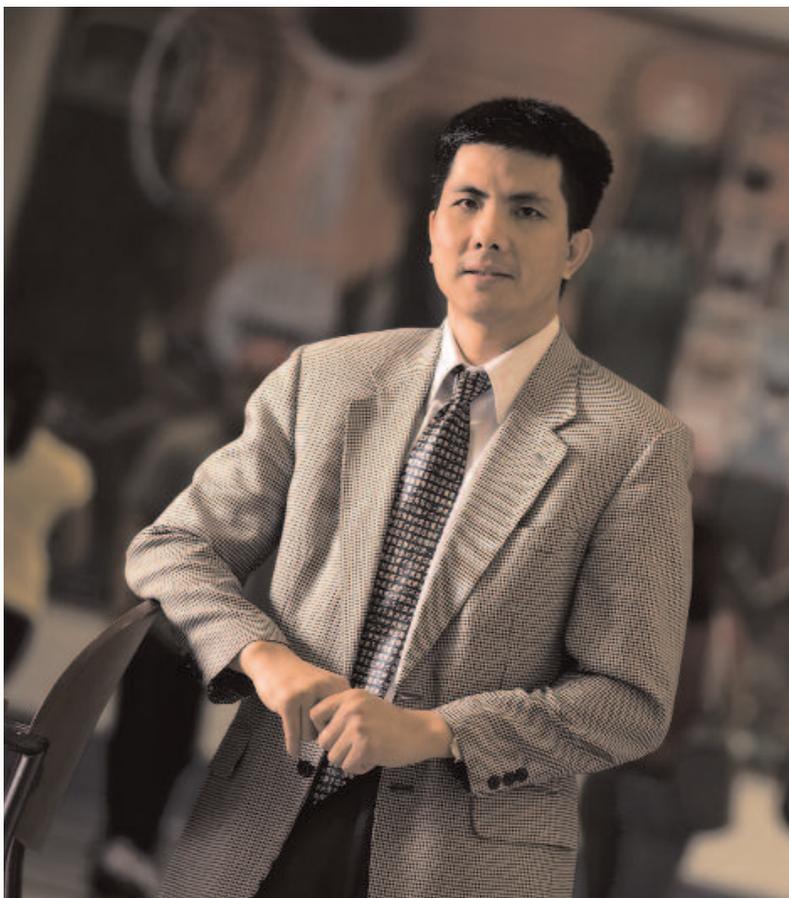


During this next year, the Office of Community Engagement will seek to increase awareness among faculty, students and staff about community partnerships with the University and offer workshops in community engagement for faculty, encouraging them to incorporate service-learning in their own classroom curriculum where appropriate.

## Advancing Animal Welfare Policy Changes in China

Ten years ago, while waiting for an oil change and flipping through a Chinese newspaper in Denver, Peter Li came across



*“I help them understand the public policy restrictions and look for opportunities where they can help change public policy while working within the system,” UHD associate professor Peter Li on helping Chinese citizens protest animal cruelty.*

—Peter Li, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor of East Asian Politics,  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences*

an article that changed the direction of his life. The story detailed a tourist’s visit to a black bear farm in China—a place where 200 of the 7,000 bears spent their lives in small cages, catheterized to extract bear bile used in Chinese medicine.

The Chinese native knew all too well that such animal abuse is completely legal in China. But UHD’s associate professor of East Asian Politics also believes that public policy can change that behavior. That’s why Li has spent the last six years consulting with organizations like the Humane Society International (HSI), to incrementally effect animal welfare policy change in China.

“HSI, which seeks to operate in China, must adopt a very different approach than other animal welfare groups that can openly protest animal cruelty practices,” he said. “I help them understand the public policy restrictions and look for opportunities where they can help change public policy while working within the system.” In 2006, Li was invited to testify at the European Parliament about China’s fur animal farming practices again underscoring the country’s lack of animal welfare policy. “China has a great deal to do, but change is possible,” he asserts.

Once a professor at the Diplomatic Institute in Beijing, Li understands the governmental and societal restrictions in China and seeks to create what he calls a “fear-free” learning environment for his students at UHD. “Learning is controlled in China. Even in a classroom, you don’t challenge the government’s position on Tibet, for example. You would be in trouble saying that Tibet should be independent. Here, you are free to protest the President’s policies, but in China, a protest is considered a disruption of the political and social stability of the country,” he said.

Li strongly believes that world development must consist of more than productivity growth. “Development of third-world countries must include a qualitative improvement in people’s lives. Development must take into consideration animal welfare, environmental protection, ecological balance and social responsibility.”

He encourages his students to express their views and even to disagree with him. “My perspective may be different from your perspective, but that’s okay,” he tells them.

Li appreciates the diversity and cultural richness of UHD’s student body and sees the University’s addition of more internationally focused courses and UHD’s new minor in international politics as a positive move.

“When I started six years ago, we had one professor teaching international politics; now we have three. I see more diversified research subjects, specialists on antiterrorism, South East Asian politics, East Asian politics and, of course, animal welfare policy-making. It’s an exciting time of change,” Li concluded.