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Dr. Chin-Tang Liu Is Changing The Way Teachers Teach

St. Petersburg, Fla - April 10, 2003



From teaching high school in densely populated Taiwan, to training rural math and science teachers in the foothills of the Ozarks, Dr. Chin-Tang Liu has spent his career dedicated to bringing innovative and creative teaching methods to the classroom. As one of the newest members of University of South Florida St. Petersburg's faculty, Liu brings his expertise to future teachers studying in the Bay area.

Named the new assistant professor of science education, Liu will draw from his vast experience to enhance teaching methods and enrich the learning environment as he trains future educators in his unique methods of instruction that are on the cutting-edge in education.

Liu, born in Taiwan, began his career as an educator by teaching physics, math, chemistry, and Earth science at the Chong-Chen Military High School and later at Tamkang Middle and High School. He entered the United States in 1987 to pursue a doctorate in science education with a physics and astronomy emphasis. At the University of Iowa, where he earned his Ph.D., Liu was the Research/Assessment Coordinator when his research played a major role in obtaining a three-year, \$2.1-million grant from the National Science Foundation for the Iowa Scope, Sequence, and Coordination (Iowa-SS&C) Project.

In 1996 Liu started bringing innovative 'teacher education' to rural Missouri communities through the Ozarks Partnership Teacher Enhancement Initiatives project of Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) where he was an assistant professor. "The Ozarks Partnership was created to enhance teacher training and student achievement in rural areas," said Liu. "The project secured \$2.81-million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the largest grant ever made to SMSU."

This ongoing project "involves creating partnerships among college faculty, student teachers, and rural schools to improve education through fostering professional development for rural teachers, identifying prospective teachers willing to work in rural areas, increasing the availability of teachers in under-staffed specialties such as mathematics, science and technology, and to strengthen student teacher's content knowledge," said Liu.

In 2000, Liu took his didactic methods to Temple University. There, he has facilitated the training of more than 100 middle and high school teachers in math and science through a NSF-funded Integrated Math/Science/Technology Educational Partnership (IMSTEP) project from the School District of Philadelphia.

Liu's research continues to focus on how the quantitative reasoning can be infused in the context of learning science for students in middle and high schools. In March, he presented his research at the annual conference of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching and the National Science Teachers Association in Philadelphia.

"Dr. Liu is already a prolific scholar," said Gary Olson, interim associate vice president for Academic Affairs. "His vast amount of research and extensive number of published papers is impressive. Dr. Liu will be an outstanding scholar, and will be a wonderful addition to our faculty."

With collaborator Robert Yager, Liu co-authored two proposals what were awarded as the "Exemplary Program" by the Program Effectiveness Panel of the U. S. Department of Education. He has also been the recipient of grants and funding from many sources, including the Eisenhower Program of Pennsylvania State Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.

"I look forward to continuing my work with Florida teachers in urban and rural settings," said Liu. "I am attracted to the Suncoast not only for its warm climate, but to USF St. Petersburg for its academic reputation."

Of special interest to Liu is the continuation of his work within the Hispanic community. "As a former tutor in the Hispanic communities in Missouri and Philadelphia, I hope I can serve as a bridge to various communities."

Whether working in crowded cities, rural mountain towns, or the beautiful Suncoast, Liu is one of the nation's forerunners in innovative teaching methods, and is changing the way teachers teach.

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