

Date: Feb. 2, 2026

**JSPS US AND CANADA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SEMINAR PROGRAM
REPORT**

Organizer (Awardee)

Name: Xurong Kong

Position & Affiliation: Professor, Kean University

1. TITLE OF SEMINAR Dialogue between the East and West
2. DATE(S) Jan. 29, 2026
3. VENUE & CITY, STATE Union, NJ, USA
4. TARGETED RESEARCH AREAS (1) Ancient history (2) the Silk Roads (3) history of material culture
5. NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS TOTAL: <u>100</u> persons including <u>4</u> US and Canada Alumni Association members -US: <u>100</u> persons -CANADA: <u> </u> persons -FROM OTHER COUNTRIES: <u>3</u> person(s) including <u>1</u> person(s) from Japan

NOTES FOR REPORT

*Please be sure to include the following contents. (Maximum 5 pages)

- Executive Summary
- Topics Discussed with Outcomes & Future Challenges
- Workshop/Seminar Agenda
- List of participants

-Executive Summary

Two days after the historical winter storm named “Monster,” over one hundreds of students, colleagues, scholars, and administrators came, and they came from China, Japan, Washington, Seton Hall and beyond.

The seven speakers delivered seven solid research papers that will generate and inspire more conversations about the relationship between the west and East from the historical and cultural perspectives. We were talking about history, but the familiarity and relevance enable us to hold a deeper confidence that history will never prevail, and studying history will be there as it was there with what happened in history, all the time.

Dr. Jamie Peiling said, “History is the silk roads.” Dr. Chen Dongdong asked, “how could Kean keeps humanities so alive while other places suffer its diminishing?” Students showed interested in more conferences alike. Everyone, in different styles, expressed their excitement and joy over the whole day event, which tells us that academic gathering is healthy and needed.

-Topics Discussed with Outcomes & Future Challenges

The topics covered in the conference is diverse and coherent which make a real dialogue across cultures.

Dr. Abe Yukinobu: "The Soundscape of Northern Wei Luoyang"

Dr. Jamie Pelling: "Silk Road Imaginaries in the Middle East"

Dr. Chris Bellitto: "Virtue, Character, and Government Leadership"

Miss Lin Hou: "Catalysts of Technique: The Hellenistic Influence on Han Stone Reliefs"

Dr. Jacquelyn Stonberg: "Magical Amulets and other Spiritual Art along the Silk Roads from Greece to Japan"

Dr. Elizabeth Hyde: "Chinese Plants in Louis XIV's Histoire des plantes: East Meets West in the French Garden"

Dr. Xurong Kong: "The Sounds of Others: Musical Instruments that Traveled Afar"

People attended the event wanted to hear more, and our Kean photographer, Mr. Byran Pekarek, wished he could stay longer as he found the conference amazing and the topics inspiring.

Two issues were very challenging. First is the budget. I did not know how many people will join the dinner, so I budgeted it for \$1,000, but we only spent around \$500 for 10 people. I wish someone can help me to budget better. I also hope JSPS could increase the funding amount especially considering the inflations in the USA.

Another issue is lacking assistance. In the proposal, I had budget for assistance with conference, website and photo taking, that person quit for moving to a new job. I should also have a budget for assistance.

Mrs. Kajihara Yuri and Yamashita Ryoko have been extremely supportive and considerate. I am willing to work with them and JSPS for more collaborations.

The JSPS pin is a treasure for me, as it reminds me of my productive and life-changing experience in Japan. THANK YOU.

-Workshop/Seminar Agenda

Dialogue between the West and East

Sponsored by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

Date: January 29, 2026

Location: Liberty Hall Academic Center (LHAC)

8:30 - 9:00	Reception
	Welcome Speech
9:00 - 9:20	Introduced by Dr. Brid Nicholson Dr. Michael Salvatore Executive Vice President for Academic and Administrative Operations at Kean University
9:20 - 10:20	Dr. Abe Yukinobu "The Soundscape of Northern Wei Luoyang"
10:20 - 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 - 11:30	Dr. Jamie Pelling "Silk Road Imaginaries in the Middle East" Dr. Chris Bellitto "Virtue, Character, and Government Leadership" Lin Hou "Catalysts of Technique: The Hellenistic Influence on Han Stone Reliefs"
11:30 - 12:30	JSPS Information Session
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch and Picture-Taking
1:30 - 2:30	Dr. Jacquelyn Stonberg "Magical Amulets and other Spiritual Art along the Silk Roads from Greece to Japan" Dr. Elizabeth Hyde "Chinese Plants in Louis XIV's Histoire des plantes: East Meets West in the French Context" Dr. Xurong Kong "The Sounds of Others: Musical Instruments that Traveled Afar"
2:30 - 2:45	Coffee Break
2:45 - 3:15	Discussion Led by Dr. Sue Gronewold
3:15 - 3:30	Final Remarks

Dr. Laura Baecher

Associate Provost for Faculty Development

3:30 - 4:30

Concert

Organized by Paulus Hook Music Foundation

-List of participants

Besides over one hundreds of students:

1 Japanese Scholar: Dr. Abe Yuki

1Phd. Candidate from China: Miss Lin Hou

1 Scholar from Seton Hall University: Dr. Dongdong Chen

1 teacher from Verona School Distrcit: Mrs. Jenny Yan Qin

4 Administrators:

Dr. Michael Salvatore, Executive Vice President for Academic and Administrative Operations at Kean University

Dr. Laura Baecher, Associate Provost for Faculty Development, Kean University

Dr. Jin Wang, Dean, College of Business and Public Management, Kean University

Dr. George Chang, Dean, The Dorothy and George Hennings College of Science, Mathematics and Technology, Kean University

10 Kean Faculties:

Dr. Jamie Pelling, Assistant Professor, History Department

Dr. Chris Bellitto, Professor, History Department

Dr. Elizabeth Hyde, Professor, History Department

Dr. Xurong Kong, Professor, History department

Dr. Jacquelyn Stonberg, Associate Professor, Art History program

Dr. Catherin Nicholson, Chair, History Department

Dr. Abigail Perkiss, Professor, History Department

Dr. Nicole Schroeder, Assistant Professor, History Department

Dr. Dongyan Mu, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental and Sustainability Sciences

Dr. Mingjing Sun, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry

Photos

Photos from Mr. Joshua Dunn, student from Performing Art at Kean University



[East meets West Silk Roads](#)

Plus ones from Kean Photographer Mr. Bryan Pekarek

<https://kean.canto.com/b/P60AD>