Chinese Professors Visit VCSU

August 2, 2012

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Eight faculty members and one translator from Hangzhou, China visited Valley City Wednesday where they toured Valley City State University and the downtown area.

Each summer, a group of faculty from Zhejiang Economic and Trade Polytechnic (ZJETP) College visit the Fargo area, and VCSU partners with North Dakota State University to host a portion of their visit.

The professors arrived at about 9 a.m. and started their tour at the university.

President Steve Shirley addressed them with a welcome reception in the Skoal Room at the Student Center. While there, Tony Dutton, instructor of social science at VCSU, presented information on the history of VCSU.

Professors then received a tour of campus and attended a faculty demonstration at VCSU’s McFarland Hall.

Kerry Gregoryk, professor of business and information technology, said that VCSU has developed a partnership with their university and every year ZJETP College brings faculty to see how instructors at VCSU do things.

“It’s just a nice exchange of teaching ideas,” Gregoryk said.

Jamie Wirth, instructor of mathematics at VCSU, gave a presentation on how he uses Blackboard and Smart Boards in the math classroom.

Wirth demonstrated his use of video lectures and online quizzes, saying his techniques actively get students to interact in the classroom.
Rob Walsh, instructor of communication arts, told the professors how he uses service learning projects in his classes. The professors were curious how Walsh analyzed the results of the projects, so he gave them handouts to guide them if they were ever interested in implementing a service project in their classrooms.

Dina Petherbridge, instructor of Spanish at VCSU, demonstrated how she uses Apple iPads to help her students and children learn a second language.

The professors from ZJETP College used the iPads to test an application called PuppetPals that allows users to learn language in an interactive way. Petherbridge said her students are able to record their voice so that they can hear themselves speaking Spanish.

“The learner becomes creative, and you’ll be amazed at how far they come at learning a language,” Petherbridge said.

Following the presentation on iPads, professors from the technology education department showed off their robots and told the audience that their students create and program their own robots for a design challenge project.

Walsh said the faculty presentations are important between the collaborative universities because “as much as we can see each other and interact, we develop a much more effective program to meet students needs on both ends.”

Following the faculty presentations, the group toured VCSU’s Prairie Waters Education and Research Center in Kathryn and toured downtown Valley City starting at Dutton’s Valley Gallery.