

LIBERAL STUDIES PROPOSAL
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO
EXPERIENTIAL STUDIES IN CHINESE CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

Fall 2000

Applicant: Steven Andrew Martin

Advisor: Hsueh-Li Cheng, PhD

Liberal Studies coordinator: Jackie Pualani Johnson, MA

Degree title: Experiential Studies in Chinese Culture and Philosophy

Dear Committee,

I have recently completed my Associate of Arts degree at the Hawaii Community College. To date, I have earned 27 upper-division credits with University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH) and have maintained a GPA of approximately 3.6. I have participated in six U.S. university accredited study abroad programs and received good grades. Three study abroad programs took place in China with UHH and Peking University (PKU). Program dates encompassed summers of 1995, 1997, and 2000, allowing time to lend meaning and direction for the creation of a Liberal Studies proposal with UHH.

Other study abroad programs that I have completed include: the University of Nevada at Reno's program in Costa Rica, 1996 (Spanish language and Central American history); the School for International Training's undergraduate semester in Cape Town, South Africa, 1997 (Xhosa language, Islamic studies, social sciences, and history); and the St. Bonaventure University undergraduate semester in Seville, Spain, 1998 (Spanish language, culture, and history).

From a global perspective, I have chosen Chinese culture and philosophy as my field of specialization and the Liberal Studies proposal. I base this decision on personal experience, academic insight, and the passion gained through studying abroad with UHH at PKU. Framed as an 'experiential study', this study proposal is a culmination of primary research and personal connection.

Throughout three study abroad programs in China with UHH, and one independent project in Tibet (Rels 399), as well as four other trips to Asian areas (Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, and Japan), I have experienced the intrinsic connection between China and other Asian cultures and philosophies. This Liberal Studies proposal serves to document my first-hand experience in contemporary China into academic-style travel journals and through personal interviews. I will produce a realistic and lasting impression of language, culture, and history in my reports and transcend the impressions learned from printed materials, today's media reports, and the traditional classroom experience.

The UHH study abroad program at PKU forms the core of this proposal. I will attend two summer programs (2001 and 2002) and conduct independent study on the Silk Road. My research will include lectures and personal interviews at PKU and at select sites in Western China, Pakistan, and India.

While the chance to meet and discuss both historic and contemporary issues with Beijing University professors is peculiar and profound in experience, it is important to recognize many resources of philosophical insight at the institution, including a wide range of faculty members, students, and campus life. Albeit only two credits are offered from the PKU curriculum in a single summer session, the experience creates profound understanding in eastern thought and culture.

It is now possible to take up to 12 credits in one summer session with UHH, after which students have several months to fulfill reading and writing requirements (normally, at least one course is designated as writing intensive). First-hand experience promotes the inspiration to embellish journals with both truism and academic research. The program has a scholarly approach, offering special lectures at academic institutions, such as the prominent Nanjing University in Nanjing and Hunan University in Changsha (adjacent to the 1,000-year-old Yellow Academy). Foreign academic institutions contacted during the UHH program provide a remarkable resource for my studies and intellectual pursuits; while field research has led to discoveries with philosophical implications, such as *Hemudu*¹ ruins in South China and *Ta Wen Kou*² on the North China Plain, which dignify an already time-honored Chinese cultural and philosophical development.

Specifically, I propose to attend lectures scheduled at PKU in May 2001, travel on the Silk Road with the UHH Chinese Culture Study Program during summer 2001, and enroll for 10 upper-division credits with UHH. Hsueh-Li Cheng, Ph.D., has advised my registration in the following summer classes: Phil 494 (3 credits); Phil 499 (1 credit); Rels 394 (3 credits); and Phil 494D (3

credits). The academic focus of the 2001 program is Western China, China's largest province, especially as it relates to the Silk Road, the great power line of culture, philosophy, religion, and economics. The Silk Road was the road for Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and much more to enter China. Although Buddhism flourished along the Silk Road for more than a millennium, today the soul of Xingjiang is undeniably Muslim (there are 21,000 mosques in China). Herein, although my research on the Silk Road is to gain first-hand experience with the introduction of Buddhism from India, I will conduct personal interviews in Islamic Studies.

Finally, I propose to attend UHH during the Fall semester 2001 and complete 6 upper-division credits: Phil 300 (3 credits), and Rels 430 (3 credits). My combined credits at the end of the Fall 2001 term will total 123, with 45 upper-division credits specific to my Liberal Studies major in Chinese culture and philosophy. In order to complete my studies, I plan to return to PKU in the summer of 2002 to present my finding for clarification.

Please allow me the opportunity to return to China and complete my Liberal Studies education in Chinese culture and philosophy, as such an opportunity would add wondrous insight to my long-range goals of graduate school, teaching, and publishing my research papers, photo-journals, and journal articles.

I appreciate your consideration of my proposal.

Sincerely,
Steven Andrew Martin

Advisor:
Hsueh-Li Cheng, Ph.D

Coordinator:
Jackie Pualani Johnson

Liberal Studies
Committee:

¹ According to Hsueh-Li Cheng, Ph.D., the *Hemudu* civilization was buried under a massive 7,000-year-old mudslide.

² This is the 6,000-year-old civilization site near the hometown of Confucius and Mt. Tai Shan visited by UHH students in summer 1997.

UH HILO COURSES COMPLETED TOWARD MAJOR

DATE COMPLETED	NUMBER	TITLE	CREDITS	GRADE
1995	IS 393 P Peoples Republic of China	Interdisciplinary Studies Foreign Field Experience	4	A
1997	REL 494	Special Topics in Religious Studies	3 Writing Intensive	A
1997	REL 499	Directed Studies	1	A
2000	IS 393 P Peoples Republic of China	Interdisciplinary Studies Foreign Field Experience	4 Writing Intensive	A
2000	REL 399	Directed Studies	3	A-
2000	PHIL 399	Directed Studies	3	A
2001	PHIL 301	History of Chinese Philosophy	3	A

1995	Beijing University	Chinese Culture and Philosophy	2	Credit Transfer
1997	Beijing University	Chinese Culture and Philosophy	2	Credit Transfer
2000	Beijing University	Chinese Culture and Philosophy	2	Credit Transfer

UHH COURSES TO BE COMPLETED

Summer 2001	PHIL 494	Phil/Soc/Econ Silk Road	3	I
Summer 2001	PHIL 499	Directed Studies	1	I
Summer 2001	REL 394	Culture/Religion West China	3	I
Summer 2001	PHIL494 D	Geographic China Phil	3	I
Fall 2001	PHIL 300	History of Indian Philosophy	3	
Fall 2001	REL 430	Philosophy of Zen	3	

Summer 2001	Beijing University	Chinese Culture and Philosophy	2	Credit Transfer
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TOTAL UHH CREDITS COMPLETED/PROPOSED TOWARD MAJOR: 45