

Time*



line

Newsletter of Faculty of Education International Student Union

No.9 September 2015

Dear Reader, We would like to introduce you our newsletter 'Time*line', please feel free to send us any feedback/news/articles/ideas or things that you are interested in! News will be shaped to your needs: you will find open calls for conferences, academic issues, activities and things that just happen to us every day...enjoy☺

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1. New Students of 2015 by Masaki Onuma

In September, Beijing Normal University (BNU) welcomed new students for the year 2015. These students include 11 students for PhD program in Educational Leadership and Policy (Comparative Education), 7 students for MA program in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration, and 16 students for MA program in Educational Leadership and Policy (Comparative Education). Similar to previous students, the new ones are also from various countries of the world covering both north and south.

On September 10, the new students were given orientation by Xiao xiao, Academic Secretary of the Faculty of Education. Xiao xiao explained the BNU school calendar, credit



system, and general information for living and studying at BNU. Then, the new students selected their class monitor in respective programmes. Accordingly, Maria Khan was selected as

the PhD class monitor, while Rachel Witt and Dann Gaymer were selected as the monitors for MA in HESA and CE respectively. After that, Samson Maekele, the Acting President of the union, introduced the International Students Union, Faculty of Education (ISU-FOE) to the new students. Samson explained that the union will expect more from the new students to bring fresh ideas and creativity. The new students also stated their readiness and willingness to contribute as part of the union.



2. Students' Union: Empowering Students by Abdulghani Muthanna and Samson Maekele



International Students Union, Faculty of Education (ISU-FOE) of Beijing Normal University (BNU) is a student-led organization that has been elected by international students to perform many academic and non-academic activities within the university in general and the faculty in particular. There are two main objectives for the FEISU. The first

one is to find out the needs and interests of international students and then report to the administrative staff which always work hard to satiate these needs and interests. Secondly, the union is formed to invite students to attend different academic and non-academic activities that nurture the mind, soul and heart!

Most of the academic activities that the union has performed are attending conferences, seminars, lectures, and research group discussions with professors and senior students, as well as student-to-student consultations. The union also works to promote students cultural and global understanding. An emphasis is given to build Chinese-international students' student-to-student communication and understanding of Chinese culture and history. These activities are facilitated through various activities such as organizing cultural festivals, dialogue events and other platforms. Moreover, the union organizes field trips to different educational sites or touristic places/parks for enjoyment and entertainment as it believes that having good time helps a lot in achieving the academic tasks and knowing the environment and the people.

To engage students in more different activities, the ISU-FE has four ministries that perform various academic and non-academic activities. For instance, the Ministry of Academics is responsible for involving students in academic writing competitions, attending and participating in conferences and seminars, facilitating academic discussions between professors and students, and between students themselves. In addition, the Ministry of

Academics invites instructors to give lectures/presentations to students on topics that interest the students or develop their academic skills. Another ministry named 'Ministry of Culture and Activities' is meant to organize and celebrate graduation ceremonies and festival events; it also organizes activities that get Chinese and international students together to promote inter-cultural understanding. The Ministry of Media is also established with the purpose of disseminating information and releasing the union's newsletter "Timelines"; it also prepares posters and brochures and corresponds with all international students about any activity happening. Furthermore, the ISU-FE has the Ministry of Career Development that focuses on identifying students' career needs and help students (MA students in particular) to find interesting organizations for doing the internships.

All the ministries work together for the sake of supporting international students and make the study and life easy and enjoyable for them. The union is highly delighted to announce that most of the goals set this year have been fully realized and wish the new coming elected ministries to work harder to have such a successful path.



3. A Book Review by Abdulghani Muthanna

Educational Policies and Legislation in China, 1st ed. Xiao Zhou Xu & Wei hui Mei, 2009.

Zhejiang University Press and Homa&Sekey Books; Paramus, New Jersey: U.S.A.

269 pages, ISBN 978-308-06590-0, paperback

Policies of Education in the Great China: A Way to Go Forward

Education is the highest and noblest activity in the lives of human beings (Xu & Mei, 2009) and is considered a key component in the individual and social development of nations (Bassey, 1992; Muthanna, 2013). Only with education, challenges become opportunities, intractable issues become solvable, and setbacks get tackled (Xu & Mei, 2009). Furthermore, Xue Ji says that to establish "a state and rule the people, education comes first" (as cited in Xu & Mei, 2009, p. 3). Despite the accumulated wealth of positive educational experiences worldwide, problems and challenges in different educational contexts still exist and appear and this might be due to the fact that human beings are dynamic and demand further

innovations and reforms in many aspects particularly in the educational aspect. The innovations of the educational aspect of any country might start from improving the current educational systems and policies and end with practical implementations of these policies. However, the larger the education system is, the more challenging it becomes for educational researchers. Educational researchers are, according to Bassey (1992), either those who seek to understand or those who seek to change. But I personally think that there are many educational researchers who tend to understand and change at the same time and this could be the third type of educational researchers the world needs these days.

China, as history shows, has the largest educational system in the world (Xu & Mei, 2009). Therefore, I personally think it is very useful to read and comprehend the Chinese educational system that might contain many educational systems used in many other parts of the world. To have a good command of the educational system and policies of China, an interested scholar can navigate through the Education in China Series (four different books). This paper is, however, limited to reviewing the book of Educational Policies and Legislation in China by Xiaozhou Xu and Weihui Mei. This book gives a good interpretation of the values guiding China's educational policies and legislation formulation and basic framework; different educational policies in China are presented with some authors' reflections. The reflections of different stories on some ancient Chinese educators (such as Confucius, Mencius, & Xue Ji) add much flavor to the book and make it more motivating and interesting. Through these stories, a scholar can learn many factual philosophical ideas and thoughts.

The book contains 9 chapters that are systemically organized and easily comprehended. These chapters cover past and present educational policies of China and also refer to some possible future educational policies. Chapter 1 addresses the theoretic basis of educational policies focusing on education position, quality, and equity. Within this chapter, educational laws are also introduced. A detailed explanation of educational legislations of China with more focus on the three significant educational legislations and laws of China is provided in chapter 2.

In chapter 3, the authors outlined the educational development and planning and how they occurred in China. Chapter 4 is the longest one and concentrates on providing the policies of studying abroad and higher education internationalization in China. History of private education and its current developmental policies in China are discussed in chapter 5.

A detailed review of lifelong learning and teacher education policies are presented in chapters 6 and 7. In the last chapter, the authors presented the characteristics of educational policy and legislation in China from content, process, and value perspectives. Trends of educational policy and legislation in China are also reflected upon in this chapter.

This book is also useful for Chinese graduate students majoring in higher education, teacher education, comparative education, etc. as it aims to give them a big picture of the development of educational policies and legislation in China. Further, it is useful for international students who are interested in conducting international comparative studies with a focus on educational policy and legislation. Moreover, education policy makers and researchers can benefit from reading this book as it might have a good influence on their educational views and might open new paths of thinking. The book is well structured and contains simple language.

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4. Happy Birth-Month of September

From this issue, we celebrate the birth-month of the following Faculty of Education International Students. Timeline wishes you “Happy Birth-Month” and all the best.

EFTIMI SYLARI
GBELEME, YAOVI MICHEL
SUEBNUSORN, WANWISA
LIN, GOETHALS

“Happy Birth-Month!!”