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### Chinese priest teaches Spanish at U of Montana

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CHINESE PRIEST TEACHES  
SPANISH AT U OF MONTANA

By Kathleen Bourke and  
Dorothy Walling  
UM Information Services

MISSOULA---

You're wrong, "Wang" is pronounced like "Wong." And in the case of the Rev. Dr. Wang, assistant professor of Spanish in the University of Montana foreign languages department, pronunciation is very important.

The 40-year-old priest speaks seven languages--Spanish, English, German, Italian, Chinese, Latin and French. His multi-lingual ability may be attributed to his varied background, studded with travel and intellectual pursuit.

In 1967 the UM's foreign languages department offered Father Wang an appointment as an assistant professor of Spanish for the school year. Since then he has taught elementary Spanish grammar and upper division literature Spanish courses including drama, golden age poetry and the Spanish novel.

Father Wang said he is interested in the growth and improvement of the entire UM foreign languages department.

About the state of Montana, Father Wang said, "The first year I wasn't very happy here because of the sudden change from the big-city life of Washington, D.C., but I've come to enjoy Montana for its outdoor life and nice people."

When Father Wang is not writing his book--a college Spanish supplementary reader--or teaching a summer Spanish course, he may be found bicycling, blasting a serve over a UM tennis court net or dropping a dry fly into a perfect fishing hole.

Father Wang's apartment near the University reflects a continental touch. Within are colorful and decorative accent pieces from such countries as Italy, Spain, Germany, England and his native China.

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Father Wang frequently invites students to learn about Spanish culture in the informal atmosphere of his apartment. They prepare Mexican and Spanish foods and said Father Wang, "My students are great chefs."

In addition to his scholarly involvement on campus, Dr. Wang "helps out on weekends" at Christ the King Church, the Catholic parish in Missoula for UM students, faculty and staff.

Originally from the city of Chanhua in the Northern China province of Shantung, Father Wang is a direct descendant of the ancient philosopher, Confucius. His surname, Wang, means "king" in his native tongue.

Father Wang left his homeland at the age of 21 because of Communist infiltration. He was one of 10 scholarship-winning students sent to Spain by American missionaries to study for the priesthood.

Proving his intellectual worth, the young scholar received straight A's while attending college. He was graduated magna cum laude in 1950 with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree from St. Charles College, Zaragoza, Spain.

Four years of study followed at the School of Theology in Spain and in 1954 Father Wang was ordained into the Roman Catholic priesthood. He spent one year as pastor of a parish in Zaragoza, and describes himself as, "A Chinese priest working for the Spanish poor."

Granted ecclesiastical permission to study law in Rome, Dr. Wang in 1959 received his J.U.D., a doctor's degree in canon and civil law.

In 1960 he came to the United States with the help of a Franciscan bishop friend. For the next seven years the versatile priest taught various aspects of law, theology and philosophy in the eastern part of the country.

During this time Dr. Wang attended the University of Florida, Gainesville, and the University of Maryland, College Park, where he received his master's and doctoral degrees, respectively, in Spanish. He also studied the classics, Latin and Greek, at Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.