

One of the best faculties and strongest programs on modern Chinese society has been developed at UCSD

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One of the best faculties and strongest programs on modern Chinese society now available has been developed on the San Diego campus of the University of California.

According to Dr. Paul Pickowicz, assistant professor of history and new chairman of the Chinese Studies Program, Chinese studies is probably one of the lesser known strengths of the UC San Diego campus. However, the program now boasts nine faculty members on its committee - two historians, an anthropologist, a political scientist, two linguists, a sociologist and one faculty member from the literature department and one from the drama department.

"When I came to the San Diego campus in 1973, China was only marginally important," Pickowicz said, "but at the moment there is probably the greatest amount of academic interest. Universities are beginning to open up exchange relations with China.

"In fact, a very important step will be taken in developing our program when Chancellor William McElroy pays an official visit to China in mid-September to work out an exchange program between UC San Diego and Chungking University in Szechuan," Pickowicz said.

"At the moment our Chinese Studies Program consists of several parts," Pickowicz explained. "Our basic program is an undergraduate major. It's possible for any student on campus to major in Chinese studies. We expect them to take two years of Chinese language as well as courses in political science, Chinese history, anthropology and sociology to get a feeling for the whole spectrum.

"Another thing available to all our students, both undergraduate and graduate, is the opportunity to study abroad," said Pickowicz, a former assistant director of UC's Education Abroad Program in Hong Kong. "The EAP permits the students to live abroad in a Chinese environment and get full credit back here toward their major."

The Chinese studies major and general interest in courses about China is growing on campus.

"We have about 20 students in first year Chinese, and my class in history this spring has around 80 students who are simply interested in Chinese history because China is in the news," Pickowicz said.

The young historian, who has made several trips to the People's Republic of China himself, said that plans were under way to send 18 to 20 undergraduates from the whole UC system to study language in Peking "probably by next year."

Pickowicz also disclosed that other plans for the program were in the works.

"Several of us who are interested in contemporary Chinese society are putting forward proposals of our own to go to China to do field research in the arts, linguistics and rural sociology," he said.

"One of our goals for the faculty in the program is for some cooperative research efforts in China. Another goal is to take students for summer study tours, and a third goal is to arrange a language exchange so that we provide language training for Chinese students coming here and we send our students to sister universities in China for training," Pickowicz said.

According to Pickowicz, a Chinese studies major is not just preparation for graduate school but may offer job possibilities in business where contacts between the United States and China are increasing and also in government service where there will be an ongoing need for trained specialists with knowledge of China.

Other faculty members of the Chinese Studies Program are: Matthew Y. Chen, linguistics; Ping C. Hu, Chinese; David K. Jordan, anthropology; Richard P. Madsen, sociology; Thomas A. Metzger, history; Susan L. Shirk, political science; Yen Lu Wong, drama, and Wai-Lim Yip, literature.

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