

CONFIDENTIAL

Chinese Language Curriculum

*Foreign Language Department
College of Arts and Sciences
Saint Joseph's University*

DRAFT

Preliminary Marketing Plan

July 1, 2005

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Background & Need

Saint Joseph's University ("SJU") offers Mandarin Language classes and a minor in Asian Studies. The program combines traditional academic discipline with practical, commercially oriented insights. SJU-in-Beijing, organized by a consortium of 20 Jesuit institutions, offers students an opportunity to attend the Beijing Institute for Language and Culture for one or two semesters. Support for the program ranges from professors who enjoy Chinese as a purely intellectual exercise to sinologists to native Chinese with family and business ties in China and Taiwan. The blend of interests provides unique breadth and depth of learning for students who choose to take advantage of the resources.

The Chinese Language program at SJU operates at a loss and attracts fewer students than anticipated. SJU wishes to increase participation in the program. Program quality appears more than adequate for success. SJU's Foreign Language Department, however, faces a difficult and complex communications challenge. The program is relatively new and evolving. Program features and benefits are more subtle and multifaceted than merely learning Mandarin. The program is an interdisciplinary, interdepartmental blend of core liberal arts competencies (classical Chinese, linguistics, Chinese history, eastern philosophy, etc) and applied knowledge (with commercial and professional immediacy). The potential universe of stakeholders in the program is larger and more complex than many other SJU course offerings. Based on an informal survey, it would appear that fewer than half of SJU students are aware SJU offers Chinese language courses or an Asian Studies minor. Two SJU professors were unaware of the courses.

This preliminary plan proposes that a small (test) marketing program be conducted to communicate features and benefits of SJU's Chinese Language Curriculum to potential stakeholders. Assistance from the School of Business would significantly facilitate plan formulation and implementation.

Objectives

- 1) Attract 30 students to existing SJU Chinese Language classes from within the existing student body using existing communication channels.
- 2) Forge mutually beneficial links with 10 outside organizations needing access to Chinese language and culture expertise.

This document was prepared by Corporate Finance, Inc. as a special project.

Data for the document was obtained from publicly available information and industry publications. Sources generally state they believe the information they provide is reliable but that the accuracy and completeness are not guaranteed. We believe the research others have performed are reliable, but have not independently verified the information.

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Methodology

1) **Identify primary stakeholder groups.** Currently these are perceived as including:

- ✓ SJU Students
- ✓ SJU Foreign Languages Faculty
- ✓ Career Development Center
- ✓ Erivan K. Haub School of Business
- ✓ Admissions
- ✓ Financial Affairs
- ✓ Alumni
- ✓ Business & Government Organizations

2) **Identify potential benefits to each stakeholder.**

a) *SJU Students* – Benefits to SJU students who learn Mandarin include:

Personal enrichment. Besides new vocabulary and grammar, bilingualism conveys meta-linguistic advantages including knowledge about language and insight into its abstract structure.¹ Chinese, in particular, leads to new ways of thinking, organizing concepts, and using language. It opens doors to alternative philosophical (especially ontological) and theological concepts.²

Expanded world view. Chinese is to the large Sino-Tibetan family of languages as Latin is to the Romance languages except that Chinese isn't dead. It is the most widely used language in the world.³

Speakers of the spoken varieties of Chinese use a common formal written language, and a nearly identical set of Chinese characters. About one-fifth of the world speaks some form of Chinese as their native language. Of these, 855 million (including 70% of China's population) use Mandarin. Mandarin is the official

language of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan. It is one of the four official languages of Singapore and one of six official languages of the United Nations.

Access to internships and careers. The need for USA citizens with Chinese language and culture skills is sufficiently large and well known that there is little need to conduct further market research at this time. Links established with outside organizations, will automatically provide additional data as the plan is executed. This benefit is straightforward, readily perceived, of high interest, and easy to communicate.

- b) *SJU Foreign Languages Faculty* – More students are needed to justify the program's expense. A dynamic, vibrant program will increase the Foreign Language Department's overall cache. It could help establish industry and government relationships to finance the expense of travel to China (to increase and maintain cultural contacts) and to nurture opportunities for SJU students. Long term, such contacts have potential for incubating cooperative SJU/industry ventures similar to those in the business school and science departments.
- c) *Career Development Center* – being able to offer access to a pool of job candidates with hard-to-find Mandarin and Chinese cultural skills will attract additional recruiters to SJU – broadening opportunities for all SJU graduates.
- d) *Business School* – the business school faces competition from Harvard, Stanford and other well known schools for funding, top students, and prestige. One strategy has been to develop a reputation in specific market segments, food marketing for example. The strategy could be extended to the foreign language department. By teaming with the Foreign Language, History, Sociology, and Philosophy Departments the Business School could build a reputation for turning out business majors who are better prepared to navigate East Asia.
- e) *Admissions* – a strong SJU Chinese Language program with industry contacts and respected sinologists will help attract additional highly motivated students.

¹ Ellen Bialystok and Kenji Hakuta, *In Other Words, The Science and Psychology of Second-Language Acquisition*, Basic Books, New York, 1994

² Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, translators, *The Analects of Confucius, A Philosophical Translation*, Introduction and Appendix II, Further Remarks on Translation, and Interpretation, Random House, New York, 1998.

³ Mark Aronoff and Janie Rees-Miller, editors; *The Handbook of Linguistics*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2004

- f) **Financial Affairs** – more students will help cover the program’s direct costs. In the future, the prestige of a strong program could help attract contributions from alumni, grants from foundations and revenue from industry joint ventures.
- g) **Alumni** – although the program is unlikely to compete at the Hawk level as a funding source, certain alumni may be willing to contribute contacts and open doors for professors and students participating in the program.
- h) **Business & Government Organizations** – the challenge to obtain access to expert sinologists (professors) as consultants and to prospective employees (students) who speak Chinese and have knowledge of Chinese culture will continue to grow. Secondary language skills (especially languages other than the “big 3”) are short shifted by the USA education system.⁴ Given the expansion of trade, joint ventures and government contacts it is reasonable to expect demand will outpace supply for all skill levels.

3) **Build target lists and contact data; identify communication channels for each group of stakeholders.**

4) **Develop message(s) for each stakeholders group.** Design medium to convey the messages to targeted stakeholders that are appropriate for each communications channel. The state of the art in Sales Theory⁵ holds that potential “clients” should receive a benefit every time they are contacted via the “sales cycle.” Management consulting firms such as McKinsey and Huthwaite are advising Fortune 500 companies to transform their sales personnel into consultants who help clients improve their businesses. Guidance from SJU Business School faculty (perhaps combined with a case study exercise) would be especially helpful in preparing this section of the plan.

5) **Test communication packages, measure responses (to message, medium, and channel), refine, and execute.**

⁴ R. D. Lambert, *Foreign Language Planning in the United States*, NFLC Occasional Papers, Washington, DC, National Foreign Language Center at the Johns Hopkins University, October, 1992.

⁵ Huthwaite, Inc.; Neil Rackham, *Rethinking the Sales Force*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1999.

- 6) **Build a “brand” around the most successful messages.** For example, the Jesuit tradition of academic excellence and long familiarity with classical Chinese literature, philosophy, and culture are a unique foundation for helping SJU students develop a mastery of nuance and subtlety far beyond Berlitz-bred Chinese. Today there is growing consensus that Ivy League students “can’t write.” Partners at major law firms have complained that even top graduates, including those on Law Reviews at Yale and Harvard, often have trouble crafting coherent sentences.⁶ The perception could be exploited by contrasting it with the Jesuit reputation for teaching students to think and clearly communicate their thoughts. A brand built around these core values would resonate.
- 7) **Continue to refine the plan** and coordinate the activities of stakeholders focusing on win-win for all participants.

Next Steps

- 1) Build upon the ad hoc message communicated to SJU students shortly before they left for summer vacation. See attached “*Project Mandarin*” flier. The message chosen was a simple commercial message considered most likely to appeal without an opportunity for repetition. The message was delivered one time by blanketing SJU bulletin boards. The message generated 6 inquiries. The number of students who signed-up as a result of the flier is unknown.
- 2) Determine whether permission could be obtained to email the flier to all students.
- 3) Use contacts made during summer internships at Corporate Finance, Inc. (investment banker to early stage companies) and Artemis Strategy Fund (private equity firm specializing in early stage companies) to recruit corporate sponsors of and/or participants in Project Mandarin. Consider establishing an Advisory Board.
- 4) Use momentum created by the first three steps to obtain support for completing and implementing a comprehensive plan.

⁶ Independent Research, Corporate Finance, Inc. Bethesda, MD, 2002-2004

Internships

Looking for an Internship? Are you missing out on the “secret weapon” available to all Saint Joseph’s students?”

It’s not too early to begin planning your summer 2006 internship. Fall 2005 is the deadline for many of the plum openings.



Although the best internships are highly competitive, you can greatly improve your chances by taking advantage of a “secret weapon” hidden in Saint Joseph’s language department. Some of the most prestigious names in business and government are seeking employees and interns with certain hard-to-find credentials – credentials that, as a St. Joe’s student, are readily available to you.

Organizations such as Boeing, McKinsey, Pfizer, Wal*Mart, U.S. State Department, and KPMG often prefer to recruit at Ivy League schools. However, geo-political and international trade issues have created a special window of opportunity for students willing to take advantage of resources within St Joseph’s language department. The resource, the secret weapon, is St. Joseph’s Chinese Language curriculum. Before you say, “Chinese is too difficult,” consider the following facts.

- ✓ Chinese has an unfair rap; it’s no harder than Latin or French (I speak from first hand experience which I’ll share with you, if you wish).
- ✓ The playing field is more level and fair. For example, if you take first year French you may be competing with students who have 1-2 years of high school French under their belts: not so Chinese.
- ✓ Great tutors are available.
- ✓ Your teachers are plugged into China and Chinese culture. You’ll pick-up valuable insights as a byproduct of the classes.
- ✓ Chinese classes improve your little grey cells and synaptic connections.

Join “Project Mandarin” before you leave for summer! It matches St. Joe’s students with organizations who need bright, motivated individuals who are interested in Chinese and willing to travel. The response from organizations has been strong. We now need more students.

Interested? Please email your questions, comments, and contact information....

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