STUDY ABROAD PROPOSAL
C.V. STARR-MIDDLEBURY/CET PROGRAM IN KUNMING, CHINA
Proposed by the Asian Studies Program
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2nd revision 10-11-13

The Asian Studies Program proposes the addition of a direct-credit study abroad program in Kunming, China. The proposed program is administered by Middlebury Schools Abroad in cooperation with CET Academic Programs (CET). The program would replace the current CET/Middlebury program offered in Hangzhou. This proposal outlines the rationale for establishing such a program for Vanderbilt students and provides information regarding its academic and cultural benefits.

RATIONALE

Since 2007, eighty Vanderbilt students have studied abroad in China through CET. Many of these students have even chosen to study with CET in China two or three times. The enrollment for CET China has grown with each year on record. During this time of expanding interest, however, the Vanderbilt options in China have remained virtually unchanged. The only addition on record occurred in 2008 when GEO added the Shanghai-based CET Chinese Studies & Internship program to meet the emerging fascination with business in China.

Currently, Vanderbilt offers study in Shanghai, Beijing, Harbin, and Hangzhou. We are proposing to phase out the current CET program in Hangzhou and replace it with Kunming. We strongly believe the Kunming program will have more of a draw for our students than Hangzhou. Kunming is the capital of Yunnan province, located in an ethnically diverse area of southwest China, on the border with Vietnam, Laos, and Burma. Away from the densely populated east coast of China, it is situated in the foothills of the Himalayas in a region known for its natural beauty and environmental diversity. The CET program at Kunming takes full advantage of the location, and offers exciting opportunities for students who are interested in exploring anthropology and environmental sciences.

Overall, Vanderbilt’s students have not been as enthusiastic about the Hangzhou semester programs, in part because the curricular focus (culture, arts, and film) replicates some course offerings already available at Vanderbilt, and in part because Hangzhou as a location has not had any particular draw for our students. Replacing the Hangzhou program with the Kunming program would provide another stellar intensive language option, and more importantly, would expand intellectual opportunities in curricular and geographic areas that are of increasing interest to our students. (CET itself has already done some reorganizing between Hangzhou and Kunming: in 2009, CET and Middlebury expanded to Kunming and relocated their Hangzhou summer program there).

The program in Kunming maintains its high commitment to excellence in language teaching, and offers a unique language immersion opportunity in southwest China. While the region is not centrally located, residents of Kunming tend to speak a fairly standard version of Mandarin, making this city a good location for language students to learn outside of the usual “Beijing-Shanghai” corridor. The program, aimed at intermediate- to advanced-level Chinese language learners, builds upon students’ Chinese
foundation while rapidly increasing knowledge of the language and culture. Students take all courses in Chinese, including content-based electives and the unique one-on-one tutorial.

Yunnan University serves as the partner university to the Middlebury-CET program in Kunming. It is centrally located in Kunming’s downtown area, adjacent to the Green Lake and its adjoining park. As a comprehensive university, YNU has programs in most academic disciplines but is particularly recognized for its departments of anthropology and environmental studies.

Program Highlights:

- A semester-long program, with option to extend to a full academic year.
- Intensive language curriculum, conducted entirely in Chinese, that targets the needs of intermediate and advanced Chinese language students
- A one-on-one content-based tutorial, an area studies tutorial pertinent to the host city (Kunming Impressions) and two elective courses
- Direct enrollment and internship options for qualified students who chose to continue a second semester
- The opportunity to live and interact with a Chinese roommate
- Co-curricular activities and field trips, organized and funded by the program, that match individual interests and backgrounds—examples include musical instrument classes, dance lessons and traditional Chinese art studies
- Field trips/excursion each semester to a site such as Xizhou, Luoping, Yuanyang, Jianshui, Fuxian Lake or Ailao Mountain

ACADEMICS

The C.V. Starr-Middlebury China programs, operated in cooperation with CET Academic Programs, combine the best of language learning and Chinese program administration.

The Schools Abroad provide an authentic experience through guided independence, allowing students to immerse themselves as fully as they wish in the host language and culture. Programs vary in nature and in size, though all remain small enough to sustain individual initiative in participants who range from the mildly adventurous to the trailblazer. A Middlebury staff presence provides full in-country academic and personal support.

All program sites offer rigorous language training that aims to improve each of five basic skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing and fluency in cultural knowledge. All instruction is in the host country language and conforms to that country’s educational approach. The challenge, therefore, is more than linguistic. It also involves adjusting to a new way of teaching and learning—an education in itself. Middlebury resident staff can help ease the transition as students navigate unfamiliar educational systems and policies.

Students in the Schools Abroad thrive on the freedom to tailor an authentic experience that is most rewarding to them. They come away not only with superior language proficiency, but with a deeper understanding of themselves and the world. Those who remain for two semesters or do an internship
gain an even greater ability to function in another culture and view their own culture from an entirely
different perspective.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

As per Vanderbilt policy, each student who wishes to participate in the program must have completed at
least two semesters at Vanderbilt, hold a 2.75 GPA, and be in good academic and disciplinary standing.
All applicants must have completed two years of college-level Chinese or the equivalent prior to
departure for the program. Five full semesters is preferred.

Applicants to the program are evaluated on their grades, general recommendations, Chinese writing
sample, and personal statement. Applicants are reviewed and selected by Middlebury College
International Programs/Study Abroad personnel.

While abroad, all students are required to enroll in the one-on-one content-based tutorial, an area studies
tutorial pertinent to the host city (Kunming Impressions) and two elective courses. The participants also
follow a Language Pledge throughout the program–promising to not speak in a language other than
Chinese.

CREDIT/GRADING

Total recommended credit for the semester is 16 credit hours. Students are held to Middlebury College
standards, courses include robust reading and writing components, and students are graded on the same
4-point scale as used at Vanderbilt.

COURSES

Required Courses

One-on-One Tutorial  一对一专题研究
The one-on-one is designed to bring the student’s four language skills to a higher level through
exploring in-depth on a topic of the student’s own choosing. The course emphasizes discussing and
exchanging ideas with the teacher, reading authentic materials, mastering the terminology related to the
chosen subject and writing well-researched essays. As they progress in their studies, students are
expected to be able to discuss their subject in greater and greater detail. Students are also expected to
prepare formal presentations on their subject. In their presentations, students are expected to express
their ideas clearly and are to use key terminologies skillfully and appropriately. Students also write
research essays, and are expected to write with clarity, accuracy, and depth. The course is also combined
with topic related class trips whose frequency depends on the course topic.
4 hours per week
Texts and materials prepared by School in China faculty

Kunming Impressions  昆明印象
The goal of this course is to help students gain a better understanding of the unique city of Kunming by
conducting an in-depth study on a variety of readings and field trips which cover many aspects of the
city and its outlying areas, such as local businesses, the history of the region, local and provincial
governments, tourism, environment, minority lives, family life, education and religion. Students will spend significant amount of time exploring topics out in the city, as well as time in the classroom working with a teacher and classmates.

4 hours per week. *Students who continue for a second semester do not need to repeat the course*

Texts: Reading materials compiled by Middlebury School in China

**Electives**

**Yunnan Minorities’ Studies  少数民族研究**

This course takes advantage of Kunming’s diverse ethnic population of twenty-five minority ethnic groups as students become familiar with contemporary ethnographic research within Yunnan. This class will incorporate visits to villages and NGOs that work with minority groups, along with classroom discussion. The topics include religions, weddings and funerals, bilingual education and economic impact on indigenous cultures.

4 hours per week

Text: Compiled by School in China faculty

**China’s Environment and Development  中国的环境与发展**

This course takes advantage of Yunnan University's Institute of Ecology and Geobotany and its well-established programs in Environmental Studies for YNU students. The course surveys environmental challenges of modern China, as well as how it confronts the country’s rapid development. In addition to this general survey, the course pays particular attention to the particular surroundings and challenges of Yunnan Province. Students will discuss topics such as food safety, water pollution, biodiversity, clean energy and environmental policy. Local experts will attend the class to discuss their projects and research.

4 hours per week

Texts: Compiled by School in China faculty

**Business Chinese  商务汉语**

This course aims to enhance students' language skills in a business context and to promote their understanding about the business environment and culture in contemporary China. The text is developed from real business cases from real multinational companies that have successfully made inroads into the Chinese market. The second part of the course will provide an overview of China's changing macro-environment, while real business cases let us examine individual Chinese companies and their development in the new millennium. By the end of the semester, students are expected to 1) enhance their cultural awareness of contemporary China and the Chinese business world; 2) gain vocabulary and fluency in Chinese in order to function more confidently and comfortably in real business settings; 3) access business news and information in Chinese; 4) give business presentation in Chinese.

4 hours per week


**Introduction to Chinese Newspaper Reading  报刊阅读**

In this class, students will learn the expressions and sentence patterns that are customarily used in Chinese newspapers and periodicals. Students will be trained in the basic skills required for reading Chinese newspapers. Discussion plays a key role in this class, as students will be required react to the
contemporary issues they will be reading about.
4 hours per week
Text: Materials compiled by School in China faculty, additional primary source materials.

*Contemporary Issues in China  当代社会话题*
This class uses the popular 2009 TV series Woju 蜗居 as a background to discuss contemporary social issues. Students will discuss topics such as the real estate market, urban migration, young people’s perspectives on love, and urban modernization. This class will also teach current vocabulary and idioms, with a focus on common verbal expressions. By the end of the semester, students are expected to understand modern Chinese social issues and be able to discuss their opinions using a variety of words and sentence structures.
4 hours per week
Text: 《当代社会话题》， compiled by the School in China faculty

*High Intermediate Chinese 高级汉语进阶*
This course is designed to bridge the gap between the intermediate and advanced levels of Chinese and is designed specifically for those students who are less confident in communicating with locals in Chinese. Mastering advanced-level sentence patterns and vocabulary, building a habit of speaking Chinese with good grammar, discussing contemporary social topics of China confidently, and expressing complicated ideas with ease are the goals of this class. The classes are divided into lectures, drill sessions and individual tutorials.
5 hours per week
Text: Materials selected by the faculty at each site.

*Classical Chinese 古代汉语*
This course is recommended for advanced students only. The fall semester course focuses on the learning of the syntactic structure and grammatical function words in Classical Chinese. During class students translate texts of Classical Chinese into modern Chinese paying particular attention to the content and philosophical implication of each. In the spring semester, students will read a wide selection of wenyan (Classical Chinese) texts that sample the classics of ancient Chinese thought, including Confucius' Analects, the Daoist texts Laozi and Zhuangzi, Mohist arguments against war, Sunzi's The Art of War, and Legalist writings on law. Students will also learn to punctuate wenyan texts (which were originally unpunctuated) and compose sentences or short paragraphs in wenyan. All class discussion will be conducted in modern Chinese.
4 hours per week
Text: *Language of the Dragon*, Cheng & Tsui, vol. 1 or 2, as appropriate

**ADMINISTRATION**

Middlebury and CET maintain two full-time staff onsite. The Director oversees all issues of an academic nature whereas the Assistant Director assists students with cultural, administrative and day-to-day matters.
Wang JiaJia, Director, Kunming (Fall/Spring). A native of Beijing, Jiajia received her B.A. in Chinese Archaeology from Peking University in 1999. After graduating from college, she went to the University of Pennsylvania and received her Ph.D. in 2009. Jiajia has broad research interests, including Medieval Chinese history, art history, folk religion, archaeology and the cultural exchanges along the ancient silk routes.

Jiajia also has considerable Chinese language teaching experience. She received her training in Chinese language teaching as an instructor with Associated Colleges in China (ACC) from 1999 to 2000. While studying at UPenn, she then worked as a TA and later lecturer in the Chinese program. From 2003 through 2008, Jiajia taught at the Princeton-in-Beijing program. She was the head coordinator of Level 2 at Princeton-in-Beijing for two terms. Jiajia has taught Chinese to beginning, intermediate and advanced students, including Business Chinese, to help students understand economic development and business practices in modern China.

Liu Fang, Summer Academic Director, Kunming. Ms. Liu Fang comes to CET from Oberlin College, where she has served as a Chinese instructor since 2000. Ms. Liu has taught all levels of Chinese at many schools and programs, including the Middlebury Summer School (Instructor, 1991 and 1994 to 1998; Lead Teacher, 1999 to 2005), Boston College (Lecturer, 1994 to 1995) and the University of Vermont (Lecturer, 1995 to 2000). She also served as Program Coordinator and Coordinator of the Chinese Language program at Yunnan University in Kunming from 1986 to 1990 and 1991 to 1994, respectively. Ms. Liu received her BA from Yunnan University in 1986, and her MEd in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Vermont in 2000. She has presented papers at numerous conferences and is currently working on a Chinese language teachers’ reference book.

Katherine Leyland, Assistant Director, Kunming. Katherine has been interested in Chinese language and culture since the age of 16 when she worked as a busgirl in a Chinese restaurant and was taught how to write her first Chinese characters by fellow Chinese coworkers. She pursued her dream of learning Chinese at Middlebury College, and attended the CET Beijing JanTerm program and the C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in China, Hangzhou in 2006. Upon completing the Hangzhou program, Katherine was awarded an Oxford World Leadership Corps grant in the summer of 2006 to study microfinance in rural areas of Sichuan province. After graduating from Middlebury in 2007 with a degree in Chinese and Political Science, she returned to Sichuan as an Oxford World Leadership Corps Fellow and staff consultant for the NGO Ecologia. She worked with rural farmers to help launch a microfinance unit and researched local socially responsible entrepreneurs. Following the devastating May 2008 Sichuan earthquake, she helped found and manage the Rainbow Project, a relief program that helped children in affected areas.

FACULTY

Instruction in both language and culture courses is provided by full-time Middlebury-in-China faculty, and also by faculty from Yunnan University. Full-time Middlebury-in-China faculty include:

Liu Dan 刘丹. Lecturer. After graduating from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Yunnan University (云南大学) in 1996, Liu Dan started her career in teaching Chinese at the School of International Students at Yunnan University. She is experienced in teaching all levels of Chinese
language courses, beginning through advanced. She also teaches undergraduate courses at Yunnan University. Liu Dan has also taught intermediate and advanced Chinese for three summers at the Middlebury Chinese School.

**Yang Huiling 杨蕙菱. Lecturer.** A native of Yunnan, Huiling graduated from the Beijing International Studies University (北京第二外国语学院) in 2004. Her major was Chinese language and literature in college. Right after her graduation, she joined ACC (Associated Colleges in China) and taught the intermediate and advanced levels from 2006 to 2008.

**Zhang Youlan 张友兰. Lecturer.** Youlan graduated from Xianning University (Hubei Province) in 2008 with a major in Chinese Language and Literature. She received her Masters degree in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics at Yunnan Normal University in 2011. While pursuing her masters degree, she worked as a part-time teacher at Yunnan University and Yunnan Normal University.

In general, full-time faculty such as these individuals work exclusively teaching Middlebury-in-China/CET students. Some part-time instructors may also teach at Yunnan University.

**STUDENT LIFE**

**Orientation**
The Kunming staff arranges an orientation for all students upon arrival. This orientation is designed to acquaint students with their surroundings, apprise them of protocol during the program, and respond to all questions and concerns. Orientation is led by the Assistant Director, with academic materials covered by the Director. The student orientation includes information on academic policies, student conduct policies, student health and safety, support services available on and off campus, and culture shock, as well as general introductions to the campus and surrounding city. During orientation, students will receive copies of all policies, lists of hospitals, and emergency contact cards to keep with them at all times.

In addition, students will take a placement exam upon arrival in order to determine the appropriate language class.

**Cultural Activities and Field Trips**
The academic program is supplemented by co-curricular activities and excursions to points of interest around Yunnan Province.

The School in China facilitates several co-curricular activities for all students each semester. These activities range from a one-on-one lesson, attendance in a local club, volunteer work or even a solo activity. The Assistant Director will help get each student started in this co-curricular activity based on their interest and background. Each student then reports weekly to the AD on the activity. Some past co-curricular activities include:

- Biking, hiking, and cliff climbing outdoors around Kunming.
- Learning to play local musical instruments,
- Learning street dance.
- Studying traditional arts like calligraphy, Chinese painting, *majiang* (mahjong), *taiji* or handicrafts
making.

**Immersive Housing**
Every student is paired with a student from the host university. Chinese roommates are selected through an application process, and every effort is made to match Middlebury and Chinese students with compatible interests and habits. Previous students who have participated in the Middlebury School in China agree that it offers amazing opportunities to build lasting friendships and integrate them in campus life.

Students are housed with their roommates in double-occupancy rooms in a dormitory that is not far from the classroom building. The dormitory offers a student lounge, laundry facilities and a galley kitchen. Meals are not included in the cost of this program. Three meals a day are available in the campus cafeterias at a moderate price.

**Immersive Location**

Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province and is located in the Southwestern corner of mainland China, in the foothills of the Himalayas. Because of its removed location and relatively high altitude, unlike the cities in Eastern China, Kunming is known for having beautiful weather and clean air. Kunming’s parks—combined with the temperate climate of Southeast Asia—make it a very livable city with a strong outdoor culture. Kunming is very multicultural, clearly demonstrating the influence of the twenty-six different ethnic groups living in Yunnan Province.

The program is located on the campus of Yunnan University, one of the oldest universities in China (founded in the 1920s) and now one of China’s prestigious “National Key Universities.” The University has a total student enrollment of approximately 20,000, half of whom are undergraduates. It offers a comprehensive curriculum in the fields of the liberal arts, law, science, technology, economics, and management. The campus offers a cosmopolitan environment, with top Chinese scholars and students, as well as a sizeable number of international students, particularly from southeast Asian countries.

**Structure of the Academic Year**

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<th>Semester</th>
<th>Vanderbilt University</th>
<th>Kunming</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>August to December</td>
<td>August to December</td>
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<td>Spring</td>
<td>January to May</td>
<td>February to June</td>
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Non-Discrimination

As with all Vanderbilt University programs, this study abroad program will not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, military service, or genetic information in its administration of educational policies, programs, or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan programs. In addition, the program will not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Safety and Security

Students and parents can find security and safety information about particular study abroad locations at the following websites, and, based on the information provided therein, students and parents can make informed decisions about whether to participate in a study abroad program.

GEO travel warnings and alerts:

Information for parents of students planning to study abroad:

Student International Travel Policy:

CIEE, Health and safety:
http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/why-ciee/health-safety/

CIEE, Travel alerts:
http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/alerts/

CET:
http://cetacademicprograms.com/before-departure/safety/