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Stress-Free Primary Education and Stricter Higher Education: Toward the Systematic Evolution of Chinese Education

“We shouldn’t encourage high school students to study overly hard, nor should we encourage undergraduates to indulge themselves.” This remark was made by a leader of the Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE) at the International Forum on Higher Education Annual Conference, held in Ningbo, China, in early November of this year. Observers believe that his words summarize the systematic evolution of Chinese education that is intended in the government’s new policies for reforming both primary and undergraduate education, and in the Double First-Class University Project.

**Bridging the divide between elementary and secondary education**

For a long time, taking the college entrance exam—a “wooden bridge” that is extremely narrow relative to China’s huge population—has marked a dividing line for Chinese students between their lives before and after. Under the pressure of great competition and the traditional idea that “learning is the noblest of human pursuits,” many Chinese children receive education even before birth (prenatal education), and attend various training courses at a young age, including painting and foreign languages, to cultivate their tastes and learning abilities. For most students, such courses will run throughout their primary education years. At the same time, from kindergarten on, they are required to do a great deal of studying. Thick glasses and a heavy school bag can be seen on many children. For such reasons, Chinese students have been praised by overseas universities for their strong knowledge base, yet criticized for their lack of creativity and imagination.

However, this “Purgatory-like” schooling ends immediately after a student’s admission to university. For those who do not have enough self-discipline, the university is their paradise. Their lives will become a series of games, romantic relationships, and sleep. Learning will become secondary. Four years of shiftless pursuits results in a great waste of students’ academic ability and educational resources.

In summary, in the eyes of Chinese policy mak-
ers, the problem lies, on the one hand, in the “cramming” method of primary education. Students are physically and mentally exhausted, and thus emptied of creativity. On the other hand, higher education is too lenient, and encourages students to waste their last golden years of learning before entering the real world.

The basic logic of treating diseases is to suit the remedy to the cause. For example, since the burden on students is heavy at the primary education stage, alleviating that burden is a natural cure, particularly for kindergarteners and very young pupils. Courses in kindergarten should be given in the form of games, and typical primary school curricula should be forbidden. Meanwhile, in-school time as well as homework should be reduced. Training institutions should be regulated to minimize burdens on K–12 students. The MOE has also formulated an implementation plan to clarify the responsibilities of all parties as well as prevent and control myopia among children and adolescents. The purpose of the plan is to reduce the heavy academic burden both in and out of the classroom.

As for higher education, we believe it is necessary to increase the burden on students and, more precisely, to become stricter with them, which is also in line with China’s ongoing Double First-Class University Project.

Recently, Huazhong University of Science and Technology caused a great sensation by transferring 18 students whose credits are not up to standard from undergraduate to junior-college status—the incident can be regard as a landmark. China’s MOE has also issued relevant policies to speed up the construction of high-level undergraduate education, known as the reformational “40 Polices on Higher Education for the New Era.” The overall goal of these changes is to build several benchmark schools and first-class undergraduate programs within five years, and to form a world-class, high-level undergraduate education system with Chinese characteristics. This is also the first clear timetable and roadmap given by China for undergraduate education reform.

One of the new policies requires that for college students, examinations should “increase the proportion of process assessment results in the total results of a course” and should “improve the monitoring, evaluation, and feedback mechanism for the students’ learning process.” In terms of the form that examinations should take, it is emphasized that faculty should “integrate written examinations, oral examinations, nonstandard answer examinations, and other types of examinations.” Another policy addresses the problem of students simply “going through the motions” in writing their graduate theses, and stipulates that the overall management of designing thesis topics and proposals should be strengthened, and that the form, content, and complexity of thesis defenses should be strictly supervised.

**Focusing on faculty and students alike**

It is worth noting that the new policies are not only strict with students, but also with university faculty. Many adjustments have been made to the evaluation system for faculty, including strengthening the evaluation of teaching performance and implementing a “one-vote veto” in the promotion of teachers. The policies state that the reward for outstanding teachers should be increased, and that teaching quality and scientific research ability should be regarded as equally important in professional evaluations, performance appraisals, and allowance allocations. For staff mainly engaged in teaching, basic salaries should be raised to a reasonable level.

The reforms also require monitoring teachers’ personal credit histories, improving disciplinary mechanisms for teachers, constructing teacher development centers in colleges and universities, and providing training courses to improve faculty skills, so as to comprehensively enhance teachers’ sense of responsibility and confidence.

In addition, the director of the MOE’s Department of Higher Education mentioned in his recent speech that “unconscionous programs should be closed down.” This remark is worth pondering. We should expect that as China’s colleges and universities have been expanding rapidly for many years, some substandard programs would inevitably result. But if we want to build high-quality programs, we should eliminate those of poor quality. Therefore, the effective exercise of authority and standard-setting will have a great impact on the development of colleges and universities.

**Evaluating policies: a work in progress**

To build first-class undergraduate education is actually an important aspect of the Double First-Class University Project, and will certainly impact the standards of that project. After all, there are only two years left before the final evaluation of the project in 2020, and it has been reported that there will be a midterm evaluation, of which the most pressing concern is still the standards.

AcaBridge invites outstanding scholars from home and abroad to reach out to us. We’ll help you contact colleges and universities, provide one-on-one, personal consultation, and help you learn about and apply for talent-recruitment programs. If you need any help, please contact our recruitment consultant at consultant@acabridge.edu.cn. For more details, visit our website at www.edu.cn/jjzg.
About Us
Founded in 1920, Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT), which is under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, is a national key university offers specializations in science, engineering, management and many other fields. It is a member of the C9 League and also the first universities to be part of Project 985 and one in list of “Double First-Class” University project.

HIT was ranked as the world’s sixth best university for engineering, and the second in China, according to the 2018 US NEWS Global Universities ranking. In the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2017 ranking, it was eighth in China and among the global top 200. In the same year, HIT had a subject area ranked among the global top 0.01%, according to Essential Science Indicators (ESI) data.

Together with the Shenzhen Municipal Government, HIT founded Harbin Institute of Technology, Shenzhen (HITSZ), which was established in 2002 as HIT Shenzhen Graduate School and currently serves as a key campus of HIT. It is the first university in Shenzhen which belong to C9 League member, also in the list of Project 985 and “Double First-Class” University project which starts to enroll undergraduate students.

Shenzhen is a city born to innovate, Shenzhen has become a frontrunner in promoting innovation-driven development when China’s economy steps into the new normal. Shenzhen is now widely known as a ‘City of Makers’ and a ‘City of Innovation.’ With a brand-new look, HITSZ will follow the HIT tradition, keep on the philosophy of high starting point, high standard to attract more international excellent talents and carries forward the Shenzhen spirit to serve as a contributor to national and regional economic and social development.

Teaching and Research
Among the 330+ full-time teachers in HITSZ, 80% of them have studied or worked overseas, and 90% have been recognized as high-level talents by the city and nation. HITSZ owns more than 40 key laboratories, engineering laboratories, and public platforms above municipal level. In terms of funds, HITSZ has years of accumulated scientific study funds amounting to over 1200 million RMB. What is more, HITSZ has undertaken more than 3000 scientific study programs and established cooperation with over 800 enterprises in Shenzhen, and has solved more than 1400 major technological issues. HITSZ has realized annual increase of 30% in the number of SCI paper for the last 5 years. Additionally, 10.3% ESI high cited papers of Shenzhen were from HITSZ.

Schools and Research Centers
HITSZ promotes interdisciplinary studies within 10 schools covering 22 disciplines. 34 research centers in different schools serve as the basic teaching and research units, which focus on developing avant-garde research to promote regional economic development.

For more details, please refer to www.hitsz.edu.cn.
Established in 1952 and located in Harbin – the beautiful “Ice City”, Northeast Forestry University is in national “211 Project” directly under the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China and key construction projects of “Advantage Discipline Innovation Platform”. It is a multidisciplinary university integrating agriculture, science, industry, economics, management, culture, law, medicine and art with forestry science as its advantage and forestry engineering as its feature.

1. Recruitment of high-level talents

**Relevant support policies for talents**

NEFU vigorously implements the “5211” talent introduction plan, and provides a guarantee of talent for realizing the grand goal of building NEFU into a world-class forestry university and comprehensively promoting the construction of the “Double First class” university. The level and treatment of imported talents (house purchase subsidy and personal emolument are both pre-tax) are as follows:

1. **Leading Talents or Teams**
   Academicians of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, academicians of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, and foreign academicians of famous overseas academic institutions; Or someone who has obtained important scientific research results recognized by domestic and foreign counterparts, and has quite strong competitiveness and wide academic influence in the industry.

**Remuneration:** it depends on the talents’ condition

2. **Distinguished Young Scholars**
   Scholars with a PhD who have published high-level academic papers in the top academic journals in the field; Outstanding young scholars at home and abroad who have the potential to get awards of talent programs such as Recruitment Program of Global Experts, National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, Changjiang Scholars Program, Young overseas high-level talents introduction plan, and National special support program for high-level talents, etc.; Scholars with a title at or above the level of associate professor from well-known overseas universities, or researchers with the same title as those from overseas well-known research academy (institute); The age is generally under 40 years old, especially distinguished ones can be relaxed to 45 years old.

**Remuneration:** Appointment as professor; Annual salary system, starting from RMB 300,000 a year, Subsidies for house purchase starting from RMB500,000, Start-up funds for scientific research in natural science and acquisition expenses of equipment starting from RMB 2,000,000, Start-up funds for scientific research in humanities and social science starting from RMB 300,000.

3. **Excellent Young Teachers**
   Scholars with a PhD who have published high-level academic papers in the influential academic journals in the field; Outstanding young scholars at home and abroad who have the potential to get awards of projects such as Provincial Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, Longjiang Scholars and Provincial Outstanding Young and Middle-aged experts, etc.; Generally under 35 years old, especially outstanding ones can be relaxed.

**Remuneration:** Appointment as professor or associate professor; House purchase subsidies are from RMB 150,000 to RMB 300,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in natural science and acquisition expenses of equipment range from RMB 300,000 to RMB 1,000,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in humanities and social science range from RMB 100,000 to RMB 300,000.

4. **Young Backbone**
   A doctorate holder who is from a well-known university at home or abroad or who has been engaged in teaching or scientific research in a well-known academic institution at home or abroad for more than 3 years. Young backbone who has published high-level academic papers in the outstanding academic journals in the field, who has the ability to obtain the National Natural Science Foundation or the National Foundation for Philosophy and Social Sciences, and who has great development potential in academic and scientific research, etc. The age is generally under 35 years old, especially outstanding ones can be relaxed.

**Remuneration:** Appointment as associate professor or lecturer; House purchase subsidies are from RMB 30,000 to RMB 150,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in natural science and acquisition expenses of equipment range from RMB 150,000 to RMB 300,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in humanities and social science range from RMB 50,000 to RMB 100,000; Implementation of the national wage and school allowance standard and additional post subsidy RMB 1000 per month in the first 2 years during the first employment period.

5. **Excellent Young Teachers**
   The excellent young teacher whose moral quality is high, with outstanding achievements and good academic development potential. The first degree should be a full-time undergraduate degree from a well-known university, and applicants should possess a doctoral candidate education background and a degree at a non-equivalent education level; A non-foreign language teacher should be proficient in a foreign language, and a foreign language teacher should reach level 8 of a professional foreign language. In principle, doctoral education background and degree are required and the age is generally under 35 years old.

**Remuneration:** The position of appointment shall be executed in accordance with the relevant documents; Implementation of the national wage and school allowance standards; House purchase subsidies are RMB 50,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in natural science range from RMB 50,000 to RMB 150,000; Start-up funds for scientific research in humanities and social science range from RMB 30,000 to RMB 50,000.

NEFU recruits the flexible talents, and the treatment of flexible talents depends on the circumstances.

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Zhang Chunlei (Tel: +86-0451-82190165)
Please submit your resume to nefumoe@vip.163.com

**II. Recruitment of Full-time postdoctoral**

Someone who has high moral quality, outstanding achievements and good academic development potential, and could do full-time post-doctoral research in our university. Received a doctorate from a well-known university or research institution at home and abroad, and the doctoral time is generally no more than 3 years, generally under 35 years old.

**Contact information**
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Please submit your resume to nefubgb@nefu.edu.cn
The Second Laoshan Young Scholars Forum of Qingdao University in 2018

Time: December 19, 2018

Introduction to the Forum

As the poem goes, “Though the Mountain Tai is very high, it is not as gorgeous as Laoshan Mountain.” Laoshan Mountain is the first peak of China’s coastline, and has the name of “first mountain” at sea. It stands on the shore of the Yellow Sea, tall and majestic, with a long history and a strong culture. With its name coming from Laoshan Mountain, “Laoshan Forum” is one of the main platforms hosted by Qingdao University for talents introduction, aiming at building a high-level academic exchange platform for outstanding young scholars at home and abroad in various disciplines to discuss the hot researches of different subjects around the academic development frontier, promote academic exchanges and cooperation, and enhance mutual understanding and friendship.

Qingdao University is a key comprehensive university in Shandong Province. Located in the famous historical and cultural city of Qingdao, it nestles below Fushan Mountain and faces the Yellow sea. The university now has a number of national science and technology innovation platforms: State Key Laboratory, National Joint Engineering Research Center, National-level International Research Collaboration Base, Programme of Introducing Talents of Discipline to Universities, National-level International Joint Research Center etc. The university has more than 40 provincial science and technology innovation platforms: Provincial Collaborative Innovation Center, Provincial Key Laboratory, Provincial Engineering Laboratory, Provincial Engineering Technical Research Center, Provincial Research Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences etc. There are 9 post-doctoral stations in the university and 13 first-level doctoral disciplines, 2 professional doctoral degree program, 37 first-level master degree programs, 6 second-level master degree programs, 23 professional master programs.

Qingdao University has fine disciplines, i.e., clinical medicine, engineering, chemistry, neuroscience and behavioral science, and materials science, listed as top 1% ESI disciplines, and ranks 50th in terms of top 1% disciplines among Chinese universities in the ESI global ranking in 2018. According to Shanghai Ranking’s academic ranking of the world universities, Qingdao University ranks 701-800 in the world and 80th in Chinese mainland in 2018, and is considered as “the world’s top 500 potential universities”. It ranks 82nd among Chinese universities and 959th among world universities in US News 2019 world university rankings.

Adhering to the motto of “Morality Promotion, Extensive Learning, Truth Adherence and Innovative Practice”, we insist on the school philosophy of “student-oriented education, teacher-oriented school running, service-oriented management and innovation-oriented development”. With the idea of emancipating minds and deepening reform, we persist in connotation promotion, characteristic development, and striving for best, in order to build the school into an internationally renowned high-level university.

Subject Fields and Application Conditions

The subject fields of the Forum mainly focus on the characteristic and preponderant disciplines of our school, such as systematic science, medicine, textile science, chemistry, material science, engineering, biology, mathematics, physics, economics, management, etc.

1. Young talents, being eligible for applying for “Thousand Youth Talents Plan” of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of CPC, under 40 years old, with a doctor's degree from overseas well-known university or a doctor's degree from a domestic first-class university, continuously working abroad for more than 3 years or working at home within one year, and having achieved outstanding achievements or having great potential for development in the relevant areas.

2. Overseas outstanding young talents, being in line with the relevant requirements of our university’s distinguished professor, under 40 years old, with a doctor’s degree in domestic first-class university, and engaging in post-doctoral research or working for more than 2 years overseas.

3. Outstanding young talents, listed in “China’s Four Important Young Academic Titles”.

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Annual Salary:  
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We will provide research offices and labs which are 20-120m².  
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We will provide supportive policies and opportunities to go abroad for visiting, communicating, and researching.

Team:  
Your entire team of the research is welcome.  
We can offer you academic secretary.  
You have the right of hiring, promoting, distributing and commenting on your own team.

Environment:  
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We will let you enjoy the supportive policy of treatment for the HEU’s young leading talents.

Team:  
We are supporting the young leading talents of your own team cooperating with the HEU’s team.  
You are supporting to set up the youth academic team.

Environment:  
We will offer settling in allowance: ¥100,000 - ¥200,000 at your disposal.  
We will offer you relocating house or purchase subsidies according to HEU’s regulations.

Contact person:  
You Dandan, Ming Ming  
Tel: 86-0451-82518061  
mail: rencai@hrbeu.edu.cn

Chinese Universities Global Online Job Fair

For promoting the idea of connecting the world and serving global talent, AcaBridge will convene a global online job fair in January, 2019, cordially inviting talent of various levels to sign up.

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CQB (http://cqb.pku.edu.cn/) is dedicated to research and education at the interface between the physical and biological sciences. Current research areas include physical biology, mathematical biology, systems biology, synthetic biology and computational biology.

Applications are welcome all year round. For qualified applicants, PKU can sponsor their applications to the national (Young) Thousand Talents Program. Application materials (cover letter, CV, summary of research achievements and future research plan, all in a single PDF file) and three letters of reference should be sent to Ms. Wei Xiao (gsmkyb@pku.edu.cn).
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