

2020

# Confucius Institutes in the U.S.: Final Report

FINAL REPORT TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, PRC  
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## Executive Summary

Confucius Institutes are shared enterprises between the Chinese government's language teaching agency, known as Hanban, and local institutional hosts or partners, normally universities, in both the US and China. Hosts receive startup funds from the Confucius Institute Headquarters in the People's Republic of China (hereafter alternatively referred to as "Headquarters" or "HQ") and provide a home to language teachers who are assigned by Chinese partners.

The context for the Confucius Institutes in the U.S. study includes a recent backlash to the presence of Confucius Institutes (CIs) on American campuses. Legislators and elected officials in several states have urged terminating relationships between universities, CIs and the Chinese government. In fact, nearly half of the CIs in the U.S. have terminated relationships with the PRC in the last two years. Yet while the number of CIs in the US is diminishing, CIs are opening and flourishing at over 500 higher education institutions worldwide. Some politicians have described CIs as central to "Chinese diplomacy", Chinese soft power projection, and a "Chinese charm offensive." In reality, while the title of Confucius Institute reassuringly emphasizes the glories of a classical Chinese past rather than the vibrant present (or controversial Communist history), institute activities typically emphasize opportunities to know contemporary China rather than its history.

Critics claim CIs spread Chinese Communist Party influence, threaten national security by serving as platforms for China's intelligence community, curtail free expression and academic freedom by stifling debate, and silence defenders of human rights. CIs are also in the crosshairs of politicians for whom populist, anti-intellectual and "America first" themes resonate with certain constituencies. The debate over CI's is often conflated with wider issues involving trade and security. Recent initiatives by the US State Department to cut the length of visas issued to Chinese students studying robotics, aviation and high-tech manufacturing, sectors the Chinese have identified as priorities, offer a case in point.

In practice, CIs in the U.S. are overseen by faculty and administrators, courses and activities focus primarily on language proficiency and cultural appreciation (calligraphy, painting, cuisine), programs are rarely associated with anyone receiving academic credit, and free Chinese instruction is often available to surrounding K 12 districts. Numerous exchange visits are arranged and paid for by the Chinese. CI teachers are goodwill ambassadors, work long hours and are devoted to expanding educational opportunities for students, community members, local educators and others. For many, particularly faculty, staff and K 12 students from low income or marginalized populations, these experiences are life changing. Moreover, the opportunity to be involved in campuses activities which endeavor to transcend racial and gender boundaries is beneficial and also reflects a wider effort to prepare globally competitive and well-educated graduates.

The Confucius Institutes Headquarters in the PRC commissioned a study to answer questions about best practices among Confucius Institutes in the U.S., identify challenges that CIs face, and provide recommendations for improving CI performance. The study discusses factors that account for successful CIs and their value to host institutions and communities.

The Confucius Institute study is designed to understand and describe the operation and implementation of Confucius Institutes in a representative sample of, with one exception, institutions of higher education in the United States. The questions of interest were described in terms of outcome statements in the study proposal. Stated as questions they are:

1. What are the key programmatic attributes, demographic and institutional variables associated with US CIs?
2. How is programmatic, organizational, and community impact measured within the study group of CIs?
3. What makes some CIs successful?
4. What are the challenges facing CIs?
5. What conclusions can be made about the effectiveness of the organization, administration, and programming of the study CIs? What conclusions might be generalizable to US CIs as a larger group?

The methodological framework for the study incorporates Patton’s utilization focused evaluation (UFE), which focuses on real and specific users and uses. In this case, the study is for the Headquarters as well as the CI directors at individual US-based CIs. Notably, the study team worked to maintain a clear purpose for the study yet also remain aware and consider alternate uses for the study results. Consistent with UFE, the study methodology engaged primary intended users of the study results. A multiple case study approach was used. The CI sites were selected using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling, necessary as political conditions and COVID-19 emerged and grew more impactful during the study. The study team engaged a wide representation of individuals with experience related to CIs, from university presidents to students and community members—nearly 100 people in all. Interviews are foundational to case study research. The study team used semi-structured interviews and sought to engage a wide cross-section of respondents who could provide multiple perspectives. Table 1 provides the participating institution, contact individuals and “knowledgeable experts” who agreed to be interviewed by the study team. The team is grateful to and appreciative of the individuals who agreed to be interviewed; their participation, comments and observations were extremely valuable.

**Table 1. Institutions Participating in the Study and Knowledgeable Experts Consulted**

<b>Institution/Organization Name</b>	<b>Contact Individual/Knowledgeable Experts**</b>
Portland State University	Ron Witczak
SUNY College of Optometry	Gui Albieri
Cleveland State University	Huiwen Li
University of Nebraska at Lincoln	Charles Wood
Wayne State University	John Brender

Colorado State University	Chad Hoseth
Alfred University	Daisy Wu**
Medgar Evers College, CUNY	Keming Liu
St. Cloud State University	Kathy Johnson**
University of North Carolina- Charlotte	No Official Contact
China Institute, New York City	Shenzhan Liao
University of California Los Angeles	Susan Jain**
University of Chicago	Dali Yang**
University of Hawaii at Manoa	Cynthia Ning**
California State University, Long Beach	Heidi Zhang**
American Council on Education	Brad Farnsworth**

\*\*NOTE: The people listed agreed to be interviewed by the study team with the following caveats: while all served as the “contact” individual, some are associated with participating institutions, others from organizations supporting higher education initiatives with the PRC, others are from institutions not formally participating in this study, or from universities where a CI no longer exists or is in transition. This list does not comprise the entire group interviewed. COVID-19 impacted the study both positively and negatively.

As campuses were consumed by the need to respond to the pandemic, some sites reconsidered their ability to participate. CI closure decisions also had an impact on the original participant group resulting on other adjustments. Last, the study was originally conceived to include site visits. Ultimately, the team visited three campuses and conducted the remaining interviews via video conferencing due to rising concerns about COVID-19. The use of video conferencing gave greater access to some audiences such as K-12 teachers and administrators as well as community members.

## Study Findings

Results of the CI study included key reasons for the success of CIs. All of them relate to the demonstrated value of CIs. They include support of the CI mission from senior leadership of host institutions; the professionalism, dedication and hard work of the CI staff, program innovation and an engaged CI advisory board. It was found that success invariably related to the CI’s ability to align its activities with the programs and objectives of the host institution; the ability to plan, market, and implement programs that meet the needs of students and the community. The study team also determined that CI flexibility in budgeting and programming as well as designing “niche” programs and activities create loyal adherents.

During its work, the study team found that accusations of CI political bias are unproven, the evidence simply is not there. Nor did the study team find that CIs seek to influence curricula or

academic polices in ways advantageous to China’s political system. In fact, despite several ideologically driven reports on CIs, the team found no instance where a CI was engaged in curtailing academic freedom. On the other hand, the study offers numerous examples of the positive regard in which CIs are held among community teachers and students—appreciation for specific ways in which CI teachers have contributed to knowledge of China, mutual understanding, and international competency.

Overall themes that emerged during the study included a sense of personal value and enrichment from association and participation in the CI, that CIs are fulfilling organizational gaps and community needs in unique and responsive ways and their presence appeared to be associated with growing cultural understanding on a very human one to one level.

### **Identified Challenges**

Four key challenges facing CI’s were identified in the study, including a) organizational and reporting relationships, b) the nature of partnerships and operational procedures within US institutions, c) the relationship of CIs with the K-12 education system, and, d) competition within host institutions for program viability. Most urgent is the political pressure on CIs from federal and state agencies, whose objective seems to be to eliminate CIs and curtail US-China educational exchanges generally. This may not immediately change even with a new administration in Washington although we hope this is the case. There is great unease on many U.S. campuses that host CI’s and the ability of many to survive remains fragile, especially when the driving force for their presence is a longtime American director and a sympathetic Provost or President. This suggests that the partnership may be more personality driven than institutionalized into the operational fabric of the organization. The antidote for “personality-driven” programs, the study suggests, is to institutionalize them by providing sufficient resources, flexibility in funding and programmatic autonomy to ensure their longevity.

This conclusion especially holds at present, when institutions are more than ever dependent on external (i.e., government) funding. Institutional leaders want CIs and other partnerships with China to continue but face increasing pressure to end them or face loss of funds at institutions taking federal funds for certain types of programs. The challenge will be to find alternative ways of maintaining international language and cultural programs, perhaps through new learning centers.

Another challenge is to Headquarters’ “one size fits all” approach to CI management. The study identifies a common need among CIs for greater flexibility with respect to budgets and administrative structure. Likewise, Headquarters’ planning for international conferences needs to allow for more time between the invitation and the event if it wants greater participation by US institutional leaders. Flexibility is also necessary with respect to the “Confucius Institute” name, which has come to be associated in the US with Chinese political interference.

Confucius Classrooms are one of the most valuable services of CIs. A major challenge here is visa sponsorship—having a designated visa sponsor to bring high-quality Chinese language teachers from China to support K-12 school programs. Local Chinese teachers are often difficult to find, but teachers from China, though very welcome, must also contend with local situations,

such as union rules, that prevent hiring. Chinese teachers have sometimes been brought in as part of “team teaching,” but in the long run protocols and procedures will have to be developed to accommodate local practices.

Competition between CI and host institution language programs is another challenge. School departments are not inclined to give up student credit hours (and tuition) to independent programs such as CIs provide. Department heads may also find fault with CI teachers’ credentials. These “territorial” issues actually seem irrelevant, since the reality is that students interested in learning Chinese do not normally choose between a CI course and a departmental course. Nevertheless, a tension often exists between a Chinese department head and the CI head. One way to mitigate the tension might be to invite department chairs to become involved in CI activities, so long as chairs are not politically opposed to CIs.

### **Study Recommendations**

This study synthesizes “Best Practice Indicators” that emerged from analysis of the data. The indicators are grouped into ten broad categories related to Governance, Leadership, Culture of Excellence, Advisory Board, Continuous Improvement, Programming, Staffing and Professional Development, Resources, Communication and Technology, and Metrics and Results.

Other recommendations made by the study team include:

1. Strengthen communication between the Confucius Institutes Headquarters and MOE and participating colleges and universities.
2. Consider additional training for the Chinese director and staff related to the nature of governance in U.S. universities as well as advanced teaching and research methodologies.
3. Expand CI reporting metrics to include richer descriptions of CI activities that benefit students, faculty and the community.
4. Promote the visibility of the CI mission within the context of the mission of the host institution.
5. Sustainability of the CI depends on the degree to which its programs and activities are institutionalized in the university setting as opposed to being more dependent on personality driven factors.
6. External communication and marketing about CI’s that maintain a focus on the academic components of the CI may help avoid undue government scrutiny.

The Study Team appreciated the opportunity to engage in this work and hopes the results of our work will mitigate much of the negative tension that currently exists with respect to Confucius Institutes on U.S. campuses.

## Introduction

This Final Report, the third in a series that includes Phase I and Phased II Reports, summarizes the findings and recommendations from a study of a select group of Confucius Institutes (CIs) in the U.S. The study (for complete scope, see Appendix A) was conducted in three phases on behalf of Hanban of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). For the remainder of this report, Hanban will be referred to as the “Confucius Institute Headquarters” or “Headquarters”, or simply “HQ”.

The purpose of the study is to answer questions about best practices among CIs and identify challenges that CIs face. The study team engaged a wide representation of individuals with experience related to CIs, from university presidents to students and community members. The study outcomes include recommendations for CIs and a set of best practice indicators. The complete set of study questions and outcomes is in the Methodology section (4) of this report.

We note that during the period of time the study team commenced work on this study (October 2019 to September 2020), relations between the U.S. and the PRC deteriorated to their lowest point in many years. Approximately a third of American CIs were closed at larger institutions, primarily due to federal legislation which prohibited funding to universities if the institution received funds for language training by the US Government). Legislation aimed at ending relationships between U.S. institutions and CIs has also been proposed in certain states, and most recently (September 2020) the Secretary of State has proposed terminating all CIs in the US. ([Pompeo announcement](#)). As political relationships deteriorated, and travel restrictions were imposed in response to the pandemic, further strains occurred in Sino-U.S. relations. CIs have been impacted, in some cases dramatically. Currently, there are roughly fifty to sixty (some in “abeyance”) CIs open at U.S. institutions of higher education, down from a high of 109.

The change in geopolitical environment, as well as the effects of COVID-19, have also had a pronounced impact on the study team’s work. These events led to a cessation of travel and inability to engage in face to face interviews with institutional representatives. The team made changes to the study methodology, including site selection, timelines and survey data collection. Interviews of study participants now had to be conducted virtually. The methodological, organizational and assessment issues are discussed in the June 2020 Phase II report, sections 1 and 2 (see attached reports).

### Organization of the Final Report

The final report is organized in the following manner. Section 1 describes the methodology used by the study team for this study. Section 2 provides a summary and explanation of major

findings, followed by Section 3, a summary of the major challenges confronted by colleges and universities with an operational CI. Section 4 sets forth recommendations from the study team regarding the future of CIs in U.S. higher education. Following the References, Appendices are provided to show the authorizing study scope, bio sketches of the study team, interview protocols, and mini sketches of the CIs included in the study.

## Section 1: Study Methodology

This study incorporated best practices in research design and methodology to achieve objective and independent conclusions related to the requirements established in the study scope in Appendix A.

### **Utilization-focused evaluation framework**

This Confucius Institute study incorporates strategies consistent with the utilization focused evaluation (UFE) framework (Patton, 2008). Rather than a focus on general and abstract users and uses, UFE is focused on real and specific users and uses. In this case, the study is for the Confucius Institutes Headquarters (HQ) as well as the CI directors at individual US-based CIs. The outcomes are intended to highlight best practices and provide guidance for continuous improvement. In the UFE framework, the job of the researcher or evaluator is not to make decisions independently of the intended users, but rather to facilitate decision making amongst the people who will use the findings of the evaluation. Another feature of a UFE study is that it is rarely linear. This was certainly the case with the CI study. As originally conceived by Patton, the UFE framework had five steps; over time and use the framework now has up to seventeen (17) discrete steps that users readily acknowledge do not fit every instance of use. The ten steps most applicable to and employed in the CI study include:

1. Maintain clarity of purpose for the study and consider alternate uses that may arise, such as contribution to accountability, training, or program development interests.
2. Focus the study questions on the identified priorities and stick to them.
3. Engage primary intended users of the study results. In this case the primary intended uses are Confucius Institutes Headquarters and US CIs as well as key informants who were all included throughout the process with interim reports and other communication.
4. Sensitivity to situational factors, leadership support and openness to the study, and (in this study) awareness of the evolving political climate surrounding CIs.
5. Finding the right mix of study team members with appropriate expertise, credibility, and cultural competence who could work together to produce a high quality and useful study.
6. Be clear about the theory of change that is being studied. In the case of the CI study, the theory of change, put simply, is that Confucius Institutes will foster the conditions for knowledge about Chinese language and culture.
7. Appropriately match the study approach and measurements to the project. In this case, the study approach is multiple cases studies.
8. Adapt data methods to changing conditions as the project unfolds to deal with the emergent dynamics of the actual fieldwork. Exercise pragmatism versus methodological purity.

9. Match the nature and frequency of interim reports to the purpose, timeline of the evaluation and duration of data collection.
10. A variety of reporting formats including formal written reports as well as informal oral report.

### **Case study approach**

Utilization-focused evaluation is a methodological framework. Within that operating framework, researchers can select from a variety of approaches depending on the nature of the study. Typical approaches include participatory evaluation, appreciative inquiry, randomized control trials, quasi-experimental studies, and case studies.

There are different types of case studies, which can be used for different purposes in evaluation. Program implementation is a type of case study that investigates operations, often at several sites, and often with reference to a set of norms or standards about implementation processes. Case studies can be particularly useful for understanding how different elements fit together and how different elements (implementation, context and other factors) have produced the observed impacts. Case studies are particularly useful for evaluating unique programs, or a program that takes place in an unpredictable environment. They are especially useful for studying program implementation because the approach treats implementation as a series of events. Each event calls for new strategies that may end up changing the outcomes and impacts. A case study approach allows researchers to pursue answers to questions to create a full, complex picture of the program.

Single case studies are not considered generalizable to the whole, therefore the Confucius Institute study considers multiple cases across sites and interviews with additional key informants. The features distinguishing case studies from other methods are how sites are selected, how the data are collected, and how they are analyzed. In a case study, it is important to get views from a variety of individuals and roles.

### **Selection of study sites**

There are three main sampling techniques used in case studies: random, purposive, and convenience. The CI study used a combination of purposive and convenience sampling for selection of individual CIs. The study was a purposive multiple case design in that one group was CIs still operating while another group was CIs that have closed. The sample of CIs was also purposive based on the following selection criteria (see Table 3 and Figure 2.)

- Focus—either internal to the university or external to K-12 or the community
- Geographic diversity within the U.S.

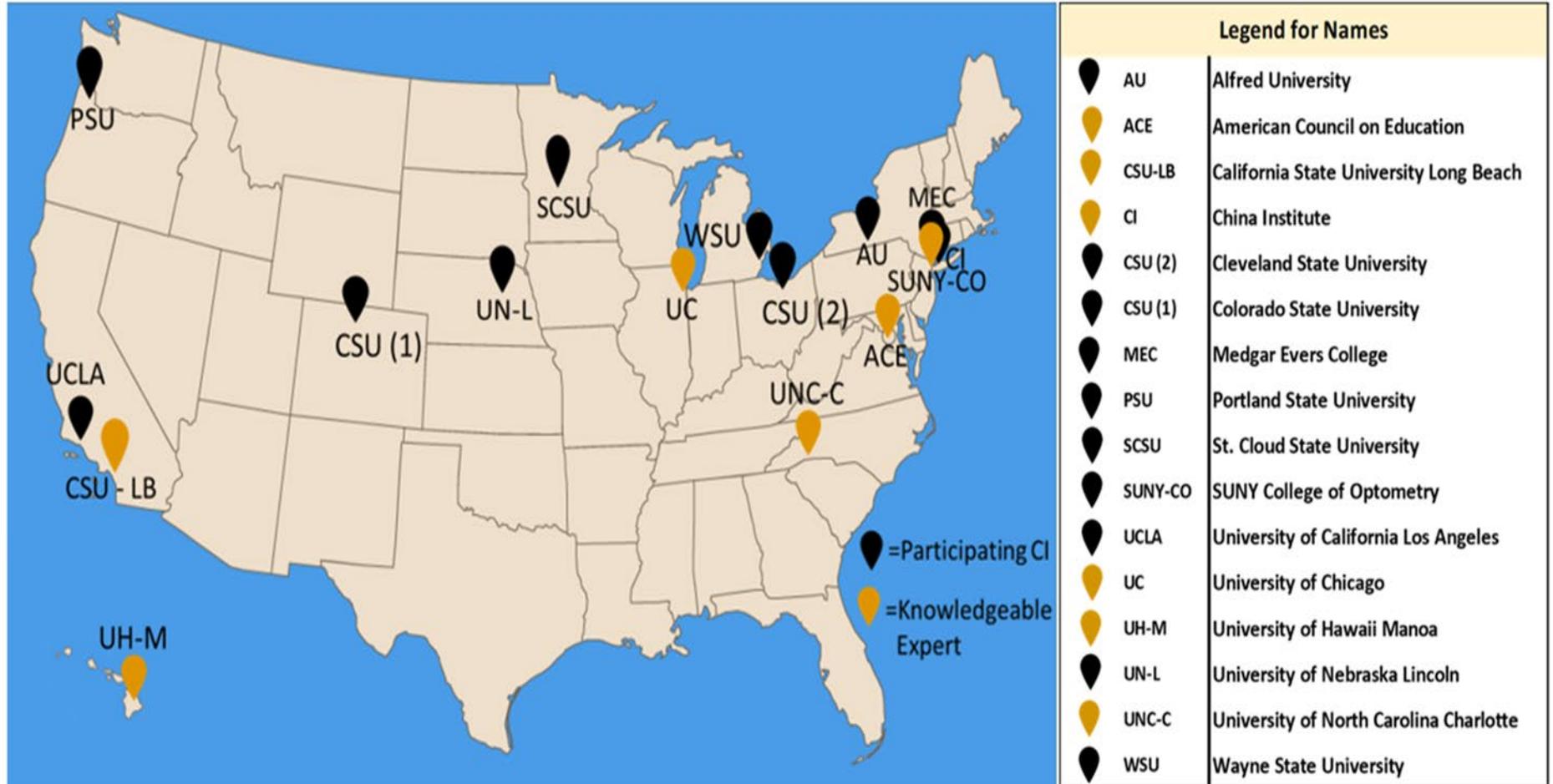
- Institutional diversity
- Size of host institution
- Institutional type, public, private, research, comprehensive, teaching
- Length of time the CI has been operational at the institution
- Number of CI staff

**Table 2. Demographics of Study CIs and Host Institutions**

Institution	Geographic Region	Total Student Enrollment	Institution Type	Date CI Program Started	# of CI Staff & Teachers
SUNY College of Optometry New York, New York (Pilot Site)	Northeast	402	Public	2009	4
Portland State University, Oregon (Pilot Site)	West	27,229	Public	2007	10
Cleveland State University	Midwest	17,260	Public	2008	14
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI	Midwest	27,222	Public	2008	5
UCLA, Los Angeles, California	West	44,947	Public	2006	2
Medgar Evers College, CUNY, New York	Northeast	4,806	Public	2019	2
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado	Central/ Mountain	33,413	Public	2012	5
University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska	Central	26,079	Public	2007	14
Alfred University	Northeast	1,750	Private	2008	20
St. Cloud State University, MN	Midwest	15,461	Public	2014	7
University of North Carolina Charlotte	Southeast	29,615	Public	2015	6

Figure 1. Geographic Representation

### Geographic Distribution of Study Participants and Knowledgeable Experts



Gaining commitment to participate in the study was a time-consuming task. The research study senior advisor has an extensive group of CI and university contacts and relationships. The senior advisor made the initial contacts and provided information about the study. In some cases, gaining consent meant some additional university contact and permission. These key individuals were also asked for names of CI and university leaders in other institutions that could be contacted.

After a purposive sample of CIs was identified by researchers, the final group of CIs and key informers was a convenience sample based on willingness to participate and provide information. The best-case studies depend on access to people and places. Willingness to cooperate in this case made convenience sampling the selection methodology. When a CI willing to participate in the study was identified (via networked conversations with other CIs and knowledgeable individuals) researchers took care to double check the new choice against the established purposive criteria.

### **Study questions**

The Confucius Institute study is designed to understand and describe the implementation of Confucius Institutes within a convenience sample of institutions of higher education and other institutions in the United States. The questions of interest were described in terms of outcome statements in the study proposal. Stated as questions they are:

6. What are the key programmatic attributes, demographic and institutional variables associated with US CIs?
7. How is programmatic, organizational, and community impact measured within the study group of CIs?
8. What makes some CIs successful?
9. What are the challenges facing CIs?
10. What conclusions can be made about the effectiveness of the organization, administration, and programming of the study CIs? What conclusions might be generalizable to US CIs as a larger group?

### **Study outcomes**

Restated as outcomes, the study questions provided a series of action steps and deliverables for the study team of researchers. Outcomes from the CI study are:

1. A set of best practice indicators against which the programmatic, organizational, and community operation and impact of CIs can be measured. *This tool, as designed by*

*researchers, is primarily intended as a continuous improvement tool and for internal use by CIs.*

2. Individual and summary description of the key programmatic, demographic, and institutional variables of the study CIs. *As the study progressed, it became apparent that while CIs shared some core features, each of the CIs had adapted and responded to the unique local context.*
3. Analysis of the conditions and variables that are contributing to success and challenges for CIs.
4. Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the case study data and researcher expertise that may improve the effectiveness and delivery of CI programs and activities.

### **Study timeline**

All of the case studies occurred between October 2019 and June 2020, identified as Phase I and Phase II of the overall study. The first phase of the study included development of the interview protocols, initial design of the best practice indicators, and site visits to two CIs to collect data and validate the instruments. All four researchers participated in the first site visit to the CI at Portland State University. Two researchers participated in the site visit to the College of Optometry at the State University of New York.

The second phase of the study included a significant change due to COVID-19. One more site visit was made, to Cleveland State University with two researchers before universities started limiting outside visitors to campus in March 2020. All remaining interviews to complete the study were conducted via video conferencing.

### **Study team**

The CI study team itself consisted of three researchers assisted by an expert advisor. Two study team members are Chinese language speakers. One is of Chinese national background. Three researchers have extensive connections and history with U.S. CIs and the Confucius Institutes Headquarters in the PRC. One researcher has a research methodology background and experience studying the development of cultural competency in other settings. All four researchers have significant travel experience in China.

The study team is dispersed rather than located in one institution or location. To accommodate this the study team held regular meetings via video conferencing. Study team members assumed various roles based on their expertise, discussed in the methods section. All video conference interviews were conducted with at least two researchers present.

## Methods

While the methods for conducting the case studies of the CIs was spelled out in a scope document, it is important to note that one of the signature features (advantage) of case study research is flexibility. As data collection unfolds and with ongoing analysis, researchers become aware of new paths worth pursuing. This was certainly the case with the CI study where it became desirable and possible to add as an interview group some key informants, experts about CIs though not necessarily speaking on behalf of a CI program. Likewise, it became apparent that not all of the interview questions were relevant to every role and some new ones might provide better information. Good case study research requires sensitivity to the environment and the people under study.

### *Interviews*

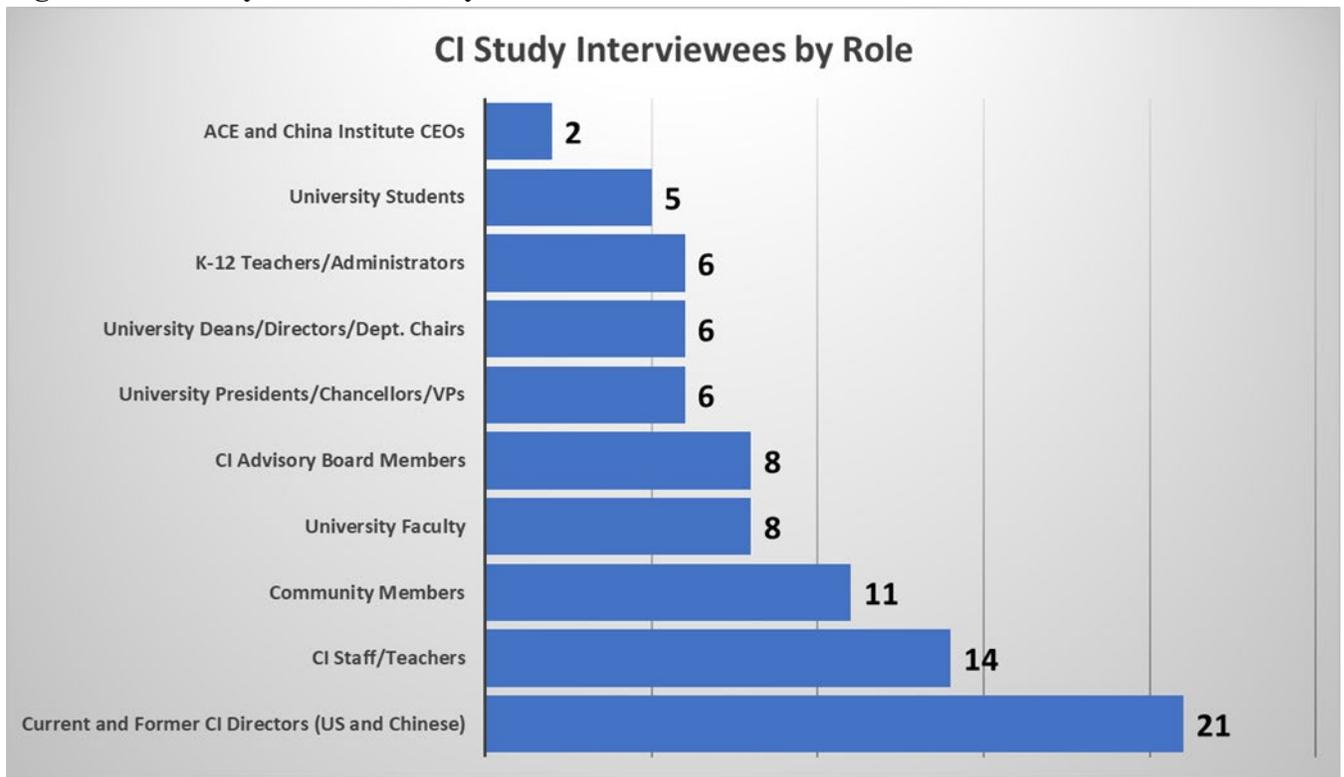
Interviews are the foundation of case study research. They provide understanding about what is happening from the perspective of those involved, and their perceptions of and reactions to what is happening. As a methodology, interviews can range from highly structured questionnaires with yes-no or limited responses (best for quantitative coding and large data collection) to non-directive conversations used most often when researchers know little about the situation or organization. In the middle are semi-structured interview protocols.

Semi-structured interview protocols provide shape to an interview without constraining it. Semi-structured interviews are advantageous over non-directive conversations in that they produce some comparable data from all respondents while still allowing for additional topics to emerge. The semi-structured interview protocols used for the CI study identified the topics of interest to the CI study. The interview protocols developed by the CI researchers varied slightly between respondent categories. For example, university and CI leaders were asked some leadership and governance questions that were not included in interviews with community partners. Though the same or similar questions were used throughout the study, the object of the interviews was to listen for and understand each respondent's unique perspective related to their CI and experiences. The interview protocols are in Appendix D.

### *Interviewee Selection*

As noted under site selection, the CI study research study team used existing relationships first and secondarily reached out to others to establish the main site contact. Once agreement to participate was achieved, the study team asked provided the key contact with a list of the other roles or types of individuals we hoped to interview. The interviewees by role are shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 2. CI Study Interviewees by Role**



There was a change in getting commitment once the study transitioned to virtual interviews. While the original plan was to interview a wide range of individuals in each identified CI, a number of experts were identified through referrals. Experts were individuals either currently or formerly connected with a CI and who knew a lot about the CI. Experts who were willing to be interviewed and provide thoughtful and candid reflections were ultimately included as interviewees in the study. The interview protocols were modified slightly to fit the context for these individuals. This became another valuable source of information for the study.

There were also differences from one CI to another in the number of individuals the study team was able to interview and their roles. Some CIs presented unique opportunities to interview individuals not originally identified. For example, the Cleveland State University CI has a strong and positive relationship with the mayor's office and local business leaders. The study team interviewed individuals in both of those roles. The Wayne State University CI provided a large group of enthusiastic community volunteers for interviews. Those individuals provided insight into ways their relationship with the CI enhanced their personal and professional lives and the community. Last, the move to virtual interviews changed the opportunity to interview K-12 educators associated with the CIs. There are strict policies and guidelines related to access to K-12 settings by researchers. The virtual instructional environment created by COVID-19 meant that the CI study team was able to interview educators who were previously unavailable.

*Collecting the Interview Data*

One of the usual considerations in designing and implementing any research study is protection of human subjects who are part of the study. The conditions that require a study to be approved by an institutional review board (IRB) are spelled out in US law, called the Common Rule. Generally speaking, case studies do not meet the definition of research outlined in the Common Rule. However, in the case of the CI study, more than one CI was a case study and the intent is to contribute to generalized knowledge. To make it more complex, the CI study is distinguishable as a program evaluation rather than research as defined in the Common Rule. Table 4 below compares the elements of program evaluation and research that the study team used as a basis for determining that the CI study did not require IRB approval. The question about whether the study had IRB approval came up several times with potential interviewees and this information formed the basis of the response provided by the study team.

<b>Table 2. Common Elements of Program Evaluation and Research</b>	
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	<b>Research</b>
Assessment of how well a process, product, or program is working in a specific context	Aims to produce new knowledge to contribute to a broader societal endeavor
Focus on process, product, or program	Focus on population ( <i>human subjects</i> )
Designed to improve a process, product, or program via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• needs assessment</li> <li>• process, outcome, or impact evaluation</li> <li>• cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analyses</li> </ul>	Same as at left, but adds procedures, component(s) or analyses aimed to generalize (e.g. combining data with other projects, randomization, expanded sites, literature review)
Assessment of program or product as it would exist regardless of the evaluation	May include an experimental or non-standard intervention
If publication results, has no impact on how the project is designed or analyzed	The desire to disseminate impacts the choice of procedures or analyses, in order to strengthen generalizability
Activity will rarely alter the timing or frequency of standard procedures	Standard procedures or normal activities may be altered by an experimental intervention

<b>Table 2. Common Elements of Program Evaluation and Research</b>	
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	<b>Research</b>
Directed and usually funded by the entity doing the program	May have external funding (note: some external funding is explicitly limited to non-research projects, which will in turn place limitations on scope of project and publications)

As noted earlier, all interviews were conducted by at least two study team members and in many cases, all four participated in the interview. The study team agreed on the primary interviewer before each interview, rotating the role and identifying one study team member as interviewer over others based on variables related to the interviewee or other factors. The interviewer used the scripted interview questions but could vary the order of them as the interview progressed. The interviewer did not take notes, but rather focused on maintaining eye contact and fluency of the interview. All of the other study team members did take notes. These roles were explained to the interviewee before starting the interview. Each interview was scheduled for one hour though some ended earlier. There are proponents of recording interviews in case studies. The study team did not adopt the protocol of recorded interviews for several reasons. First, since the interviews were conducted by multiple study team members rather than one researcher, there was no disruption to the flow of the interview by writing notes. Second, the study team had concerns that a protocol for recording interviews would raise hesitation and objection from participants.

The three case studies conducted on-site were multi-day, so the study team members saw interviewees again informally after the interview. The interviewees often volunteered additional information or other thoughts in those later, informal conversations. For some interviews (both in-personal and virtual) the study team had follow-up correspondence where the interviewee thought of “one more thing” to say, provided some sort of additional evidence, or provided the study team with names of additional people to interview.

### *Triangulation*

Following each interview, the study members who were note takers summarized their own notes. One study team member (the one who finished first) would circulate his or her notes and the other researchers would add their own notes to create the most complete record of the interview. Study team members met weekly and when there were differences in recollection or perception of what was said, the topic was discussed. Resolution usually included either agreement with the information or perception as presented or more notes and information added to the stored record of the interview.

In case study research, interviews are often complemented with observation and/or document review. The study design included a plan to make site visits for all of the case study CIs. Site visits and observation of the setting occurred for three of the CIs before COVID-19 restrictions. The study design similarly anticipated collection of a common set of documents across the CIs such as operating agreements, budget information, program outcome reports, etc. During the study researchers were attuned to requesting documents mentioned during interviews but in reality, were most often led to the CI website as the source of information about the CI.

### *Data Analysis*

Analysis of the interview data and documentation occurred throughout the study by study team members meeting weekly. The research study team members brought their diverse perspectives to those conversations to challenge assumptions and create a clear consensus about what respondents said. In response to the question, “Has enough information been collected?” study team members concluded that sufficient data was available when multiple interviewees were independently and without knowledge of what others said, corroborating one another.

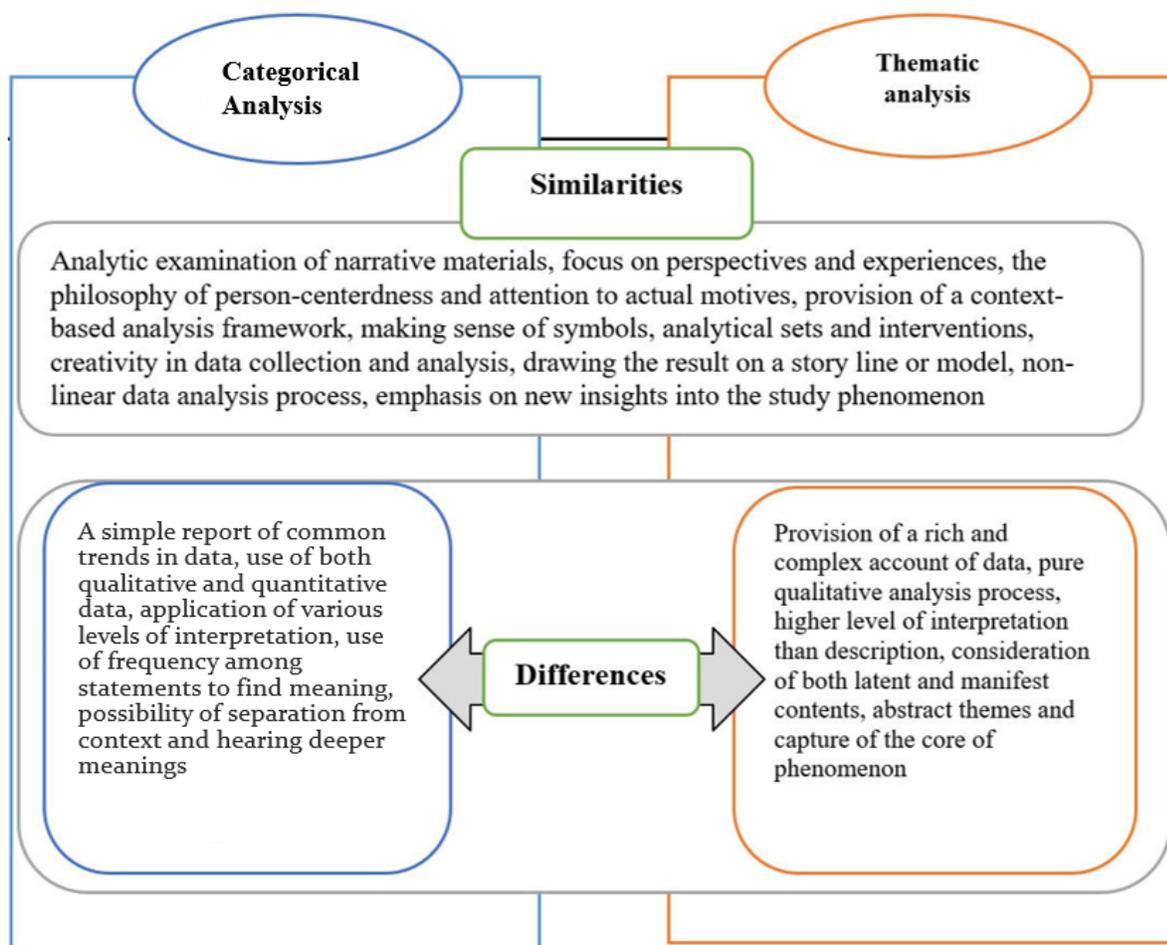
Code → Category → Theme

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### *Development of Categories and Themes*

The study team conducted both categorical and thematic analysis of the data, in that order. By definition, categories are explicit manifestations of the data. Categories are the framework for caching similar chunks of text in one place. In this study, the categories derived from the study questions and information as it was gathered, was fitted into categories. Categories are descriptive. Categories are useful for describing settings, organizational features, operations, and staffing. In categorical coding, frequency and quantity of responses matter though they are not turned into numerical data as in quantitative research. The quantity provides importance to the data. Categorical coding ensures that all of the intended questions in a study have been answered. Categories and themes, according to theory, are not interchangeable though the terms are sometimes used that way in practice. Themes differ from categories in their level of abstraction; themes uncover a depth or essence not found in categories. In this study, the themes were not created until after the categorical analysis. Themes cut across all interviewees, interview questions and categories. The theme names were developed by researchers to represent the broader, overarching ideas expressed by the participants, and are illustrated by direct quotes from interviews as recommended in qualitative research theoretical literature. Figure 4 illustrates the similarities and differences between categories and themes in our analysis.

**Figure 3. A comparison of features of categorical and thematic analysis and coding of data**



Adapted from: Vaismoradi & Snelgrove (2019)

The final step in the methodology was making responsible judgments about the CI programs included in the study as designed and delivered, observed and/or reported impacts, and context including successes and challenges. The goal with both categorical and thematic analysis is to provide contextualized and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study for possible transferability, rather than establishing generalizability to other CIs that were not studied. Transferring the results of this study to other settings will require readers to make judgments about whether the context of this study is similar enough to their own environment to derive practical implications for other CIs.

## Section 2: Explanation of Major Findings

### Variables that contribute to success

At colleges and universities where CI's remain viable and operational, the following organizational/institutional and personal variables (based on interviews and analysis of data) stand out as associated with the success of the CI on campuses studied.

**The senior leadership in these institutions (individuals to whom the CI reported) articulated a high level of support for the mission of the CI and believed the CI at that school added value to the campus community. These leaders also have the status, political acuity and willingness to fend off internal and external pressures from those who may seek to terminate partnerships.**

In our assessments and through virtual interviews of senior leaders, it was determined that the following factors appear to be associated with supportive senior leaders:

- They have a high degree of faith in the value of international endeavors, partnerships and networks, which enable them to expand the reach of their institutions and provide value (internships, international experiences and cross-cultural understanding) to student and faculty constituencies.
- They have strategic plans which consider the needs of the community with regard to international activities and, in this respect, the CI enables the institution to fulfill campus mission-related goals.
- There is a high degree of trust and respect for the people involved in the CI, particularly the US director and his or her Chinese counterpart, usually a visiting scholar. The Chinese staff are recognized for their tireless efforts on behalf of the university's international activities and the goals of the CI.
- They believe the CI enhances diversity and inclusion at the institution and exerts positive secondary "leverage" on other non-CI international programs.
- The senior leadership is stable, secure and often located in states where international endeavors are usually buffered from more provincial and parochial attitudes exhibited by some legislators and elected officials, often in states more closely associated with the current administration in Washington.

**The professionalism, positive attitude, selflessness and hard work of the U.S. and Chinese staff were critically important with regard to engaging the community, developing meaningful programs (particularly with secondary school systems), and influencing the senior leadership and members of the academic community.**

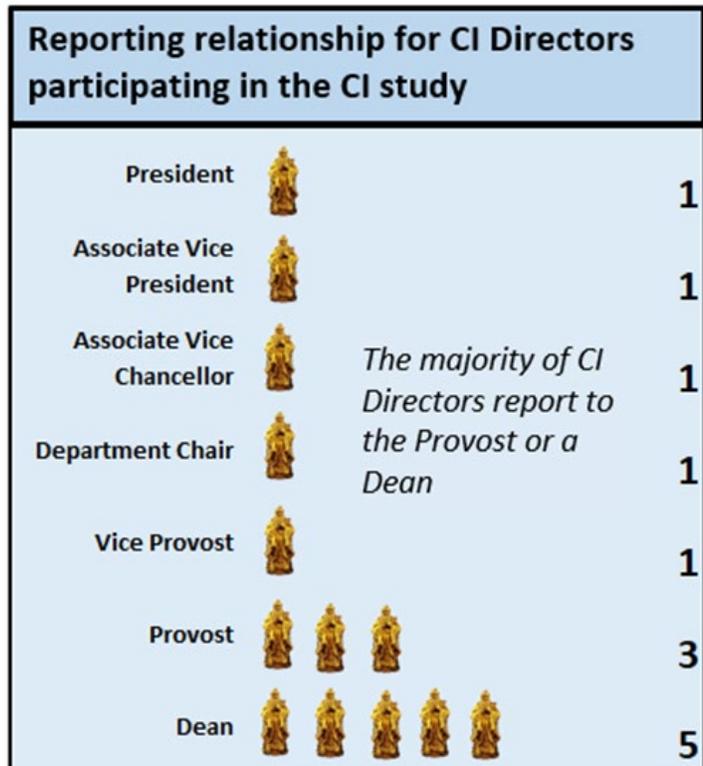
In our study, one of the factors that stood out was the tireless work, resiliency, and devotion to the mission (flexibly defined) of the CI leadership, both Chinese and American. Figure 1 shows the reporting relationship for the CI directors who participated in the CI study. Most CI directors report to the provost or a dean at their institution. These relationships were characterized by a high degree of trust and mutual respect and strong support for the goals of the CI and international partnerships in general. Work with secondary (K – 12) systems appears to be of particular importance for community engagement and showcasing the importance of the CI. These “personal” factors are hard to quantify and appeared to transcend institutional structural reporting relationships, which were not uniform.

These personality characteristics are, in our estimation, of paramount importance, and suggest that great care should continue to be invested in the selection and training of the CI leadership and staff. On a more somber note, when asked if the CI partnership would survive if these leaders departed, responses were very mixed. More discussion is included on this particular issue in Section 2 where challenges are discussed

**A CI Advisory Board that is engaged and active, and importantly, influential enough organizationally, to assist the CI with internal and external relationships (particularly with faculty and community representatives).**

A committed and influential advisory board appears critical to the success and sustainability of CIs. Board involvement is crucial in the general support for the CI and more particularly, the oversight of long-range plans for activities and programs. Also important is the membership of the advisory board: It is most influential when it includes tenured faculty and respected

**Figure 4. Reporting relationship of CI Directors**



administrative leaders with articulated support from the president, chancellor or provost. Advisory boards should also give evidence of strong relationships (which include plans, with measurable programmatic goals) with community leaders. The management of the advisory board necessitates that relationships with the partner schools in the PRC be actively maintained, thereby often helping to leverage other corollary partnership and exchange programs such as joint degrees. No doubt all of these matters will be affected by the pandemic and campus responses to COVID-19. It will be important for advisory boards to continue meeting virtually if not in person, as discussed in Section 3 of this report.

**The CI was able to demonstrate value to the university, its students and the community as a result of its programs and activities, and an ability and determination to effectively market/showcase these accomplishments.**

Demonstrating value is a product of many factors but relates, at its core, to alignment of CI activities with the mission of the college or university. In the most successful cases the CI, working through the institution, was able to engage in activities requiring a high degree of coordination with various institutional units--not an easy task, requiring personal influence and knowledge about how colleges and universities operate, and how decisions are implemented. (In many instances where leadership of U.S. institutions changed, CIs were able to adjust their activities to align with new leadership goals.) Overall, "CIs were successful at IHEs where the institution could use the relationship to spur development at the IHE," one university leader said. Another said, "The mission of a CI aligns well with the mission of a land grant university for a community connection. In our case, at our university international learning is of high value. The CI complements our university mission." Through thematic coding of interview data, some other important benefits of CIs emerged.

Demonstrating value appeared to rely on the CI being able to move beyond a simple counting of people who showed up at events to a more sophisticated approach which relied on marketing techniques to showcase demonstrable "value" of activities linked to positive student outcomes. In the most successful cases communication across campus and the community was consistent and sustained, with the assistance of internal and external "marketing" offices. Success in this respect required alignment between organizational units, clarity about intent, and leadership to ensure implementation. In cases where the CI leadership is able to demonstrate the substantive and qualitative value of programs and activities to students, faculty and especially community leaders, the CI has a much-improved chance to stay operational. Perhaps of most importance were the relationships established with public school systems in states and communities where CIs exist. The benefit of language instruction and programs for K-12 students and teachers, facilitating cultural awareness and international travel, was uniformly thought to be worthwhile by all who participated in this study. Several challenges associated with K-12 activities will be discussed in another section of this report.

**The CI had sufficient programmatic, administrative and budgetary autonomy and flexibility, and the CI leaders were able to assign resources where needed.**

There are two points to be made about this observation. First, the most successful CIs retained budgetary flexibility to utilize resources for programs, activities and staff, deemed essential by the U.S. and Chinese staff. This sometimes meant that tensions existed between CI staff and funding officials at HQ where guidelines and protocols for assigning and spending funds appear to be more rigidly conceived and often, in the opinion of many CI staff, do not accommodate the needs of CI leaders at the local level. One example relates to use of funds for purchase of alcohol or gifts, normally governed by the policies in force on American campuses. In such cases the CI leadership had to find creative ways to assign resources for needed expenditures. While budgetary autonomy was deemed an important factor associated with success, the study team also found there were some challenges related to delays between invoicing to HQ and receipt of CI funds.

Second, programmatic autonomy relates tangentially to accusations and reports about CIs, specifically with regard to the curtailment of academic freedom and influence on the curriculum in a manner which somehow favors China. These kinds of accusations appear to be ideologically driven and short on actual evidence. The study team found that at the sites examined, there was no evidence the CI was influencing curriculum or academic policies in ways advantageous to China's political system. In fact, despite a number of ideologically driven reports on CIs (see reference section), the study team found no instance where the CI was engaged in curtailing academic freedom. To the contrary, the study team found evidence that topics and areas they might have considered taboo (e.g., the relationship between Taiwan and China, and between China and Tibet) could be explored, albeit with sensitivity and discretion. The study team also found differences in functional authority between US CI directors and the Chinese staff. Most US directors appointed by the US university had signatory authority for programming, finances and employment while the Chinese staff leader was not an employee of the US host university and did not have faculty status there.

**The CI was able to avoid involvement in larger Sino-U.S. geopolitical matters by focusing on niche programs and activities which, in and of themselves, resulted in the development of loyal and committed constituencies.**

The study team found that a CI with a well-defined theme or program was most likely to succeed and stay operative. Examples are CIs that focused on select projects in the community, specific disciplinary areas (music, dance, calligraphy), or K-12 educational services, internships and the like. That assessment also applies to professional schools with CIs: "The laser focus of a professional school can be helpful for shaping the success of a CI." Professional training in best

practices was enhanced, as well as opportunities for service learning by university and faculty in outreach to the local community.

In today's academic environment, tensions around the discussion of many issues are common and the academy enforces its own codes on what may be discussed, and which topics should be avoided. The above notwithstanding, our finding repudiates articles and reports about CIs in the U.S. that charge they are controlled by external agencies or serve as platforms for espionage. The latter may occur, but we found no evidence to support the idea that such nefarious or illegal actions are going on under CI umbrellas. In fact, where espionage or illegal activities are said to have occurred, they have been reported by institutional or federal authorities at universities that do not host a CI. To date, no CI has been accused of any wrongdoing anywhere. While CIs are funded by the Chinese government as well as the host institution, they are governed by institutional policies in place at schools where they are housed, not Chinese policies or those of the Confucius Institute US Center (CIUS). The American Council on Education (ACE) has issued guidance on these matters which the study team fully supports. (see Appendix E). More on this topic will be discussed in the section of the report on challenges faced by CIs.

### **Conclusions related to Factors and Variables that Lead to Success**

The factors and variables discussed in this section are interdependent. Success and resiliency of CIs depend on a variety of institutional and personality variables, alignment with mission and a location conducive to internationalization.

### **Themes That Emerged from Interviews with Study Participants**

The findings just presented are based on categorical arrangement of the study data using the study questions as categories. By definition, categories are developed using content analysis, in which similar chunks of text are ordered or placed proximally. Categories place the study team in the role of deciding what to report. Themes, on the other hand are the meaningful "essence" that runs through the data. Themes help to express intent and meaning. Themes are often supported by quotes from the text, which serves to personalize them. The trade-off with contextualizing study data with themes is that it is then less generalizable to other similar studies.

In this study we have used both categorical description of the data and themes. The themes that emerged across our interview groups are illustrated below by direct quotes and comments that speak to CIs fulfilling community needs and developing global cultural competency and mutual understanding.

### *Appreciating the Other*

Many of the individuals interviewed relayed stories about personal value and benefit accrued from association with the CI. Most often mentioned was development of long-lasting cross-cultural relationships built on respect and an appreciation for differences that deepened over time. “Relationships are the key to success of a CI,” said one participant. “Cultural competency is about finding common ground, and respect for areas where there are differences such as politics.” One university leader suggested, “Conduct a ‘relationship audit’ to uncover whether a CI is successful or not.” This theme emerged at all levels and professional roles in the interview group. Some indicated their Chinese-US friendship would continue on a personal level even without a CI.

Many comments on the value of a CI are familiar to anyone who works on international programs: the “getting to know you” idea. As one participant put it, the CI is “able to open eyes to the world,” provide firsthand knowledge of China, and promote greater objectivity about China. Participants hopefully will be less inclined to see China as an enemy and to accept that “it’s better to engage than not.” “There is no defense of any government in the world. We as individuals are not the total of our government.”

### *Filling a Community Need*

Interviews point to several ways in which CIs fill instructional gaps that otherwise would not be available because of financial and other constraints. Learning about a foreign country is often a luxury in many communities. “In our community,” said one person, “the CI provides an opportunity that would not exist otherwise. We have had access to high quality language teachers that we otherwise would not have had.” Another interviewee reported: “The CI language and culture programming is a value-added proposition for disadvantaged students. The opportunity to learn language and culture allows students to leverage into an increasingly complex 21<sup>st</sup>-century world.” A third person said: “CI’s have consistently delivered valuable and high-quality programming.”

As the study group found, “culture” embraces an extraordinary array of activities that depended for implementation on collaboration between Chinese teachers and local people: teachers, community groups, and local government. This collaboration, itself an important benefit to mutual understanding, created social benefits for many local groups, such as the disability population and the elderly, and covered a wide range of activities: public gardens, community celebrations, traditional wellness, arts and design, history, and traditional music.

### *Understanding China at a Human Level*

“The CI puts a human face on a very large country. People are more important than a government.” This individual went on to say, “There is nothing harmful that will come from learning more about another culture. You gain another level of patience and empathy.” He gave an example of how the cultivation of cultural competency among those in authority in the US (such as police) can diffuse misunderstandings between Chinese residents—and vice versa for Americans in China. “There is always a middle ground if we could promote mutual understanding outside of the politics which are not helpful. Traveling to China changes one’s world view. That’s the beauty of CI’s.”

CI facilitation of faculty and student exchanges, in the view of several interviewees, also built mutual appreciation for differences in instruction and the way students learn as well as school culture in both countries. “Among our group, the travel experience changed some stereotypes,” said one participant. And “There are still a lot of misconceptions by Americans about Chinese culture. There is so much more to learn.”

### *Promoting Better Relations with China*

We found a wellspring of residual good will and genuine support for engagement with the PRC and Chinese students on the campuses we visited. The current political climate, outside the control of the individuals we interviewed was not unnoticed. In the majority of the interviews we conducted, a theme that loomed large was the need to continue engagement with the PRC in recognition of the value brought by the CI—at the campus level, community, and beyond . The interviewees were respectful of differences in the governmental systems between the US and China and also saw value in CIs as one way to promote mutual and global understanding. “The value of the CI effort is in the hope that it will lead to a more peaceful world and that individuals will become critical thinkers, able to see people as separate from government. The more intertwined we are makes us less likely to view ‘others’ as an enemy or someone or something to fear.” “We all need each other, especially the US and China,” one person succinctly put it. A third put the value in global terms: “It is of value to us as a community and as a nation to maintain a good relationship with China. We have a goal at our university for our students to become better informed globally and act responsibly as global citizens.”

### *Filling an Educational Void*

The effectiveness of CI language teaching was often remarked upon. “Chose US and community partners strategically for benefit to the community and the CI program,” said one CI director. Specifically, CIs have filled a void in quality Chinese language professional development for both K-12 and university language instructors, particularly as Chinese has increased in significance as a major world language.

Specific benefits flowed from CI language instruction, including development of cultural competence among faculty, students, and community, and enhancement of professional skills. For example, a CI board member provided training for his law enforcement agency peers in culturally sensitive ways that strengthened services to minority populations. K-12 students were able to enter universities with new language skills. Some were able to achieve the National Seal of Biliteracy. Getting through the rigor of one to two years of university credit-qualifying language skill translates into greater success as a university student, some students said.

## Section 3: Major Challenges Faced by CIs

Four major areas of challenge are currently facing CIs in the US. The challenges described in this section include organizational and reporting relationships, the nature of partnerships and operational procedures within US institutions, the relationship of CIs with the K-12 education system, and competition within host institutions for program viability. These challenges are discussed in more detail in this section.

### **The relationship between the PRC and the current administration in Washington D. C. overshadows other considerations with respect to the viability and success of CIs in American colleges and universities.**

As this report is being written we are witnessing a sustained effort on the part of some in the current federal administration and state elected officials to seriously curtail partnerships, joint programs, and other exchanges between the U.S. and the PRC. In our estimation, the goal is the eventual elimination of CIs. This report is not the place to recount or comment on the deterioration of geopolitical and economic relationships. It was also the case that many Chinese CI directors and staff who wanted to participate in this study later determined they could not, or were prohibited from doing so, by the universities where the CI was located.

On many U.S. campuses, based on our data, there is a profound unease, sadness and disbelief about the direction being taken by the current administration in relations with China. University leaders recognize that the deterioration is not one-sided and that issues such as cyber security, democracy in Hong Kong, religious freedom, territorial disputes in the South China Sea, copyright infringement, competition for rare metals, and tariffs and currency manipulation reflect genuine strains between the two superpowers that affect relationships in post-secondary education. So long as these issues remains, suspicion of motives and goals (which can be found among Democrats and Republicans alike), and issues of “influence and intent” and “academic freedom,” will continue to color perceptions of China and strain U.S.-PRC relations.

One major challenge in this respect will be how to continue viable partnerships in the future. The current group of committed internationalists who might be thought of as the “old guard” and still leading institutions of higher education in the U.S. may not be replaced by those similarly inclined. One question asked in a number of interviews was whether the individual being interviewed felt the partnership with the Chinese would survive if he or she were to leave the position. Many expressed doubts. The reality appears to be that Sino-U.S. partnerships on many campuses may be more personality driven than institutionalized into the operational fabric of the organization. This is both a positive and a negative observation. On one hand, the study team found that personality traits are of importance and associated with successful CI leaders and

staff. On the other, once certain individuals leave, they may not be replaced by someone with the same positive attitudes or administrative ability, the result being that programs and partnerships may wither. It is also the case that new leaders often want to be associated with programs they can call their own, and there are instances where even novel and successful programs are allowed to fail because a new manager feels they belong, are associated with a predecessor (who is now blamed for problems both real and imagined; a common occurrence in higher education). One antidote for the fragility of “personality driven” programs is to institutionalize them. This means appointing people, with operational budget lines and other administrative structures and plans, who will have both the resources and inclination to support programs after a senior leader departs.

A major aspect of institutionalization, as stated above, includes a recognizable budget line with concomitant policies mandating that programmatic outcomes are ensconced in long-range plans with measurable outcomes, linking “institutes” or “centers” closely to leaders in academic affairs, enrollment or accreditation offices. The greater the institutionalization, the less personality matters. This is both a gain and a loss. By having external resources, CIs have been able to stay on campus. Absent those resources they may not be viable, since they are not yet institutionalized in the manner being discussed here.

What the above comments elucidate as far as challenges are concerned is the notion that CIs are still too dependent on personality and external resources. Long-range viability must concern itself with those issues, and thought must be directed toward how to sustain partnerships and keep leadership engaged once the current group of leaders moves on to retirement or other academic positions. Lastly, the pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in higher education which, in effect, will ultimately make colleges and universities in the U.S. more dependent on government support, not less. Those who champion internationalization will have to reestablish its value and contribution to institutional “bottom lines.” Granting and renewal of entrance visas and the ability and willingness of Chinese and American students and employees to travel will also play a role in determining the future of CI relationships.

### **CI Closures at US Campuses**

It is also the case that some of the most successful CIs have closed, not because the senior leadership wanted to end the partnership, but because the political or legislative environment made it impossible to continue. For example, several individuals with whom we spoke believe that school authorities were informed by congressional representatives that state or federal funding requests may be in jeopardy if “their” CI remains active. In fact, in cases where CIs are closing, many institutions are trying to maintain relationships with Chinese partner institutions. In other universities where a CI has closed or is closing, Discussions are underway for

developing language and cultural learning centers that will carry on language outreach programming, not just for Chinese but for other languages as well.

### **The partnership agreement and standard operational procedures**

Among the individuals interviewed for this study, there was a perception that HQ uses a “one size fits all” approach to programming, budget, administrative structure, and the mission of CIs. Clearly the sentiment here—and the challenge for HQ—is how to accommodate a desire on the part of the CI leadership in the U.S. for more individualization and flexibility. This is a complex area and one involving very large bureaucracies and budgets.

Another example of challenges related to operational procedures that the team discerned impacts leadership support on U.S. campuses, involves how national and international conferences are arranged by HQ. The standard practice in U.S. universities includes planning well in advance. There are many approval processes that make it important that conference dates and agendas be set many months, sometimes years, in advance to allow for planning and scheduling. Often, international conferences hosted by the HQ are not announced until just weeks away, sometimes less, which effectively prevents leaders of U.S. institutions from arranging schedules to attend. One result is that the folks whose presence would be most important as far as transition and support is concerned--the provosts, presidents and chancellors of U. S. institutions--cannot attend conferences in the PRC (even to receive awards). This is a major challenge and should be addressed. It is essential that administrative practices be managed in a way that allows more flexibility and long-range planning.

### **Relationships with K-12 Public Education Systems**

It is sometimes the case that the most popular CI programs and activities can also be challenging and expose organizational vulnerabilities. The study team believes that language and cultural training managed and supported by CIs in K–12 school systems is one of their most valuable services, both for the public schools and for the colleges and universities that host them. Several challenges are also evident. First is the visa situation, which reflects the ruptured relationship between the PRC and the U.S. There is very little that can be done about visa restrictions at this time. Moreover, there does not appear to be a designated visa sponsor to bring high-quality Chinese language teachers from China to support K-12 school programs. Normally CIs are university-sponsored programs/institutes, and personnel on university-sponsored visas cannot work in off-campus schools. In the future, working on visa sponsorship will be necessary because without the ability of Chinese staff to come to the U.S., programs will be very difficult to continue.

A number of CIs are exploring whether local Chinese speakers can be trained and utilized, but this presents other challenges, including lack of availability of local speakers. Another challenge

concerns the employee status of Chinese teachers and staff and their relationship to other employees in school systems. This is sometimes a concern of labor unions representing teachers in states where unionization of school employees is permitted. It is often the case that such unions may not support external teachers doing the work that rightfully belongs under the union umbrella. This is a complex area of education law. Another challenge relates to teacher certification requirements which are established in the laws of individual states. To date most CI staff and teachers have found creative ways to work around these issues (through “team” teaching and other practices). Team teaching also addressed complex US laws that protect student rights and assign specific responsibilities to the professionals working alone in a classroom. Consequently, CI teachers and staff who work in school systems, arguably one of the most worthwhile endeavors of CIs, will have to be looked at in systemic ways. Protocols and procedures will have to be developed which support the need for CIs (and the institutions that support them) to creatively work within public school rules and regulations concerning employment law.

### **Competition on U.S. campuses from other academic departments that may see the CI teachers and staff as threats**

There are two aspects to this issue. The first has to do with cases involving relationships with other full-time faculty, most often those in the modern language departments (where Chinese is sometimes taught). Simply put, these faculty may believe CI teachers are taking credit-earning and tuition-paying students away from their department. CI courses are normally not given for credit as CI teachers do not often have university faculty status. In some locales, for-credit courses are team taught by regular faculty with Chinese staff, and there are also instances where the CI director is a Chinese American with faculty status and able to teach courses for credit. Regardless, even where Chinese teachers have faculty status, the competition between departments and faculty for credit-bearing courses assigned to a particular school or department often undermines many innovative and beneficial programs in universities. These petty jealousies and territorial dynamics among faculty (heightened due to budget cuts in the wake of the pandemic) are unfortunately all too common. Yet our study found no evidence that students, in the absence of courses offered by the CI, would flock to language departments for Chinese instruction.

In most instances the CI teachers have found creative ways to work around these matters that satisfy all parties, but they remain a source of tension and can have a dampening effect on relations between the CI and other academic departments, culminating in less support for a CI on campus. A related matter is a CI’s reporting procedures. In general, the study team found that where a CI was housed in the provost’s office, the institute was better able to minimize such tensions through the efforts and support of the provost. This is not a hard and fast rule, and exceptions abound, particularly in cases where the provost may not care or know much about

international endeavors, or the CI is associated with the regime of a predecessor—another reason for HQ and the MOE and partner schools to reach out effectively to new leaders.

A second matter related to this point is more ideological and manifests itself when some university faculty have strong political objections to the Confucius Institute. Anti-PRC sentiment is sometimes evident among Chinese faculty who are now U.S. citizens and who may not have made their peace with the Communist government. Other faculty from Taiwan, Japan or South Korea are sometimes in this group, sometimes joined by American faculty critical of China. As mentioned earlier, the study team found no evidence which substantiates claims of political interference, but they persist in the current climate and have taken root in certain sectors of the media and political constituencies that may harbor anti-Chinese sentiments. CI's may have become collateral damage in the course of deteriorating relations and geopolitical competition, despite considerable support for their presence on campus. It is hoped that this study might be used to assuage some who may hold these views and provide an alternative narrative.

## Section 4: Recommendations

**Best Practice Indicators.** The first recommendation concerns what the study team refers to as Best Practice Indicators. These ten indicators fall into one of three categories: institutional, organizational, and leadership or personality-based traits. They were developed based on the study team’s assessment of data gathered and analyzed. The recommended indicators are consistent with best practices in other administrative/programmatic realms.

**Table 3. Proposed CI Best Practice Indicators**

**1. Governance**

- a. The university hosting the CI ensures that the CI leadership has the necessary support and appropriate level of autonomy to meet the goals of the CI and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.
- b. The CI and its sponsoring university have established policies and support practices that ensure effective administration of the CI.
- c. The governing university operates in accordance with established institutional policies and processes vis a vis the Confucius Institute.

**2. Leadership**

- a. The CI leadership is knowledgeable about the overall CI program, goals and structure.
- b. The CI leadership is aware of all the contexts (local, national, and international) in which the CI operates.
- c. The CI leadership actively works to create organizational and institutional conditions for success of the CI.
- d. Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the CI’s purpose and direction.
- e. Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and participant success (defined by individual CI metrics).

**3. Culture of Excellence**

- a. CI leadership and staff foster a culture of scholarship and learning, that is consistent with the CI’s mission and vision.
- b. CI leadership actively promotes a rich variety of opportunities for all constituents to grow their cultural competence.
- c. The mission, vision, values, beliefs, and supporting operational policies and procedures of the CI are widely visible and known to all CI audiences, internal and external.

**4. Advisory Committee/Board**

- a. An advisory committee/board represents major constituents of the CI program.
- b. An advisory committee/board provides input to contribute to the CI program’s continuous improvement.
- c. An advisory committee/board has representation from full time tenured faculty and senior administrators with standing at the university and possibly influential community members.
- d. An advisory committee/board that meets regularly with set agendas, metrics to assess its effectiveness, and a strategy for communication to the community about the importance of the CI and the work of the committee/board.

**5. Continuous Improvement**

- a. The CI engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate the mission and vision for the CI.
- b. The CI and CI leadership have implemented a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving the conditions that foster ongoing successful operation of the CI.

**6. Programming**

- a. CI programming and curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all participants have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and cultural competency skills.
- b. Programming, instruction, and assessments are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple sources and an examination of professional practice.
- c. CI programs and activities are evaluated based on their substantive content and impact on those who participate.

**7. Staffing and Professional Development**

- a. CI faculty and instructors participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and learning.
- b. Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs effectively support instructional improvement consistent with the CI and host university values and beliefs about teaching and learning.
- c. All CI faculty and staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning to increase their own skills.
- d. CI teachers are given additional training and opportunities for development of their own research and publications.

**8. Resources**

- a. Fiscal timelines allow for adequate engagement at the host university from leadership and the CI Advisory board.
- b. Qualified faculty and other staff are sufficient in number and qualification to fulfill the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the CI's mission, vision, and programming.
- c. Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the CI.
- d. Budgetary flexibility with regard to the use and assignment of fiscal resources.

**9. Communication and Technology**

- a. A range of media and information resources are available and used by the CI to support its programs.
- b. The technology infrastructure in place for the CI supports its teaching, learning, and operational needs.
- c. The CI routinely communicates with policy makers and faculty/staff about the activities and outcomes of the CI.
- d. There is frequent, timely and ongoing communication between the U.S. host university, the partner Chinese university.

## **10. Metrics and Results**

- a. CI leadership and staff continuously collect, analyze, and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about the CI participants learning; program evaluation; and organizational conditions.
- b. The CI engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvements to implement.
- c. CI Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about program outcomes and CI improvement goals to university leaders, the advisory committee and broadly to other stakeholders.

### **A sustained communication strategy which highlights the beneficial aspects of CI programs and activities**

Although this matter is referenced under best practice indicators, the study team believes that communication issues deserve a more comprehensive recommendation. Regardless of which political party is in the White House in the foreseeable future, the CI staff and leadership need much better communication and resources supporting communication technology (offering qualitative assessments and data) that document the benefit of CI programs and activities to the community and often the region in which the CI is located. This communication must be made in a manner consistent with the policies and priorities of the host university. (The study team understands that in some locales the President or Chancellor may not want discussion of the CI in any forum.) Discussions should include local elected and political figures who may not be aware of CI programs and who may be hearing from constituents who have ideological concerns antithetical to the values and opportunities represented by CIs. A communication strategy could also include taking students who have learned Chinese or those who traveled to China in past years to discuss the benefits of programs.

### **Adoption and adherence to organizational guidelines**

The American Council of Education issued a set of guidelines concerning Confucius Institutes. It is attached to this document in Appendix X. The study team recommends adherence to these guidelines by all CIs except as modified by recommendations set forth in this report.

### **Consideration of more organizational autonomy for Confucius Institutes on U.S. campuses**

We recommend that, if feasible Headquarters allow the relationship to be between the host university and a Chinese partner university. This fact, in and of itself, will change the narrative around CIs in many ways. Related to this recommendation is the study team's advice offered earlier, that matters considered political in nature in the U.S. not be featured in

CI communications. Finally, the study team suggests that CIs try to be as self-sufficient in funding as possible. In less political times, CIs may even strive to be revenue generators for host institutions.

### **Major themes and recommendations from the Phase I and Phase II reports (attached)**

A number of themes and recommendations were identified and made in prior reports associated with this project. As they are still valid, they are summarized below. Additional detail related to the themes and recommendations can be found in the Phase I and Phase II reports.

#### *Recommendations from Phase I and Phase II Reports*

7. Strengthen communication between the Confucius Institutes Headquarters and MOE and participating colleges and universities. (Phase I report, page 7, Phase II report pages, 7,8 and 9)
8. Consider additional training for the Chinese director and staff related to the nature of governance in U.S. universities as well as advanced teaching and research methodologies. (Phase I report, page 7, Phase II report, pages 7,8 and 9).
9. Expand CI reporting metrics to include richer descriptions of CI activities that benefit students, faculty and the community. (Phase I report, page 8)
10. Promote the visibility of the CI mission within the context of the mission of the host institution. (Phase I report, page 8)
11. Sustainability of the CI depends on the degree to which its programs and activities are institutionalized in the university setting as opposed to being more dependent on personality driven factors. (Phase I and Phase II reports, pages 8 and 9)
12. External communication and marketing about CI's that maintain a focus on the academic components of the CI may help avoid undue government scrutiny. (Phase I and Phase II reports, page 9).

*Themes from the Phase I and Phase II Reports*

The Phase II report augmented and elaborated upon themes discussed in the Phase I report. These themes set forth on pages 7, 8 and 9 of the Phase II report, were,

1. Increasingly strained relationships between China and the U.S. and their impact on CI's.
2. Difficulties obtaining visas and navigating bureaucratic processes both in the U.S. and the PRC.
3. The importance of relationships at the senior administrative level.
4. Strict adherence to standard operational procedures may matter less in well-established CI's.
5. Local political and contextual variables contribute to the viability of the CI.
6. CI's generate or leverage secondary activities involving China with high impact and long-term value.
7. Data generated from current assessment and evaluation methodologies used by local CI's may not be adequate.

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## Appendix A: Scope of Study

REVISED JUNE 2020.

The following constitutes a research proposal concerning the evaluation and assessment of Confucius Institutes in the United States (the “CI’s”).

### 1) Study Proposal

This Proposal consists of the following sections:

- The Purpose of the Study
- Site/Participant Selection Criteria
- Study Timeline (Phases I, II and III)
- Survey Instruments
- Research Methodology
- Study Deliverables
- Project Budget and Budget Narratives
- Concluding Comments and Future Directions
- Table of Sites to be Reviewed (Appendix A)
- The Study Team (Appendix B)
- The Advisory Board (Appendix C)
- Site Visit Task List (Appendix D)

### II. Purpose of the Study

The Study will be conducted in three phases to assess the programmatic, institutional and community effectiveness of selected CI’s in the U.S.

Study outcomes include:

1. Develop a valid methodology to assess the programmatic, organizational and community impact at a select group of CI’s at U.S. colleges and universities.
2. Identify the key programmatic attributes, demographic and institutional variables associated with successful CI’s.
3. Identify why some CI’s are successful (programmatically and organizationally) as opposed to those that may be less successful with the purpose of making recommendations for the implementation of “model CI’s” in U.S. higher education. This will entail some analysis of the challenges faced by CI’s.
4. Provide conclusions that go to effectiveness about the organization, administration and programs supported based by the data collected and analyzed in phase I.

The research team will prepare a written report and make presentations (see study deliverables with the results of the assessment and evaluation) at the conclusion of the study. The team will provide recommendations (which may go towards improved effectiveness, assessment and delivery of programs and activities) to the Confucius Institute Headquarters (“HQ”).

### **III. The Team**

The Team is comprised of three individuals, all of whom have appropriate academic and experiential credentials and who are qualified to conduct this research. Their biosketches are in Appendix C.

### **IV. The Advisory Board**

Informal advisors will be contacted/consulted by the Team for specific or general expertise. All advisors will be appropriately experienced and credentialed. The Advisory Board will meet and advise on the research methodology and overall study design and focus, as well as provide input into the study deliverables. The Advisory Board will have the opportunity to review the findings and recommendations of Phase I. The study recommendations of Phase I will be delivered to the Confucius Institutes Headquarters in PRC. All communication with the study Team shall originate with the Advisory Board chair.

### **V. Site/Participation Selection Criteria**

The study will include a total of eight (8) CI's to be studied in Phase I. Should the HQ and research team mutually agree, up to four (4) additional CI's shall be studied in Phase II. In such case, research questions and site selection criteria may be reviewed and amended based on findings in Phase I. Sites will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Focus—either internal to the university or external to K-12 or the community
- Geographic diversity within the U.S.
- Institutional diversity
  - Size of host institution
  - Institutional type, public, private, research, comprehensive, teaching
- Length of time the CI has been operational at the institution
- Number of CI staff
- Number of individuals reached through the CI programs

A matrix of the CI's selected for the study are presented in Appendix A. Individual participants in the study will include both the U.S. and Chinese Directors at each CI. The research team will attempt to interview senior administrators including staff from the office of the Provost (and other Vice Presidents). Interview protocols will also be used with the CI Advisory Board at each institution. In addition to selected interviews the study protocols will include focus groups with community members and a participant survey for students and other recipients of CI programming.

During all phases of this study, interviews, evaluations and assessments will be subject to the agreement, availability and consent of those being studied and shall conform to all applicable institutional procedures and policies for assessments or evaluation involving university administrators, faculty or other participants in CI programs who may include community beneficiaries and CI staff. In the conduct and preparation of the Study, the Study must take note of and describe the structural components of the Confucius Institutes part of the Study, including whether any of the Confucius Institutes are actual separate legal entities, whether they are simply programs part of, within, and run by the universities hosting them.

## VI. Study Timeline

This study will be conducted in three Phases:

- Phase I will begin when the proposal and contract are finalized and agreed to by all parties to the contract. This Scope expects a start date of November 1, 2019. Phase I will include research instrument design and expert validation, design of interview and focus group protocols, and identification of Confucius CI sites and named participants. Phase I will incorporate a pilot study at two (2) of the eight (8) CI sites identified in Group A, Appendix A. The purpose for a pilot study is to validate the data collection instruments and standardize the protocols for reliability before use with Phase II CI's.
- Phase II (subject to agreement of the contract and proposal, projected January 1, 2020 – March 30, 2020). This Phase will include data gathering at the six other CI's identified in Group A, Appendix A, fact checking, and triangulation of data. Phase II will also include review of selected program documents, including establishment agreements and any organizational documents assuming such documents are made available to the research team.

Note: by mutual agreement and if time and funding are available, the additional sites in Group B will be reviewed in Phase II.

- Phase III (based on the agreement as stated above for other phases, April 1, 2020 – August 30, 2020) will include preparation and delivery of the written study findings and recommendations to the HQ. Phase III will conclude with a presentation to the Confucius Institutes Headquarters.

Note: The research team will do its best to prepare a preliminary report for presentation in December 2019 at the HQ Conference. The above will depend on many factors including agreement on the contract and proposal, availability and consent of institutional leaders and individuals involved in the assessment, etc.

## VII. Survey Instruments

Data collection instruments will gather both quantitative comparative information as well as data about quality factors and beliefs about the benefits of CI's. The data instruments will also attempt to quantify attitudes about CI's on the campuses selected. Instruments to be developed/selected include:

- Program Quality Rubric – a rubric will be designed by the Team to measure the extent to which indicators associated with quality programs are present among the 8 CI's. The program quality indicators will be aggregated to scales for reporting. Possible scales include resources, advisory functions, community relationships/partnerships, university relationships, alignment with CI program standards, continuous improvement processes, instructional content and delivery, site-based program assessment practices, and local program leadership. The list of potential scales may change based on input from Advisory Board and other experts.

The purpose for the rubric is to create a measure that can be used comparatively across all of the sites. The instrument will be validated through a pilot study and inter-rater reliability

analysis.

- Interview protocols – scripted interview protocols will be used with these individuals: U.S. and Chinese Directors at each CI, university senior administration and staff, and each institution’s CI Advisory Board. The scripted interviews will probe for information related to the outcomes set forth earlier in this proposal.
- Focus group protocols – these protocols will be used to gather information about satisfaction and perceived benefit from the CI’s as well as community perceptions as reported by the focus group.
- Participation survey – this survey will endeavor to gauge satisfaction with the CI’s programming and probe for changes in cultural competency. The audience for the survey will be administered to students and other participants in CI programming.
- All interviews and focus group protocols will include participant consent procedures.

### **VIII. Methodology**

This is a mixed methods study design. Quantitative data will be collected via a Program Quality Rubric. The results of the Program Quality Rubric will be reported by scale. Advisory Board experts will validate the indicators selected for the scales. Confirmatory factor analysis will be used to group indicators into the scales and Cronbach’s alpha will be used to determine reliability of the scales. During the pilot, inter-rater reliability will be assessed between the researchers using the tool. The intended outcome will be a rubric with potential for later use by CI’s wishing to conduct their own internal review.

Qualitative data will come from interviews and focus groups that will be coded thematically. The surveys will measure self-reported attitudes and satisfaction. The surveys will be administered electronically, and results will be tabulated based on Likert-scale responses.

The last source of data to triangulate the findings of the Team is documents. Documents will be requested ahead of each site visit and will be examined by the Team. During the site visit, the Team will complete the Program Quality Rubric and conduct interviews and focus groups. Depending on the size of the CI, site visits may take 3-5 days and involve between 1-2 researchers for each visit.

The study sites will assist the Team by providing contact information for distribution of surveys and gathering any required participation agreements. Tasks associated with each site visit are outlined in Appendix D.

### **IX. Study Deliverables**

Deliverables are:

- One preliminary and one final written report with findings, conclusions and recommendations;
- Two presentations of the research findings and recommendations to the HQ, and the Advisory Board. Additional presentations may be scheduled if mutually agreed by the research Team and the HQ provided additional funding is available;

- A publication ready transcript of the study;
- A CI Program Quality Rubric that has been validated and is reliable for future use, as well as preliminary best practices recommendations in areas studied; and
- Recommendations for the use of research data for programmatic, assessment and implementation improvements at CI sites studied. This material will be of use to implement best practices and a “model CI”.

## **X. Concluding Comments and Future Direction**

In addition to the Deliverables, it is expected the Study will result in the following outcomes:

1. Conclusions related to the projected study outcomes in Section II of this proposal.
2. Actionable recommendations which can be utilized by HQ and CI’s subject to their agreement and institutional agreement to improve the structural and organizational practices of CI’s in the U.S. This may include administrative guidelines for implementation of what we are referring to as a “model” CI.
3. Recommendations for future actions on the part of all parties concerned.

## Appendix B: Study Team Member Bio sketches



Dr. Lee-Hsing Lu was born in Taiwan of a family rooted in Zhejiang, China. Dr. Lee-Hsing Lu holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Development from Benedictine University. He has served as a consultant to cities and organizations both in China and in the U.S. Dr. Lu has been an adjunct faculty member in MBA, MIS and Ph. D. programs at many universities in various countries. Dr. Lee-Hsing Lu is the founder of Asia OD Network (AODN), he has served as the President of AODN in 2007, 2011, 2016 and 2018. The AODN Summits are the catalyst for a dynamic new field of international and intercultural approaches to organizational development with special emphasis on Asia. Dr. Lee-Hsing Lu is the Associate Dean of Global Project of Graduate School of Business and Program Director of Doctoral of Philosophy in Organization Development at Assumption University of Kingdom of Thailand.



Dr. Mel Gurtov is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Portland State University (Oregon) and Senior Editor of Asian Perspective. He blogs at <https://melgurtov.com>. Mel Gurtov is Professor Emeritus of Political Science, having served on the faculty from 1987 to 2008. His previous positions were at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, Calif. (1966-71), where he was a co-author of the Pentagon Papers, and at the University of California, Riverside (1971-86), where he was professor of political science. He is Editor-in-Chief of Asian Perspective, an international quarterly; he has held that position since 1994. Dr. Gurtov has been a visiting professor and Senior Fulbright Scholar—at Waseda University in Tokyo and Hankuk Foreign Studies University in Seoul—and has lectured at universities and research institutes in South Korea, Japan, and China. Dr. Gurtov has published over twenty books and numerous articles on East Asian affairs, U.S. foreign policy, and global politics from a human-interest perspective. His latest book is *America in Retreat: Foreign Policy Under Donald Trump*, published in August 2020.



Dr. Cope provided guidance for the methodology of the study. Dr. Dale Cope over 30 years of experience working in or consulting for K-12 education systems. Her expertise is in the design and management of complex mixed-methods studies in the social sciences, and research and evaluation related to cultural competency in indigenous settings. Dr. Cope earned her B.S. degree at Oregon State University and an M.Ed. at University of Puget Sound. Her Ph.D. is in Educational Leadership and Business Administration from University of Alaska Fairbanks. Dr. Cope's post-doctoral interests and training have focused on data visualization.

### **Advisors to the Project**

**Dr. Daniel J. Julius**, Professor of Management, New Jersey City University/Visiting Fellow, Yale University

**Dr. James Heimowitz**, Director, China Institute, New York City

**Dr. David Heath**, President, SUNY College of Optometry

**Dr. Harvey Perlman**, Professor of Law, University of Nebraska College of Law, Former Chancellor, University of Nebraska.

**Dr. Mitch Leventhal**, Former Vice Chancellor for Global Affairs, SUNY, now Professor of Professional Practice and Entrepreneurship, University at Albany - SUNY

### **Expert Outside Reader**

**Dr. Paul Bell**, Dean Emeritus, College of Arts and Sciences Regents' Professor, and Executive Chair, OU Confucius Institute Board of Directors, The University of Oklahoma Norman

## Appendix C: Interview Protocols

### University Leadership Questions (President, Provost)

1. What is the mission of the CI at your campus?
2. How do you know you are fulfilling the mission? What evidence do you use and how is it collected?
3. How have the goals and objectives of your Chinese partner institution been shared with you?
4. How much influence or input does a) your Chinese partner institution and b) Hanban have on the priorities and activities of your CI?
5. How do you measure or assess “success” in programs or events or activities at this CI?
6. What evidence are you using to address question 3 above?
7. In what forums or settings is the programmatic information about your CI discussed?
  - How are CI activities and programs communicated to the campus, to the community, and to your partner institution in China and Hanban?
8. What is the “value added” dimension of the CI on your campus?
  - Why is it important to have a CI?
  - Do you think these perceptions are shared by others in the community or external groups or organizations served by the CI? What evidence do you use to support this?
9. What is the reporting relationship for your CI?
  - How does the CI interface with other campus offices, for example the Office of the Provost or President?
  - Are there any issues attendant to these relationships?
10. How do you maintain a relationship with the leadership at your Chinese partner institution?
11. How do you react to the closure of CI’s on other campuses?
  - Have there been discussions on this matter (closures at other locales)?
  - What have been the results of these discussions?
  - Have you had to justify the CI with any internal or external groups regarding this issue?
12. What is the probability your CI will be operating as it has been a year from now?
13. If you were to leave this institution, would the CI continue without you?

### U.S. and Chinese Director Questions

1. What is the mission of the CI at your campus?
2. How do you know you are fulfilling the mission? What evidence do you use and how is it collected?
3. What is the value of having this CI on campus? What evidence do you use and how is it collected?
4. Do you believe others on campus understand the mission of the CI?
5. In your estimation, how do others on campus feel about the CI? Can you provide examples?
6. How do you measure or assess “success” in programs or events or activities at this CI?

7. What evidence are you using to address question 3 above?
8. What are some examples of the most successful programs or activities initiated at this CI?
9. How often does your Advisory Board meet?
  - What is your Advisory Board composition (who is on it)?
  - What are the responsibilities of the Advisory Board at your institution?
10. How do you assess the “community” or external constituent response to CI programs and activities?
  - What evidence do you use and how is it collected?
11. How and what training is provided to Chinese instructors before and during their time working with your CI?
12. How does your CI and staff interact with other programs on campus?
13. What are the biggest challenges faced by the CI on this campus?
  - How are you overcoming these challenges?
14. Is there any specific assistance, and from whom, that would be helpful in overcoming the challenges you refer to in question 8 above?
15. Are there any programmatic topics or issues that you would feel uncomfortable initiating or hosting at this CI?
16. Do you have other cooperative programs or initiatives outside of your CI with Hanban or Chinese universities?

### **Advisory Board Chair or Member**

1. What is the role of the Advisory Board for the CI?
  - How often does the board meet?
  - Who is on the board?
2. What is the mission of the CI at this institution?
3. How is the board involved in planning for the activities of the CI?
4. How is the board informed about outcomes/successes of the CI?
5. Why is it important to have a CI in this community?
6. What role does the board have in fostering community relationships?

### **CI Instructor/Faculty Questions**

1. What is the mission of the CI at this institution?
2. What are the activities of this CI that you are involved in?
3. What do you hope will be the outcome of the work you are doing? How do you know if you are successful?
4. What training did you receive before coming to this institution and what training have you received since you have been here?
5. Have you participated in a study trip to China, and what was your impression? (Faculty)

### **Department Chair (if applicable)**

1. How is Chinese language instruction incorporated into the course offerings in your department?
2. What is your relationship (reporting, training and supervision) with the Chinese instructors or faculty?
3. In your opinion, how have students and faculty benefited from the CI at your institution?
4. How important to you is it that Chinese language faculty and instructors understand and demonstrate ability to incorporate ACTFL standards into their instruction?
  - What training is provided to ensure this happens?
5. What is the process for your department to gain approval to sponsor cultural programming at this institution? Are there any examples where you offered controversial programming?

### **Students**

1. What do you know about the Confucius Institute?
2. Have you participated in a study trip?
3. What other CI-sponsored activities have you participated in?
4. How does the CI support your goals and interests for your future?
5. When making your decision about a university to attend, was the availability of a CI or Chinese community on campus a consideration?

### **K-12 Teachers**

1. In your opinion, what makes language learning is successful?
2. Describe how you interact with your local CI?
3. In what ways has this interaction been fruitful? Any problems?
4. How prepared were you for working in your community? What are your responsibilities? How have you personally benefitted from your work?
5. How is the K-12 Confucius program perceived by community members?
6. What kinds of teaching materials did Hanban provide? How useful were they? Do you have any recommendations regarding the materials?
7. Is there any training you wish you had before starting this assignment?
8. In your opinion, how are US student learners different from Chinese students? Does teaching in the US K-12 education system meet your expectations?

### **Community members**

1. What is your evaluation of the contribution CIs make to your community?
2. Did you have any exposure to Chinese culture before the relationship with the CI began?
3. What kinds of activities related to Chinese language and culture now go on in your community?
4. What would happen if the CI had to cease operating?

## Appendix D: American Council on Education Guidance for CI's



The following recommendations were provided by the American Council on Education in a letter to Presidents of universities and colleges hosting Confucius Institutes. The recommendations were written in July 2018 based on the heightened interest from Congress and US national security agencies related to academic partnerships and programs between US institutions of higher education and China. The intent of ACE in making the recommendations was to encourage proactive assessment of Confucius Institutes to keep them viable as a source of enrichment for academic and campus life.

1. All written agreements, including Memorandums of Understanding, between your institution and Hanban should be publicly available. I understand some institutions keep grant and gift agreements confidential as a matter of policy. However, a continuing theme in the criticism of Cis is the lack of transparency surrounding these partnerships.
2. Require that all CI activities be in full compliance with your campus's policies on academic freedom. Your agreements should give you clean authority to withdraw from the agreement if the partnership impinges on academic freedom.
3. Make publicly available an annual statement of income and expenses that clearly identifies the amount of funding from the Hanban.
4. Written agreements should affirm the primacy of U.S. law and your institution's written policies over Chinese law for all CI activities taking place in the United States.
5. Ensure that the U.S. director of your CI is accountable to a senior official on your campus.
6. Make publicly clear and explicit that exchange visitors who are part of your CI will not have any decision-making authority on your campus.
7. Confirm your management structure (and written agreements, as needed) to ensure that any CI governing board is limited to an advisory capacity.
8. Ensure that all courses under your CI, both credit and non-credit, are under the full control of an academic department or other appropriate unit.
9. Complete a comprehensive evaluation of your CI using a team of academically qualified external reviewers. The evaluation should include but not be limited to a determination of whether the activities of your CI are in full compliance with your institution's policies on academic freedom.
10. Identify key audiences, including elected federal officials, and communicate the results of your comprehensive evaluation and any changes to policy. Provide evidence to document the positive impact of your CI, including the number of students benefitting from its activities.

## **Appendix E: Individual CI Profiles**

### **Index of CI Profiles**

**Cleveland State University**

**Colorado State University**

**University of California Los Angeles**

**Portland State University**

**CUNY Medgar Evers College**

**University of Nebraska Lincoln**

**SUNY College of Optometry**

**Wayne State University**

**CI Operational Timeline**



# 孔子学院

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE  
AT CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

**Website:** <https://www.csuohio.edu/confucius/confucius>

*“The Confucius Institute at CSU makes resources and services available to the public and promotes cross-cultural interactions and communication throughout the state of Ohio. Through Chinese language and cultural courses, conferences, and cultural events, the Confucius Institute at CSU provides a variety of opportunities for CSU students, Northeast Ohio K-12 school students, and local residents to learn the Chinese language and experience the Chinese culture both abroad and around the Cleveland area.”*

**Directors:** Yan Xu, Director; Liwei Huang, Associate Director

**Reporting:** Chair, World Languages Department, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

**Years in Operation:** Established August 2008 -

**Focus of Programs:** In addition to K-12 language classes, teacher training, and cultural programs, the CI publishes a biannual peer-reviewed e-journal, *Chinese Language Teaching Methodology and Technology*. Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine (NJUCM) in collaboration with the Confucius Institute at Cleveland State University (CSU-CI) offers doctoral programs in traditional Chinese medicine (DAOM) and Chinese herbal medicine (PhD in Pharmacology).

**Partner Institution:** Capital University of Economics and Business (CUEB or 首都经贸大学), based in Beijing, China.

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** No

**Summary:**

The CI at Cleveland State University is unique in its relationship with the World Languages Department and the ability to offer for-credit Chinese language classes that meet standards criteria published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Current courses include Intermediate Chinese I and II, Special Topics, and Independent Study in Chinese Language and Culture. The CI also offers continuing education courses and tutoring in Chinese language. Continuing education courses in addition to language include language through film, calligraphy basics, Chinese language for businesses, Chinese traditional medicine, and Tai Chi.

The CI at CSU has strong community support from the Mayor's Office as well as from the business community. In 2018 the CI was a co-host of the Cleveland Traditional Chinese Medicine and Materia Medica Forum to provide a forum for professionals to discuss topics such as pain management, cancer, obesity, addictions, depression, and disease prevention. The CI offers HSK test preparation and administration for all levels (1-6).



The CSU CI supports six Confucius Classrooms in local schools and world language classes in two additional schools. In order to ensure the high quality of Chinese language education in Cleveland, the Confucius Institute at Cleveland State holds regular teacher-training seminars or workshops. During these meetings, local Chinese teachers come together to learn, exercise, and discuss Chinese language teaching strategy, methodology, and technology.



Activities sponsored by the CI specifically for K-12 students include a Chinese Bridge summer camp for high school students and an annual statewide K-12 Chinese speech and essay contest.



The CI hosts an annual Chinese Language Teaching Symposium. The Symposium in May 2020 was held as a two-day online event with over 200 participants. Topics covered included Chinese language teaching materials development, teaching activity design, technology in classroom teaching and learning assessment. The Confucius Institute honors local students, teachers, and educational leaders every year with its Teacher Appreciation Day celebration. The teachers and their students prepare for this event by rehearsing songs, dances, and skits, which are mostly performed entirely in Chinese.

For the local community, the Lunar New Year celebration is one of the Confucius Institute's biggest events of the year. The event brings together CSU, local schools, and the Cleveland Chinese community to showcase this extremely popular and important part of Chinese culture. Every year, guests are treated to extravagant performances and entertaining culture booths that help them to better understand China and its connection to Cleveland. The Lunar New Year performers are selected from among entries in the annual Art Performance Competition and include singing, dancing, martial arts, instrumental music performance, acrobatics, skits, and magic.





COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE

**Website:** <https://international.colostate.edu/confucius-institute/>

**Directors:** Chad Hoseth, interim director, and Kevin Nohe, associate director

**Reporting:** Office of International Programs

**Years in Operation:** Established in 2012

**Focus of Programs:** The Confucius Institute at Colorado State University offers courses on Chinese language and culture, primarily for the Fort Collins and Northern Colorado community. Classes are offered for all ages and include Chinese language for adults and children, introduction to Chinese calligraphy and painting, HSK training courses, and children's Chinese cultural activities.

**Partner Institution:** Hunan University

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** No

**Summary:** The CI hosts second Friday events at the Confucius Institute during the academic year. Example activities include movie night, Chinese traditional painting techniques, and ping pong.

The CI has an active social media presence and hosts interactive games and video series online. The CI at CSU offers scholarships for a variety of study abroad opportunities including four-week, one semester, and yearlong study in China. The CI also promotes degree-level scholarships for teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages.



**University of California Los Angeles Confucius Institute**

**Location:** Los Angeles, CA 90024

**Website:** <https://www.confucius.ucla.edu/>

*Through collaboration with campus, community, and China-based educational partners, the UCLA Confucius Institute has offered programs that provide opportunities for the study of Chinese language and culture across our region and in China. Recognizing the wealth of history, expertise, and resources available in California, our programs are designed to connect experts and communities, engage new audiences, and advance UCLA's mission of teaching, research, and public service.*

**Director:** Susan Jain

**Reporting:** To the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Years in Operation:** 2006 (closing July 31, 2020)

**Focus of Programs:** Cultural programs take advantage of the Los Angeles area's wealth of expertise in the arts. Training of K-12 language teachers is a partnership with the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies (GSEIS) and the State of California's World Language Project.

**Partner Institution:** Shanghai Jiaotong University

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** Yes (2006; renewal agreement and program proposal, 2013)

**Advisory Board:** Consists entirely of senior UCLA administrators.

**Summary:** The UCLA CI is notable for its flexible model—carrying out its mission largely in collaboration with other area schools and community experts. It is attentive to the fact that the largest Chinese immigrant community in the US; it has a large Mandarin teacher training program for K-12 schools. The Global California 2013 initiative sets high goals for California education stakeholders, including tripling the number of students who qualify for and receive the Seal of Biliteracy for demonstration of proficiency in a language other than English and quadrupling the number of K-12 schools that offer dual language immersion programs, as well as doubling the number of highly qualified K-12 bilingual educators.





*For more than a decade, the Confucius Institute has provided UCLA with a platform for building partnerships with our neighbors and colleagues abroad. We have partnered with cultural and educational institutions to offer impactful experiences for diverse audiences. Our programs have spanned disciplines, geographies, and ages—from K-12 world music programs, to professional development opportunities for California's Chinese language teachers, to MBA student research projects, international convenings on the Silk Road, lectures, concerts, film screenings, and exhibitions. Now as we see the effects on climate change and environmental destruction increase, the relationship between China and the US becomes even more consequential. In response to this rapidly changing world, UCLA will now pause its Confucius Institute program to re-imagine new opportunities for global engagement and collective problem solving.*





**Location:** Portland, OR 97201

**Website:** <https://www.pdx.edu/confucius-institute/>

**Directors:** Angela Wang (Wang Yu) and Ron Witczak, Executive Director for International Affairs

**Reporting:** To the Office of International Affairs

**Years in Operation:** Established 2007

**Partner Institution:** Soochow (Suzhou) University

**Annual Report available online?** Yes

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** No

**Advisory Board:** Meets monthly; small but active board.

**Focus of Programs:** Language teaching, K-12 (Confucius Classrooms) and adult non-credit; language proficiency testing (HSK/YCT)

**Summary:** CIPSU operates with a very substantial staff of Chinese teachers (currently, 8 instructors) as well as musicians. It serves about 14,000 students in 33 Confucius Classrooms in the Portland School District and supervises several other CC teachers around the state. CI teachers also offer noncredit courses to between 70 and 80 community members each quarter. CIPUS is highly regarded by K-12 school administrators.

CIPSU is very involved in Portland's cultural scene, producing its own speaker series and partnering with organizations such as the Lansu Chinese Garden and the Northwest China Council on cultural programs (see <https://www.pdx.edu/confucius-institute/programs-services>).





## Medgar Evers Confucius Institute for Science and Humanities

**Location:** Brooklyn, New York 11225

**Website:** None

**Director:** Keming Liu

**Reporting:** to the Provost

**Years in Operation:** Established December 2018.

**Focus of Programs:** Offering introductory Chinese at the College in collaboration with its World Languages Department. The Institute will serve as an important resource for the community, as the demand for Chinese language instruction is beginning to emerge at the K-12 level. In fall 2019, the Institute started offering Chinese Language classes in the College's Pipeline schools.

**Partner Institution:** Hunan University of Technology and Business

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** No

**Advisory Board:** 4 members, headed by the vice president. Has met only once.

**Summary:** The CI is a new part of the College's commitment to exposing people of color to the wider world. The leadership is passionate about China's importance to the College's international direction.

English major and Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) student Jaquasia Barrett was the recipient of a grant for the 2019 Summer China-US Rising Star Study Tour. As a "Rising Star," Barrett spent two weeks visiting Beijing, Xi'an, and Chengdu, China. Along with other American students, she participated in field trips and intensive study in the host cities. Barrett said the experience is one she will not soon forget.



## **University of Nebraska Lincoln Confucius Institute**

**Location:** Lincoln, NE 68508

**Website:** <https://confuciusinstitute.unl.edu/>

**Directors:** Charles Wood, director; Christopher Heselton, associate director

**Reporting:** Associate Vice Chancellor for International Engagement and Global Affairs

**Years in Operation:** Established in 2007

**Focus of Programs:** Statewide K-12 and adult non-credit language courses

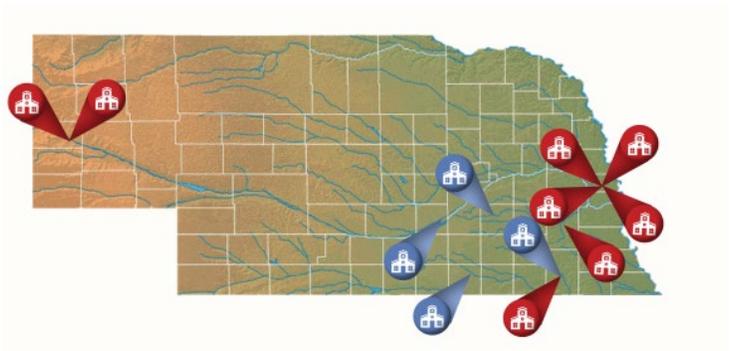
**Partner Institution:** Xian Jiaotong University

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** Yes (2018 Renewal Agreement)

**Advisory Board:** Meets once annually, alternating between Lincoln and Xian.

**Summary:** The CI focuses on distance learning, with ten Chinese teachers who are hired by the school districts. It has an excellent reputation in Nebraska because it fulfills an important role in delivery of Chinese language. The CI boasts an excellent web site for online language and cultural resources. This CI was awarded the “Model Confucius Institute” in 2015. The UNL CI-affiliated public-school Chinese language teachers are sponsored and certified by the Nebraska Department of Education. In 2017, instructors from the Confucius Institute taught Chinese language and culture classes in 10 public schools and 1 private school across the state of Nebraska.



The Confucius Institute also offers low-cost language classes on evenings and weekends for adults and children. The adult classes or Confucius Classroom classes are geared towards working professionals who seek a basic grasp of the language to better prepare themselves in dealing with Chinese counterparts. The children's classes or Confucius Kids' classes exposes young children to the Chinese language and teaches them about Chinese culture. These classes are 12 weeks long and are held at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, University of Nebraska - Omaha, and Bellevue University.

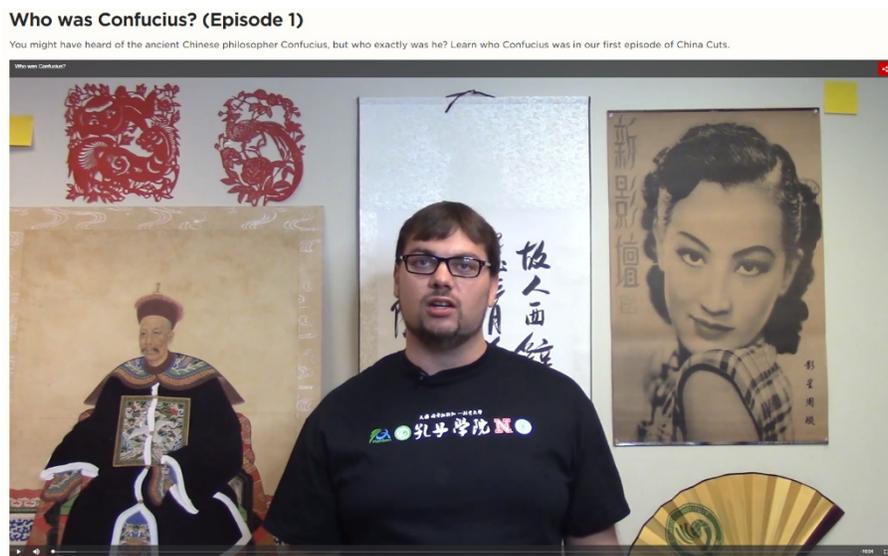
For years the UNL Confucius Institute has worked with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on programs and courses for individuals 55 and up, including Taichi, Chinese History, and Chinese culture and society classes.

The CI offers study abroad scholarships, China Bridge Summer Camp for high school students, and an annual Educators Tour in China. Every year, the Confucius Institute organizes the China in the Classroom Seminar for Nebraskan social studies, history, language and arts teachers, and the Chinese Language Teaching Seminar and Workshop. Other activities include Chinese cooking classes offered quarterly and an annual Chinese speech competition and Character-bee for middle- and high-school students. For the 2020-2021 school year, these events will be held virtually.

A signature feature of this CI is a YouTube channel that explores Chinese history, culture, society, and language. The link to the YouTube channel embedded in the China Cuts logo below.



Episode 1 on the China Cuts YouTube channel was titled, “Who was Confucius





## Confucius Institute for Healthcare at SUNY College of Optometry

**Location:** 33 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10036

**Website:** <https://www.sunyopt.edu/education/academics/international-programs/confucius-institute>

**Director:** Guilherme Albieri, PhD, Vice President for Student Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer; Jie Chen (Chinese Director)

**Reporting:** President of College of Optometry

**Years in Operation:** Established in 2009

**Partner Institution:** Wenzhou Medical University

**Annual Report available online?** No

**Contract with Zongbu available online?** Yes

**Advisory Board:** Composed equally of SUNY and Wenzhou members, chaired by president of the College of Optometry

**Focus of Programs:** The Confucius Institute at SUNY College of Optometry provides Chinese Language and Culture courses and Tai Chi courses, holds a variety of events on language, culture and Healthcare, and is a center for Chinese language tests including HSK, HSKK and BCT tests. This well-established CI is one of a handful of Institutes operating within the context of a professional training school where there is recognition of the differences in training for eye doctors in the US and China. The Confucius Institute for Healthcare at SUNY College of Optometry is the first such entity established at an optometric institution, and it is also the first one established at a specialized health professions institution of any type.

**Summary:** The Confucius Institute for Healthcare at SUNY College of Optometry provides programs and courses in Chinese language and culture with special emphasis on the healthcare system in China. Classes are open to SUNY students and faculty as well as to the general public and are particularly applicable for anyone who plans on working or studying in any of the healthcare fields or in biomedical research in China. In language instruction, there is specific emphasis on understanding medical language for community members, and accurate understanding of medical terminology for practitioners. The CI also provides semester long Tai Chi classes. The classes are offered weekly in 90-minute sessions. The Tai Chi classes help the CI fulfill its health-oriented mission.

E-MANDARIN

E-Mandarin Basic and Intermediate Levels

LEARN  
CHINESE

Beginner and Intermediate Chinese Language Classes

TAI CHI

Class in Tai Chi for Better Health



## Wayne State University Confucius Institute

**Location:** Detroit, Michigan 48202

**Website:** <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/ci/>

**Director:** John Brender

**Reporting:** To the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Years in Operation:** Established in 2008



**Focus of Programs:** The CI is a center within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wayne State University whose mission is to provide and support Chinese language and cultural programs for K-12 schools, the university community, and professional communities in southeastern Michigan and beyond. Together with Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, the Center provides a multitude of programs and resources that assist individuals and organizations in their pursuit of learning Mandarin Chinese and in learning about Chinese culture.

**Partner Institution:** Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan

**Annual Report available online?** No

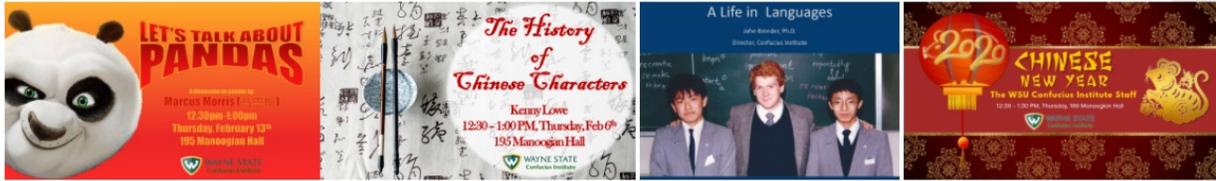
**Contract with Zongbu available online?** No

**Advisory Board:** Meets once annually. Weak board with little input.

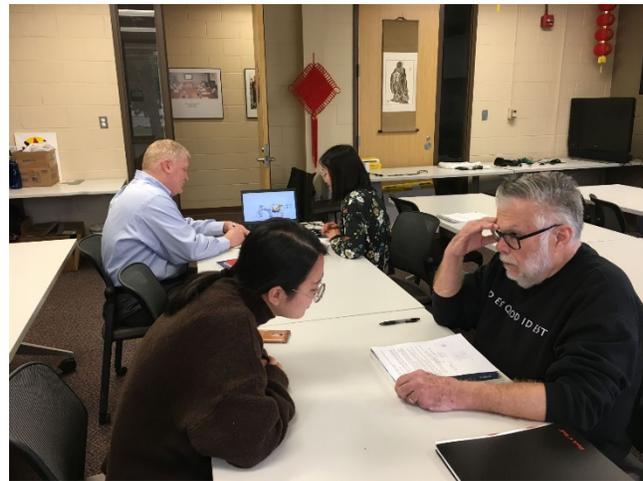
**Summary:** WSUCI offers a rich variety of cultural programs to go along with its K-12 and other language courses. Among the activities it sponsors are summer camp, China Corner, Confucius Café, and dragon boat races. The WSUCI also offers language videos on YouTube. Normally very robust, budget cuts, a weak advisory board, and limited access to teachers from China have reduced the audiences for this CI's programs.

One of the signature programs of this CI is the weekly Confucius Café. Invited speakers present in an hourlong meeting on topics ranging from Chinese art and holiday traditions, to economic and social concerns. Chinese food and tea are provided. Some of the recent topics from 2020 are shown below. The visual contains a link to the Confucius Café website.

### 2020 Spring Semester



Another signature of this CI is their China Corner. The China Corner is an informal gathering for WSU students to practice their Chinese in an enjoyable, non-threatening environment with fellow students and native speakers of Chinese. China Corner takes place every Monday through Wednesday from 3-5 PM (during fall and winter semesters) at the Confucius Institute Conference Room. The purpose of China Corner is to promote purposeful conversation about student-generated topics.



“The China Corner is a special student to student learning experience. Frequenting the Confucius Institute not only improved my Chinese immensely, but also helped to usher in a greater understanding of Chinese culture. If it weren't for the wonderful student tutors from China, learning Chinese would lose much of its relevance and my interest would soon diminish.”

— James Nolan Muncie  
Wayne State University

The CI offers a wide array of programming for K-12 students and teachers including the Michigan China Quiz Bowl, Speech and Art contests, China Corps language boot camps, a sister school program (Box Exchange).

The WSU-CI founded CLAM, the Chinese Language Association of Michigan to provide a forum for K-16 educators and advocates of Chinese language and culture. The CLAM annual conference, held in November, is well attended by educators from across the state and beyond. Another activity for the local community is a highly competitive Chinese Cooking Contest where teams prepare a menu of dishes in a limited amount of time. The dishes are judged and sampled by audience members.



