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Former provost aims to 'globalize' Temple

🕒 03 October 2017 👤 Gillian McGoldrick 📁 News, Temple Administration



Vice President of International Affairs Hai-Lung Dai wants to make Temple an internationally known institution in his new role. | JAMIE COTTRELL / THE TEMPLE NEWS



It's been three months since former Provost Hai-Lung Dai

POLLS

What are your thoughts on graffiti?

It's street art, but it can be used negatively. (52%, 71 Votes)

It's street art like the murals around Philly, and it shouldn't be censored. (25%, 34 Votes)

It's illegal, and violators of the law should be punished. (23%, 32

Votes)

Total Voters: 137

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returned to the university in an administrative role. And he has one main goal: forge Temple's reputation as a premier university internationally.

Dai, the ousted provost and current vice president of International Affairs, is instituting several initiatives like an Office of International Affairs lecture series and Ph.D. collaborations with international schools to globalize Temple.

The Office of International Affairs lecture series will kick off Tuesday at 3:30 p.m. in Room 200AB of the Student Center.

This first session, "Tension on the Korean Peninsula," will have panelists Evan Osnos, a writer from The New Yorker who has interviewed North Korean leaders, and South Korean Lt. General In-Bum Chun. The lecture series will happen at least once per semester and will cover international issues.

Before Dai became the provost of the university in 2013, he served as the dean of the College of Science and Technology. And before that, he served as the senior vice provost for International Affairs so he said he has experience in his newly made position.

"If we are a university recognized by other people as one of the premier universities in the world, [students] will have a better time of finding a job," Dai said. "So that's what I want to do."

Dai said he's realized it's a necessity for Temple to globalize at several international conferences. For example, he said, because the world is so interconnected, many issues can't be solved unless different continents work together. At a bilateral United States-China conference



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several years ago, it was discovered that issues with pollution stretched across the Pacific Ocean.

“The pollution issues in San Francisco couldn’t be fixed until the pollution problems in Beijing were,” Dai said. “We find that it is quite often beneficial and sometimes necessary to develop these international relations.”

Dai was ousted as provost by former President Neil Theobald – who is currently back at his old institution of Indiana University as a special adviser to the president. Dai was fired by Theobald in June 2016 for overspending on merit scholarships. Theobald left the university a month later under threat of the Board of Trustees for mishandling Dai’s termination and the merit scholarship program. Theobald claimed he was being fired for refusing to cover up sexual harassment allegations against Dai, which were investigated that summer and cleared.

Dai sued Theobald for slander, among other accusations, but later settled with the university.

During the time of this suit, Dai never officially left the university and continued to work as the Laura H. Carnell Professor of Chemistry. On top of his job at the Office of International Affairs, Dai is working under five grants and writing an average of 10 research papers a year.

Although his job has changed, Dai reports directly to President Richard Englert.

The Office of International Affairs is in charge of “almost everything that has an international component” at the university, Dai said. His office oversees Study Abroad and Education Abroad for students studying at Temple University Japan and Temple University Rome. It also works to maintain relationships with universities abroad

and assimilate international students at Temple.

In the past five years, the international student population has more than doubled. In 2012, Temple had about 1,800 international students. Temple currently has more than 3,400 international students. The university has credited Dai for the increase in international students during his time as provost.

Dai wants to increase this population so Temple is more competitive with other schools in the area like the University of Pennsylvania. Temple's international student population makes up only about 10 percent of the student population on Main Campus, which Dai said "pales in comparison" with other internationally renowned schools.

"[International affairs] is becoming a more and more important part of American higher education," Dai said.

Dai also maintains relationships with more than 50 international institutions on collaborative programs like dual Ph.D. programs at the University of Belgrade in Serbia and the South University of Science and Technology of China.

"By the end, my goal is that every Temple student who graduates would feel very proud of his or her alma mater and its alma mater's reputation," Dai said. "That's why it's the number one goal."



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