

Editorial

It is with great pleasure that we present the sixth issue of *The China Papers* and the final issue from the three-year pilot program *Teaching Science in English*. This set of papers, on aspects of learning and teaching, is one of the results of a professional development program that has been taking place at The University of Sydney for Chinese university science teachers. The development program is a collaborative project between the University and the China Scholarship Council. In the words of the Council 'As a new step in the reform process in higher education, the Ministry of Education of China has decided to introduce bilingual teaching in science subjects in Chinese universities. To this end the China Scholarship Council has started a scholarship program for English and professional upgrading for science teachers from Chinese universities in support of this endeavour'.

For inclusion of a paper into an issue of *The China Papers* the paper must be written as a result of ideas and understandings developed during the Sydney program and to reflect issues and ideas that are relevant to the individual's learning and teaching needs. These may be related to issues and aspects of learning and teaching theories, or to research or developments carried out or initiated whilst involved with the Sydney program. A significant criterion for inclusion in *The China Papers* is that the contribution must be seen as having the potential to be developed further into an acceptable international journal article and to have a real and practical application to the Chinese teacher's home institution.

These contributions come at a particularly important time for science tertiary teaching in the People's Republic of China. As part of the *Higher Education Teaching Quality Reforms* announced in May 2003, the Chinese Ministry of Education has implemented an *Education Invigorating Action Plan 2003-2007*. One of the aims of this plan is to improve the quality of undergraduate teaching by adopting new teaching modes and using new technologies in tertiary teaching. We hope that the papers contained in this publication go some way to addressing these issues and responding to this initiative.

Within this volume are papers on the use of problem solving, case studies, concept mapping in supporting active learning. Together with the papers from the previous five issues of this publication, these papers are helping to build a new way of learning and teaching in the People's Republic of China. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chinese visiting teachers and our colleagues within the Faculties of Science and Education and Social Work for the helpful and collaborative approach that was taken in the production of these papers.

The China Papers are also online (<http://science.uniserve.edu.au/pubs/china/>) in pdf.

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