Report of the Committee
to Review the Peking University-Yale University Joint Undergraduate Program in Beijing

David R. Cameron, Professor of Political Science and Director, Yale Program in European Union Studies, chair
Judith Hackman, Associate Dean, Yale College and Director, Teaching Fellow Program, Yale Graduate School
Paize Keulemans, Assistant Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures
Barbara Rowe, Assistant Dean, Yale College for International Programs and Fellowships and Director, Office of Fellowships
Meg Urry, Israel Munson Professor of Physics and Astronomy; Director, Yale Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics, and Chair, Department of Physics

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Introduction

In 2005, Peking University of Beijing (PKU) and Yale University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to create a Joint Undergraduate Program that would bring Yale undergraduates to Beijing to study and live with PKU undergraduates and bring Yale faculty to teach courses open to the Yale and PKU students.

The Program began in the 2006-07 academic year and is now in its third year. The MOU, paragraphs 1.3 and 8.6, stipulates that the Program will operate initially for a three-year trial period, from Fall 2006 through Spring 2009, with the expectation that both parties will find it sufficiently successful that there will be mutual interest in renewing it thereafter. (The MOU is attached as an appendix to this report at page 20.)

In anticipation of the expiration of the MOU, Dean Peter Salovey created this Committee to review the Program. The Committee was asked to consider several matters:

1. Yale College’s role in the administration of the Program;
2. Recruitment of Yale College students;
3. Financial concerns;
4. Participation of Yale faculty; and
5. Curricular issues, including Chinese language instruction.

The Committee met over a period of eight months, beginning in June 2008. It invited all students who participated in the Program and were on campus during the Fall semester to meet with the Committee and discuss the Program. A large number of students did so. The Committee also arranged individual meetings with most of the faculty who have taught in the Program (except those who were at PKU in the Fall). Three members of the Committee – Deans Hackman and Rowe and Professor Keulemans – made a week-long site visit to PKU in early January, during which they spoke with Yale and PKU faculty, administrators, and students. An important component of the site visit concerned the instruction in the Chinese language available to Yale students. In evaluating that component of the Program, the Committee also had access to an independent evaluation of Chinese language instruction at Yale and in the Joint PKU-Yale Program conducted for the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures by Lening Liu, the Director of the Chinese Language Program at Columbia University.

Based on those discussions and its review of the Program, the Committee recommends that the Program be continued. However, the review identified a number of concerns pertaining to the recruitment of Yale College students, participation of Yale and PKU faculty, curricular opportunities available to Yale students and language instruction, as well as issues pertaining to financing and administration. It believes that, in order to strengthen the Program and ensure its viability over the long term, those concerns and issues should be addressed by those responsible for the Program at Yale and, where relevant, discussed with PKU as part of the discussions pertaining to renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding. Before addressing those concerns, we provide, in the next section, a brief overview of the operation of the Program in its first five semesters,
from the Fall of 2006 through the Fall of 2008. Following that, we discuss the matters noted above.


PKU, also known as Beida, was founded in 1898. Located in northwestern Beijing, it was China’s first national university. It now has more than 15,000 undergraduates and 12,000 graduate students. As in many countries, virtually all PKU undergraduates choose their major prior to admission and concentrate their studies within their major. In 2001, however, PKU established the Yuanpei Liberal Arts Honors Program, in which 160 undergraduates in each of the first two undergraduate years studied in a broad liberal arts curriculum while taking the prerequisites necessary for their major. Since then, the Honors Program has become a four-year college that currently enrolls nearly 800 students.

There are many study-abroad programs operating at PKU. But the PKU-Yale Program is unlike any other program operating at PKU in that the Yale students not only study with but live with Yuanpei students in a residence hall on the PKU campus. The Program was designed to enroll an equal number of Yale undergraduates and Yuanpei students each semester. The Yale and Yuanpei students live together on two floors of Building 42 on the PKU campus, the men on the first floor and the women on the second floor. Each Yale student shares a room with a Yuanpei student. The two floors of Building 42 can accommodate up to 24 Yale students each semester -- 12 men and 12 women.

The Program is open to all Yale College sophomores and juniors and, in some cases, first-semester seniors. It was designed to be available to all Yale undergraduates regardless of their major or intended major. Students can participate in the Program in either the fall term or spring term or for the academic year. Courses taken in the Program carry full Yale course credit and a term at PKU counts as a term of enrollment in Yale College. No prior Chinese language training is required but all students are required to study the language at an appropriate level while at PKU.

Over the six semesters since the Program began in the Fall of 2006, and including those who will participate during the Spring of 2009, a total of 64 Yale undergraduates studied in the Program. Five of the students participated for two semesters and one is about to start his third semester at PKU. The enrollments on a semester-by-semester basis were as follows: Fall 2006: 21; Spring 2007: 12; Fall 2007: 7; Spring 2008: 7; Fall 2008: 11; and Spring 2009: 12. (The number of enrollments sums to 70 because the five students who participated for more than one semester are, of course, counted in each semester in which they were enrolled.) Of the 64 students who participated or soon will participate in the Program, one was a senior, 38 were juniors, and 25 were sophomores when they began their studies at PKU.

At the time they began at PKU, the 64 students were majoring in or intended to major in the following areas: the Humanities and Arts: 15; the Social Sciences: 35; the
Natural Sciences: 8; and interdisciplinary programs such as East Asian Studies: 14. Six were undecided. (The total exceeds the number of students who participated in the Program because some were double majors or undecided between two majors.) The most frequently-mentioned current or prospective majors were East Asian Studies: 13; Economics: 12; Political Science: 11; History: 8; Psychology: 6; and MCDB: 4.

A second distinctive feature is that at least two members of the Yale faculty teach courses at PKU each semester. PKU and Yale each designate five courses for the Program that will be taught by their faculty each semester. Of the five courses designated and taught by Yale faculty each semester, two or three are lecture courses with up to 40 students and two or three are seminars with up to 18 students. Yuanpei students not residing in Building 42 and other PKU students are able to take the courses offered by Yale faculty. Likewise, the Yale students are able to take other PKU courses beyond those designated for the Program, provided they receive approval from their Director of Undergraduate Studies and PKU. Yale students may also take a directed research course with either Professor Xing Wang Deng, who heads the Peking-Yale Joint Center for Plant Molecular Genetics and Agrobiotechnology, or Professor T.P. Ma, who leads the Peking-Yale Joint Center for Microelectronics and Nanotechnology.

Over the five semesters from Fall 2006 through Fall 2008, a total of 16 Yale faculty members taught in the Program while in residence at PKU. 8 are or were members of Humanities departments, 3 members of Social Science departments, and 5 members of Natural Science or Medical departments. Of the 30 courses offered by the Yale faculty over those five semesters, 16 dealt with topics in the Humanities, 6 with topics in the Social Sciences, and 8, including two directed research courses, with topics in the Sciences.

A third distinctive feature of the Program is the Yung Wing Lecture Series. Named for the first Chinese graduate of Yale College (in 1854), who was also the first Chinese student to receive a degree from an American university, the Series has brought two to three of Yale’s foremost scholars to PKU each semester for public lectures. Over the first five semesters of the Program, a total of 13 lectures were given in the series.

Most of the students who have participated in the Program report their experience at PKU to have been rewarding. Indeed, the Committee didn’t encounter a single student who regretted participating in the Program and many said the experience had a profound and enduring effect on them, in shaping the direction of their studies, enabling them to form friendships that they wouldn’t have formed had they remained at Yale for the semester or year, and, of course, giving them the opportunity to learn about China in a way that could not be replicated in any other study-abroad program. By and large, the students enjoyed the experience, especially getting to know their roommates and the other Yale and PKU students in the Program, traveling in China as on the Yale Club book donation trips, and being able to take such PKU courses as the one taught by Dong Chen on the Chinese Economy. But some had concerns about certain aspects of the Program – for example, the fact that the offerings of non-Program, non-language PKU courses taught in English and accessible to them were limited and hard to find, the fact that the
subject matter of the courses taught by the Yale faculty sometimes didn’t interest them,
and the fact that electricity was shut off at midnight in most of Building 42. The students
who met with the Committee had interesting insights on why other Yale students had
decided not to participate in the Program and several had very thoughtful, if sometimes
contrasting, suggestions on how the curriculum and overall focus of the Program might
be changed so as to increase its appeal to Yale students.

Most of the faculty who have taught in the Program likewise reported that their
experience was rewarding. For many of them, the Program afforded an opportunity not
only to visit China but to spend a substantial amount of time at a Chinese university that
they might otherwise never have. Several told the Committee that the experience helped
them to become better teachers and caused them to explore new areas of scholarly
inquiry. But most of the faculty also had concerns about some aspects of the Program –
for example, the prior preparation of some of the Yuanpei students for their courses
compared with that of the more advanced PKU students who took their courses, the fact
that the Yale students often were uninterested in the courses being offered by the Yale
faculty, and the fact that they had few, if any, connections with the PKU departments and
faculty in their discipline. As in the case of the students who met with the Committee,
the faculty who met with the Committee had many thoughtful suggestions for improving
various aspects of the Program including, most importantly, ways by which the numbers
of Yale students and faculty participating in the Program might be increased. We are
grateful for their suggestions and, indeed, have incorporated a number of them in this
report.

Recruitment of Yale Students

The figures noted above pertaining to the semester-by-semester enrollment of
Yale undergraduates in the Program in its first two years – 21 in the Fall of 2006, 12 in
the Spring of 2007, 7 in the Fall of 2007, and 7 in the Spring of 2008 – understandably
raised questions about the attraction of the Program for Yale students and Yale’s effort to
recruit students for it. To some extent, the downward trend in enrollments in the first two
years can be understood as the combined effect of an initial pent-up demand for a study-
abroad program in Beijing, on one hand, and, on the other, several problems that
developed in the first year – some of them typical of the start-up of any such program,
others unique to the Program. There is, however, some reason to believe, based on the
Fall 2008 enrollment of 11 and Spring 2009 enrollment of 12, that the Program has now
moved beyond those difficulties and that future enrollments, assuming the Program
continues, will stabilize in the range of 10 to 15 students per semester.

If, as we anticipate, future enrollments stabilize in the range of 10 to 15 Yale
students per semester, some might conclude that the Program is not attracting as many
students as it was designed to attract and that Yale, therefore, is not doing all that it
should be doing to recruit students for the Program. After all, the two floors of Building
42 at PKU can accommodate a maximum of 24 students per semester. The Committee
does not share that view. Aware of the considerable reluctance of Yale undergraduates to
study abroad during the academic year, the Committee believes it is unrealistic to assume
the Program will attract 24 students each semester. That figure, it should be noted, resulted not from an estimate of interest in the Program among Yale undergraduates but, rather, from the decision to locate the Program in Building 42, the design of that building – specifically, the number of rooms on each floor in the wing made available to the Program – and the fact that men and women must be housed on different floors.

There is another, more important, reason why enrollment in the Program is unlikely to stabilize at levels higher than perhaps 10 to 15 students per semester. As data in surveys of Yale seniors conducted at the conclusion of their senior year confirm, there is a very high degree of satisfaction among Yale undergraduates with their academic and non-academic experience at Yale. Moreover, the great majority of Yale students desire to spend all eight of their undergraduate semesters at Yale; although the number has been increasing in recent years, a relatively small number of Yale students, compared with students in other comparable institutions, wish to study abroad each year. It appears the reason more do not study abroad, despite encouragement from many faculty advisers to do so, is because, on the one hand, they find both the academic side of Yale – the large number and high quality of the courses available to them – and non-academic side – life in the residential colleges, participation in extracurricular activities, friendships – exceptionally rewarding and, on the other hand, because they have many opportunities to study or travel abroad in the summer or after graduation, either through fellowships or internships.

One such means by which students interested in China can travel and study there without participating in the PKU-Yale Joint Program are the Light Fellowships. The Fellowships support the intensive study of Chinese and cover tuition, room and board, and travel. Most students make use of the Fellowship during the summer but they can also be used to support study in either academic semester or for the academic year. In the past two years, an average of 83 Light Fellowships were awarded for study in China. Thirteen students participating in the Program studied Chinese with a Light Fellowship in either the semester before or the semester after participating in the Program. But it is no doubt the case that for many students the Light Fellowship provides an attractive and less costly way to travel to and study in China, and one that does not require that they forsake one of their eight undergraduate semesters in New Haven.

The Committee asked all of the students with whom it spoke why more students did not participate in the Program. The answers invariably emphasized the wide range of courses available to them at Yale, the prerequisites and required sequences of courses in majors, especially in the natural sciences, the attachment of students to their residential college, their involvement in extracurricular activities and organizations, their friendships, etc. Several students noted that the students who participate in the Program (or, to be more precise, their parents) have to pay the same tuition and, prior to 2008-09, the same room charge that is paid by students who do not participate in the Program. (Beginning in 2008-09, the participating students pay $800 less per semester than the Yale College room fee.) Participating in the Program obviously provides an altogether unique opportunity to live in and learn about China. But it does mean that they (or their parents) pay the same tuition as other Yale students for the opportunity to select from a
much smaller set of possible courses, some of which lie outside their disciplinary interests. And it means that they pay a substantial amount, even with the reduced room charge, to live in accommodations that, however well-equipped compared with other PKU dormitories, are not comparable to those available in the residential colleges.

Some of the possible explanations offered by students in response to the Committee’s questions regarding why more Yale students have not participated in the Program involved factors over which Yale and PKU have no control – for example, the distance of PKU from Yale and their families, etc. But some of the answers did point to factors that could be addressed by Yale and PKU and that, if addressed, might make the Program more attractive to more Yale students.

A number of students noted that most of the courses offered by Yale faculty at PKU were courses that, at least initially, were not of great interest to them and that they probably would not have taken had they remained at Yale for the semester. On the other hand, a number of students noted that they encountered considerable difficulty in finding courses they could take taught by PKU faculty other than the ones offered through the Program. With only two Yale faculty members participating in the Program in most semesters, it would be astounding if the Yale students found the four courses on offer as interesting as the four courses they might have taken from among all those listed in the Yale College Programs of Study had they remained at Yale. On the other hand, on the basis of the information noted earlier about the current or intended majors of the Yale students and the disciplinary locations of the Yale faculty who have participated in the Program, there appears to be something of a disconnect between the academic interests of the students and the disciplinary location of the Yale faculty. Almost 60 per cent of the students were majoring in or intended to major in the social sciences. Yet only three of the 16 Yale faculty who taught in the Program in the first five semesters are social scientists and only twenty per cent of the courses taught by those faculty – six of 30 – were social science courses. One way of reducing that apparent disconnect, and the somewhat muted interest in the courses offered by the Yale faculty, would be to increase the participation in the Program of Yale faculty located in departments in the social sciences.

PKU is obliged by the MOU to offer five courses through the Program each semester. Three of its courses are language courses that are offered each semester. Thus, PKU offers two non-language courses each semester. In the first five semesters of the Program, PKU offered ten non-language courses. For the Yale students, the most popular non-language course was Dong Chen’s introductory course on the Chinese economy, which has been offered each semester. PKU also offered a History course in the Fall of 2006, a Philosophy course in the Spring of 2007, courses on Electrical Engineering and on Chinese Art in the Fall of 2007, and a course on Foreign Policy in the Fall of 2008. Thus, other than the courses on the Chinese Economy and on Foreign Policy, the non-language PKU courses, like most of the Yale courses, were generally in disciplinary areas other than those in which most of the Yale participants were majoring or intended to major. One way to reduce that disconnect, and perhaps enhance the academic value of
the Program for the Yale students, would be for PKU to offer other courses in the social sciences in addition to the courses on the Chinese economy and on foreign policy.

Because of the subject matter of some of the courses taught by the Yale faculty and the non-language courses taught by PKU faculty, a number of Yale students searched for other courses offered at PKU beyond those offered through the Program. A few had some success in finding courses taught in English – for example, in PKU’s business school – but most of the students reported considerable difficulty in finding such courses. And those who did report considerable difficulty in obtaining permission from their Yale DUS to take the course, presumably because nearly all courses offered in English at PKU are graduate-level courses in the professional schools. Hopefully, over time the Resident Director’s office of the Program will develop an inventory of non-language courses at PKU taught in English that Yale students have taken that will alleviate those difficulties. Nevertheless, it would be very helpful for the Yale students if PKU informed the Resident Director prior to each semester of any non-language PKU courses taught in English that would be accessible to Yale students so the students would have sufficient time to contact their DUS and find out prior to the start of the semester whether they could receive Yale credit for the course or courses. The availability of at least a few such courses each semester might add to the academic value of the PKU experience for some of the Yale students. It would also be very helpful to Yale students wishing to plan their academic studies in advance if a list of the non-language PKU courses that have been offered in recent semesters could be made available so they could have a better sense of the possible course options available to them in the Program.

The Committee’s conversations with students revealed an additional means by which at least some thought the Program might be modified in a way that would perhaps attract more students. Several students pointed out the obvious fact that the Program is located in China and attracts students who wish to learn more about China. One possibility suggested by several students was for Yale to give greater emphasis, in the recruitment of Yale faculty, to subjects that have some relevance to China. Such a focus would not mean giving so much emphasis to the study of China that the Program would be of interest only to students majoring in East Asian Studies or concentrating within some other major on the study of China. But it would enhance the value of the Program for all of the Yale students participating in it, since all are presumably participating because they want to learn about China. One way to give greater emphasis to subjects having some relevance to China while retaining the commitment to offering courses across the full range of a liberal arts curriculum would be to attempt to ensure that one of the participating Yale faculty members each semester is a specialist in China or someone who can teach a course about a subject that has relevance to China. Obviously, given the small number of Yale faculty specializing in China, such an emphasis might reduce the number of courses about China available to undergraduates who are in New Haven. Nevertheless, it would enable the Program to have more of a China focus while retaining its commitment to being available to all Yale undergraduates, regardless of disciplinary interest, and offering courses across the full spectrum of a liberal arts curriculum.
Several of the faculty with whom the Committee met suggested a more fundamental change in the Program. Recognizing that the Program has not attracted enough Yale undergraduates to occupy all of the rooms available to it in Building 42 and that it may not do so in the future in the event it is continued, those faculty suggested that the university consider broadening the participation of Yale students to include some graduate students in semesters in which there is excess space available. There are many categories of graduate students that might benefit from the opportunity to study for a semester at PKU – most notably, Master’s students in International Relations, Forestry & Environmental Studies, Art, Architecture, Management, Law, Drama, Music, perhaps even students in the Medical School, and, of course, Ph.D. students in the Arts and Sciences either taking courses or conducting research on topics pertaining to China.

Obviously, any Yale graduate students participating in the Program would not room with Yuanpei College students nor would they room with Yale undergraduates. They would, instead, either live alone or room with another graduate student. The Committee understands that the participation of Yale graduate students would fundamentally change the Program and for that reason might be undesirable. But given that Yale is paying for the two floors in Building 42 and as much as half of that space may be unoccupied by Yale students in a typical semester in the future, the Committee believes it might make sense for Yale to consider supplementing, when unused dormitory space is available, the Yale undergraduate participants with a small number of graduate students.

Recruitment of Yale and PKU Faculty

Had this report been prepared at this time a year ago, the most urgent problem confronting the Program no doubt would have been the recruitment of Yale students. But with the recovery of enrollments this year to the low end of the range – 10 to 15 students per semester – that appears to be realistic over the long run, and with the possibility that some of the changes in the curriculum suggested above may bring enrollments closer to the high end of that range, it is apparent that the most urgent problem confronting the Program involves the recruitment of Yale and PKU faculty to teach in the Program. Emblematic of that problem, for much of the time during which the Committee was meeting it appeared there might be no Yale faculty teaching at PKU in the Spring semester of the current academic year. Fortunately, that problem was resolved by extending one of the faculty members for a second semester and appointing an eminent scholar from another university to teach in the spring semester. However, it was made clear during the Committee’s site visit that PKU prefers that Yale not meet its teaching commitment with non-Yale adjunct faculty for the same reason that Yale does not want PKU to hire foreign scholars visiting PKU to teach its courses in the Program.

There are many obvious reasons why it is difficult to recruit Yale faculty to teach in the Program – the employment situation of spouses, the educational needs of children, other family obligations, teaching and advising obligations, research and laboratory commitments, commitments and interests outside the university, etc. For most Yale faculty contemplating participation in the Program, spending a semester teaching at PKU
is probably regarded, rightly or wrongly, as a sustained diversion from their scholarship. Any such diversion could be especially costly, of course, for non-tenured faculty. In addition, for most Yale faculty contemplating participation in the Program, the possibility of spending a semester teaching in Beijing no doubt conjures up the prospect of innumerable transaction costs that would be incurred on a daily basis—especially, of course, by those who do not read or speak Chinese. To note just one such cost, participating faculty with young school-age children are likely to find themselves spending a good deal of time every school day on public transportation, traveling from the vicinity of PKU in northwestern Beijing to the English-language schools that are located in southeastern Beijing.

During their visit to PKU, Committee members were told that the same problem of recruiting faculty to teach in the Program exists at PKU. In most cases, PKU provides no incentive for faculty to teach courses in English, either in the form of counting such courses toward the required teaching load or in the form of additional pay. The Committee hopes PKU will make it possible for other PKU faculty in addition to Dong Chen to teach non-language courses in English about China on a recurring basis.

The Committee spent a good deal of time, both in its meetings with faculty who have participated in the Program and its meeting with the China Study Programs Advisory Committee, discussing the issue of faculty recruitment. The Committee believes the issue of faculty recruitment is the most urgent problem confronting the Program at this time. It believes that if the Program is unable to recruit faculty to participate in it each semester, the Program will cease to be attractive to students and, unless remedied, would have to be terminated. It believes the university must, therefore, do as much as it can to encourage and facilitate the participation of Yale faculty in the Program. The Advisory Committee has been very helpful in recruiting Yale faculty (as well as students) for the Program and no doubt will continue to be helpful. But the Committee believes that, in order to be effective, the recruitment of faculty will require from time to time the active involvement of university officers, including the Dean of Yale College and the Provost’s Office.

The Committee’s discussions identified a number of ways in which the university could encourage and facilitate the participation of Yale faculty in the Program. Several faculty reported that when they broached the possibility of participating in the Program with their department chair, the chair sought to dissuade them from pursuing the option so the department would not lose the faculty member’s courses for the semester in question. The University could alleviate this problem by making available to any department that loses vital courses because of faculty participation in the Program funds that would allow it to replace the lost courses.

Several faculty were concerned that participation in the Program could conceivably have an adverse effect on the chances for promotion of non-tenured faculty by interrupting their scholarship at a critical period in their academic career. The Committee agrees and recommends that the university adopt a policy that is communicated to all departments that the tenure clock for any non-tenured faculty
member participating in the Program will be stopped for the duration of his or her participation.

It is apparent that for all faculty, regardless of rank, participation in the Program imposes substantial additional costs, in terms of time, beyond those incurred in teaching two courses at Yale. To cite but one example, two to three of the courses taught by Yale faculty at PKU each semester are lecture courses. The Program has been able to provide Teaching Assistants for faculty teaching lecture courses. But it is difficult to find TAs who are knowledgeable about the subject and experienced in assisting in a course. The Committee believes Yale should provide some compensation beyond travel and living accommodations in Beijing to faculty who incur the additional costs associated with participation in the Program. One such form of compensation would be to grant a participating faculty member relief from teaching one course at some time after his or her return from Beijing.

Several of the Yale faculty who taught in the Program expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of contact they had with the PKU department and faculty in their academic discipline. Although a number of the faculty reported that they had excellent PKU students who were not in the Yuanpei program in their courses, they felt somewhat isolated professionally. The language issue poses an obvious obstacle but several suggested it might nevertheless facilitate recruitment of Yale faculty if those teaching in the Program had greater contact with the faculty, departments, and programs within their academic disciplines at PKU. PKU is aware of the concern and during the Committee’s site visit Provost Lin indicated that PKU would make every possible effort to connect Yale faculty teaching in the Program with their disciplinary counterparts at PKU.

The Committee realizes that most if not all of these proposals, and others that might have the same effect of facilitating the recruitment of Yale faculty, may add to the cost of the Program. However, to do nothing more than is done now to facilitate the recruitment of faculty to teach in the Program runs a high – and potentially embarrassing – risk of causing the Program to fail for lack of faculty, and then student, participation.

Non-Language Curriculum

We have already discussed, in the section above pertaining to the recruitment of Yale students, a number of possible changes in the curriculum, most of them quite modest, which might make the Program attractive to more Yale students. In particular, we suggested that the Program might, through its recruitment of Yale faculty as well as its communications with PKU administrators, increase the presence in the Program’s offerings of courses in the social sciences and courses that pertain in some way to China. We believe that would not only enhance the attraction of the Program among Yale students but also increase the perceived academic value of the Program for the students who participate in it.
One way to enhance the curriculum while at the same time strengthening ties with Yuanpei would be to recruit Yale faculty from interdisciplinary programs that match those being developed at Yuanpei. The college has recently established an interdisciplinary major in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, which is of course similar in focus to Yale’s Ethics, Politics, and Economics major. Yuanpei will soon introduce a second interdisciplinary major in Paleobiology, and in the future it will introduce additional interdisciplinary majors in Computer Science and Psychology, Social Work and Psychology, and Environmental Science and Public Policy. Yale faculty teaching in other interdisciplinary programs at Yale such as International Studies might also be able to offer courses in the Program that would be of interest to Yale and Yuanpei students.

Another way to enhance the curriculum, suggested by PKU administrators during the Committee’s site visit, would be for Yale to compile a list of “hot topics” that it believes would appeal to Yale students. Yale might also compile, on the basis of interviews with past, present, and future participants, a list of subject areas and disciplines that Yale students would like to see taught in the Program. Working from such lists, PKU could then identify members of its faculty with expertise in the designated topics, subject areas, and disciplines, some of whom might be able to teach one or more courses in English for the Program.

Language Instruction

Unlike most if not all other programs for foreign students in China, the PKU-Yale Program is not a full-time language instruction program. But it does require all Yale students to study Chinese while at PKU at whatever level is appropriate. Three of the five courses that PKU offers in the Program each semester are language courses at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels. (Yale also provides the resources for an additional course in intensive elementary Chinese at PKU each spring.) The courses are offered in PKU’s International College of Language Studies. Students in the fourth year or higher level study the language in an advanced elective course in the college. Yale credit for an independent tutorial is allowed if both the Resident Director and the DUS of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures approve it. Students who are fluent in Chinese are allowed to fulfill the Program’s language requirement by auditing a course taught in Chinese at PKU; those who are native speakers are allowed to take such a course for credit.

Over the six semesters from the Fall of 2006 through the Spring of 2009, the 64 Yale students participating in the Program had a wide range of background in the Chinese language. 21 entered without any prior training in Chinese, 11 had an elementary background (i.e., one year of study), 15 had an intermediate background (i.e., two years of study), 10 had an advanced background (i.e., three years of study), and 7 had studied Chinese beyond the advanced level or were native speakers.

The fact that the Program is not a full-time language instruction program has posed some challenges for the International College and for Yale. The College generally teaches students in courses for which there are twenty contact-hours per week. The
courses rely exclusively on in-class instruction. That stands in marked contrast to the practice at Yale and most universities and colleges in the United States. At Yale, for example, students have only five contact-hours in class each week but are exposed to intensive teaching methods in class and make extensive use of learning materials outside the classroom. At PKU, the Yale students generally have the same number of contact-hours per week as Yale students in New Haven – five – but are not exposed to intensive in-class teaching methods and do not make use of extra-curricular materials.

Because the language instruction at the International College does not make use of intensive in-class teaching methods and extra-curricular materials, the Yale students studying Chinese at PKU often do not learn as much in a semester as students at the same level in a semester at Yale. This can create problems for students who wish, upon their return to New Haven, to continue their study of the language. The problem can be especially acute for those who take the first semester of elementary Chinese at PKU and wish, upon their return to Yale, to take the second semester of elementary Chinese. During the Fall semester of the current academic year, for example, the Yale students in the elementary Chinese class at PKU were taught by someone who, unlike the instructor in the first two years of the Program, had not observed language instruction at Yale, did not use the textbook used at Yale, and did not meet with the students five days a week. As a result, the students covered only half of what had been covered in the previous year. Four of the students wished, upon their return, to continue studying elementary Chinese in the current semester. They had to be placed in a special section because they were so far behind the students who had completed the first semester at Yale.

The Committee urges that PKU take steps to ensure that the language instruction offered Yale students in its International College is comparable in terms of the extent of language competence attained by the students to the instruction offered students at the same level at Yale. That would require that PKU ensure that the instructors of Yale students in the International College are aware of Yale’s expectations regarding the extent of language competence attained by students upon the completion of courses at the various levels. It would also require that, to the extent possible, PKU ensure that the instructors are familiar with and make use of textbooks, teaching methods, and learning materials that are comparable to those used at Yale and that Yale students have at least five contact-hours of language instruction, if not more, each week.

The Committee believes that in order to ensure that the language instruction provided by the International College is as comparable as possible in terms of the extent of competence attained by the students to that provided at Yale there must be frequent contact and communication about all aspects of the language instruction provided Yale students between those responsible for it at PKU and the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale. Together, they must exercise joint oversight of that instruction.

For its part, Yale should provide the International College with information regarding the extent of language competence attained by the Yale students entering the Program each semester and its evaluation of the appropriate level of study for all of the
students. That information should be provided prior to the start of the semester and early enough that the International College has sufficient time to assign instructors and arrange for classrooms prior to the arrival of the students. The Committee recommends that the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale convey that information to the International College and monitor the progress of the students throughout the semester to ensure that they are attaining the level of competence required to continue, upon their return, their study of the language in the appropriate course.

**Administration**

Responsibility for administration of the Program is located both at Yale, in the Center for International Experience, and at PKU, in the Office of International Relations, Foreign Student Division. Responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Program is located in the office of the Resident Director, currently Ningping Yu. There is an On-Campus Coordinator within the CIE office at Yale and an On-Site Program Coordinator within the office of the Resident Director. As stipulated in the MOU, Yale pays the salary, benefits, international travel expenses and housing expense of the Resident Director and the salary of the On-Site Program Coordinator.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the role played by the Resident Director in the day-to-day administration of the Program. As described in paragraph 5 of the MOU, the Resident Director is responsible for providing both academic and non-academic support for the Yale students, leading the pre-semester orientation for the Yale students, administering the Yung Wing Lecture Series, and organizing course-related field trips and extracurricular activities for the students. In addition, the Resident Director serves as the on-site liaison for the Program with Yuanpei College and the PKU Office of International Relations and works closely with both.

The position of Resident Director requires considerable administrative and interpersonal skills -- the ability to simultaneously provide helpful academic and non-academic advice to Yale and PKU students, carry out the various administrative tasks related to the Program, and maintain close working relations with Yuanpei College, the PKU Office of International Relations, and Yale’s CIE. Although the current Resident Director did not have any prior experience with either PKU or Yale, she does have an academic background and prior experience as a resident director, and by all accounts she has advised the students well, carried out the administrative responsibilities of the office efficiently, developed good working relations with both Yuanpei and the PKU Office of International Relations, and developed a close working relationship with those at Yale responsible for the Program. In addition, she and the Program Coordinator at PKU have involved the PKU students who have attended the Yale Summer Session in welcoming the Yale students to PKU. The Committee hopes that Yale will make every effort to retain both the Resident Director and the Program Coordinator in the event the Program is continued. But if either or both depart, it will be very important to appoint individuals who can perform all their tasks well, because to a very large extent the success of the Program depends on the performance of those two individuals.
Given the personnel changes involving the Resident Director and the Program Coordinator at Yale after the first year of the Program, it has taken time for the current staff at both locations to develop policies and procedures, deal with unanticipated developments, and become familiar with each university’s bureaucracy. Likewise, it has taken PKU time to learn about and understand Yale’s academic and administrative procedures. The Committee agrees with the suggestion made by PKU administrators during the site visit that steps be taken to ensure more frequent and more regular communication between the Yale and PKU administrators responsible for the Program. They also suggested that it would be helpful if some of those at PKU who are involved in the Program visit Yale so that they may learn more about Yale’s administration of the Program. The Committee endorses that suggestion.

When the Program was created, a China Study Programs Advisory Committee was formed. Consisting of all faculty who have taught in the Program as well as the Yale administrators responsible for it, the Advisory Committee has played an important role in the recruitment of Yale faculty and students, the evaluation of PKU course proposals, and in other matters pertaining to the Program. However, since the membership of the Advisory Committee increases by at least four faculty members each academic year, it may be advisable that it be restructured as a somewhat smaller committee that, while continuing to include ample representation of faculty who have recently taught in the Program, does not necessarily change its composition each year and that can exercise effective oversight of all aspects of the Program. In view of the issues related to language instruction discussed above, the Committee believes that as part of that restructuring the Advisory Committee should include the Director of Chinese Language Programs of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and another faculty member of that Department selected by the chair of that Department.

Financing

The PKU-Yale Program obviously is more expensive to operate than the traditional study-abroad program. The Program requires a full-time coordinator at Yale and much of the time of the Assistant Dean who oversees all aspects of the Program, including the recruitment of students and faculty. In addition, Yale pays the salary, fringe benefits, and accommodations of the Resident Director and pays for the accommodations of its students at PKU, the equivalent of the salaries and benefits of at least two faculty members for an entire academic year, tuition supplements for the school-age children of teaching faculty who do not have the language skills necessary for a Chinese school, the travel and accommodation expenses for the teaching faculty and the two or three Yung Wing lecturers each semester, and the travel and accommodations of the administrative personnel responsible for the Program who must travel to Beijing or New Haven from time to time. It is, in short, an expensive program, and implementing some of the suggestions made with respect to faculty recruitment and language instruction would, of course, only add to what is already an expensive program.

It is obvious, given that Yale receives payment of tuition and the room charge (less financial aid) from the students participating in the Program, that the net cost of the
Program decreases as the number of participating students increases. With the assistance of the Yale College Business Office, the Committee sought to estimate the revenues and expenses associated with the Program. In its first two years, all of the Program’s expenses (other than the salaries and benefits of the Yale faculty teaching in it) were covered by tuition and room payments of the participating Yale students and gifts from two restricted funds. Nevertheless, the two restricted funds are largely expended and it will be necessary in future years that the Program keep its expenses more closely in line with the revenue generated by the tuition and room payments of its participating students.

Notwithstanding the considerable expense, the Committee believes that Yale’s participation in the Joint Program provides a benefit to both universities that can not be reduced to a simple calculation of revenues and expenses based on how many Yale students participate. Yale’s relationship with the most prestigious university in China is exceptionally important and has many potential advantages, regardless of how many Yale undergraduates study at PKU each semester and how much it costs Yale to maintain the Program. The Program has given Yale very high visibility not only within PKU but within the Chinese government, as exemplified by the visit of President Hu Jintao to Yale and his visit to PKU, during which he visited with the Yale students. (In fact, when the president was given a roster of foreign programs at PKU from which to select one for a visit, he immediately selected the PKU-Yale Program.)

The Program also provides a basis for further cooperation with PKU in the future across a variety of disciplines. To cite but one example, during the Fall of 2008 Professor Bruce Wexler organized with Professor Shihui Han of PKU a joint International Social Neuroscience Network that has already attracted more than a dozen participating scientists from the U.S., Europe, and China. From a long-term perspective, the PKU-Yale Joint Program represents an important and innovative development that may in the future lead to the development of other mutually beneficial programs such as exchange programs that send Yale graduate students and faculty in a variety of disciplines to PKU and bring graduate students and faculty from PKU to New Haven. It was clear in the conversations with faculty and administrators at PKU during the Committee’s site visit that they desire greater research collaboration with Yale faculty members and see the Program as one important means by which that objective can be achieved.

Conclusion

In 2005, Peking University of Beijing and Yale signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a Joint Undergraduate Program that would bring Yale undergraduates to Beijing to study and live with PKU undergraduates and Yale faculty to teach courses open to the Yale and PKU students. The Program began in the 2006-07 academic year and is now in its third year. The MOU stipulates that the Program will operate for a three-year trial period, through the spring semester of the current academic year, with the expectation that both universities will find it sufficiently successful that there will be mutual interest in renewing it thereafter.
In anticipation of the expiration of the MOU, Dean Salovey created this Committee to review the Program. The Committee was asked to consider several matters, among them the recruitment of Yale students, the recruitment of Yale faculty to teach in the Program, curricular issues, including Chinese language instruction, the administration of the Program, and financial issues pertaining to the Program. The Committee met over a period of eight months, beginning this past June. It invited all students who have participated in the Program and are now on campus to meet with it and discuss the Program. A large number of students did so. The Committee also met with most of the faculty who have taught in the Program. In addition, three members of the Committee conducted a week-long site visit to PKU.

The Committee recommends that the Program be continued and that the university therefore discuss with PKU renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding agreed in 2005. The Committee’s review did, however, identify a number of concerns pertaining to the recruitment of Yale College students, the recruitment of Yale faculty, the composition of the non-language curriculum available to Yale students, the language instruction component of the Program, and the administration of the Program.

The Peking University-Yale University Joint Undergraduate Program provides an opportunity for Yale undergraduates to study in and learn about China in a way that is unmatched by any other study-abroad program. In its three years, the Program has attracted interest from a considerable number and wide range of Yale students. All of the students who participated in the Program with whom the Committee spoke recognized the extraordinary nature of the Program and the unique opportunity it provided them to learn about China and no doubt many more will take advantage of that opportunity in the future if the Program is continued.

As important as the Joint Undergraduate Program is as an educational resource for Yale undergraduates, the Committee believes that Yale’s participation in it provides a benefit for both universities that goes beyond the Program itself. The Program provides a base from which other mutually beneficial programs – for example, programs involving faculty and graduate student exchanges and joint research projects involving PKU and Yale faculty – can and hopefully will develop in the future. In a real sense, the long-term mutual interest of PKU and Yale extends beyond the Joint Program.

At the same time, however, it is essential, in order for other programs of exchange and cooperation between PKU and Yale to develop in the future, that the Joint Undergraduate Program not only continue but function well and to the satisfaction of both universities.