

# Shantung Christian University

[Jinan](#) (Shandong Sheng, China)

American Presbyterian, English Baptist, Anglican, and Canadian Presbyterian mission agencies worked together to form what came to be known as Shantung Christian University. The University's earliest roots went back to Tengchow College, which was established by American Presbyterians in 1882 with Calvin Mateer as its leader. In 1902 the Presbyterians and English Baptists agreed to combine their efforts in higher education in Shantung, forming an Arts College at Weihsien, a Theological College at Tsingchowfu, and a Medical College, which was eventually established in Tsinan. By 1909 it had been determined that the University should be consolidated in one location, and Tsinan was chosen. Fundraising efforts for a new campus in Tsinan were led by Henry W. Luce and the Chicago architectural firm of Perkins, Fellows and Hamilton was engaged to design the buildings. Luce was a very effective fundraiser but he did not see eye-to-eye with the president of the University regarding the manner in which the funds should be spent. He resigned from Shantung rather unexpectedly in 1917 and went on to do successful fundraising for Yenching University.

Cheeloo, as the Shantung Christian University was called informally, was renowned for its medical education program. Even before the main campus was ready, plans for a hospital carefully drawn and building operations begun in 1914, under guidance of Harold Balme. Between 1916 and 1923 the former Peking Union Medical College, the Medical Department of Nanking University, the Hankow Medical College, and the North China Union Medical College for Women all were moved to Tsinan, the five schools combining to form the Cheeloo University School of Medicine. When a new hospital building was completed in 1936, this older hospital building was utilized by the School of Medicine.

In 1917, the College of Arts and Science moved from Weihsien and the College of Theology and the Normal School from Tsingchowfu to occupy the new campus at Tsinan. The campus was on the south side of the city wall, separated by the wall from the buildings of the School of Medicine. The four dormitories ready for occupation were arranged in courts, with each court designed to have its own commons building, including a dining room, social hall, kitchen, and bathrooms.

Bergen Science Hall was the first classroom building completed on the new campus in Tsinan. It was devoted to Chemistry and Biology while the matching Mateer Science Hall was devoted to Physics and Physiology. Centered between these two classroom buildings, across a central green, was the main administration building, McCormick Hall. The center of the campus was the setting for University events that helped to foster the sense of school spirit that was a distinctive characteristic of the Christian universities in China. The Cheeloo Weekly Bulletin for January 7, 1928 reports, for example: "Another innovation in Cheeloo customs which may well become permanent (weather permitting!) was the New Year's Day celebration in the centre of the campus between McCormick Hall and the Chapel. A goodly

number of students and faculty gathered in a large circle around the flag-pole at nine o'clock New Year's morning for a short meeting.

The programme consisted of a hymn; the raising of the flag; a selection by the University Band; a short speech by Dr. Peter Kiang; an ode written for the occasion and read by one of the women students; and a 'community bow' - everyone bowing three times to the flag, and three times wishing for the Republic of China 'a thousand years.'"

A new women's dormitory was constructed in the 1920s. The plans for it were recounted, with enthusiasm in the Cheeloo Weekly Bulletin of August 1923: "It will be a two-storey block , almost covering the four sides of a square, with a quad garden within. The centre wing will contain Reception rooms, large Y.W.C.A. room, and Reading Room, and, on the second floor, four large common studies in which the women students can work during the evening. The north and south wings will contain bedroom accommodations for sixty students (two to each room), and also a commodious suite of rooms for three foreign or Chinese members of staff - this suite having its special entrance, and including office, sitting room, dining room, bathroom, and four bedrooms. The whole dormitory will be centrally heated and lighted with electricity, and there will be ample bathtubs and sanitary installations. On the fourth side of the square there will be a large dining room, pantry and kitchen, connected with the corridor on the north wing..."

The Kumler Memorial Chapel was dedicated with impressive ceremonies on June 8, 1923. It opened its doors every weekday morning at eight o'clock for a worship service of twenty minutes duration. The attendance of students was voluntary and varied from fifty to eighty percent of the student body. As one Cheeloo student wrote of the chapel: "The Chapel of our University stands on the southern part of the campus. It is made of stone. The beauty and the extensiveness of it impress you a lot. If you stand on the top of the tower and look around, all the beauties of nature are in your sight. Perhaps you can distinguish what are the differences between living in society and living in solitude. Inside the chapel is as bright as outside for there are about one hundred windows in our chapel. It is a sacred place."

This water tower, near the edge of the Cheeloo campus, overlooked significant famine relief efforts undertaken by the University during the 1920s. A village of huts of famine refugees housed several hundred people, who were fed and given medical care during the winter months. Women students mended and remade discarded clothing for the use of the refugees. Various fundraising events were held to support the relief efforts. On December 17, 1927, for example, the students of the Department of Sociology secured the moving picture Erh Pa Chia Jen and had two showings in a campus building, selling tickets for fifty cents and twenty cents, all proceeds going for famine relief.

During the Sino-Japanese War, the work of Shantung Christian University was primarily carried on in Chengtu, on the campus of West China Union University. The hospital remained open in Tsinan with a largely Western staff and the College of Theology, Nursing School, and Rural Institute remained in operation until Pearl Harbor. The entire campus was used as a hospital by the Japanese during the War, housing 1,200 patients as well as 600 officers. In the summer of 1952 the College of Medicine was merged with the Shantung Provincial Medical

College and the resulting Shantung Medical College occupied the entire campus. The College of Science was merged with the new National University in Nanking while the College of Theology joined Nanking Theological Seminary.

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**Further reading**

Corbett, Charles Hodge. Shantung Christian University (Cheloo). New York: United Board for Christian Colleges in China, 1955.