

CONFERENCE NOTE—DEWEY THEN AND NOW: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LABORATORY SCHOOLS



Nobel Laureate James J. Heckman will keynote an upcoming conference that will explore how John Dewey's ideas shaped the Chinese educational system and are so relevant today.

DATE: May 2–4, 2019

LOCATION: University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, Illinois,
USA

REGISTER: www.ucls.uchicago.edu/deweythenandnow



Volume 2 · Number 2 · Fall 2018 · Pages 75-78

From 1919 to 1921, John Dewey, founder of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, traveled throughout China. During his visit, he gained what some have called "superstar" status, with people flocking to his lectures or reading them in translation in books and newspapers, and widely applying his philosophies of education. From May 2–4, 2019, some of the world's most passionate Dewey scholars and educators will convene at the Laboratory Schools—the Dewey school—for a three-day colloquium honoring the 100th anniversary of that two-year trip to China made by John and Alice Dewey.

Keynote speaker, James J. Heckman, is the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, a Nobel Memorial Prize winner in economics and an expert in the economics of human development. Through the University's Center for the Economics of Human Development, he has conducted groundbreaking work showing that quality early childhood development heavily influences health, economic and social outcomes for individuals and society at large.

In the span of a century, research partnerships between UChicago scholars and their Chinese counterparts have blossomed into dozens of ongoing relationships, spanning many fields of study. The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools are excited to deepen this connection. Lab started in 1896 with fewer than a dozen students. Today the school educates more than 2,160 students in nursery through high school. It is an institution known around the world and continues to be very much a laboratory school that emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving, creative and scholarship.

This May 2019 conference will bring together researchers, policymakers, and school-level educators from the United States and China to further our understanding of how Deweyan education has evolved. Attendees will leave having created a base for further collaborative work between American and Chinese educators and policymakers who share an interest in Dewey. They will understand how Dewey's ideas are shaping educational policy and have the opportunity to see his ideas in practice at the school he founded.

Over several days, through keynote speeches, panel discussions, hands-on activities, field visits, and presentations, attendees will honor, and reflect upon, John Dewey's role in education and his continued global relevance. Tentative conference offerings include:

- Expert-led sessions covering topics such as: the role of interdisciplinary thinking in education today; arts in education; current issues in Chinese educational practice; the value of civic education; and the role of democratic education.
- Programs that emphasize current educational challenges in China in context of Deweyan beliefs and values on schooling and democratic education.
- Opportunities to tour the Laboratory Schools and observe classes.
- Activities that model “learning by doing,” including a hands-on art project— participants will work with a local artist on a project that, when completed, will be shared with the greater Laboratory Schools community.
- Visits with local civic organizations. Dewey learned about China, in part, by engaging with local communities. This to honor his approach, participants will have the opportunity to conduct field visits, which may include: a community garden, arts center, or youth-based community organization.
- Educational site visits at local area schools to see student learning in action.
- Tours of the University of Chicago and Chicago sights.

Conference presenters include:

Yajun Chen, Director of the Dewey Center
Fudan University

Kai-Ming Cheng, Emeritus Professor
Division of Policy, Administration and Social Sciences Education
Hong Kong University

Dali Yang, William Claude Reavis Professor of Political Science
University of Chicago

Yanhong Zhang
Officer-in-Charge, Statistics Division
UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

To register or learn more about this event go to:
www.ucls.uchicago.edu/deweythenandnow

Individuals who are interested in presenting and organizations that
might like serve as presenting partners should use this form:
<https://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/deweythenandnow/contact-us>

*This conference is made possible, in part, by the generosity of Mr. Jun Zhou
and the Jefferson Education Group, LLC.*