



ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

<https://asce.tamus.edu>

THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

August 25, 2021

BEIJING'S AMERICAN HUSTLE: HOW CHINESE GRAND STRATEGY EXPLOITS U.S. POWER

Matt Pottinger | Foreign Affairs | September/October 2021

Although many Americans were slow to realize it, Beijing's enmity for Washington began long before U.S. President Donald Trump's election in 2016 and even prior to Chinese President Xi Jinping's rise to power in 2012. Ever since taking power in 1949, the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has cast the United States as an antagonist. But three decades ago, at the end of the Cold War, Chinese leaders elevated the United States from just one among many antagonists to their country's primary external adversary—and began quietly revising Chinese grand strategy, embarking on a quest for regional and then global dominance. The United States and other free societies have belatedly woken up to this contest, and a rare spirit of bipartisanship has emerged on Capitol Hill. But even this new consensus has failed to adequately appreciate one of the most threatening elements of Chinese strategy: the way it exploits vital aspects of American and other free societies and weaponizes them in the service of Chinese ambitions. Important U.S. institutions, especially in finance and technology, cling to self-destructive habits acquired through decades of "engagement," an approach to China that led Washington to prioritize economic cooperation and trade above all else.

Read the full article [here](#).

BIDEN VOWS CLARITY ON FOREIGN RESEARCH TIES FOR ACADEMICS

Paul Basken | Times Higher Education World University Rankings | August 25, 2021

The Biden administration is promising a quick push to clear up confusion among universities and their academic staff over what foreign research activities need to be reported to the government – and facing scepticism given the extent of the problem. The White House science adviser, Eric Lander, has set an early November deadline for giving federal funding agencies "clear and effective" guidance for researcher disclosures that encourage global scientific cooperation while guarding against national security threats. The long-standing problem, which universities fear could lead to international partners being scared off, has become more fraught in recent years, with a Trump administration crackdown on researchers having ties to China – which largely involved arresting those who did not fully disclose foreign affiliations on grant applications – exacerbated by broader anti-Asian discrimination during the Covid pandemic and potentially by an impending US intelligence report into the origins of Covid-19. The Justice Department's China Initiative so far has involved at least 16 arrests of academic scientists.

Read the full article [here](#).



ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

WITH CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES DWINDLING IN THE U.S., WHAT'S NEXT FOR CHINESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION?

Jordyn Haime | *SupChina* | August 24, 2021

As the fall academic year approaches, many universities are again seeing a wave of closures of Confucius Institutes (CIs), the controversial Chinese government-funded institutions that have been accused of being a propaganda arm for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). According to the National Association of Scholars (NAS), a conservative group that has advocated for the closure of CIs, only around 30 will remain in the United States by the end of 2021, down from 110 in 44 states in 2017. This year's closures come as national opinion of China has reached an all time low — 67 percent of Americans have “cold feelings” toward China — and as reports of anti-Asian violence have skyrocketed across the U.S. At the same time, interest in learning languages at the college level has declined, and the liberal arts, which were already facing funding cuts across the country, are facing greater challenges amid the pandemic.

Read the full article [here](#).

KANSAS PROFESSOR SAYS FBI MISLED COURT IN ALLEGING HIDDEN TIES TO CHINESE GOVERNMENT

Ellen Nakashima | *The Washington Post* | August 24, 2021

A University of Kansas professor has accused the FBI of misleading a federal judge while seeking search warrants in a case charging the professor with failing to disclose his ties to a Chinese university and a Chinese government recruitment program. A motion filed Monday by an attorney for Feng “Franklin” Tao, a U.S. resident born in China, alleges that Kansas City, Mo., FBI agent Stephen Lampe knowingly used false information from an informant to obtain warrants to search Tao’s emails, computers, home and office. The motion says Lampe deliberately withheld information that would undercut the informant’s credibility and the reliability of the evidence. Tao is asking the court to throw out evidence obtained with the warrants. The case is scheduled to go to trial in October. The FBI and Justice Department declined to comment. A spokeswoman for the U.S. attorney’s office in Kansas said the office’s response would be filed as part of the court case.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL MILITARY AI

Zoe Stanley-Lockman | *Center for Security and Emerging Technology* | August 2021

Since the U.S. Department of Defense adopted its five safe and ethical principles for AI in February 2020, the focus has shifted toward operationalizing them. Notably, implementation efforts led by the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center (JAIC) coalesce around “responsible AI” (RAI) as the framework for DOD, including for collaboration efforts with allies and partners. With a DOD RAI Strategy and Implementation Pathway in the making, the first step to leading global RAI in the military domain is understanding how other countries address such issues themselves. This report examines how key U.S. allies perceive AI ethics for defense. Defense collaboration in AI builds on the broader U.S. strategic consensus that allies and partners offer comparative advantages relative to China and Russia, which often act alone, and that securing AI leadership is critical to maintaining the U.S. strategic position and technological edge. Partnering with other democratic countries therefore has implications for successfully achieving these strategic goals. Yet the military aspects of responsible AI that go beyond debates on autonomous weapons systems are currently under-discussed.

Read the full article [here](#).



HOW CHINA IS MILITARIZING AUTONOMOUS UNDERWATER VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

Ryan Fedasiuk | *The Maritime Executive* | August 22, 2021

Since 2018, Indonesian fishermen have regularly reeled in autonomous, glider-like vehicles operating as far south as the Java Sea—part of China’s longstanding undersea vehicle research program first declassified in 2021. Over the past decade, details have sporadically emerged about China’s unmanned (UUV) and autonomous undersea vehicle (AUV) projects, but questions linger about which kinds of vessels the Chinese defense industry may be developing, and how the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) might use them in a future conflict. This article draws on a wide array of primary sources—including advertisements from defense companies, PLA writings and research papers, and information released by state-run research institutes—to illuminate China’s growing fleet of autonomous undersea vehicles. After profiling three major AUV research institutes, the article identifies potential applications of China’s growing fleet of AUVs and continued barriers to development.

Read the full article [here](#).

COMPLICITY IN DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT WITH AUTOCRATIC SYSTEMS

Eva Pils | *Ethics and Global Politics* | August 4, 2021

Autocratic control of civil society, including academia, can be extended to democratic societies and institutions in ways that pose threats to liberal-democratic values, such as academic freedom, for example through mechanisms and practices that lead to academic self-censorship. Engaging critically with the literature on ‘sharp power’ and ‘authoritarian influencing’ addressing this phenomenon, this paper argues that democratic actors who, without sharing the repressive goals of autocracies, contribute to their success in settings of international collaboration and exchange can become structurally complicit with such wrongs. Recognizing the risk of complicity is a necessary first step towards addressing the political responsibilities resulting from it.

Read the full article [here](#).

EVANINA: COMBATING CHINA’S ‘EXISTENTIAL’ CYBER, INFLUENCE THREATS REQUIRES POST-9/11 INTENSITY

Bridget Johnson | *Homeland Security Today* | August 18, 2021

Battling in “the new frontier” of malign foreign influence requires finding ways to fill “a vast gaping hole” in helping Americans identify vulnerabilities and influence ops “every day living in technology but also with elections in the future,” the former director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center said, adding that the Department of Homeland Security could fill that domestic engagement role. Bill Evanina told the Senate Intelligence Committee at an Aug. 4 hearing that “the holistic and comprehensive threat to the United States posed by the Communist Party of China is an existential threat, and it is the most complex, pernicious, aggressive, and strategic threat our nation has ever faced.” The private sector and academia “have become the geopolitical battle space for China” as leader Xi Jinping “has one goal: to be the geopolitical, military, and economic leader in the world, period.” “He, along with China’s Ministry of State Security, People’s Liberation Army, and United Front Work Department, drive a comprehensive and whole-of-country approach to their efforts to invest, leverage, infiltrate, influence, and steal from every corner of the United States,” Evanina said. “...Economic security is national security.”

Read the full article [here](#).



CHINA KILLS ALMOST 300 PARTNERSHIPS WITH ELITE FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES IN PLACES LIKE NEW YORK, LONDON AND HONG KONG, AFTER PRIVATE TUTORING BAN

Phoebe Zhang | *South China Morning Post* | August 16, 2021

China's education authorities have terminated 286 cooperative programmes between Chinese and foreign universities as part of a routine assessment of collaborative arrangements with foreign institutions. A cumulative list of terminated programmes was published last week on the official app of the Ministry of Education and included partnerships with elite institutions including City University London, New York University and the University of Hong Kong. Some of the programmes were also mentioned in a similar list released by the education authorities in 2018, and appear to have been terminated several years ago.

Read the full article [here](#).

U.S. UNIVERSITIES FACE ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR OF TOO FEW CHINESE STUDENTS

Grady McGregor | *Fortune* | August 16, 2021

In the coming weeks, tens of millions of students are set to descend on college campuses across the United States in what many universities had hoped would kick-start the first normal and mostly in-person academic year since the onset of the pandemic. The rise of the Delta variant may be complicating those plans, but there is another factor threatening a return to college as usual: U.S. universities may be losing their luster in China, the U.S.'s largest source of international students. Chinese student applications for the coming academic year shrank 18% compared with last year's cycle, according to data from application platform CommonApp. The decline appears especially pronounced given that U.S. colleges got a 9% boost in applications from international students in this cycle compared with the previous one.

Read the full article [here](#).

WHILE AMERICA SLEPT, CHINA STOLE THE FARM

Chris Bennett | *Farm Journal* | June 8, 2021

American farmers are asleep as a thief strips machinery, barn, bins, and fields of all valuables—and then returns for more. China has breached the inner walls of the U.S. agriculture industry in what has arguably been the most expansive heist in farming history, and is currently attempting to steal or hack every conceivable facet of U.S. agriculture technology. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) openly has declared its intent to dominate high-tech industries across the world, including agriculture, by 2025. Undergirding its technological superiority effort, China has unabashed plans for a solo climb to the top rung of the global power ladder by 2049—international dominion. In order to fuel its ascendance, the CCP is engaged in widespread theft, cyber-hacking, and espionage, with the U.S. as the honey hole of illicit gain.

Read the full article [here](#).

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

The Academic Security and Counter Exploitation Program is coordinated by The Texas A&M University System Research Security Office as a service to the academic community.
<https://rso.tamug.edu>

