

# **Experiential Learning through Dream in the Red Chamber: A Chinese Novel as a Bridge to Linguistic and Intercultural Competence**

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## **Abstract**

Our presentation will describe an ongoing project to explore the possibilities for teaching Chinese language and culture through the classic novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, by Cao Xueqin. Through a year-long grant from the ASIANetwork consortium, the project began in March, 2019 with an interdisciplinary undergraduate seminar on the novel and its themes, following which we spent three weeks in China, visiting three cities and interviewing students and scholars of the novel. Now presenting on the results of this research and adapting our findings into classroom lessons on Chinese language and culture through “experiential learning” based on the novel and students’ research. We will share an outline of our project and describe our findings on how our interdisciplinary, experiential approach to the novel offers insights into student motivations and the kinds of insights into language and culture the novel offers.

## **Bio**

Dr. Jinai Sun is Associate Professor of Chinese at North Central College where she has taught since 2011. Dr. Sun also has served for seven years as Program Director of the STARTALK Chinese Immersion program at North Central. Her research focuses on curriculum and instructional design, particularly through the use of authentic materials toward student motivation in Chinese language classrooms in the U.S.

Stuart Patterson (B.A. St John’s College, Ph.D. Emory University) is Visiting Associate Faculty and Chair of the Shimer Great Books School at North Central College. Patterson teaches interdisciplinary seminars across the traditional liberal arts at both undergraduate and graduate levels. His most recent scholarship involves the role of gossip in Cao Xueqin’s *Story of the Stone*.