

The Alliance to Advance Liberal Arts Colleges Workshop Proposal

**Research and Teaching on Science, Medicine, and Technology in China and the Sinophone**

**Description of the Workshop**

China is the world's largest economy. Central to such growth is the knowledge that China drew on from its indigenous practices of science, medicine, and technology, and the ability of its people to appropriate and adapt such knowledge from the West. China also faces enormous challenges in providing health care to its population. The migration of millions of Chinese people from China to countries abroad in the nineteenth and twentieth century have attracted the attention of scholars of science, medicine, and technology. An estimated forty million people of Chinese descent live abroad, and are considered by scholars either as Overseas Chinese or members of the Sinophone. Many of them became physicians, medical personnel, entrepreneurs, technologists, among other occupations. Some chose to develop their interests and deploy their expertise in science, medicine, and technology (SMT) in their new host countries in the Americas, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, while others chose to bring such expertise and knowledge to mainland China. These members of the diaspora are often subjected to stereotypical representations by other races in their host societies, even as they sought actively to challenge such ideas through SMT.

This workshop brings together faculty from liberal arts colleges and universities in considering the importance of SMT in researching and teaching China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Sinophone. In this respect, we will investigate the following:

- (1) What are the different approaches of SMT in these regions, and how do we best leverage on traditional research methods, and new technology to advance a robust research agenda on this topic collaboratively?
- (2) How do we incorporate studies on SMT in the curriculum?
- (3) How can we most effectively share with fellow scholars in our respective community to incorporate SMT in the humanities and social sciences, which would likely have an effect on bolstering students' enrollment in the latter?

The first half of the workshop will involve participants sharing their research on this broadly defined topic. Topics will include the history of wartime Chinese medicine, history of electrification of Chinese industry, history of dreams and psychology in China, history of computers in Taiwan, history of disability studies in Hong Kong, politics of automobile industry in China, anthropology of labor as drug treatment in China, agricultural science in China and Taiwan, science-fiction and realism in Republican China, historical legacies of healthcare in contemporary China, and representation of Asians as human machines in the United States. Research papers will be pre-circulated among the workshop participants. Each member will speak for five to ten minutes about their paper, focusing on methodologies in advancing such a research agenda. A designated commentator will talk for five to ten minutes about each paper. Afterwards, all workshop participants will hold a Q and A. Each session will last for

approximately twenty-five minutes. The goal of each session is to solicit feedback on individual research projects.

The second half of the workshop will involve participants pre-circulating a page of an abbreviated sample syllabus for teaching a class on this topic, with an eye on sharing primary sources for teaching. Each participant will also prepare brief remarks or questions on classroom activities, advising, curriculum design, and student assessments. At the end of this session, participants will achieve the goal of considering and developing key strategies in developing and incorporating SMT in the curriculum.

The outcome and follow-up activity of the workshop is to produce a semi-public or public website on the abstracts of each participants' papers, as well as key strategies and sample sources in teaching SMT in China and the Sinophone in a liberal arts setting.

### **Tentative Schedule (Held at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, March 30, 2018)**

#### **Day 1**

7:00 p.m. Welcome Dinner

#### **Day 2**

7:15 a.m. Breakfast

7:40 a.m. Introduction and Keynote Speech

8:40 a.m. Research Workshop

10:50 a.m. Coffee Break

11:10 a.m. Research Workshop II

12:50 p.m. Lunch / Research Workshop III

2:55 p.m. Teaching Workshop I (Syllabi Workshop)

3:40 p.m. Coffee Break

4:00 p.m. Teaching Workshop II (Pedagogy)

6:00 p.m. Closing Reflections and Post-Workshop Follow-Up

7:00 p.m. Dinner

#### **List of Participants**

#### **AALAC Faculty**

- Wayne Soon, Assistant Professor of History, Vassar College (Workshop Organizer, Primary Liaison)
- Long Bui, Assistant Professor of STS and Sociology, Vassar College (Currently at Wesleyan University but will join Vassar in Fall 2017, Workshop Organizer)
- William D. Johnston, Professor of East Asian History and Science in Society Program, Wesleyan College (Keynote Speaker)
- Angelina Chin, Associate Professor of History, Pomona College

- Suzanne Gottschang, Associate Professor of Anthropology and East Asian Studies, Smith College
- Mingwei Song, Associate Professor of Chinese, Wellesley College
- Yingjia Tan, Assistant Professor of History, Wesleyan College
- Nick Bartlett, Assistant Professor in Contemporary Chinese Culture and Society, Barnard College
- Kerry Ratigan, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Amherst College
- Seung-Youn Oh, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Bryn Mawr College

**Non-AALAC Faculty**

- Brigid Vance, Assistant Professor of History, Lawrence University
- Honghong Tinn, Assistant Professor of History, Earlham College
- James Lin, Assistant Professor of History, University of Washington at Seattle
- David Luesink, Assistant Professor of History, Sacred Heart University