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Michigan Teachers Learn their Global ABCs

*Intensive workshop sponsored by U-M's Center for Chinese Studies
addresses new state social studies standards*

ANN ARBOR, MICH., May 26, 2009—Last weekend, middle and high school teachers from southeast Michigan completed the second of a two-part University of Michigan workshop focused on understanding China's history, politics and culture and addressing the new Michigan teaching standards for world history.

Organized by Mary Gallagher, director of the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan International Institute and associate professor of political science, the workshop's presenters helped teachers break free from conventional perceptions of China. Speakers also guided teachers into thinking about ways to incorporate a global perspective into their social studies instruction.

"Teachers not only need knowledge of regions but also how these regions 'fit' in the larger global or human story," said Robert Bain, workshop presenter and associate professor of history and social science education at U-M's School of Education. "The challenge is to help teachers learn to see the global picture without losing sight of the familiar. Workshops such as these help teachers see the familiar in a new light while enhancing their knowledge in history and cultural studies."

Topics ranged from the Opium War and political reform to gender issues and the arts. Speakers also provided resources to help teachers develop world history curriculum for their classrooms. The content of the presentations will be adapted for classroom use among 2,600 middle and high school students statewide.

"I can immediately integrate the material presented into my work on China," said Larry Price, a high school teacher at Starkweather Alternative, Plymouth-Canton Schools. "We saw very high quality material and research, much of which is ready to use in a high school classroom."

In addition to Gallagher and Bain, presenters included Martin Powers, U-M professor of Chinese art and culture; Alex Day, assistant professor of history at Wayne State University; Wang Zheng, U-M associate professor of women's studies and history; and Ross Dunn, curriculum specialist on world history from San Diego State University. Graduate students Lijing Yang, Liying Rong, and Deng Feng from U-M's School of Education also contributed.

The workshop was supported by the National Committee on United States-China Relations, Title VI funds from the U.S. Department of Education, and the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan International Institute.

Center for Chinese Studies

The Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan was founded in 1961 and has maintained its leading position among centers nationwide for more than 40 years. Situated within the International Institute, the Center for Chinese Studies provides students, specialists, and the public at large with expert resources and a deeper understanding of contemporary and historical issues related to China. For more information, visit www.ii.umich.edu/ccs.

University of Michigan International Institute

The University of Michigan International Institute houses 18 centers and programs focused on world regions and global themes. The institute develops and supports international teaching, research, and public affairs programs to promote global understanding across the campus and to build connections with intellectuals and institutions worldwide. For more information, visit www.ii.umich.edu.

Captions:

CCS Teacher Workshop—Marty Powers

Marty Powers, U-M professor of Chinese art and culture, explains China Mirror, an online resource for teachers that uses Chinese objects to explore topics important in social studies and humanities courses. For more information, visit www.lsa.umich.edu/chinamirror.

CCS Teacher Workshop—Steve Boyce

Steve Boyce, world history teacher at Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor, comments during a workshop for middle and high school teachers hosted by the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan International Institute.

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