

East meets west to study U.S. tax system

The tax man cometh...all the way from China to learn the American taxation system.

Sacramento State is hosting 18 students from Hubei Province in central China here to learn how the American tax system works. The students arrived Aug. 30 to begin a year of study through the College of Continuing Education.

"We have developed a customized training program for them in taxation," says Bernadette Halbrook, faculty liaison for the College of Continuing Education. "They will take classes in business, international accounting and leadership development and will job shadow at the California Franchise Tax Board."

Sacramento State's involvement began about a year ago when a former faculty member from the province mentioned it to Alice Tom, dean of the College of Continuing Education.

"He said there were people in his province interested in learning about the American tax system and wondered if we might have any interest in putting together a program for them," says Halbrook. "Dean Tom said, 'yes' then began conversations about what their needs were and what they wanted."

The students work for the Hubei Province Local Taxation Bureau and were selected by the Chinese government to attend Sacramento State.

"The Chinese government originally identified 400 people as up-and-coming leaders," Halbrook says. "Fifty were chosen to go to Wuhan City to study English for a year, and 18 were identified as top scorers and were offered the opportunity to come here."

Despite their training in English, Halbrook said the program will still be very demanding for them.

"English is not their first language so that will make things harder," she says, "but we're very conscious of that and have people who have worked with international students before to help them."



Eighteen tax representatives from China are attending Sacramento State to study the American tax system. Their classes, established through the College of Continuing Education, began this fall and will last for a year.

Halbrook says this may be the only program of its type in the United States, and she hopes it can become a model to be used in the future with other groups.

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