

Dialogue, Engagement Key to Global Security and Prosperity

US Higher Education Leaders Discuss US-China Educational Exchanges, hosted by the Confucius Institute U.S. Center and the US-China Strong Foundation

Washington, D.C. – 4/26/18 It has been 40 years since the historic “opening” of China to the West, and much has been accomplished. Five scholars met with members of the media and higher education on Tuesday to discuss the future of US-China Educational Exchanges at the National Press Club, hosted by the Confucius Institute U.S. Center and the US-China Strong Foundation.

Additional event information and photos available [here](#).

Moderated by **John Holden** (CEO, US-China Strong Foundation), panelists included

- **Matt Salmon** (VP for Government Affairs, Arizona State University, former US Representative, R-AZ),
- **Winston Langley** (Professor of International Relations, Former Provost, University of Massachusetts-Boston),
- **Harvey Perlman** (Professor of Law, Former Chancellor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln), and
- **Madelyn Ross** (Associate Director of China Studies, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies).

Responding to the question of the importance of US-China educational exchanges, **Madelyn Ross** reminded the audience, “Education has been at the leading edge of US-China relations.” Former US Representative (R-AZ) **Matt Salmon** affirmed that the US-China relationship is “the single most important bilateral relationship in the world today.”

A major element contributing to the dialogue about educational exchanges has been the establishment of Confucius Institutes in the US. Confucius Institutes provide educational programs dedicated to teaching Mandarin and facilitating awareness and understanding of Chinese culture. **Winston Langley** and **Harvey Perlman** recognized the value Confucius Institutes bring to the US. **Perlman**, former Chancellor of the University of Nebraska, said the University’s connection with a Chinese partner university through the Confucius Institute helped fuel economic development in the Nebraska agriculture industry.

Concerns about Confucius Institutes have been raised recently in the media. When asked about this issue, the panelists indicated that greater dissemination of information about the work of the Institutes would help dispel any confusion and misinformation. **Salmon** noted that the Arizona State University Confucius Institute has been instrumental in securing grant funding from the US Department of Defense for a program to address a shortage of Americans with professional-level knowledge of a language deemed critical to national security, noting it would be unlikely for the DoD to approve such funding if it perceived the Confucius Institute as a threat.

Jonathon Marek, a Georgetown University School of Foreign Service student and Confucius Institute beneficiary spoke at the event and concurred, adding, “The ultimate value of Sino-American academic exchanges is that we get to understand each other better, irrespective of national differences.

Exchanges [...] help build the US-China relationship by forging deep ties between American and Chinese students.”

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The [Confucius Institute U.S. Center](#) is a nonprofit organization that supports the teaching of Chinese language and culture in the United States and fosters educational exchanges between China and the United States.

The [US-China Strong Foundation](#) is a nonprofit organization that seeks to strengthen US-China relations by investing in a new generation of leaders who have the knowledge and skills to engage with China.

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