

Gang brings China to Meredith

By: Betsy Stewart

With his briefcase in hand and a smile as big as China on his face, Gong Huan-Gang is a familiar sight in Joyner Hall this semester. Gong is visiting professor of politics from Dongbei University of Finance and Economics in Dalian Province, People's Republic of China. He is teaching at Meredith under the auspices of the Kenan Grant, which has funded a series of faculty exchanges with Dongbei University since 1992.

Gong is teaching two classes this semester: China Today and Introduction to Chinese Language. He says it is very difficult to learn Chinese in only three months, but his students are eager.

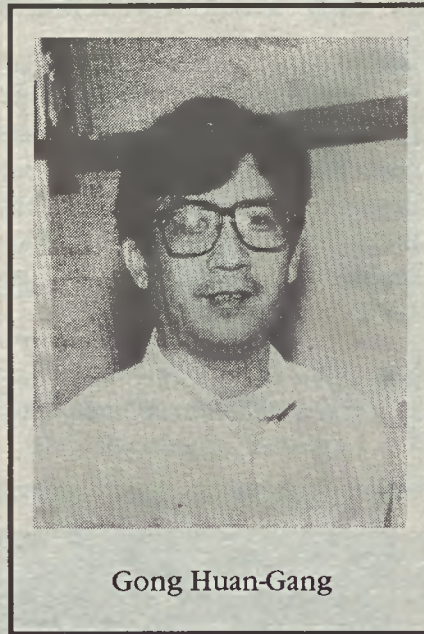
"I like the students here," Gong said. "They are quite smart, quite polite, quite gentle. They are quite smart to learn a foreign language, and they are quite keen to learn about what happens in China."

At Dongbei University, where he

is associate professor and deputy dean, Gong teaches classes in foreign trade practices and international trade. These classes are important, Gong says, because Dalian, a border province, is one of 15 Special Economic Zones in China. It is one of China's most important industrial bases with steel, coal and other natural resources. Dalian is second only to Shanghai in its importance as a harbor city.

Gong holds a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in economics. This is his first trip outside of China. His wife, who works in a bank, and his eight-year-old son are at home. He says he misses them, and adds that his semester at Meredith "is a task, an obligation I have to finish and do it well."

What is his favorite American food? Hot dogs! Gong is living at the Lemmon House on Faircloth Street and eats most of his meals in the Belk Dining Hall. He said, "in the cafeteria I think most of the vegetables are overcooked, but with such a big number of students it



Gong Huan-Gang

is difficult to meet everybody's satisfaction."

In comparing education in China with what he has seen at Meredith, Gong notes one major difference. "Most of the Chinese students have to compete to get a chance to be a university student, and it is much more difficult. Here it is only a question of money. In China you have to compete, and only a few of the senior students, no more than ten percent, get in." Gong said the hardest task is to get into graduate school, and for some majors there are no master's or doc-

toral programs available. Many Chinese students go abroad to study, Gong added, and they go to Japan, the U. S. or Europe. Japan is a frequent choice because of its proximity, and because many students speak Japanese as well as Chinese.

Gong's first impression of America was that we have "too many cars, nobody walks on the street and everybody is busy, quite busy." He visited the NC State Fair and noted that it is similar to national fairs held in China. "It was the first time for me to see so many American people gathered together," he said.

"This is quite an important experience," Gong said, "and I have learned a lot. America is a highly-developed country. People here are quite busy, busy with their own business. They have little time to chat. The American economy is quite well organized and everybody is busy here, except me sometimes," he smiled.

Gong will return home at semester's end and is looking forward to spending three days in New York City after he leaves Raleigh. A friend in China told him, "if you love somebody, send him to New York—it's a paradise. If you hate somebody, send him to New York—it's a hell." Gong is anxious to see New York, whether it be paradise or hell, for himself.

Counseling Center No Show

By Dina Di Maio

Turnout has been low at the counseling center's seminar series, "Beyond Meredith," said Sanne Martin, seminar director.

Turnout has grown since the beginning of the semester, but it is still not as large as she would like it, said Martin.

"We're hoping for 20 people, but we're always getting 10," Martin said.

Two reasons for the low attendance: advertising is difficult and students are busy.

Because the counseling center is paying for the seminars, it is spending as much as possible on advertising. Martin said the counseling center sent brochures to students and also posted flyers and posters.

The counseling center is now using other channels to advertise.

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