



Talal Abu-Ghazaleh – Confucius Institute

TAG-Confucius Newsletter | Issue 43 - December 2019

Talal Abu Ghazaleh-Confucius Institute:

The Institute was established in September 2008 to introduce the Chinese language and culture, as well as achieving a greater mutual understanding between the Arab and Chinese cultures. This unique initiative is based on the cooperation agreement between Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Global and Confucius Institute in China. The Institute has been named after the great intellectual, mentor and philosopher, Confucius, whose ideas had influenced China and other regions around the world for over 2,000 years.

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For inquiries please contact us

Tel: +962 - 6 5100600 | Fax: +962 - 6 5100606

website: www.tagconfucius.com | Email: ralyabroudi@tagconfucius.com

TAG-Confucius Institute is the first institute accredited by the Chinese Government to teach Chinese language in Jordan.

TAG-Confucius Institute is holding a new course to teach the basics of the Chinese language for beginners:

A. Threshold Level for Adults: starting 05/01/2020

Schedule: Sunday and Tuesday from 6:00 – 8:00 pm

B. Threshold Level for Kids: starting 04/01/2020

Schedule of the course: Saturday from 3:00- 4:30 pm

And Tuesday from 3:00-4:30 pm

***All Chinese language teachers are from China specialized in teaching Chinese language for foreigners and accredited by the Confucius Institute in China.**

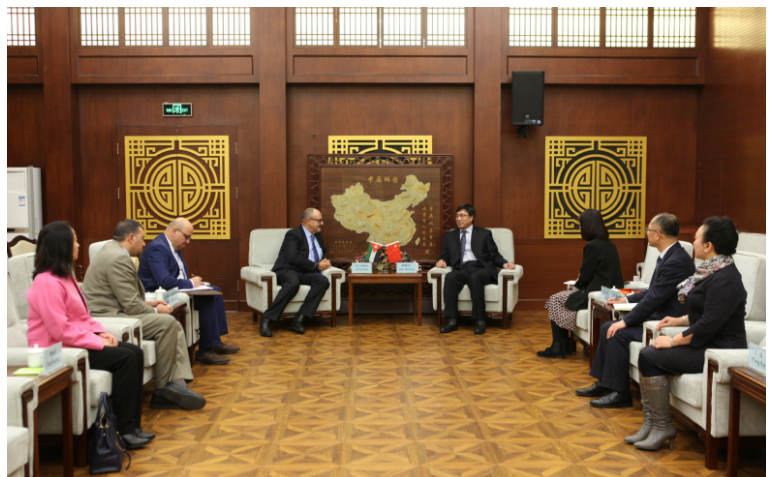


On the Sideline of TAG-Confucius' 11th Annual Board of Directors Meeting

President of Shenyang Normal University Receives Abu-Ghazaleh

SHENYANG, China - President of Shenyang Normal University (SNU), Dr. Hao Deyong, received Mr. Luay Abu-Ghazaleh, Vice-Chair of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Global (TAG.Global) and Chairman of TAG-Confucius Institute, and the accompanying delegation.

The meeting was on the sideline of the 11th Meeting of TAG-Confucius Board of Directors which was recently held at Shenyang Normal University headquarters.



During the meeting, Dr. Deyong stressed the depth of the Chinese-Jordanian relations in particular and the Sino-Arab relations in general, underscoring the vital role TAG. Global plays in boosting such relations through TAG-Confucius Institute.

Dr. Deyong also underlined the efforts TAG-Confucius exerts in spreading Chinese language and culture in Jordan through academic, cultural and artistic activities in addition to the scholarships, noting that 30 scholarships were granted to Jordanian students to learn Chinese language at SNU.

Furthermore, He also expressed his gratitude and appreciation to HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, chairman of TAG.Global, for his continued and outstanding efforts in supporting the Institute and the University, extending an invitation to His Excellency to patronize the graduation ceremony of the University which will be held next June.



On the other hand, Mr. Luay Abu-Ghazaleh chaired the 11th annual meeting of TAG-Confucius Institute, in his capacity as the Chair of Institute Board of Directors, which was held at Shenyang Normal University Headquarters.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh expressed his pride in the partnership with the Shenyang Normal University and the Confucius Institute

Headquarters (Hanban) which dates back to 2008, pointed out that this partnership is distinctive since it is the only partnership in the world between the Chinese government and the business sector.

He also accentuated Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh's keenness in consolidating such relationships through new partnerships to achieve the "Belt and Road" initiative, which is considered the cornerstone of cooperation between both parties. At the same time, Mr. Luay Abu-Ghazaleh stated that TAG.Global aspires for further cooperation with the University in the fields of Intellectual Property, technical and cultural exchange.

For his part, Vice President of SNU, Dr. Han Guohai, said that the University increased the number of its faculties to become 26 in different specializations and increased the absorptive capacity to become 45 thousand students, pointing out that it is working on preparing a systematic and methodological plan to develop qualifications and competencies of lecturers.

During the meeting, TAG-Confucius Executive Director, Mr. Mamoun Abu Al-Sebaa', presented a detailed report on the cultural, academic, artistic and social events TAG-Confucius conducted this year, stating that the Institute will strive to increase its academic and cultural activities to promote the Chinese language in the Arab countries.

‘TAG-Confucius’ Participates in the Annual Global Confucius Institute Conference



CHANGSHA, China - Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Confucius Institute (TAG-Confucius) participated in the annual conference of the Global Confucius Institute Conference held under the theme “Innovation and Development of International Chinese Language Education in the New Era”.

The Conference was held in Changsha, capital of central China’s Hunan province, with the participation of 1500 participants including university presidents and managers of Confucius institutes from more than 154 countries.

During the 33 workshops, participants discussed various topics including the International Policies for Teaching Chinese Language, Creative Development of Confucius Institutes, Cultural Exchange between China and Countries of the World as well as Development of Cooperative Partnerships.

Mr. Mamoun Abu Al Sebaa, Executive Director of TAG-Confucius Institute along with Dr. Yang Songfang, Dean of TAG-

Confucius Institute represented TAG-Confucius in the Conference.

Abu Al-Sebaa expressed pride of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Global’s TAG-Confucius; the first private entity that signs partnership with Confucius Institute Headquarters/Hanban with Shenyang Normal University as a Chinese partner university. TAG-Confucius was established in 2008 to spread Chinese language and culture, as the first official Chinese language center to teach Chinese and the first Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) center in Jordan.

During one of the workshops entitled ‘Cultural Exchange between China and Jordan’, Abu Al-Sebaa’ stated that TAG-Confucius offers an array of services most importantly organizing Chinese language and specialized business language courses for those who wish to do business with China. Many people benefitted from such courses mainly TAG.Global employees and managers, Jordan Chamber of Commerce, Jordan Engineers Association, Ministry of Tourism in addition to local community.



He also pointed out that TAG-Confucius has become a destination for Jordanian business community, which seeks to become involved in the world of business with China, by organizing introductory seminars about China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) in collaboration with China Foreign Trade Center, organizing festivities to celebrate Chinese national festivals and occasions throughout the year, promoting scholarships program to

study in China, and facilitating cultural and educational visits of students and scholars.

It is worth mentioning that various activities were held during the conference, including the Chinese Language Teaching Resources Exhibit, Confucius Institute's New Technology Applications Exhibit, and the Cultural Heritage Expo in Hunan Province.

China's 5 Biggest Holidays and How They're Celebrated

Public holidays in China are vastly different to those in the West. Chinese holidays typically reflect a tradition or an event of cultural significance. Celebrations like Christmas and (the Georgian calendar's) New Year's Eve are hardly observed at all. Instead, most Chinese holidays follow the lunar calendar, which dictates numerous days of significance throughout the year.

Here we list the five biggest holidays in China, what they mean and how they're celebrated.

Lunar New Year

Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival (春节 - Chūn Jié), is the largest and most widely celebrated event in China. The holiday falls on the first day of the Lunar Calendar, in January or February, with celebrations continuing for the full week proceeding. Traditionally, the event saw deities and ancestors honored with the colour red, which is associated with wealth and joy in China. During Spring Festival, Chinese people traditionally wear red clothing, decorate their windows and walls with red paper motifs, perform dragon dances and hand out money-stuffed red envelopes known as hong bao.

Today the event is marked by a week-long public holiday, during which Chinese people often travel all across the country to gather and celebrate with family. The public holiday starts on the Eve of the Lunar New Year, with the day in a typical Chinese household consisting of a reunion dinner and a televised viewing of the CCTV Spring Festival Gala, a colorful TV event that began in 1983. During the following week Chinese people will engage in a number of traditions, such as praying to different deities for blessings, lighting firecrackers to ward off evil spirits, visiting family and friends and gifting hong bao.

Of all holidays in the Chinese calendar, Spring Festival has the largest social and economic impact. Businesses are often closed for the entire break, and new projects may be delayed until after the New Year for greater blessings.

Lantern Festival

China's Lantern Festival (元宵节 - Yuān Xiāo Jié) is another holiday early in the Lunar Calendar, falling on the 15th day after the Lunar New Year, around February and March. The Festival is said to have begun more than 2,000 years ago during the Han Dynasty. Chinese people visited temples to pray for the prosperity of their family and the nation, and lit paper lanterns to honour deities and gods.

Today, such customs remain. In addition, the eating sticky rice balls known as (汤圆 tāng yuán) and the solving of wordplay riddles attached to lanterns known as (灯谜 dēng mí) are also popular activities. As this is the first celebration after Spring Festival, the Lantern Festival is symbolic of greeting the New Year with family and celebrating unity and togetherness. During the festival lantern parades are held across cities in China, with the celebrations usually lasting late into the night.

Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival (端午节 Duān Wǔ Jié) is an annual Chinese holiday celebrating loyalty and filial piety - the act of respecting and honoring parents and elders. The holiday takes place on the 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar calendar, around May or June. The origins of the event are said to date back 2,000 years. While there are many myths and legends about how the tradition of racing dragon boats and throwing rice balls into water came about, the best-known story is that of Qū Yuán (屈原), a poet who lived in 300BC. Unable to face the usurpation of his homeland by a neighbouring kingdom, Qu Yuan is said to have thrown himself into a river in a sacrificial protest. The town's people raced after his body in boats, but when he was nowhere to be found, they resorted to throwing sticky rice into the river.

Apparently the idea was that the fish would eat the rice instead of the beloved poet's body. This is said to be how dragon boat racing and sticky rice dumplings (粽子-zòng zi) came about.

In modern-day China and beyond, the Dragon Boat Festival is often used by businesses to host annual retreats and team building events. In the spirit of building a strong and loyal corporate culture, dragon boat racing, camping and other outdoor activities are often hosted by businesses during this time. The eating and sharing of zòng zi is still perceived as a symbol of luck and good fortune. Unlike the other family-focused holidays, the Dragon Boat Festival is observed to a lesser extent internationally, with the majority of celebrations remaining in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Mid-Autumn Festival

The Mid-Autumn Festival (中秋节 Zhōng Qiū Jié) is China's annual harvest festival, falling on the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar, around September and October. The festival originated as way of celebrating a good harvest and praying to deities for more of the same. The moon, a symbol of rejuvenation, is worshiped on this day. It is believed that the moon is at its roundest on the day of the festival, signifying togetherness and unity. The tradition of sharing moon cakes - sweet pies that usually contain a complete egg yolk at their center - also represents the moon, the coming together of family, and working together for a good harvest.

The Mid-Autumn Festival remains one of the most celebrated holidays throughout Asia. The tradition of giving moon cakes has been heavily commercialized, even in the West. The festival is largely celebrated as an outdoor reunion event, with moon gazing, lantern parades and family picnics galore. Cities around the world with large Chinese populations will often host celebratory events on this day.

National Day

The National Day (国庆节 Guó Qīng Jié) festival is the longest public holiday break in China following the Lunar New Year. The event celebrates the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on Oct. 1, 1949. Since 1999, October 1st has kicked off what is known as Golden Week - a national holiday primarily focused on shopping and aiding the domestic tourism industry. The rationale was that while

Spring Festival is also a week long, the customs of family reunion and other traditions do not allow for an extended period of leisure and recreation.

Golden Week is when most Chinese people embark on their annual vacation or partake in extended periods of leisure. Most shops stay open and host big sales to satisfy an increasing appetite for discretionary spending. As a result, the economic significance of the National Day Golden Week has grown, with the holiday being one of the largest concentrated periods of consumerism within China. You'll also find top domestic tourist spots like the Great Wall of China absolutely mobbed during this period. Go to there at your peril!

Besides these top five, there are a number of other holidays of social significance in China, including Tomb Sweeping Day and Double Ninth Festival, both of which follow the lunar calendar.

Other days of note include contemporary events such as Labour Day, the Communist Party and army anniversary days, and the highly-popular Double Eleven Singles Day.

The vast number of unique holidays and celebrations closely reflects the rich history of China. While historical holidays will remain a core fixture of the yearly celebrations, the development and growth of China and its economy will no doubt give rise to even more events worthy of celebrating in coming years.

<https://www.echinacities.com/expat-life/Chinas-5-Biggest-Holidays-and-How-Theyre-Celebrated>

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Tel:+962 65100 909 | Fax: +962 6 5100 901 | Email: info@tagtech.global

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