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# Chongqing, Cincinnati universities launch Joint Cooperative Institute

By Cao Yingying | China Daily | Updated: 2017-11-09 07:43



A total of 57 students from Chongqing University traveled to University of Cincinnati in Ohio, the United States to start their last year of college life on Aug 17.

At Cincinnati, the two sides not only marked the date as CQU-UC Joint Co-op Institute Day, but also shared their cultures and experiences to strengthen the cooperation.

Students enrolled in the Joint Co-op Institute, set up by CQU and UC in 2013, committed to a five-year program. It includes five semesters of classes given by UC and CQU engineering professors, as well as five semesters of paid, cooperative education work experience integrated into the first four years.

In their final year, the students are taking all courses at UC's campus to experience the unique campus culture in Cincinnati.

Steve Ettorre, a professor from UC, is currently in Chongqing teaching semiconductor physics, and probability and statistics to JCI students.

He said that the program is part of an accredited engineering curriculum that UC has developed to train young people for engineering careers. Teachers provide academic and United States industry perspective in the courses.

"I have had a long career in the industry and can give the students a picture of what skills and approaches are needed to be successful in the industry," said Ettorre.

He added that the program not only provides a good platform for students, but also teachers. Professors from UC and CQU will observe each other's classes and discuss teaching styles.

Fu-lin Tsung, another UC professor teaching thermodynamics and engineering foundations for the program, said: "In addition to academic knowledge, I also concentrate on professional skills.

"I ask many questions and train them to clearly express themselves in class, because communication is an important aspect of being an engineer."

"For hands-on labs, students build and test electrical circuits, test solar panels and hydrogen fuel cells. In addition to technical knowledge, I also emphasize written and oral presentation skills, all in English, preparing them for the global economy," he added.

Another important part of the program is to work in companies as an intern. This helps the students to effectively integrate theory and practice, said Luo Yuanxin, vice-dean of CQU's mechanical engineering school.

Mao Shangwei, big data department manager of CISDI Research and Development Co, hired students from JCI.

He said, "At first, we doubted their ability and just wanted the students with the highest scores to work with us."

The first intern named Wei Chengzhi impressed them with his hard work and professional skills. During his internship, he even helped to solve technical problems that the workers had been unable to tackle.

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"For innovative teams, we really welcome such fresh and creative brains to join us," Mao added.

Jia Feifan, who joined JCI in 2013, said that the program first attracted him because he could gain two Bachelor degrees from both CQU and UC, as well English-language teaching to help him study abroad further.

"Later, I found the most interesting part was working in different companies and organizations," Jia said.

He used to work at a control team of manufacturing center of Chongqing ABB Transformer Co. Another role involved working as an assistant to a foreign teacher.

"The jobs I have done help me to better understand what I have learned in class and how to apply that knowledge in practice," Jia said.

Yuan Yuchan, majoring in electrical engineering and automation, said that she previously could not imagine how her college life would be without any summer or winter holidays. But the truth is that the cooperative education program makes her life rich and meaningful.

"When researching and experimenting in UC labs, I discovered the subject I was really keen on, and was determined to study biological equipment for the coming Master's degree.

"After I gave a presentation about what I had researched in a meeting, a professor came to me and invited me to work on projects with him. He has become the mentor of my final-year project," Yuan said.

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Foreign expert (right) shows the machine to an intern of CQU-UC Joint Co-op Institute.

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