

# Confucius Institute opens at University of Johannesburg

The Confucius Institute (CI) opened at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) today, Thursday, 28 January 2016. The Institute plans to initiate Mandarin courses, conduct tests as assessments, host Chinese events to promote Chinese culture and conduct a Chinese bridge programme.



It is a joint venture between UJ, Nanjing Tech University and Confucius Institute Headquarters /Hanban and the fifth to be launched in South Africa.

Dr David Monyae, the Director of UJ's Confucius Institute, says, "The Africa-China relationship goes far beyond the political into economical arena. Exploring the work already taking place at the University, the Institute seeks to uncover the extent to which the continent can benefit and learn from China in Africa's development."

He points out that China has become an important partner to South Africa, and as a result, it has become important for many South Africans, from different spheres, to learn to speak, read and write Mandarin. "The UJ CI will be offering Mandarin on different proficiency levels. Contact with Chinese colleagues, however, extends beyond language, and an understanding of Chinese culture is essential."

The Institute will also be offering a number of cultural courses and events to enhance a better understanding of Chinese culture. For studies in China, students must be relatively proficient in Mandarin, therefore UJ students will benefit from doing the short courses in Mandarin.

"Being able to communicate in Mandarin will open up opportunities for students to study in China and will enable smoother communication between South African citizens and the Chinese. The Institute will assist Chinese companies to enhance

their footprint on the continent."

UJ CI already has students enrolled learning to speak Mandarin and actively participating in practical higher education and cultural programmes. In 2015, the Institute's co-director, Prof Lyu Jiangao a Professor of Law from Nanjing Tech University, led two sets of UJ students and staff on a cultural exchange excursion to China.

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