

INTRODUCTION TO ASIA PACIFIC CENTER FOR THE STUDY AND TRAINING OF LEISURE (APCL) AT ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY

Lijun Zhou¹

Zhejiang University – China

RESUMO: O artigo possibilita uma breve introdução sobre a Asia Pacific Center for the Study and Training of Leisure (APCL) na Zhejiang University, China, no tocante à sua atual situação e orientação, no cultivo de talentos para o engajamento construtivo do lazer, na pesquisa acadêmica e sua cooperação, e no seu desenvolvimento futuro visando oportunidade de cooperação com organizações e universidades com escopo similar voltado ao lazer pelo mundo.

Palavras-chave: APCL. Pesquisa acadêmica no lazer. Cooperação.

ABSTRACT: The article made a brief introduction to Asia Pacific Center for the Study and Training of Leisure (APCL) at Zhejiang University, China on it's orientation and situation, discipline construction and talent cultivation, academic research and cooperation, and it's future development, hoping to have more opportunities to cooperate with more organizations and Universities studying leisure in the world.

Keywords: APCL. Leisure Academic Research. Cooperation.

Orientation and situation

The APCL is an open and non-profit academic research and education institution, aiming at contributing to the development of leisure by resource integration and active participation.

In 2004, the original purpose of APCL establishment was to provide theory support and planning consultation for the first World Leisure Expo (2006) in Hangzhou. And the task of APCL mainly focused on leisure theory research, talent cultivation and policy consultation. Preparations for the first World Leisure Expo were done during the first two years, including setting up an interdisciplinary research group cooperated by teachers in related discipline on campus, and doing research on *Strategy Development Planning on Oriental Metropolis of Leisure* delegated by Hangzhou government.

Series of achievements were achieved after that, the continuous development on academic research, discipline construction, social service and academic exchanges influences both leisure academic and leisure industry. At present, APCL is the only one owns both Master and Doctorate programs in China. Also the research group is of the largest scale in China, with strong discipline constructed, interdisciplinary cooperative and active in international communication.

¹ Professor, Vice Director, Department of Sports Science. Email: janezhou328@hotmail.com

The APCL presented itself on international occasions including World Leisure Congress, and was honored as an institution for international leisure study, leisure practice and leisure promotion by the World Leisure Organization.

Discipline construction and talent cultivation

Based on the APCL, the first domestic doctoral program on leisure studies was established under the first level discipline of philosophy, with approval from the Academic Degrees Committee at Zhejiang university and recorded by the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council. The APCL enrolls students nationwide, aiming at developing discipline construction in leisure studies, exploring leisure research theory, and cultivating high-level comprehensive talents for leisure application.

The Ph.D. program is to cultivate talents of teaching and research skills for universities and research institutions, or personnel with management and planning talent for government or leisure enterprises. The master program is mainly focused on future teachers and researchers cultivate, and potential planners, managers and operators training for government, community as well as enterprises such as tourism, entertainment, sports and healthcare, exhibitions and clubs etc. Since 2008, the APCL has been continuously enrolled graduate students for 8 years. The first graduate student got master degree in 2010. Two years later, the first doctoral student passed doctoral dissertation defense and was awarded doctoral degree.

By the winter of 2015, the numbers of students had graduated were: 8 masters, 6 doctoral students, 3 postdoctoral students (including a Ph.D. from German), 4 enterprise postdoctoral fellows. All of the students were cultivated according to the scheduled goal, and now are working in universities or research institutions. At present, the APCL has 6 masters, 10 doctoral students, 6 postdoctoral students. Training classes were provided for graduate students who are major in leisure and other related discipline, which brought favorable social impact and formed a complete system of education and training in leisure area.

The APCL has made positive explorations and innovations on discipline construction, graduate students cultivation, education and practice, which perfect the curricular structure and enlarge its influence. In recent years, the number of applicants increased rapidly with higher qualities.

Practice base of APCL was established in the office of Hangzhou World Leisure EXPO in 2008. Zhejiang University also invited Guoping Wang (Director of Hangzhou International Urban Research Center, former Zhejiang party committee, Hangzhou municipal party secretary, director of municipal people's congress) as part-time professor and doctoral supervisor in APCL.

Cooperation agreement was signed between APCL and Hangzhou International Urban Research Center for joint recruit doctoral students. At the same year, Zhejiang

University approved the establishment of postdoctoral research station on leisure studies at Hangzhou International Urban Research Center, joint enterprise postdoctoral began to recruit since 2012.

Academic research and cooperation

There are three main research fields currently: (1) leisure theory research; (2) leisure culture and industry research; (3) city leisure research. Based on discipline comprehensive advantages at Zhejiang University, APCL has basically formed an interdisciplinary research team from philosophy, Chinese, foreign language, communication, economic, tourism management, education, sports, ecological environment, etc.

Now it has 12 principal members and other members who participated in research in APCL. In order to attract social attention on leisure career, it also engages contract researcher fellows and distinguished researchers from different social fields. At present, it has 5 international famous leisure research experts, 13 domestic contract researcher fellows, and 3 distinguished researchers.

The APCL insists on taking academic research as its main task. Since 2004, Hangzhou government, Zhejiang University and the World Leisure Organization have jointly hold the annual China (Hangzhou) Leisure Development International Forum of for 12 years. As main organizers, APCL and Office of Hangzhou Leisure Expo are responsible for inviting experts and organizing related work on academic forum. The forum is an excellent platform for communication on leisure theory and information at home and abroad, which has become an international influential and highly-reputed brand in the field of leisure research.

Since its establishment, the main members at APCL have or almost completed more than 100 researches, and published hundreds of papers on leisure research on academic journals. 13 *Leisure Series Books* were published by APCL since 2009, including collected papers of *Leisure Comment*, academic monographs, translated works and important research reports. A collection of outstanding doctoral dissertation is in edition currently.

At the same time, the APCL have launched extensive contact and cooperation with the domestic and foreign well-known universities, institutions and scholars in the field of leisure study. At present, we have achieved favorable academic contact and cooperation with scholars from the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany, Australia, South Korea, Japan, China Taiwan and other regions.

More than a dozen foreign experts have visited and gave lectures in our leisure center recently. Among them, professor Geoffrey Godbey, international authority on leisure research from the Pennsylvania State University, has donated more than four hundred academic books for our center. He Also called on more than ten well-known

scholars in the North America to donate personal collections. From 2013 to 2015, he was honored as Sir Yu-Gang Bao Visiting Professor at Zhejiang University, and worked two months in APCL every year.

The APCL also sends qualified teachers and graduate students to universities in the United States, Canada and other regions for exchange study and research cooperation. Now, a teacher is participated in a two-year visiting and cooperation program at the University of Alberta. A doctoral student had completed one-year joint cultivation. Another doctoral student is going to finish three-month study at the university of Texas A&M.

In 2008, Zhejiang Leisure Association was established, which was sponsored and charged by APCL with routine matters. In 2010, APCL set up Yangtze River Delta Leisure Academic Alliance, with major members take turns to organize academic conference on leisure and city development every year. In 2013, Hangzhou Association for the Advancement of Leisure was launched by APCL.

Serving the society, and promoting the development of leisure career

Since the establishment of APCL, we have been active in serving for the development of local leisure tourism, and providing supports including theoretical research, application and promotion, talents cultivation for the colleges which have leisure related majors in Zhejiang Province.

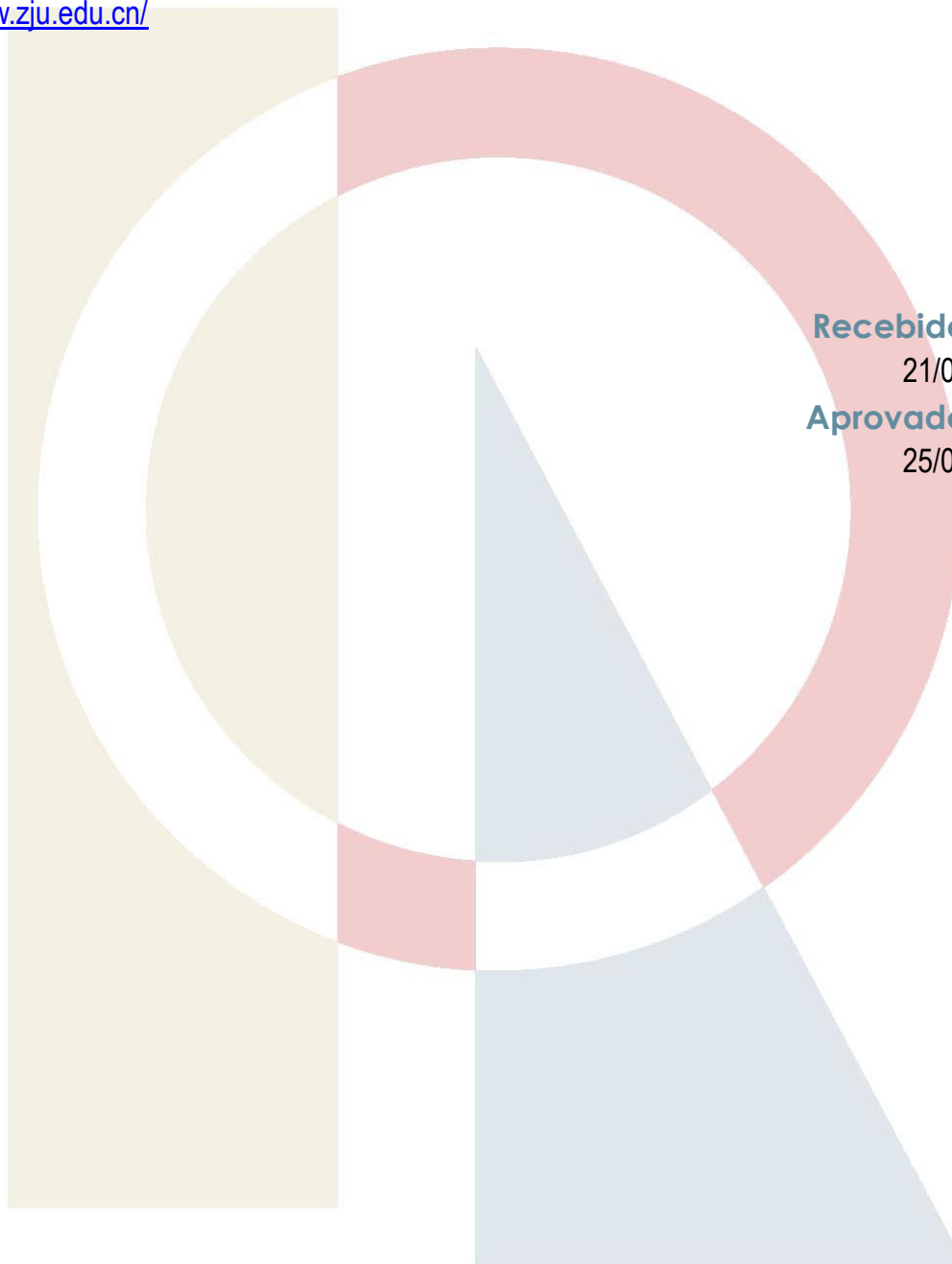
We had completed a large number of leisure tourism development plans, and plenty of programs on leisure culture, leisure industry, urban life quality and industry standardization for not only Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou City, but also other provinces and cities in China. As well, the APCL provides theoretical support and decision-making consultation for domestic cities and local leisure tourism culture development.

Many research reports and plans have been adopted by the government, published by important medias, and got instructions from leadership. In recent years, APCL has deeply and all-round involved in theory research and practical popularization, so as to construct Hangzhou into an important tourism and leisure center in the world.

Meanwhile, we establish friendly relations of cooperation with many regions and cities inside Zhejiang Province like Ningbo, Shaoxing, Jinhua, Zhoushan, Quzhou, or outside Zhejiang Province such as Xiangyang in Hubei Province, Taining in Fujian Province, Songjiang District in Shanghai, Zoucheng in Shandong Province. We are striving to achieve an interactive win-win situation of leading services and research-oriented exploration.

Endereço para correspondência

Zhejiang University
866 Yuhangtang Road 310058
Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province
P. R. China
www.zju.edu.cn/



Recebido em:
21/04/2015
Aprovado em:
25/04/2015