MEMORANDUM

Date: May 17, 2018

TO: Michael Clark, Presiding Officer, Faculty Senate
    Thomas Luckett, Presiding Officer Elect, Faculty Senate

FROM: Ron Witczak, Executive Director, OIA
      Jian Wang, PSU CI Director & Professor, Library
      Eric Einspruch, PSU CI Board Chair & Adjunct Professor, Public Administration and OHSU-PSU School of Community Health

RE: Background Information on the Confucius Institute at Portland State University

As the Faculty Senate prepares to consider a resolution regarding the Confucius Institute at PSU, we are writing to inform the faculty of the background regarding the Confucius Institute at Portland State University, in addition to correct some factual errors stated at the most recent faculty senate meeting.

Please note that when negotiations began 10 years ago, Dr. Gil Latz, former Vice Provost of International Affairs and Ron Witczak sought to make certain that in practice, all courses offered by the CI will be non-credit. This was in recognition of the potential issues that have cropped up around the nation where other universities have endeavored to use the visiting CI teachers to teach for-credit language courses on those campuses. In addition, we negotiated that any funds raised by the CI’s non-credit courses and other activities would be deposited into a PSU Foundation account under the sole control of the Office of International Affairs to be used for any activity and to support programs that benefit the PSU campus, faculty, students and staff.

More background information and facts are below:

- The CIPSU was established in 2007 and is one of the oldest and largest CIs in North America - PSU’s Office of International Affairs has maintained since its inception that any course offerings by the CI will be non-credit based.
- PSU faculty members have benefited from grants for their own research that the Internationalization Council (made of of PSU faculty members) awards from funds generated with CIPSU activities. A competitive grant program was established in 2015. To date eight PSU faculty members have received over $35,000 in grant funding.
- PSU students are the direct beneficiaries of scholarships supported by CIPSU’s non credit programming. PSU students have been awarded over $22,000 in scholarships to seek out study abroad opportunities as well as continue their for-credit language learning in WLL. In addition, one of the projects funded by Hanban last year was support of $6,600 toward MURP students and their
internship program in China last summer. CI also helps support campus organizations and
departments with funding requests for their own activities - of particular note, most recently the CI funded **$2,500 toward the 2017 Art and Archeology of the Silk Road** in collaboration with the School for Art and Design and the Institute of Asian Studies.

- Funding from Hanban supports 34 Confucius Classrooms in K-12 schools throughout the state of Oregon. Currently, there are about 10,000+ students learning Chinese in the CIPSU affiliated K-12 Confucius Classroom host schools in Oregon. This endeavor was supported by the Oregon State Legislature and the Oregon Department of Education to offer Chinese language as one of the foreign language entrance requirements to public universities. This is also why the GSE was given the authority to create the Chinese Language Teacher Certification program within the GTEP and the ITEP programs.

- Leadership and governance: The Director of the CIPSU is a PSU tenured faculty member. The founding Director was also a full-time PSU faculty member. The CIPSU board, made up of PSU faculty members and community partners, oversees CIPSU activities and approves all budget proposals each year. The board has been chaired by a PSU faculty member since it was established.

- At PSU, CIPSU offers non-credit language and culture classes, as well as a wide variety of cultural events for the community at large. The CIPSU also administers the HSK proficiency test of Mandarin as a foreign language. Revenue generated from these activities supports the operations of the CIPSU and allows the CIPSU to provide student scholarships and faculty research awards to PSU faculty. The PSU-Hanban contract makes clear that the University has full control over the use of these resources for any purpose related to our academic mission.

- Use of PSU facilities: As with all external grants and contracts, Hanban is charged an overhead rate (20%), which supports the use of PSU space and other resources. PSU does not provide the CIPSU with classrooms and other facilities free of charge. Hanban provided $60,000 to support the establishment of a high-tech classroom in the Karl Miller Center, which is used for both CIPSU and many other meetings and events by various academic and administrative units at the university.

- One question often raised about Confucius Institutes is the use of classroom materials, and whether or not these are selected by the Chinese government. The CIPSU Director and visiting teachers select all teaching materials. **One of the main texts used for non-credit courses was published by Meiru Liu, a PSU full-time faculty member.** Hanban does not review or approve teaching materials. (Note: In addition, CIPSU visiting scholars and the CIPSU Director select materials based on students’ feedback in order to customize materials to meet the needs of individuals).

- Selection of teachers: CIPSU teachers are visiting scholars who spend 1-2 years in Oregon on J-1 visas. The CIPSU Director and co-director, together with school district representatives, conduct interviews via Skype and select all visiting scholars, with input from the CIPSU board and approval of K-12 partners.

- CIPSU serves as resource for the university, Oregon K-12 schools, and local communities. CIPSU provides cultural lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on activities to local schools upon request, and also offers lectures and non-credit classes to local organizations including CUPA’s China Seminar (part of CUPA’s PSU-China Innovations in Urbanization Program), the Helen Gordon Child Development Center, Oregon College of Oriental Medicine, OCOM, Lan Su Garden, Nike, etc.

- CIPSU collaborates with Soochow University to host summer camps and an HSK scholarship program camp for local high school and college students. For example, a group of 38 high school will be traveling to China this summer, and another group of 10 students including one PSU student have received HSK scholarship this year and will be studying for four weeks this summer at Soochow University.

- The CIPSU collaborates with the PSU School of Music to provide opportunities for student exchanges and performances, for example, PSU music students to attend the international summer music school in Beijing and PSU opera students to perform in Suzhou, the **CIPSU funded over $6,300 toward this**
activity. Three new music teachers will come to PSU as CIPSU volunteer teachers to collaborate with the School of Music to provide musical events (Bonnie Miksch, Director of the School of Music and Theater, helped select the teachers via Skype interviews).

- **The CIPSU Collaborates with GSE to provide non-credit teacher training workshops** for both local and CI/CC Chinese language teachers, and establish exchange programs with Soochow University.
- Serves as an authorized testing center in Oregon for Chinese Language Proficiency Exams that take place regularly throughout the year. The standardized exams aim to measure the ability of non-native Chinese speakers to communicate in Chinese in living, academic, and working settings. Having the language qualification/certification allows students to study in China, obtain scholarships, and improve career opportunities.

In closing, PSU should be proud that we - through foresight and careful negotiations with Hanban - have not fallen into the national rhetoric regarding CI’s and academic freedom issues that other campuses have fallen into because they have chosen to let CI teachers teach for-credit language. We should be extolling the fact that we are the most successful and largest CI in the country with a very strong connection to the Oregon legislature and the Oregon Department of Education because of the success of PSU’s CI. It is very clear that PSU, students, faculty, business partners, and community members have benefited greatly from the activities and programming that the CI has conducted over the last 10 years.