To: Faculty Senate, for June 2018 meeting
From: Jonathan Pease, WLL
Re: PSU’s Confucius Institute

Confucius Institute has made itself a full teaching unit within PSU:
(1) CI is allowed to teach for PSU credit, with teachers PSU did not hire. (This violates original negotiating points. The bait-and-switch was enabled by keeping the contracts secret, even from the Senate.)
(2) PSU is obligated to provide and pay extra local instructors when needed.
(3) CI has taught a methods workshop at least 7 times for PSU graduate Education credit.

Teaching units need Senate approval:
(1) Even non-credit centers can only be established with approval from affected departments, Senate Educational Policy Committee, and Senate. PSU’s CI was proposed by Hanban in 2005 to PSU and PPS administrators, who implemented it, and renewed it, without input from departments or Senate.

CIs are political instruments of a one-party state:
(1) FBI is investigating covert activities by CIs nationwide.
(2) PRC government has always sought loyalty from overseas Chinese, or at least silence and self-censorship. CIs’ presence in itself is a form of intimidation among people who have projects or family in mainland China, or even those who do not.
(3) Hanban has lobbied hard for Oregon’s Confucius Classrooms. (Pushed earliest enabling legislation in US.) Confucius Classrooms’ imported K-12 teachers, curriculum and ideology have co-opted grass-roots Oregon initiatives in Chinese education. Many in local Chinese community and others have quietly pulled their kids out of these programs.

PSU’s revenue stream not all beneficial:
(1) PSU also pays into the system. And revenue calculations do not include possible lower enrollment in regular language courses, and loss of local and overseas funding sources because of antipathy to Hanban.

CI is superfluous:
(1) PSU has literally uncountable agreements, exchanges and other dealings with Chinese entities at all levels. Most pre-date the CI; almost none are dependent on the Hanban.
(2) The Hanban could run its K-12 classrooms from anywhere in Oregon; no need to be on a university campus.

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3 Intensive summer workshops on the teaching of Chinese, designed and taught entirely by Confucius Institute, 2008—2014, for 3 credits @ $100/credit (6 credits in summers that had a China session).
4 ORS 326.327 (passed in 2010), authorizes Superintendent of Public Instruction to “enter into an agreement with another nation” to place Chinese teachers in K-12 schools. The next year the Hanban hosted an Oregon legislative delegation in Beijing and pushed for Oregon HB 2010, which would have required all K-12 public schools that teach 2 or more languages to include Chinese. Both bills were the earliest of their kind in the United States.
USA does not “do the same thing” overseas:
(1) In international outreach by sovereign states, Confucius Institute model is unique.
(2) Peace Corps volunteers and others do not need to hide their beliefs, or concern themselves with American ex-pats’ attitudes about our government.

Particular points:
(1) Hanban’s deep presence throughout Oregon is possible because local Chinese community is too diffuse to resist easily. University of Washington CI, forced into existence after a state visit by Hu Jintao, ended up late, small, and located off campus, because of push-back by Seattle’s massive, well-educated China constituency. (UW faculty seldom hear from the UW’s CI, but complain about almost daily junk e-mails from PSU’s CI)
(2) In earliest proposal, Hanban suggested letting CI teach some of our regular courses. Later, PSU’s CI tried to pressure School of Education to let them run the Chinese GTEP program.
(3) After CI appeared, some PSU Chinese language students showed an uptick in homework essays containing wholesale phrases characteristic of party bureaucrats, veering sometimes into full plagiarism.
(4) In early days of PSU’s CI, a WLL administrator advised keeping an open mind, because CI people might become converted to American democracy like Soviet guest teachers in the 60s. Later changed views after removing an unauthorized CI poster from WLL’s bulletin board and being threatened by CI about violating “academic freedom.”
(5) Hanban courts administrators with trips to China; has offered trips to some China faculty but not others, leading to potential discord. When challenged, people who have taken those trips can be shrill.
(6) Faculty members across North America have refrained from speaking out against CIs at their schools, in order to shield close colleagues who come from China.
(7) Prestige universities get better contracts than lower-tier schools (waived secrecy clauses…); still, most top American universities have not opened CIs.
(8) The only major American Chinese newspaper that reports on CIs or other state-backed harassment often goes missing from Portland newsstands. Elsewhere in US, Chinese agents have been caught removing stacks of these papers.

Major groups that have recommended closing Institutes or refused Hanban funding:
(1) Canadian Association of University Teachers; AAUP; Association for Asian Studies (7,000 members); European Association of Chinese Studies (1200 members).

Universities that Rejected Confucius Institutes:
(1) Harvard, Penn, UC Berkeley, San Diego, Santa Barbara; Claremont, Mt. Holyoke; Universities of Wisconsin, Colorado, Manitoba, British Columbia (3 times)…
(2) Kyoto and Tokyo Universities, Australian National, Southern Denmark, Copenhagen, Aarhus, Oslo…

Institutes terminated:
(1) McMaster University and Toronto School District, after human-rights incident; University of Lyon.
(2) Toronto closure led to CAUT and AAUP recommendations to close or take control over Institutes. Penn State immediately closed its Institute. U. Chicago followed, after years of controversy. Most recent closure is Texas A&M.