

## Joint college course bears fruit

By MAY ZHOU in Houston | China Daily USA | Updated: 2018-04-26 05:38



Student Xu Zhaojing (not mentioned in story) gets hands-on experience at University of Cincinnati. [Photo provided to China Daily]

On Saturday, April 28, Yuan Yuchan will be one of the first 56 Chinese students to get a bachelor degree in engineering from both University of Cincinnati (UC) and Chongqing University (CQU) in a ceremony at the UC campus.

Launched five years ago, the Joint Co-op Institute (JCI) of CQU and UC offers a five-year program to Chinese students with degrees in electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. Students spent their first four years at CQU alternating between internships and classes, then their fifth year studying at UC.

"I have grown so much in the past five years especially compared to my high school classmates in conventional university programs," Yuan said. "The mandatory internships allowed me to find out what I like or dislike in this field and learn how to work and deal with people.

"The cost of finding the right path is much cheaper through internships," Yuan added.

Students said the benefits of the year at UC went beyond academics.

Jia Feifan said he learned to be more independent and realized the importance of communication and team work.

Yuan said her view of American students also changed: "They are smart and study hard."

Yuan has decided to pursue a PhD program at UC after graduation and was also accepted at a few other highly ranked schools, such as Northwestern.



Students from Chongqing University celebrate the 2018 Chinese New Year at the University of Cincinnati during their fifth year study in the Joint Co-op Institute. [Photo provided to China Daily]

After visiting other universities and talking with graduate students, Yuan decided that the right fit with a professor was more important than a school's ranking.

"I have built a great relationship with my professor at UC," she said. "He has experience in what I want to do in the future: to build my own company."

Other students in the program have decided to pursue fields such as business administration or data management. A few are entering the workforce, but most of them — 80 percent — will pursue graduate studies in engineering either in the US or China.

Students finding the right path is exactly what the faculty hoped to see from this program, said Zhang Zhiqing, vice-dean of JCI.

"We found that 40 percent of engineering students fell behind in hands-on working ability in China," Zhang said. "We introduced the UC model of combining internships with classroom teachings to change that.

"All of our engineering courses are taught in English to reach international standards," Zhang added.

So far more than 50 companies in China, some Fortune Global 500s, have taken on students for internships.

"The program has been quite successful and each year more students enroll," Zhang said. "There are more than 400 students in the program currently. We are planning to offer two additional programs in civil and software engineering in 2019."

Zhang said that the biggest challenge has been finding qualified professors able to teach engineering courses in English in China.

The programs have brought some UC professors to teach at CQU. One of them was Thomas Huston, professor at UC and co-director at JCI.

"Our professional practice (Co-op) education started in 1906," said Huston. "It gives students opportunities to see what's really involved in the real world and if they truly like what they chose. We are very excited that the Chinese students will celebrate the first graduation of our joint program with CQU on April 28."

Huston said the Chinese students' English skills strengthened bit by bit every year. "It's a tremendous effort for them to take a hard discipline not in their mother language. They also get to immerse themselves in another culture by spending one year here."

"Living in a global economy, you have to be exposed to the other side," Huston said.

To celebrate the graduation of inaugural JCI class, CQU President Zhang Zongyi will travel to Cincinnati to attend the commencement.

"We have planned various festivities for this special occasion," said Huston.

Contact the writer at [mayzhou@chinadailyusa.com](mailto:mayzhou@chinadailyusa.com) (<mailto:mayzhou@chinadailyusa.com>).



[/popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm\\_source=chinadaily-int&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:](http://popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm_source=chinadaily-int&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:)  
'[popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm\\_source=chinadaily-int&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:](http://popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm_source=chinadaily-int&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:)  
'[popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm\\_source=chinadaily-int&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:](http://popup.taboola.com/en/?template=colorbox&utm_source=chinadaily-int&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=thumbnails-a:Below Article Thumbnails:)  
**You May Like**

[http://www.womensarticle.com/top-10-best-countries-to-raise-children-start-a-family/?utm\\_source=taboolaraisekids&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_term=chinadaily-int](http://www.womensarticle.com/top-10-best-countries-to-raise-children-start-a-family/?utm_source=taboolaraisekids&utm_medium=referral&utm_term=chinadaily-int)

### **Top 10 Best Countries To Raise Children & Start A Family**

WomensArticle.com

[http://www.womensarticle.com/top-10-best-countries-to-raise-children-start-a-family/?utm\\_source=taboolaraisekids&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_term=chinadaily-int](http://www.womensarticle.com/top-10-best-countries-to-raise-children-start-a-family/?utm_source=taboolaraisekids&utm_medium=referral&utm_term=chinadaily-int)

[http://boredarticles.com/travel/top-10-best-countries-to-travel-to-alone-in-2018/?utm\\_source=taboolatravelsolo&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_term=chinadaily-int](http://boredarticles.com/travel/top-10-best-countries-to-travel-to-alone-in-2018/?utm_source=taboolatravelsolo&utm_medium=referral&utm_term=chinadaily-int)

### **Top 10 Best Countries To Travel To Alone In 2018**

Bored Articles

[http://boredarticles.com/travel/top-10-best-countries-to-travel-to-alone-in-2018/?utm\\_source=taboolatravelsolo&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_term=chinadaily-int](http://boredarticles.com/travel/top-10-best-countries-to-travel-to-alone-in-2018/?utm_source=taboolatravelsolo&utm_medium=referral&utm_term=chinadaily-int)