a walking tour through the Washington monument, Embassy Row, the National Cathedral and other memorials. The group also visited the Islamic Center, where they listened to a presentation on Islam.

“Being my first time in Washington D.C., even four whole days were not enough to explore the city,” said Andrew Khaminwa, a junior from Kenya majoring in aeronautical engineering. “The Smithsonian Institution hosts a vast well of knowledge from history to current affairs in its museums. I was particularly moved by the Holocaust Museum, which bluntly and in detail gave me a picture of what took place in Germany and other parts of the world during the last century. The Washington Monument and the memorials all give an original and unique touch to the city that puts it in a class of its own. The White House tour and the Supreme Court and the Capitol were great places to visit, giving me an opportunity to learn more about the history of the U.S.”

Day four was a free day; students visited to Chinatown, Georgetown and shopping malls, then most of the group met up for dinner at the Hard Rock Café.

“The Indonesian students really enjoyed the D.C. trip,” said William Mamudi, a doctoral candidate from Indonesian. “The capital city of the USA is indeed one of the most beautiful places I have ever visited so far. Also, I made new friends throughout this trip.”

On their final day in D.C the group visited the White House; The students were very excited about this tour; many of them noted that visiting the presidential residence is not allowed in their homelands.

“I think the trip was really instructive and educational, Said Alberto Rivera, a master’s student in engineering management from the Dominican Republic. “The logistics of the trip were really well coordinated; everything was planned on a timely basis. I also think we visited the most important places in Washington in a short period of time. We did lots of thing for little money.”

Story by Sonnie Farmer
Merengue dancing, fashion shows and mouth-watering exotic dishes, like crepes and corroke, are just a few samplings of the cultural and culinary delights presented at Western Michigan University's 21st International Festival held March 21 in the Bernhard Center's East Ballroom.

More than 3,000 people attended the annual event, which showcases the cultural diversity of WMU's campus community for the Kalamazoo community and beyond. Fifteen registered student organizations took part in this year's event, enlisting 75 volunteers, some as early as fall semester to begin planning.

"International Festival is such a rare occasion because Americans can show up at an event and experience 15 cultures in a single afternoon," said Nick DiFranco, chair of International Festival. "The festival takes six months to plan and involves many, many volunteers who make food, create booth displays, or participate in the fashion and cultural entertainment that takes place on the main stage throughout the festival."

The Japan Club, whipped up delicacies such as curry rice, corokke—fried potato balls with onions, ground beef and eggs—as well as crepes.

The Saudi Arabian Student Association booth was packed with a crowd waiting to purchase ma'asoub, which is sweet bread made with unsalted butter and banana topped with white cream, cheese or honey. Other big hits were the balela, which is chick peas served with pickled cucumber, dill and mint, and a delicacy made from fried potatoes and ground lamb topped with egg and fresh parsley.

The Russian Club featured bylini, thin crepes filled with strawberry marmalade, then sprinkled with powdered sugar. Another sweet treat enjoyed by attendees was the pryaninki, a glazed sugar cookie with a hint of citrus flavor, all of which were served with traditional Russian tea.

The Indian Student Association served up spicy chicken tikka masala, which is grilled chicken served with rice, chutney, and onion rings. Corn chaat is an Indian snack made with corn, red pepper and tomatoes. Dessert was kulfi, a famous Indian ice cream dessert served with almonds.
On the main stage, 12 performances were showcased during the four-hour festival. The Dominican Student Association wooed the crowd with folk dance performances of the bachata and merengue. Egyptian Cabaret and American Tribal Style Dance were presented by the Middle Eastern Dance Club. The Indian Student Association presented one of their many traditional dances, called the “Dances of the Holi Festival.”

First prize in the competition for “Best Booth,” went to the Malaysian Students’ Association, which was awarded $100 and a commemorative plaque from the Haenicke Institute for Global Education. The Dominican Student Organization and the Western Michigan Iranian Community took second and third place in the competition.

DiFranco said the RSO booths were judged by WMU President Dr. John M. Dunn, Bill Woods, associate dean of the Haenicke Institute, Cathleen Fuller, manager for international degree and articulation partnerships, and three anonymous judges.

“The International Festival competition has always been a huge favorite among the international students at Western Michigan University,” said MASA’s Vice President Cheryl Lim, participating in her fourth festival. “It is amazing to know experience that our efforts, teamwork and sacrifices paid off by winning the best booth award at International Festival 2010. Our student organization is able to promote Malaysia through International Festival with the opportunity to display and serve our food, traditional clothes, traditional dances, instruments and more. Our booth also included freebies for children and people of all ages and lots of information about Malaysia.”

International Festival was organized by the International Program Council and the Campus Activities Board. Sponsors of the event were WMU’s Graduate Student Advisory Committee, Haenicke Institute for Global Education, University Cultural Events Committee, and the Western Student Association.

Story by Afina Malek
Hollywood in the limelight at the 2010 International Ball

More than 180 WMU students, staff and faculty donned their best evening wear April 10 to “tear up the rug” at the 2010 International Ball hosted by the International Programming Office.

Participants received a red-carpet welcome and a four-course meal before taking to the dance floor for ballroom dancing instruction. A professional photographer was available to ensure everyone had a keepsake photo of the event.

This formal gala is a year-end celebration hosted near the end of the spring semester, said Maran Subramain, a planner for the event and a doctoral research assistant at the Haenicke Institute for Global Education. “International Ball was a great opportunity to dress up, dance and have some fun at the end of the academic year,” Subramain said.

Event photo gallery
Born to a Malaysian father and a Singaporean mother, one might think that Dawn Chan, a 2008 graduate of Western Michigan University, had much exposure to the Chinese language growing up in Malaysia. However, English is the language her parents taught her as her first language and it wasn’t until college that she began studying Chinese.

Though she was born in Houston, Texas, Chan grew up in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She said her parents occasionally scolded her and her brother in Cantonese, but they were insistent that their children learn English as their first language.

Considering that Chan grew up in a multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual society in Kuala Lumpur, it wouldn’t be surprising if Chan knew a second, if not third language, but her lexicon was limited to English until she decided to minor in Chinese to meet degree requirements in college. That decision has become an important catalyst for her career prospects.

Chan began her college career in January 2005 at Sunway University College in Malaysia, then decided to transfer to a business school in the United States in August 2006.

"The initial thought of studying Chinese struck me when I was thinking about transferring from Sunway to random schools in the U.S.,” Chan said. “I noticed that several of the business schools required a minor in a foreign language as a graduation requirement.”

So she returned to Houston and enrolled at the University of Houston, where she signed up for her first Chinese class. After a semester in Houston, Chan decided to transfer to Western
Michigan University, which offered a direct-transfer program.

"I got to Western and decided it would only make sense to continue with my Chinese language studies," she said. "I found myself in junior-level classes, being the only student in class who had never set foot in China; I started itching more and more to visit China. Acknowledging after about two years of Chinese classes that my Chinese was probably not good enough to communicate effectively, I decided it was time to head over to China for a year, where I’d be forced to speak Chinese all the time. When I was about to graduate in 2008, my Chinese teachers at WMU encouraged me to apply for any available scholarships to study in China. After I received notice that I had been awarded the President's Scholarship for Study Abroad, I got serious about heading over to China to further study the language."

Because she had already graduated by the time she finalized her decision to study abroad, Chan had to re-enroll at WMU. She said the persistence of her professors, the scholarship, and her irresistible urge to live in China are what pushed her to complete the paperwork necessary to study abroad, with the assistance of staff at the Haenicke Institute for Global Education.

When Chan arrived at the Beijing Language and Culture University in February 2009 and admits she initially felt confused and uncomfortable. One of five new students in a class of 17, most of the class had formed bonds from the semester before and she quickly learned that breaking the ice in a language in which she wasn't fluent was rough.

"I started as the weakest person in class, very obviously, but with no job to distract me from studying and having to use Chinese everywhere I went; I progressed fast," Chan said.

Her teachers and fellow students were patient, and now she jokes that due to her Asian appearance and her progress in learning Chinese, she blends in with the locals.

Visiting the Summer Palace

Chan at the entrance to Yuan Ming Yuan Ruins
“A lot of people actually are surprised when I say I’m not from China,” Chan said. “It gives me an indescribable feeling—pride and satisfaction put together, but so much more!”

Chan said she never imagined she would be able to speak Chinese so well in her lifetime, let alone after living one year in Beijing. “I've been catching myself thinking harder about how to construct sentences in English than I have to in Chinese,” she said.

Her Chinese language skills have improved so greatly she was offered a job working in Beijing as a marketing coordinator/account manager position for POSH, an alliance of Herman Miller, which manufactures office furniture and equipment. “The interview was conducted completely in Chinese, to my surprise, but I had no problems with the language” Chan said. “I decided not to take the job because it would take an hour and a half to get to work every day. I had just extended a student visa, and changing it again would likely lead to problems.”

Chan also visited the Kungfu School in Henan Province

Uncertain that she was ready to enter the Chinese workforce, Chan enrolled at the Global Village School, a small language training school near BLCU. She expects to begin looking for work again in a few months and has no plans to leave China anytime soon.

"The fact that cost of living is cheap is a great part about living in China," she said. “Little things add up a lot, like riding an electricity-powered bicycle everywhere I need to go, getting a "blind man massage," where the masseur is actually blind, and having just about every head turn back
to see that me, a Chinese-looking person who can speak English fluently! Ultimately, I do want to go back to the U.S., but not right now. I've come to realize how valuable a person can be in China who speaks both English and Chinese well, and I want to take advantage of it! I guess my plan to head home for grad school needs to be put on hold for a few years, but hey, I'm pretty sure this will be worth the while."

**Story by Nate Coe**

![WMU students with Chan at China's Olympic Stadium, the Bird's Nest](image)

**WMU music professor discovers database of rare Russian viola sonatas**

The May/June issue of Encore magazine includes a feature article about WMU Professor Igor Fedotov, who recently discovered a database of rare Russian viola sonata.

Read the story in [Encore online](#)