Challenges and Rewards of Online Teaching in China and the Path Forward

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Now for Our Afternoon Exercises
Introduction

- Binghamton University Early Readiness Program
- Zhenjiang International School
- Site visit
- Teaching Assistant
Academic Considerations

• Education in China
• Areas of Study
• English Language Skills
• Classroom Participation
• Academic Integrity
• Academic Success
Course and Teaching Method

- World Regional Geography
- Lectures on iTunesU
- Assignments and weekly quizzes on Black Board
- Twice per week discussion sessions via Webex
Teaching Assistant

• Spent the semester in Zhenjiang
• Tutored students in geography
• Worked with students on their English speaking and writing skills
• Socialization
Teaching Assistant

- Language barrier
- Cultural differences
- Learning style differences
- Teacher expectations
Monitor and Adjust

• Age of students and cognitive ability
  – *Select an economic, political, or cultural activity in your city and discuss how it has been influenced by globalization.*

• Students do not voluntarily participate in class discussions
  – Call on them first and then ask question.

• Extra credit opportunity at the end of the semester
Monitor and Adjust

• Webex
  – Each student sat a computer monitor with a webcam and microphone
  – Made it difficult to monitor the classroom
  – Students could use the chat feature to ask for clarification or to communicate privately
  – Sometimes did not work very well
The Path Forward

- Have Chinese students and Binghamton students enrolled in the course
  - Hybrid course
    - Course materials available online
    - Meet twice per week for discussion
  - Collaborate on projects
    - For example, compare and contrast urban space
The Path Forward

• Newing College’s International Learning Community
  – Chinese students housed in Delaware Hall (break housing)
  – RAs and Pro Staff trained for the needs of international students
  – Participants in the Leadership Program can serve as mentors (first year)
  – Subsequent years – Binghamton students enrolled in World Regional Geography will serve as mentors
The Path Forward

• Newing College’s International Learning Community
  – A section of ESL 210 will be offered for Newing International Students
  – Through the Leadership Program we will encourage Newing residents to be native speaking partners with our International Students.
  – We will also encourage our International Students to participate in the Newing Leadership Program during their sophomore year to become more integrated into the campus community.
The Path Forward

• Benefits
  – The “hybrid classroom” will help to develop greater critical and analytical thinking skills for both groups of students.
  – Both groups of students will internationalize their experience through their interactions.
  – There will be greater cultural understanding between the two groups of students.
The Path Forward

• Benefits
  – Both groups of students will further develop their critical and analytical thinking skills by be exposed to each other’s perspectives on issues of global and regional importance.
  – The ZIS students will potentially improve their English language skills through their interactions with Binghamton students.
  – The ZIS students may be more inclined to apply to, and attend Binghamton University since they will have a greater connection to the school.
Conclusions

• Cultural differences
• Learning style differences
• Technology issues
• Socialization
• Academic and social challenges for Chinese students in U.S.