RIT-Hunan University

International Partnership Summary

Overview

RIT and Hunan University entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on August 15, 2013. The general provisions of the initial MOU included short- and long-term teaching and seminar development and other forms of faculty collaboration, primarily between RIT’s College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, the Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences and the E. Phillip Saunders College of Business. The MOU also included provisions for student exchange, study abroad, and “2+2”, “3+2” and other forms of reciprocal articulation agreements allowing students to attend the partner institution. In addition, the MOU included a provision for “exploration and feasibility assessment of developing a new ‘College of Design’ in Shenzhen, China”.

The relationship with Hunan was a direct result of the strategic planning for internationalization and our efforts to formally focus on Asian academic partnerships. Key aspects of our strategy included focusing on building ties to national universities in China whose academic reputations match well with RIT’s. Dr. Lorraine Justice, Dean of the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, has built on her established reputation and networks in China to facilitate faculty ties to Hunan and build broad support for our partnership with Hunan University. The partnership with Hunan University evolved quickly due to the enthusiastic support of faculty in the School of Design, and Dr. Justice’s professional and academic ties with Dr. Renke He, Dean of Hunan’s School of Design1.

Hunan University’s School of Design is consistently ranked among the top design schools in China. The school was asked by the Shenzhen Municipal Government to lead the development of one of nine “specialized joint international schools” planned for the city. Other proposed joint specialized schools include a school of engineering, a school of science, and a school of business, each to be done in collaboration with an international partner. The RIT-Hunan Shenzhen School of Design will be the first such specialized international school to open in the city.

Status and Structure of the Joint School of Design

As of June 15, 2015, RIT and Hunan had finalized all of the agreements required to submit a full application to the Guangdong Provincial Ministry of Education, and the China (national) Ministry of Education, to establish a “joint secondary foreign cooperatively run school.” The national ministry could still conceivably reject the application; however, initial indications from the ministry are very positive and supportive. We anticipate knowing the final status of our application by late-October,

2015. Hunan has included enrollment plans for the school in their annual national enrollment projection. Beginning Fall 2016, Hunan will enroll students intending to study at the Shenzhen campus.

As a “secondary school”, the design school is technically an academic division of Hunan University. The alternative to a secondary school would have been to create an “independent foreign cooperatively run school.” We chose not to pursue “independent school” status due to the capital requirements typically associated with these types of schools; the lengthy and uncertain application process; and, the potential for greater government intervention in the management of independent schools.

The cooperation agreement between RIT and Hunan University, in tandem with the school charter, provides the following for management of the school:

The creation of a “joint management committee” comprised of three members appointed by Hunan, three members appointed by RIT, and two invited members from local civic organizations from outside of Hunan or RIT.

The appointment of a Dean and Vice Dean, with the Dean being a Chinese national appointed by Hunan University, and approved by the joint management committee. The Vice-Dean is to be a U.S. national, and approved by the joint management committee.

The creation of an “Academic Committee” charged with making recommendations to the Joint Management Committee on issues related to the management of the school. The Academic Committee is comprised of the Dean, the Vice Dean and four academic representatives—two nominated from RIT and two nominated from Hunan University.

The programs to be offered at the school include undergraduate programs in Industrial Design, Graphic Design, 3-D Digital Design, with the possibility of offering the MFA and other graduate design programs as approved.

Faculty for the school will come from both Hunan University and RIT, as well as international faculty who are hired specifically to teach at the Shenzhen campus.
Hunan University is situated at the foot of the picturesque Yuelu Mountain in the historically and culturally renowned City of Changsha, capital of Hunan Province. It enjoys the title of an "Ancient Millenarian Academy, Famous Centennial University". As one of the key and most comprehensive universities affiliated with the Ministry of Education, it has been included in the state's "Project 211" and "Project 985" for priority investment and construction. Professor Liu Keli is the Party Secretary of the CPC Hunan University Committee and Professor Zhao Yueyu is the President.

Hunan University, an extension of one of the four famous Academies of the Song Dynasty, dates back to the period of the founding of Yuelu Academy in 976 AD. It was reconstructed into Hunan Institute of Higher Learning in 1903, renamed Hunan University in 1926, and subordinated to the Republic of China's Ministry of Education as one of several state universities in 1937. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Central People's Government appointed Li Da, a well-known philosopher and educator, as the first President of Hunan University. Chairman Mao Zedong inscribed the name of the University. In 1953, Hunan University was renamed the Central-South Institute of Civil Engineering. Later it was renamed Hunan Polytechnic College, and was finally, named Hunan University in 1959. Since 1963, the University has been affiliated with the Ministry of Mechanical Industry and in 1978 it was approved as a key and comprehensive university of China, and became directly affiliated with the Ministry of Education in 1998. In 2000, Hunan University and Hunan Institute of Finance and Economics merged to give shape to a new comprehensive Hunan University.

The University has a Graduate School and 23 colleges and departments. Professional disciplines involve 11 subject categories, such as philosophy, economics, law, education, literature, history, science, engineering, management, medicine and arts, which offer 25 disciplines authorized to confer Ph.D. degrees, 41 disciplines authorized to confer Master's degree, and 20 academic degree authorizations, 2 key first-order disciplines and 14 key disciplines honored at the national level, as well as 21 post-doctoral programs. It has a staff of over 4,300 with a faculty of more than 1950, of which, over 1,270 are professors and associate professors, 4 are members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering, 4 are invited-members at both Chinese Academies of Sciences and Engineering, 33 are members of the state's Thousands Talents Program, 4 are members of the state’s Ten Thousand Talents Program, 24 are Cheongkong Chair Professors, 18 have been honored with financial support from National Outstanding Youth Fund, 5 are members of the Academic Degree Commission under the State Council, 21 are members of the state's Outstanding Talents Project of the 21st century, 134 are reputed as New Century Excellent Talents in support programs of the Ministry of Education, 34 are members of Hundred Talents Program of Hunan Province, 16 are chair Professors of the Lotus Scholarship Program of Hunan Province, 199 are Council Experts for Special Allowance, 4 are winners of the National Distinguished Teacher Prizes, and 8 innovative teams are supported by Program for Cheongkong Scholars and Innovative Research Team in Universities.

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The student body totals over 34,000, of which over 20,800 are undergraduates and 14,000 are graduates.

Hunan University is equipped with 2 state key laboratories, 2 national engineering technology research center, 1 international research center of national level, 1 key discipline laboratory of the Commission for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND), 5 key laboratories of the Ministry of Education, 5 provincial or ministerial-level engineering technology centers, 14 key laboratories of Hunan Province, 1 provincial engineering laboratory, 4 key laboratories of institutions of higher learning of Hunan Province, 3 key laboratories of mechanical industry, and 17 provincial-level social science research bases. In the past decade, it has undertaken around 10,000 scientific research projects at various levels, gained 2 second-class awards for the national natural science, 3 second-class awards for the national technological invention, 1 first-class award and 18 national second-class awards for the Science and Technology Advancement, in addition to 6 second-class awards for Outstanding Achievements in Humanities and Social Sciences at Universities.

Hunan University enjoys academic exchanges with 140 universities and research institutes across the world. More than 300 recruited experts come every year for long or short term courses. The enrollment of overseas students from over 40 countries and regions is approximately 1000. Confucius Institutes of Honam University, University of Regina, and Colorado State University have been established cooperated by Hunan University.

Location

The school will be located in the city of Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. Shenzhen is situated directly north of Hong Kong, with a (2013) population of approximately 11 million people. The city is the high-tech and manufacturing hub of southern China, home to the world's third-busiest container port, and the fourth-busiest airport on the Chinese mainland. It is one of the country's most popular tourist destinations. Shenzhen was designated as a State-level innovative city by the China central government and the number of PCT (Patent Cooperation Treaty) applications from Shenzhen has led all Chinese cities for 10 consecutive years. Shenzhen ranked fourth in Forbes' 2013 list of innovative mainland cities. The city is also well-known for design, with more than 6,000 design companies employing more than 60,000 people. On Nov. 19, 2008, UNESCO named Shenzhen a member of its Creative Cities Network and awarded Shenzhen the title of City of Design. The city is one of the fastest growing cities in China and has a unique status as a special economic zone, where trade and new models for economic development can be explored and developed³.

Shenzhen is comprised of ten districts, each with its own status as a sub-municipality. The proposed Hunan-RIT School of Design will be located in the Bao’an District. The Bao’an District has the largest population of the ten districts, and is a hub for both design and innovation activities in Shenzhen. The municipality of Shenzhen is outlined by the purple border in Figure 1.0 and the general location of the Bao’an District can be identified as the yellow area on the left side of the map.

Figure 1.0: Map of the Shenzhen Municipality


Facilities

All of the facilities, and associated upgrades, are being provided by the Bao’an District government and the Municipality of Shenzhen. The Municipality and Hunan University are responsible for operation, maintenance, and management of the facilities. The campus facility is located on Hongwen Road in Baocheng 20, Xin’an Community, Bao’an district. The facility covers approximately 15,000 square meters (161,460 square feet), including 14,582 square meters (156,000 square feet) of instructional, office and dormitory space, and 1,060 square meters (11,500 square feet) of subsidiary land and recreational facilities.

4 Photos of the building exterior are included in the appendix
RIT Stakeholder Communication on the Partnership

September 18, 2013 RIT China-Asia Initiatives, including the Hunan and Beijing Jiaotong University Partnerships presented to the RIT Global Delivery Corporation Board.


April 4, 2014 Details RIT-Hunan and RIT-Beijing Jiaotong Partnerships presented to the RIT Global Delivery Corporation Board.

September 25, 2014 RIT-Hunan Agreement establishing the joint secondary school presented to the RIT Global Delivery Corporation Board. A motion to approve the draft agreement is approved.

November 13, 2014 RIT-Hunan and RIT-Beijing Jiaotong University partnerships presented to the Education Core Committee of the RIT Board of Trustees.

January 12, 2015 RIT-Hunan and RIT-Beijing Jiaotong University partnerships are presented to the Executive Committee of the RIT Board of Trustees

February 9, 2015 RIT-Hunan and RIT-Beijing Jiaotong University partnerships are presented to International Education Taskforce of the Academic Senate.

Major Delegation Visits

August 2, 2013, initial Hunan University delegation visit to RIT, meetings with RIT administration, CIAS leadership and faculty.

August 13-16, 2013, Provost Haefner, Executive V.P. Miller, Associate Provost Myers, and Dean Justice meets Hunan and Shenzhen delegations.

May 7-11, 2014, Provost Haefner, Executive V.P. Watters, Executive V.P. Miller, meets Hunan and Shenzhen delegation.

October 25, 2014, Delegations from Hunan University, Shenzhen Municipal Government and Bao’an District Municipal Government visit to meet with RIT administration and faculty.

November 9-12, 2014, Provost Haefner Associate Provost Myers, meets Hunan and Shenzhen delegation

May 7-9, 2015, Dean Justice meets with Hunan University administration and Shenzhen delegation.

May 11 – 15, 2015, Provost Haefner and Associate Provost Myers meet with Hunan and Shenzhen delegations for official Tri-Party signing ceremony.
Major Agreements and Dates

**RIT-Hunan MOU**: Signed August 15, 2013 by Dr. Haefner and Dr. Miller and Hunan Vice President Dr. Chen Shou. The general provisions of the initial MOU included short- and long-term teaching and seminar development and other forms of faculty collaboration, primarily between RIT’s College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, the Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences and the E. Phillip Saunders College of Business. The MOU also included provisions for student exchange, study abroad, and “2+2”, “3+2” and other forms of reciprocal articulation agreements allowing students to attend the partner institution. In addition, the MOU included a provision for “exploration and feasibility assessment of developing a new ‘College of Design’ in Shenzhen, China”.

**RIT-Hunan Cooperation Agreement**: to establish the joint design school. Agreement signed by Dr. Destler and Hunan Vice President Chen Shou, October 24, 2014

**Charter** of the joint design school: to define the administrative and governance of the Hunan-RIT School. Agreement signed by Dr. Destler and Hunan Vice President Chen Shou, October 24, 2014

**Addendum to the RIT-Hunan Agreement**: to address certain issues pertaining to the admissions process as required by the China Ministry of Education. Agreement signed by Dr. Destler and Hunan Vice President Chen Shou, April 20, 2015.

**RIT-Hunan-Shenzhen Municipality Tri-party Agreement**: to secure facilities and funding from the municipality and certain commitments of the parties related to the operation and start-up of the school. Agreement signed by Dr. Haefner, May 14, 2015.

Key people from Hunan University

**Dr. Yueyu Zhao** was named the President of Hunan University in 2011, previously serving as Vice President, Director of Post Graduate Studies, Director of the Division of Science, and Deputy Director of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Solid Mechanics from Xiangtan University (1983), a Master’s degree in General Mechanics from the Beijing Institute of Technology (1987), and a PhD in Structural Engineering from Hunan University (2000). Dr. Zhao is also engaged as an expert in the evaluation of mechanics group of the National Natural Science Foundation of China, executive director of Chinese Society of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (CSTAM), editorial member of the Chinese Journal of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, Engineering Mechanics, and Advances in Mechanics of CSTAM, and executive editor of the Journal of Dynamics and Control.

**Dr. Chen Shou** is the Vice President of Hunan University, where he completed an undergraduate degree in Computer Science and Application (1984); a Master degree in Engineering Management (1986); and hi Ph.D. in Management Science and Engineering (1998). From 1992 – 2004 he also served in the roles at Hunan University: Vice Dean of the International Business School, Dean of
the College of Business, Vice Director of the Graduate School, Assistant to the President, and Vice President. He is also a member of the Social Science Committee of the Ministry of Education, a member of the MBA Education Steering Committee, Deputy Director of the Chinese Association of Quantitative Economics (CAQE) and Chairman of Hunan University Education Committee. He is editor in chief and editorial member of five national core periodicals including *System Engineering, The Journal of Quantitative & Technical Economics and Journal of Management Sciences in China*.

**Dr. Renke He** is currently the dean and professor of School of Design at Hunan University in China, where he studied from 1978 to 1984 at the Civil Engineering and Architecture departments. He is also director of the Chinese Industrial Design Education Committee and vice-chair of the China Industrial Design Education Association. From 1987 to 1988, he was a visiting scholar at the Industrial Design Department of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen and, from 1998 to 1999, at School of Design of North Carolina State University in the US.

**Key contacts at RIT**

Dr. Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. James Myers, Associate Provost, International Education & Global Programs

Dr. Lorraine Justice, Dean, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

Mr. Peter Byrne, Chair, School of Design, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
Appendix A: Photos of the Proposed Hunan University-RIT’s Design School Facilities in Shenzhen, China

Figure 2: Main academic building in Shenzhen
Figure 3: Office and housing in Shenzhen