

## Transnational Education Case Studies (Track 8.1)

**TITLE: Opportunities and challenges associated with transnational educational partnerships in China: An experiential account**

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### ◆ Outline of presentation

(not a prescription but offering a general qualitative framework for consideration)

- Introduction: Why Transnational? / Why China?
- **Zhengzhou University / University of Wollongong insights** into transnational education partnerships: prerequisites required and measures used to develop and expand these partnerships
- Case study including **the partners motivation / perspective**
- Concluding reflections



## Introduction:

### ◆ Why transnational education programs?:

– Helps to create and maintain global networks and transferable skills via:

- Partnering with like minded institutions overseas:

- has the potential to increase an institutions profile and enhance its reputation and relevance in strategically important regions of the world;

### ◆ the development of ‘niche’ transnational education programs also allow the opportunity to:

– establish broader linkages with relevant academic institutions, professional and government bodies in the country of engagement:

- Which inadvertently enhances graduates outcomes (career potential);



## Introduction:

### ◆ Why transnational education programs? (continued):

- Internationalising staff at both institutions and enriching their teaching experience (capacity building);
  - Also importantly enriching the learning experience for all students across all campuses via student exchange/study abroad, as well as opportunities for internships;



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### ◆ Why China?

- Chinese Universities possess a strong history of collaboration with local industry as a source of new technology and staff acquisition (for a detailed analysis see Liu & Jiang, 2000):
  - In the last few years, the Chinese government has also attached greater importance to the role of the transfer of technology from research institutions to industry in economic development (project '211' , and '985' Universities - Phase III in 2008);
  - In recent years, more and more Chinese universities with govt. support have begun to establish high technology companies jointly with enterprises (R&D Invest. in 2006 was 300 billion RMB, 1.42% of GDP and 5<sup>th</sup> largest worldwide\*) :
    - Generally, enterprises input capital (210 billion) while Universities (27 billion) and Research Institutes (52billion) invest in technology and become a shareholder by converting technology into capital.

\* Ministry of Science & Technology, PR China, For a good summary see Weiping Wu, Cultivating Research Universities & Industrial Linkages in China,

2006.



## Case Study: China-Australia Transnational Education Collaboration

- ◆ **Outcome:** China Ministry of Education approved education program
- ◆ **Partners:** Zhengzhou University (ZZU) (Zhengzhou, Henan Province) + University of Wollongong (UOW) (Wollongong, Australia)
- ◆ **Engagement undertaken:**
  - UOW teaching 10 of its subjects in English into the ZZU bachelor Engineering programs;
  - ZZU students have the option of articulating at different stages of their degree into the equivalent UOW bachelor Engineering programs and/or progressing to a relevant UOW coursework masters programs;
  - Collaborative research between staff of both Schools, that has led to:
    - Joint research publications; and
    - Successful joint research funding proposals to the relative Government bodies of each country;
  - China Scholarship Council agreement allowing for high quality ZZU PhD students to complete their doctorate at UOW.



## Case Study: China-Australia Transnational Education Collaboration

### ◆ Zhengzhou University's motives for engagement with UOW:

- ‘To effectively compete with existing national as well as international competitors who have moved into China’ and ‘to maintain competitive position in the province’;
- UOW international reputation and track record of successful engagement in China;
- Trust of partner which is reinforced by UOW's relationship with other leading Chinese institutions;
- Enhancement of academic programs by having international staff teach directly into the program and giving students a chance to gain a broader perspective on their studies
- UOW's reputation for working with industry providing scope/potential for research and development (R&D):
  - complementary technological capabilities.



## Case Study: China-Australia Transnational Education Collaboration

### ◆ University of Wollongong's motives for engagement with ZZU:

- 'To effectively compete with existing national as well as international competitors who have moved into China' and 'to maintain and enrich its reputation of a University of high level teaching and research';
- Respect and trust of partner developed via long-term research collaboration;
- Complementary technological capabilities;
- Ability of the partner to enhance UOW students study options overseas;
- Increase flows of quality coursework and research students from ZZU to UOW;
- Enhancement of academic staffs international engagement;
- Opportunity via the partner to work with industry providing scope/potential for enhanced research and development grants.



## Case Study One: China

### ◆ 'Pressure points':

- Balancing each partner's association with other Universities in the same country;
- Need to realistically ascertain your own unique value proposition (distinctive competencies) to ensure a sustainable competitive advantage in the program offerings;
- Ability to service new requests (resourcing implications) from partner in a time-frame which is suitable and achievable by both parties (governance / resourcing / operational / financial / and administrative scope:
  - Perennial challenge is to react and harness the institutions strengths in a time frame ('real-time') and in a way acceptable to the partner;
- Inability to utilise academic staff expertise outside of their 'specific' interest;



## Case Study One: China

### ◆ 'Pressure points' (continued):

- Research / commercialisation of intellectual property is a complex and drawn out process with often delays in seeing tangible benefits.
- The ability of each University to harness (bring together) it's broad areas of expertise into a program that is beneficial to students that blends the strengths and experience of academic staff from two academic institutions;
- Access to a stream of quality staff who have international relevance and are motivated to teach in an overseas location:
  - Ability of the University to 'enthuse' its high quality teaching and research staff when they are already time constrained.



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### ◆ **Concluding reflections:**

- Imperative to have a comprehensive understanding of the country you are interested in engaging with; together with the requisite on the ground connections and support:
  - How you process and manage such connections / requests is critical to finding opportunity;
  - Strive for deep and long-term collaboration;
  - Look for opportunities to value add to the collaboration;
  - Leveraging / utilisation of staff with in-country expertise, plus research publications and conference attendance helps to build an international profile and networks that can assist (create an avenue) for engagement (developing a cohort of ‘practitioners’ of applied research’)



## Public – Private Partnerships in Transnational Education

### ◆ Concluding reflections

- Strong domestic competition in China has a bearing on the relative importance of the motivations for alliance formation and partner selection criteria:
  - You need to be operating and engaging within this changing environment;
- Chinese institutions are strongly motivated to form international partnerships in order to build capacity and also effectively maintain competitive advantage in the market; confirming conclusions reached by a comprehensive study undertaken by (Dong & Glaister, 2006);
- Solid procedures must be in place and each party is aware of its roles within the collaboration;



## Public – Private Partnerships in Transnational Education

### ◆ Concluding reflections:

- Working with any foreign institution requires patience and support;
- Nevertheless, if successfully delivered such programs have the ability to increase the reputation of the institutions both within their own country and internationally:
  - your partner can become your advocate for further opportunities within the country including:
    - Forging strategic alliances with other academic institutions can assist / increase your level of engagement with industry and government



## Public – Private Partnerships in Transnational Education

### ◆ Concluding reflections:

- The way such partnerships are managed is essential to their success;
  - Strong management team supported by flexible contractual templates;
  - High quality service is essential;
  - Consistent entrance standards and realistic price setting for program delivery (keep in mind where you are working);
  - Ease of interaction / communication is vital;
  - Flexibility; fast turn around; responsiveness.

