

For immediate release

October 1, 2008

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Confucius Institute Launches Community Chinese Class

College Station, September 23, 2008 – The Confucius Institute (CI) at Texas A&M University has launched a new community-based Chinese language and culture class for the fall of 2008. The communities of Bryan and College Station have responded, with 38 participants signing up for the class.

Randy Kluver, director of CI and director of the Institute for Pacific Asia at Texas A&M University, said that the goal of the Confucius Institute is to help meet the overwhelming demand for Chinese language skills, and to offer opportunities to learn about Chinese history, culture, and language.

“The number of people in the United States learning Mandarin has gone up significantly in recent years,” said Kluver. “The Confucius Institute is developing this Chinese class to provide more opportunities for our students and friends from the community to learn Chinese.”

The Modern Language Association reported that Chinese language enrollment increased by 51 percent nationwide between 2002 and 2006.

Kelly Cole, graduate student from the Department of Oceanography said she really enjoys the Community Chinese class.

“I am going to China shortly and I think it would be beneficial to learn a little about the language and culture before I go,” said Cole. “The community class is so helpful, I hope the Confucius Institute will still offer it next semester.”

The Chinese teacher, Rong Zhou, who is a visiting scholar from Ocean University of China, agreed that the class has received very positive feedback.

The non-credit class started on Sept 23 and will end in November on Tuesdays and Thursday. The class is offered free of charge to Bryan /College Station community members, friends of the university, and students of Texas A&M University. For more information call Christine Yang at 979-845-3099.