

FEATURED STORY

International Interdisciplinary Innovation Talent Development and Research Forum along with Grand Commencement of the 2023 GEC Summer Research Program



A milestone was achieved as the International Interdisciplinary Innovation Talent Development and Research Forum and the commencement of the 2023 GEC Summer Offline Research Program, co-hosted by GEC Academy and supported by Jiushi Tourism Group — International Youth Growth Camp, received an enthusiastic response. This event served as a vibrant nexus, drawing together a diverse assemblage of nearly 500 distinguished guests. Among them were esteemed scholars and experts representing prestigious Chinese universities, government officials, and notable business leaders.



Click [HERE](#) to watch the video on YouTube.

The occasion also welcomed approximately a hundred accomplished professors hailing from internationally acclaimed universities and revered research institutions worldwide, many of whom hold esteemed positions within the GEC teaching faculty. This collective gathering, alongside over 2,500 students who participated in the 2023 GEC Summer Research Program, delved into critical topics including innovative talent cultivation, global competencies, cross-border talent exchanges, and dynamic academic-industry collaborations. The collaborative momentum of this event set a robust course for fortified global educational partnerships while underscoring the shared mission of the GEC teaching faculty in shaping a more interconnected educational landscape.

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The forum kicked off with several opening speeches. Mr. Baoli Liu emphasized the broader scope of education internationalization in his opening address. He noted, “Education internationalization encompasses comprehensive enhancements to educational systems, the sharing of high-quality educational resources, the alignment of talent development with global standards, the establishment of digital networks for international education, and the expansion of platforms for educational collaboration dialogues.”



Mr. Baoli Liu, Executive Secretary-General of the Organizing Committee of China-ASEAN Education Communication Week and Former Inspector of the Department of International Cooperation and Exchanges at the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China



Mr. Ning Zhang, President of the International Competence Development Committee in the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy

Mr. Ning Zhang talked about the global surge in student mobility, stating that “while it brings opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges and mutual respect, it also poses challenges like intercultural understanding and language barriers.”

Mr. Sheng Yan warmly welcomed and expressed gratitude to the forum’s attendees, especially to over a hundred professors from esteemed international institutions and research bodies, convening in Shanghai, and to the students participating in the 2023 GEC Summer Research Program. Mr. Yan underlined the continuous pursuit of cultivating international interdisciplinary innovation talents in his speech, recognizing the coexistence of challenges and opportunities along this path.



Mr. Sheng Yan, President of GEC Academy



Professor Chas Bountra, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Innovation and Professor of Translational Medicine at the University of Oxford

The forum was enriched by a special address delivered by Professor Chas Bountra, whose keynote speech, aptly titled “**Collaborative Solutions for Global Challenges,**” shone a spotlight on the pivotal role of international cooperation in tackling global issues. Professor Bountra's focus extended to the realm of medical advancements and the nurturing of innovative talents. He underscored the indispensability of visionary leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs in driving scientific exploration and industrial progress to create tangible change.

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The keynote speeches delivered by six distinguished guests were a cornerstone of this forum, covering a diverse range of topics, and offering insightful perspectives on international innovative talent development.



Professor William Eskridge, the Alexander M. Bickel Professor of Public Law at Yale Law School



Professor Hui Li, Professor and Doctoral Supervisor at Peking University

Professor Eskridge's exploration of **“An Innovative Path to International Talent Cultivation”** began by examining the dynamics between ordinary individuals within society. He underscored the paramount importance of global cooperation, particularly in confronting worldwide challenges and propelling educational innovation. Notably, he highlighted the universality of the challenges the world grapples with, encompassing climate change, pandemics, and nuclear weapon threats. In a compelling call to action, Professor Eskridge advocated for collaborative endeavors across humanity to address these concerns. He aptly cited, “Projects like those embraced by GEC Academy stand as prime illustrations, fostering mutual comprehension and cross-cultural learning among disparate nations, cultures, and academic spheres.”

Professor Li's keynote address centered on **“Building a Community of Shared Future in Cyberspace”**, shedding light on the predominant challenge of managing digital and cyberspaces. He proposed innovative solutions, emphasizing collaborative network governance. His talk also included insights from blockchain technology and hyperbolic geometry research, such as applying Lobachevskian geometry to streamline cyberspace.



George Malliaras, the Prince Philip Professor of Technology at the University of Cambridge



Dr. Kan Huang, President of the Beijing Education Association for International Exchange

Professor Malliaras drew from personal experiences in his address themed **“Perspectives on International Multidisciplinary Graduate Education.”** He delved into the realm of global interdisciplinary education and examined diverse graduate training models across top U.S. universities. He emphasized the importance of nurturing students with a robust professional base and fostering interdisciplinary learning during graduate studies. Moreover, he underscored how practical experience and soft skills play a pivotal role in developing students into well-rounded individuals.

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During his talk titled **“Internationalized Innovation Talent Development and the Responsibility of Universities,”** Dr. Huang explored the importance of nurturing global innovation talent from a governmental standpoint. He highlighted the crucial role that universities should undertake in this endeavor, shedding light on China's higher education institutions' practical approaches to international innovation talent cultivation. Dr. Huang also underlined the evolving nature of talent development as a shared societal responsibility, calling for active participation from both businesses and government bodies.



Professor Edward Mullen, Willma and Albert Musher Professor Emeritus at Columbia University



Mr. Zhijia Wang, Expert of the International Competence Development Committee and Former Director of the International Department of State Environmental Protection Administration of China

Professor Mullen's discussion centered on **social sciences**, highlighting research methods' role in decision-making, understanding complex societal aspects, amplifying diverse voices, and driving change. He stressed the need for structured frameworks in social science research to navigate human behavior intricacies. In his remarks, Professor Mullen also encouraged Chinese students to engage in social science research, nurturing sociological imagination and skills that reflect today and shape tomorrow.

Mr. Wang delivered a speech on **“International Competence Cultivation and the Requirements of International Organizations for Interdisciplinary Innovation Talents.”** He emphasized how interdisciplinary innovative talents play a crucial role in addressing global challenges, highlighting the significance of the cultivation of globally adept individuals with diverse skills and versatile abilities.

The forum continued with three roundtable discussions. The first roundtable, themed **“New Trends for Talent Development in the Post-Pandemic World,”** was skillfully moderated by Dr. Yukteshwar Kumar, Ex-Deputy Mayor of Bath and Senior Lecturer at the University of Bath. This engaging conversation featured esteemed participants from the GEC Teaching Faculty, who collectively explored emerging trends and future prospects in top-tier university talent development within the post-pandemic landscape.



From left to right, the individuals in the photo are: Professor Sophia Koutsogiannaki, Assistant Professor; Professor David Johnson, Professorial Fellow in St Antony's College at the University of Oxford; Professor Slav Hermanowicz, Professor of the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley; Professor Gregory Kesden, Associate Teaching Professor and MS ECE Faculty Advisor at Carnegie Mellon University; and Professor Joshua Edel, Professor of Biosensing and Analytical Sciences at Imperial College London.

The discourse delved into the pivotal role of soft skills in talent cultivation, the integration of creativity and lifelong learning opportunities in education, and the transformative influence of technology on teaching. Building on the innovative role of GEC Academy in talent development, the participants also examined strategies to seamlessly incorporate modern technology into education, fostering teaching innovation and facilitating international collaboration.

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In the subsequent two panels, participants shifted their focus to the significance of interdisciplinary approaches from the vantage points of higher education and foundational learning. They emphasized how interdisciplinary approaches stimulate novel ideas and facilitate breakthroughs. Furthermore, the panels explored methods to nurture adaptable talents, empowering students to navigate future challenges within interdisciplinary and cross-cultural contexts. Additionally, the discussions encompassed international collaboration in cultivating innovative talents and advancing foundational education at the secondary school level.

The forum concluded with a closing address by Mr. Jianrong Yang, Director of Shanghai Advisory Committee on Technological Innovation Education. He underscored how, in our current era of globalization, educational exchanges function as vital connectors that bind the world together while nurturing friendship and cooperation between nations. Highlighting the essence of interdisciplinary collaboration involving two or more fields, he emphasized the need for robust communication and cooperation among scholars from diverse disciplines and regions.

This forum, hosted by GEC, stood as an expansive platform that united educators from around the world. Together with the esteemed members of GEC teaching faculty, we will continue to make efforts in fostering vibrant discussions and collectively exploring cutting-edge ideas and practices in interdisciplinary innovation talent development.



Recap: Onsite Seminar on the Impact of ChatGPT on Education at Shanghai Jiao Tong University

On August 2nd, GEC held the August Faculty Meeting on the theme of The Impact of ChatGPT on Education at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, which coincided with the 2023 Summer Research Program and marked the very first time for us to organize such an on-site event since the outbreak of COVID-19. Wendy Wang, Co-founder and Academic Director of GEC Academy, started the roundtable meeting by graciously introducing the keynote professors and welcoming the audience for attending this activity. We would like to thank everyone who joined in the meeting, especially thanks to our beloved professors who were invited to share their thought-provoking opinions on the topic.



A glimpse into the meeting at Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Distinguished Professors Sharing Thoughts on The Impact of ChatGPT on Education

Five professors from diverse disciplines were invited to share their insights on this subject. Through their distinct experiences, they engaged in a captivating exchange of ideas, offering thoughtful commentary that created a truly captivating intellectual experience for the audience.

- **Professor Bradd Shore, Professor of Anthropology, Emory University**

Professor Shore maintained that “Many technologies have freed human beings from certain kinds of tasks and allowed learners to go on to a higher level of learning. ChatGPT was no exception.” He said that people should not underestimate where ChatGPT could go by sharing with us several personal experiences and demonstrating that it was able to come up with creative ideas which we never would have dreamed it would do. Besides, ChatGPT presented the possibility of personalized and high-quality instruction by serving as a very powerful supplement to education. What was necessary to remember was that human beings were by nature adaptable creatures, and we should learn to incorporate new technologies in teaching.

- **Professor Francis Steen, Professor of Communication Studies, UCLA**

Professor Steen harbored the view that the development of technology had changed society dramatically and revolutionized education by overcoming geographical barriers. However, he suggested that “people should be skeptical to ChatGPT as it was trained on large language models and sometimes it could not be trusted”. Students were advised to focus on improving their own perception and skills they excel.

Onsite Seminar on the Impact of ChatGPT on Education at Shanghai Jiao Tong University

- [Professor Gina Antonello, Professor of Sport Management, New York University](#)

Professor Antonello insisted that both educators and students should move with the times and realize the potential of ChatGPT as a long-term tool by incorporating it into teaching and learning rather than banning it. That being said, she encouraged students to evaluate ChatGPT critically and with caution and take advantage of their smart brains by giving us vivid examples and pointing out that it could not replace analytical and problem-solving skills.

- [Professor Pavlos Protopapas, Scientific Program Director](#)

Professor Protopapas was intimately involved in the field of artificial intelligence. He kindly introduced the underlying logic, working mechanism and availability of ChatGPT to the audience. To his understanding, ChatGPT was more of a help than a hindrance to education because he thought that it had greatly increased efficiency and accuracy for doing academic research.

- [Professor Alberto Grünbaum, Professor Emeritus of Applied Mathematics, UC Berkeley](#)

Professor Grünbaum gave recognition to artificial intelligence since it had enhanced effectiveness and efficiency in medical diagnosis. However, he pointed out that it was a real problem if people believed everything coming out from ChatGPT by showing his personal experience. He suggested that students should have more confidence in themselves, put more emphasis on human communication and view problems through a critical lens.



A glimpse into the Q&A session of the meeting

The round-table meeting concluded with an insightful Q&A session where both guest professors and students participated in the discussion and made comments. Questions related to working mechanism, ethical considerations, authenticity, and influence regarding ChatGPT were put forward, which provoked more new understanding of this tool. The whole session was conducted in a very lively and interactive manner, captivating everyone in the audience.

GEC is deeply honored to have our esteemed teaching faculty generously share their unique and invaluable insights. GEC's unwavering commitment lies in harnessing the collective wisdom of distinguished scholars worldwide, alongside our accomplished faculty members, to illuminate cutting-edge technologies and diverse realms of the humanities. This collaboration seeks to ignite inspiration in students, propelling them toward excellence in their forthcoming academic and professional journeys.

Please click [HERE](#) to access the recording.

Faculty Work Gallery

This month we introduced a book - from Professor Bradd Shore.

If you are interested in showcasing your research, grants, book releases, conference presentations, or any work you deem valuable and interesting to share, please feel free to contact us.

The Hidden Powers of Ritual: The Journey of a Lifetime



The Hidden Powers of Ritual

The Journey of a Lifetime

By [Bradd Shore](#)

320 pp., 6 x 9 in, 52 b&w illus.
Paperback
ISBN: 9780262546584
Published: December 12, 2023
Publisher: The MIT Press

MIT Press Bookstore

Penguin Random House

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Barnes and Noble

Bookshop.org

Indiebound

Indigo

Books a Million

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Emory University

About the book

The Hidden Powers of Ritual is an engaging introduction to ritual studies that presents ritual as an evolved form of human behavior of almost unimaginable significance to our species. Every day across the globe, people gather to share meals, brew caffeinated beverages, or honor their ancestors. In this book, Bradd Shore, a respected anthropologist, reaches beyond familiar “big-R” rituals to present life’s humbler, overshadowed moments, exploring everything from the Balinese Pelebon to baseball to family Zoom sessions in the age of Covid to the sobering reenactment rituals surrounding the Moore’s Ford lynchings. In each ritual, Shore shows how our capacity to ritualize behavior is a remarkable part of the human story.

Encompassing both the commonly unlabeled “interaction rituals” studied by sociologists and the symbolically elaborated sacred rituals of religious studies, Shore organizes his conception around detailed case studies drawn from international research and personal experience, weaving scholarship with a memoir of a life encompassed by ritual. A probing exploration that matches breadth with accessibility, The Hidden Powers of Ritual is a provocative contribution to the ritual theory that will appeal to a wide range of readers curious about why these unique repetitive acts matter in our lives.

Please click [HERE](#) to find more information.

Introducing New Faces

We're pleased to welcome 2 new faces to the GEC team - **Yukun & Kai!**

01 Educational background:

Bachelor of Arts in
Italian&English(Bilingual), Tianjin Foreign
Language University, 2011-2015

02 What are your current duties?

I serve as Course Coordinator at GEC Academy where my primary duty revolves around wholeheartedly attending to every student. I proactively delve into comprehending their progress within the curriculum and take the initiative to assist them in resolving any challenges they encounter. Moreover, I establish and maintain a strong rapport with the professors, enabling me to offer comprehensive feedback that contributes to the successful culmination of projects.



Yukun Zhang (Angela)
Yukun.Zhang@gecacademy.cn

03 What made you choose GEC Academy?

I believe what sets GEC Academy apart is its profound commitment to providing students with a preview of overseas courses, facilitating invaluable opportunities for direct engagement and interaction with esteemed professors. Our comprehensive approach encompasses both online and onsite courses. Furthermore, my extensive years of experience in liaising with international students further enrich my ability to impart enhanced courses and share relevant insights with all students, a responsibility I gladly undertake.

04 What are your specialisms and interests?

To begin with, I'm a warm and cheerful individual who always wears a smile. I thoroughly enjoy engaging in conversations with students and professors, readily offering assistance wherever needed. Within GEC Academy, I've successfully managed a myriad of projects spanning diverse fields including Humanities, Psychology, Education, Finance, and Computer Science. My substantial experience in these areas has equipped me well. Beyond my professional role, I find solace in simple sports like badminton, table tennis, and walking. Singing and engaging in games like UNO are also favorite pastimes of mine, contributing to my overall well-being.

Introducing New Faces

We're pleased to welcome 2 new faces to the GEC team - **Yukun & Kai!**



Kai Xie (Peter)

kai.xie@gecacademy.cn

01 Educational background:

Bachelor of Management in Logistics Management, Tianjin University of Science and Technology, 2015-2019

02 What are your current duties?

I hold the position of Course Coordinator at GEC Academy, where my role involves overseeing and guiding students throughout the PBL programs to enhance their learning journey. With a particular focus on the ongoing 2023 Summer Research Program, my utmost dedication lies in delivering exceptional service by promptly addressing any queries or challenges that may arise.

03 What made you choose GEC Academy?

I have a genuine passion for the education industry, where I find a deep sense of purpose. Assisting students in overcoming challenges and witnessing their growth brings me a profound feeling of achievement. Ever since my graduation, I have remained committed to the field of education, continuously contributing my skills and expertise.

04 What are your specialisms and interests?

I excel at fostering enjoyable interactions with others and possess strong communication skills, particularly when engaging with students and their parents. My interests and hobbies are incredibly diverse, and I often initiate conversations by sharing these passions. For instance, I have a keen enthusiasm for sports like basketball, badminton, and table tennis, along with a deep appreciation for animation, movies, singing, and painting, among other pursuits.

AMAZING WORK FROM GEC STUDENTS

Each month, GEC will introduce some of our exceptional students' work in a specific research area to our audiences. This month we selected two articles from our previous students in the field of **Finance**.

Financial and Marketing Performance of P&G and Unilever

As the idea of environmental protection and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is gaining more attention, sustainability is now one of the determinants in assessing whether a company is ethical and has further development potential. Therefore, sustainability analysis is becoming critical for a business nowadays. This research aims to shed light on the financial and marketing performances of two leading companies in the personal care industry – P&G and Unilever, who put much effort into conducting environmentally friendly production and establishing sustainable development plans. This research uses financial statements to analyze the companies' financial status and comes up with a marketing strategy analysis of the two companies. It also uses SWOT analysis as a tool to reveal their performances generally. Through analysis of their financial and marketing performance, this research concludes that P&G and Unilever are in good financial condition and doing well with their sustainable plans. This paper also provides general and separate suggestions for these two companies in the end.



Click [HERE](#) to read the full text!

Portfolio Designed Based on Markowitz Model in Terms of the Wine Industry of China

Contemporarily, China's Wine industry has a special social status because of the prevalence of the culture of drinking. Since the 21st century, the Wine industry has flourished, and the stock price has risen sharply, which makes it become the favorite object of plenty of investors. Facing the unexpected COVID-19, the Wine industry recovered and maintained a rising trend immediately after a short blow, showing its strong risk resistance. In order to find the best investment strategy for the Wine industry, this paper applies the financial analysis method to screen out stocks worth investing and the Markowitz model to determine the optimal portfolio as a reference for investors with quantitative analysis. To be specific, several typical stocks in the industry are chosen and the effective frontier is obtained. According to the models, the performances of the optimal case are illustrated and demonstrated. These results shed light on guiding further exploration of the Wine industry and other similar industries.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full text!

WHAT PROGRAMS DOES GEC OFFER IN August 2023 SEMESTER?

In August, GEC launches a total of **67** online research programs in the areas of Finance, Marketing, Management, Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Electrical Engineering, Sociology, Psychology, Mathematics and so on. This month, GEC also set up 3 customized lectures for Tianjin University. We will continue to gather students, faculty, and staff for an unrivaled academic experience.

The tables below show detailed information about the programs that GEC launches in August.

[GEC 2023 August Program List](#)

[GEC Customized Lectures for Universities in August 2023](#)

Please click [HERE](#) to find previous program/course offerings.

Newsletter Improvement Survey

We would love to hear your thoughts or feedback on how we can improve your experience with our newsletter.

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