Kennesaw State selected as site for Confucius Institute for Chinese language, culture

April 10, 2008 - PRLog -- Building on more than a decade of partnerships with the People’s Republic of China, Kennesaw State University (KSU) has been selected as one of the newest sites in the United States designated as a Confucius Institute – a Beijing-based project funded by the Chinese government to promote China’s language and culture.

KSU’s institute will operate under an agreement between the university and Yangzhou University in China’s Jiangsu Province. It will offer a range of academic and professional development programs for students, employees and executives of local and regional businesses, schools and community residents. The offerings will include credit and non-credit courses, workshops and seminars covering Chinese language, healing and martial arts, painting, calligraphy, cooking, economy, social development and business.

KSU President Daniel S. Papp traveled to China on Saturday for eight days of visits. While in China, he will visit with the university’s education partners in Shanghai, Nanjing, Yangzhou and Hangzhou, as well as Chinese education officials in Beijing and Zhejiang Province to renew and strengthen relationships.

During the visits, Papp also will finalize and sign agreements with the Beijing-based Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban) (http://www.hanban.org/en_hanban/index.php) and with Yangzhou University (http://www.yzu.edu.cn/english/), an institution of 35,000 students located northwest of Shanghai.

“We are deeply honored to have been selected as only the second site of the Confucius Institute in Georgia,” Papp said. “Having this program on the Kennesaw State University campus will enhance our global connections and position the institution as a leader in education related to China – which is extremely vital as this important country enhances its standing as a world power.”

Expanding relations with China

Kennesaw State University’s Confucius Institute is the latest in a string of initiatives the university has undertaken to achieve strategic goals related to global learning and public service.

Papp, an international affairs expert, has spearheaded the university’s drive to expand its relationships with China since becoming president in 2006. His trip follows on the heels of Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue’s mission to China April 1-4 to position the state as a major commercial partner with China.

Two KSU faculty members — Sheb True, associate dean of graduate programs at the Coles College of Business, and Stella Xu, an adjunct professor of management and entrepreneurship — traveled in Gov. Perdue’s economic development mission to China last week. Xu served as Perdue’s interpreter.

“KSU is pursuing the same leadership path to building relationships with China as Gov. Perdue,” Papp said. “Our ties to China span many years and cut across endeavors throughout the university. These KSU
linkages and relationships are wide and deep. They offer significant benefits to KSU, to the state of Georgia, and to China.”

**Confucius Institute to focus on cultural understanding**

Key goals for the Confucius Institute at KSU are to train Chinese language teachers — in short supply throughout Georgia and the region — and to meet the growing demand of area businesses to learn China’s language, customs and business practices.

“We cannot hope to achieve global cooperation without an earnest and thorough attempt to learn how to communicate with other countries,” said Akanmu Adebayo, executive director of KSU’s Institute for Global Initiatives, which will house the new Institute. “This is how we build better appreciation for the cultural heritage, philosophy and ethics of those with whom we hope to build relationships.”

The Institute is expected to collaborate with a number of KSU initiatives in Asian studies, with China as its central focus. Specifically, five existing academic departments and/or programs at the University will comprise the Institute. These include:

- Chinese language and culture studies, coordinated by the foreign languages department;
- Chinese Proficiency Testing, Bagwell College of Education;
- International Chinese Training Program, Continuing Education;
- China and Asian Studies Minor and Major, the College of Humanities and Social Services’ Interdisciplinary Studies Program; and
- China- and Asia-related programs within other university colleges.

The Confucius Institute’s teaching staff will be drawn from among KSU’s faculty with expertise in Asian studies and affairs, especially the university’s 37 faculty members of Chinese origin.

KSU’s 51 enrolled Chinese students, along with more than 80 other students studying Chinese language at the university, also will assist with language instruction.

**China partnerships and initiatives a KSU tradition**

KSU has established and maintained formal relationships with China since 1989, launched by an agreement with Nanjing Normal University for faculty exchange.

In 1993, KSU became one of five regional training centers in the U.S. approved by the Chinese government to provide short-term professional development to train visiting government and business officials. The center has trained more than 2,000 officials to date.

In addition, more than 70 Chinese city and provincial officials earned Master’s of Public Administration degrees at KSU from 2003 to 2006.

KSU also operates a Chinese government-approved Proficiency Testing Center for the Southeastern region. The center, which grants language certification, has tested the proficiency levels of more than 350 candidates and awarded 61 scholarships since it opened in 2003.

More than 100 KSU students have participated in summer study-abroad programs in China since 1997. The university also maintains student and faculty exchanges with five Chinese universities.
For more information about the Confucius Institute, contact Akanmu Adebayo at aadebayo@kennesaw.edu or 770-423-6336.

To learn more about KSU’s global initiatives, visit: [http://www.kennesaw.edu/globalinstitute/](http://www.kennesaw.edu/globalinstitute/).

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A member of the 35 unit University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State University is a comprehensive, residential institution with a growing student population of more than 20,000 from 132 countries. The third largest university in Georgia, Kennesaw State offers more than 60 graduate and undergraduate degrees, including new doctorates in education and business.

Website: [www.kennesaw.edu](http://www.kennesaw.edu)

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