

John Hawkins: The Expanding Role of Asian National Universities

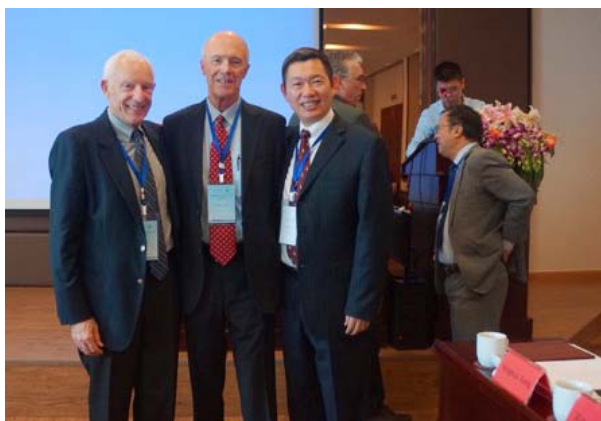


By Joanie Harmon

Co-director of APHERP presents international conference on universities' need to meet demands of global societies and economies.

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John N. Hawkins, UCLA emeritus professor of education and co-director of the Asian Pacific Higher Education Research Partnership (APHERP), presented an International Research Seminar at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China in late May. The seminar's focus was based on a paper written by Hawkins and John A. Douglass, Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Studies in Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of California, Berkeley titled "Envisioning the Asian Flagship University: Past and Future."



Professor John N. Hawkins at Zhejiang University with Deane Neubauer, professor emeritus, University of Hawaii (at left), and Xu Xiaozhou, dean, College of Education, Zhejiang University. Courtesy of John N. Hawkins

Attendees included 20 scholars from universities in the United States, China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines, and Vietnam. Also present were UCLA Ed & IS students, alumni, and former visiting scholars, including W. James Jacob, Director of International Education and the University of Pittsburgh, and Professors Shen Xiaopeng, Yue Kan, and Shao Xinjiang of Zhejiang University. The participants addressed the issues surrounding the increasing expectations of Asian Flagship Universities due to their expanded role in society and the need of national economies to be competitive players in the global market.

“While the pursuit of improved rankings and a claim to World Class University (WCU) status continues as seemingly the primary goal for many universities in the Asian Pacific region, there has been a growing debate about the value and feasibility of this vision,” Professor Hawkins notes. “Alternative ways are being discussed which challenge and critique this model and suggest other more creative ways to look at the role of teaching, community service, R&D, and scholarship in higher education. In turn, this has created a predicament for those Asian Flagship Universities engaged in an evolving ecology of higher education in the region.”

During the course of the seminar, Hawkins joined Professor Song Yonghua, vice president, Zhejiang University, and Xu Xiaozhou, dean, College of Education in the opening ceremony of the Zhejiang University Center for International Education Research.



UCLA Professor of Education John Hawkins spoke on the past and future of the Asian Flagship University at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China last month. Courtesy of John N. Hawkins

“This seminar has helped lay the groundwork for future collaboration between UCLA Ed & IS, UCLA, and Zhejiang University,” says Hawkins. “The new center will serve as the primary linkage point for further student and faculty exchanges as well as collaborative research.”

Papers from the International Research Seminar will be published under the title “Envisioning the

Asian Flagship University: Past and Future” in both electronic and traditional book form in late 2016. In addition, a delegation of Zhejiang University students and faculty will visit UCLA Ed & IS this July as part of the collaboration between these institutions.