

China Initiative and Our Concerns



UAFCHA
02/22/2022

Agenda

- **Introduction**
- **UAFCHA presentation and discussion**

UAFCHA

◎ **UA Chinese Faculty (by 2020)**

- ➔ > 188 total, 153 (~7% of total TT faculty) TT (42/47/54)
- ➔ Science/Engineering/Medicine/Eller/...
- ➔ Contribute greatly to research (fund, paper,...), teaching, service.

◎ **UAFCHA (UA Faculty of Chinese Heritage Association)**

- ➔ founded in 03/13/2021, registered under UA Faculty Affairs Office
- ➔ Membership open to all interested parties (**71 members**)
- ➔ Mission
 - promote and support members
 - support UA missions and serve UA community

Outline

- **Background**
from politics to prosecution
- **Finding based on Survey**
negative impacts and insecurity
- **Support we need**

Background: from Politics to Prosecution

◎ Dramatic change of environment (2018-2021)

- ➔ DOJ China Initiative, NIH 10,000 letters, FBI warning brochure to academia
- ➔ implementation of new policies from federal agencies and universities

◎ Targeted investigation (2018-2021)

- ➔ High profile arrests, 2021 (MIT, Prof. Gang Chen), very different University responses
- ➔ Wrongly charged and later dismissed cases: Gang Chen, Anming Hu, Sherry Chen, Xiaoxing Xi, ...

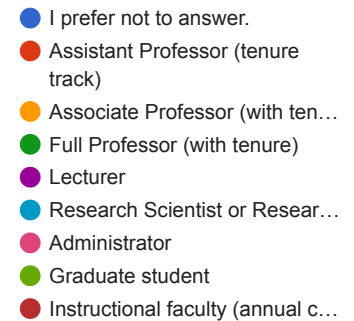
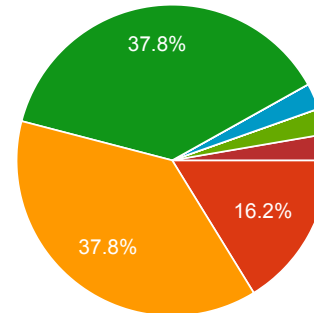
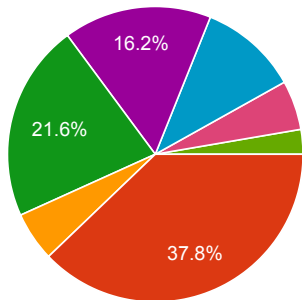
General fear of being wrongfully charged

Survey

Survey on the impact of academic research

→ 5 Universities nationwide (Umich, Mich State, Iowa State, Columbia, Notre Dame) 295/927

→ UA 37/70, different colleges, different ranks



Main Findings: Negative Impacts and Insecurity

UA (nation-wide)

◎ Sense of Security

- ➔ Do not feel safe as Chinese-origin researches in the U.S. **62%** (59%)
- ➔ Worried about Collaboration/traveling to China **73%** (72%)
- ➔ Fear university will not support Asian American scholars if targeted by the US government **24%** (40%)
- ➔ Concerns are largely invisible to University leadership **78%** (64%)

◎ Procedure-wise

- ➔ Unclear of rights or responsibilities when investigated **67%** (91%)
- ➔ Unclear of what to disclose
 - to university **75%** (71%)
 - to funding agency **74%** (64%)

◎ Faculty/Student recruitment/retention

- ➔ Faculty thought about leaving the US for another country **21%** (32%)
- ➔ Reduced student/postdoc application pool/more difficult to recruit/faculty reluctant to take Chinese students
- 30%** (31%) faculty report they have students/postdocs turned down US offer because they feel the US is not a welcoming environment

◎ Lack Asian American inclusion

- ➔ Univ leadership positions lack Asian American representation **87%** (86%)

Reflection and Actions

◎ Survey data raise surprising alarms

➔ Negative impact on academic research with reduced:

- federal grants
- research activity
- international student enrollment

➔ Hurt the competitiveness, innovation, and productivity of US academic research

➔ Further fuel microaggression, anti-Asian hate

◎ Actions taken

➔ Letters and meetings with University leadership

➔ Letters and communications with DOJ, congress and president Biden

Support We Need

◎ Action to enhance sense of security

- ➔ Convey the message to colleges (deans), depts (heads), center (directors)
- ➔ Set up an advisory office/designated personnel to ensure faculty's legal rights during any inquiries.

◎ Action to increase procedure transparency and legal protection

- ➔ Increase clarity/consistency/equality in policies regarding disclosure
- ➔ Checklist of disclosure to funding agencies/internal reporting
- ➔ Guideline regarding federal investigation

◎ Action to improve recruitment and retention

- ➔ Expel concerns over "China Initiative" and racial profiling
- ➔ On behalf of us, improve communication with state legislature, congressional delegations, other Universities, government agencies, the public

◎ Action to improve Asian American inclusion

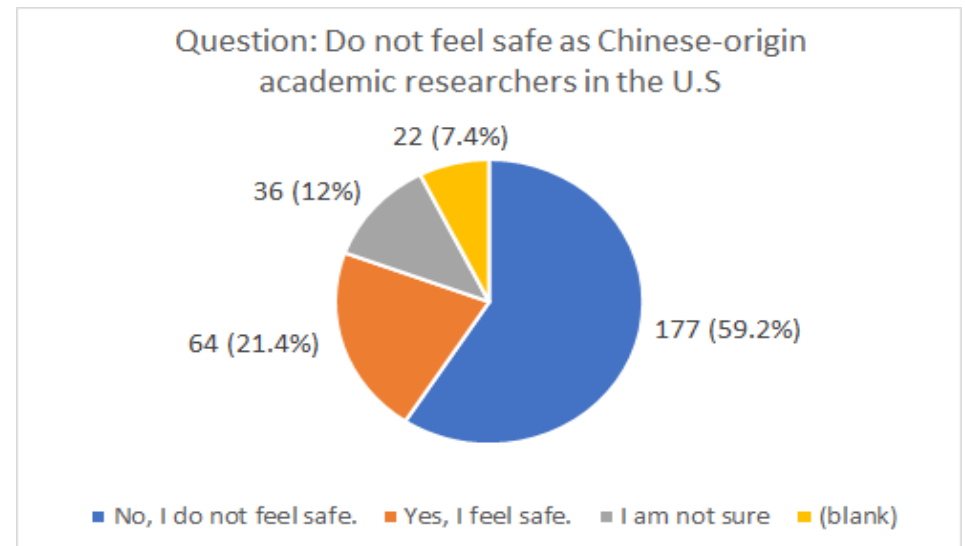
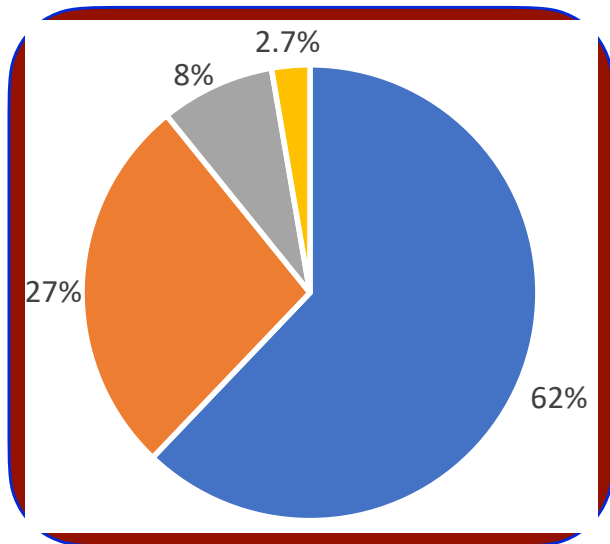
- ➔ Representation in leadership roles
- ➔ Voice of our community

Survey Details

#1: Sense of Security

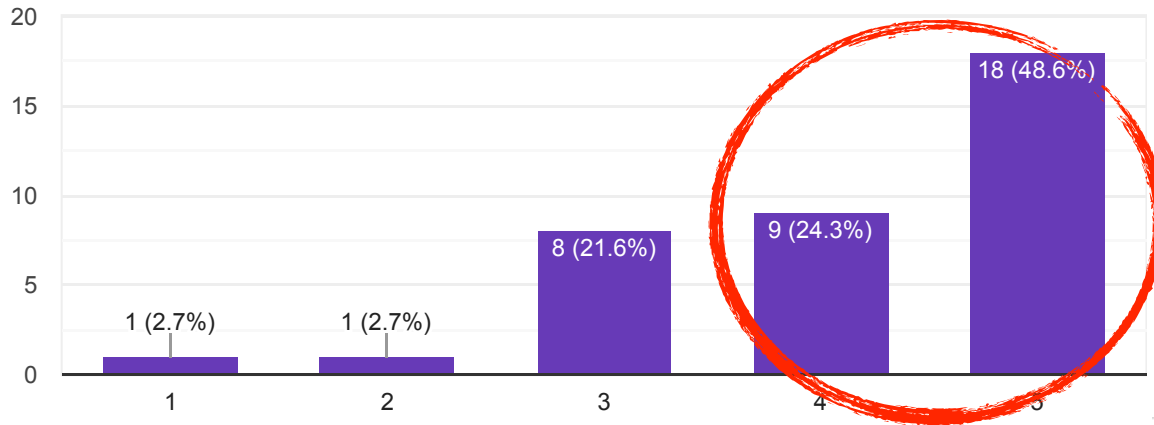
UA (nation-wide)

62% (59%) do not feel safe as Chinese-origin academic researchers in the U.S., while additional 8% (12%) are not sure (70% total/71%)



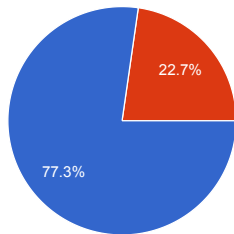
73% (72%) are worried about traveling to and/or bringing students to China (post-pandemic)

77% are worried about collaborations with colleagues in China



Are you worried about these collaborations given the current political atmosphere in China and/or in the US?

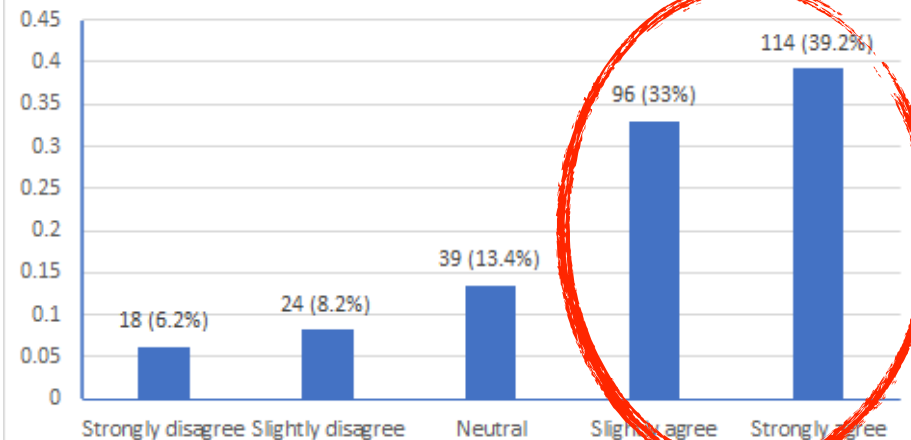
22 responses



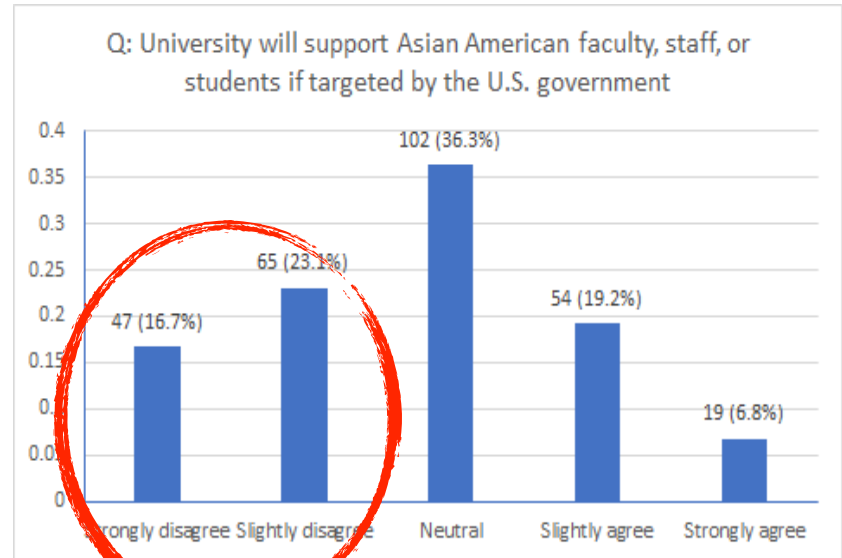
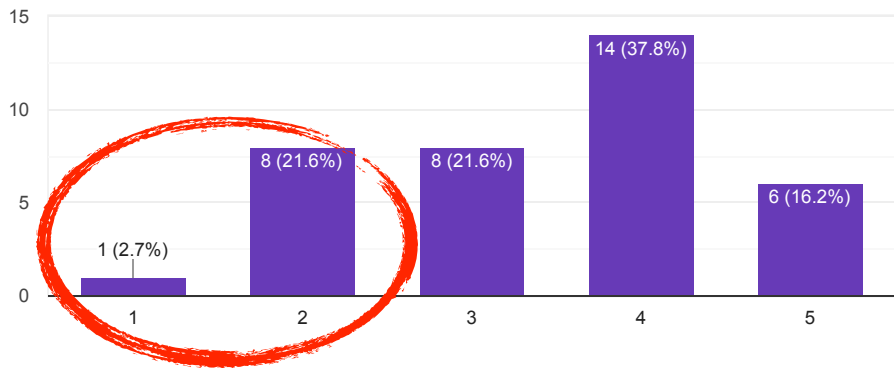
● Yes
● No
● I prefer not to answer.

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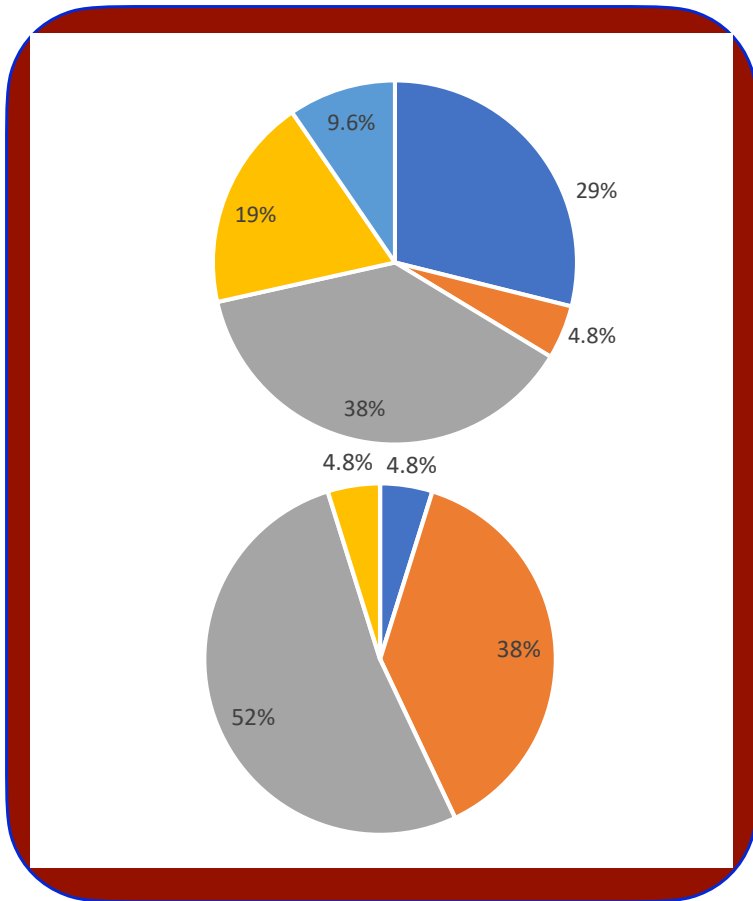
Q: Worried about traveling to and/or bringing students to China (post-pandemic)



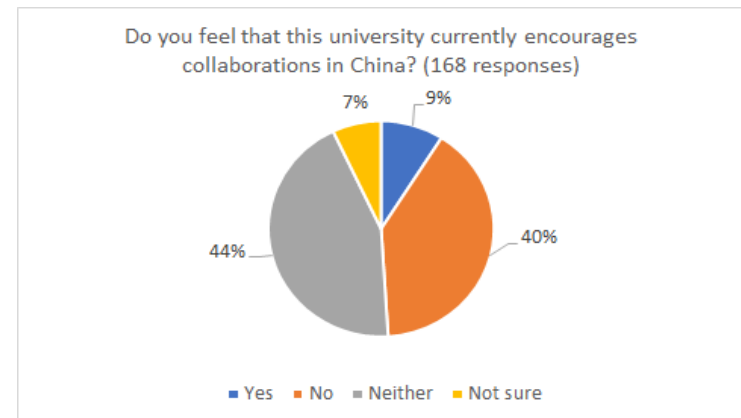
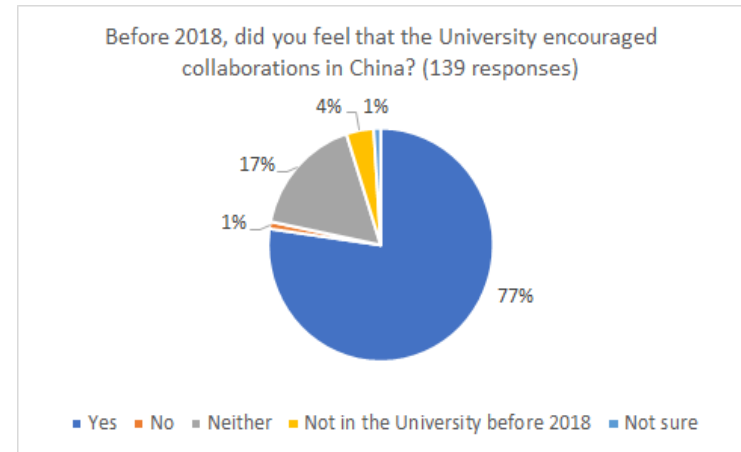
24% (40%) fear university will not support Asian American faculty, staff or students if targeted by the US government, protect faculty



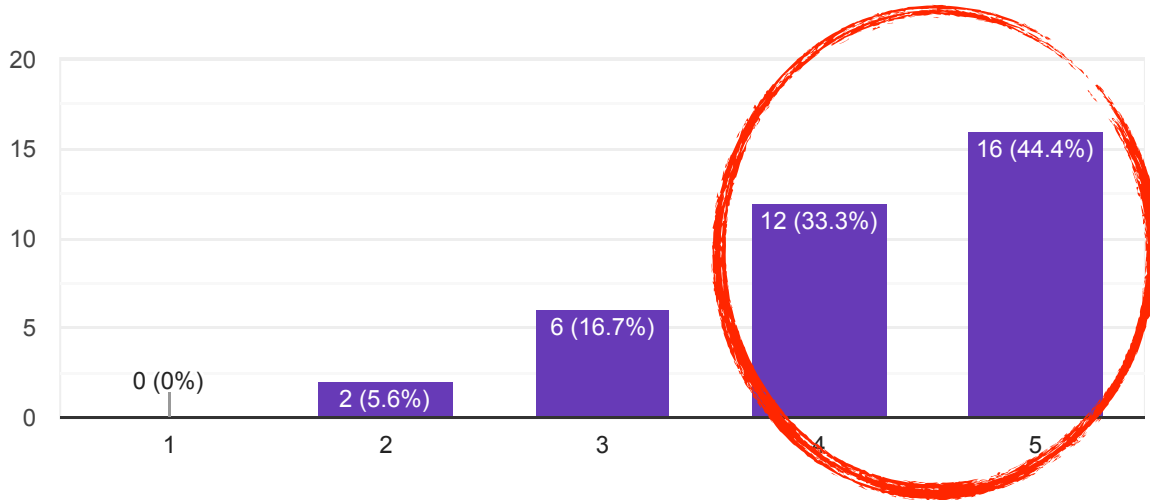
29% (77%) of faculty believe university encouraged these before 2018. Only 5% (9%) do now.



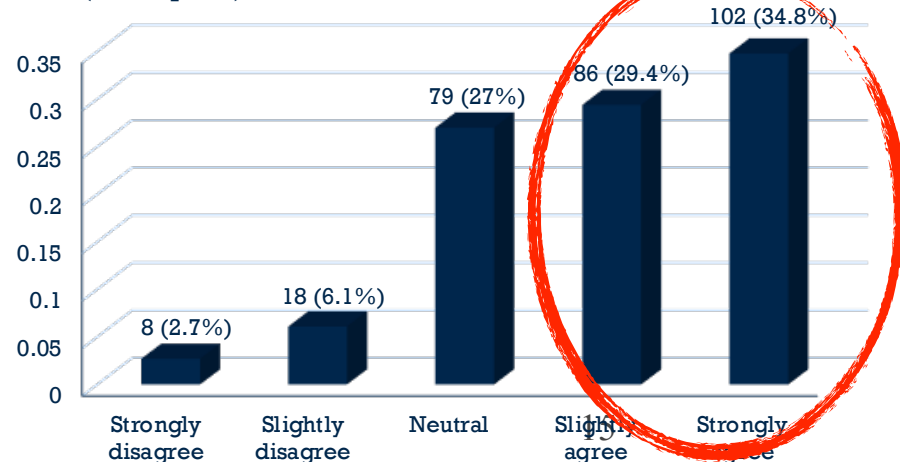
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78% (64%) agree that Asian American faculty, staff and student concerns are largely invisible to University leadership

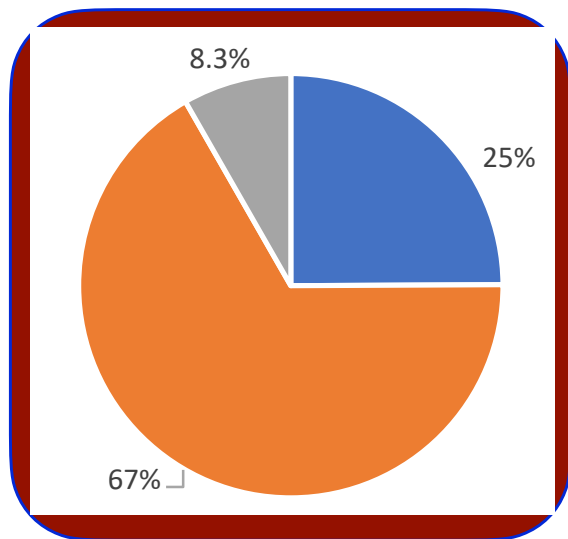


Question: Asian American faculty, staff, and student concerns are largely invisible to university leadership (293 replies)



#2: Procedure-wise

67% (91%) of those investigated were not informed of their rights or responsibilities

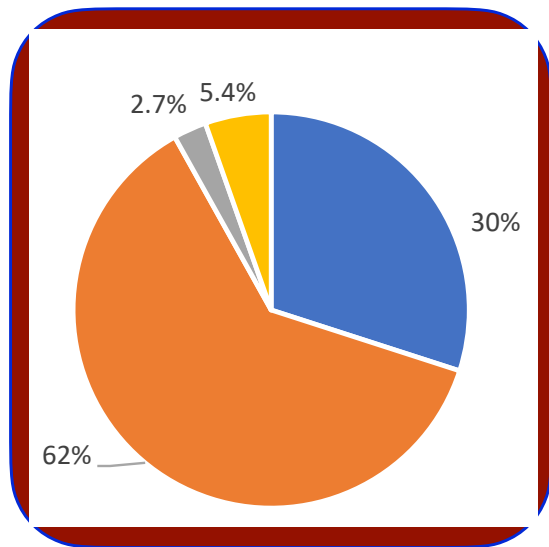


Disclosure

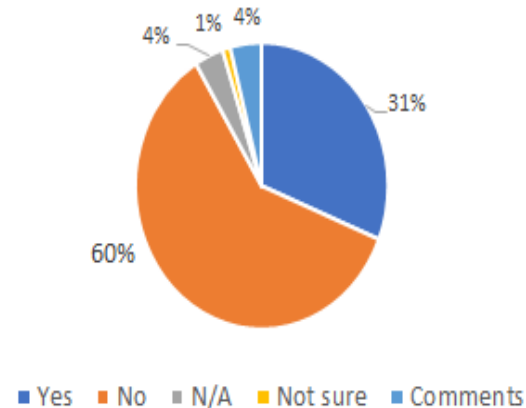
- **72% (81%) of researchers know WHERE they should disclose COI to Universities**
- **Only 25% (29%) know what should be disclosed to universities**
- **Only 26% (36%) know what should be disclosed to federal funding agencies**

#3: Faculty/Student recruitment/retention

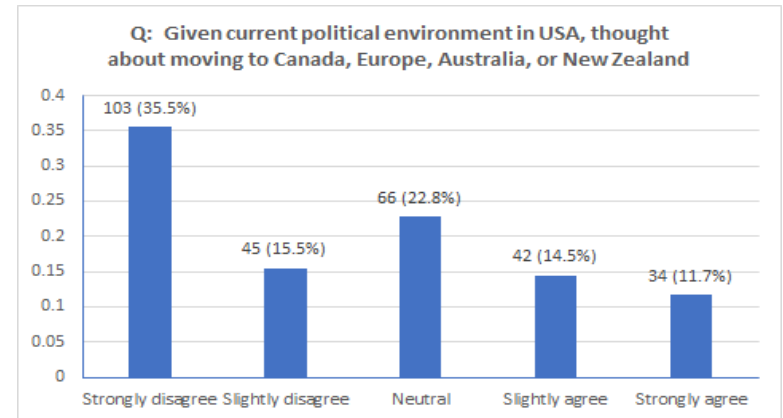
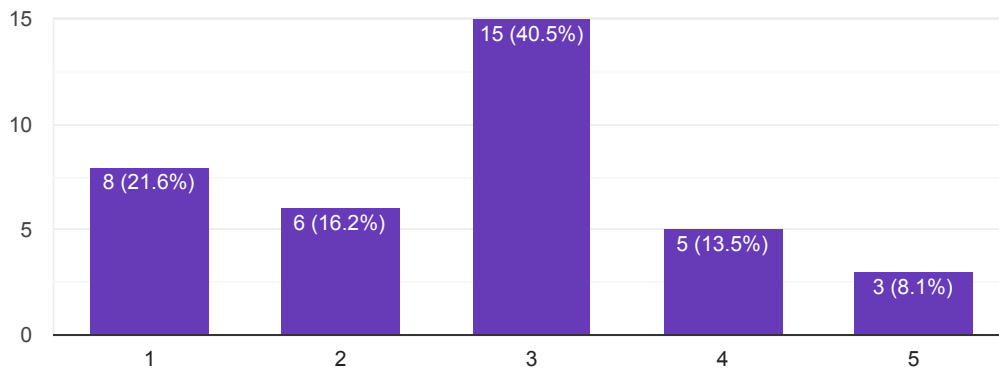
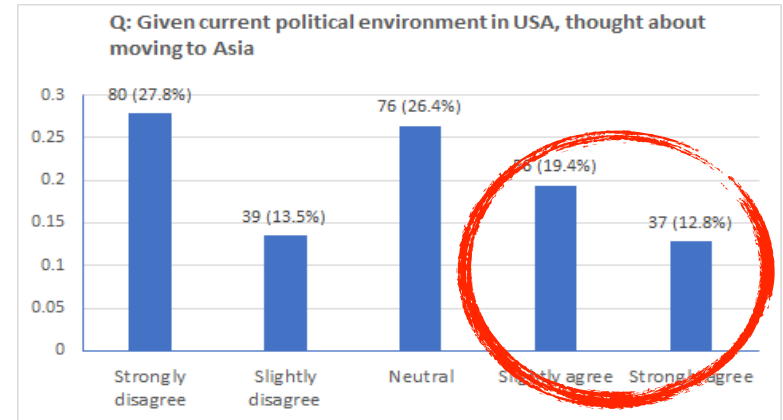
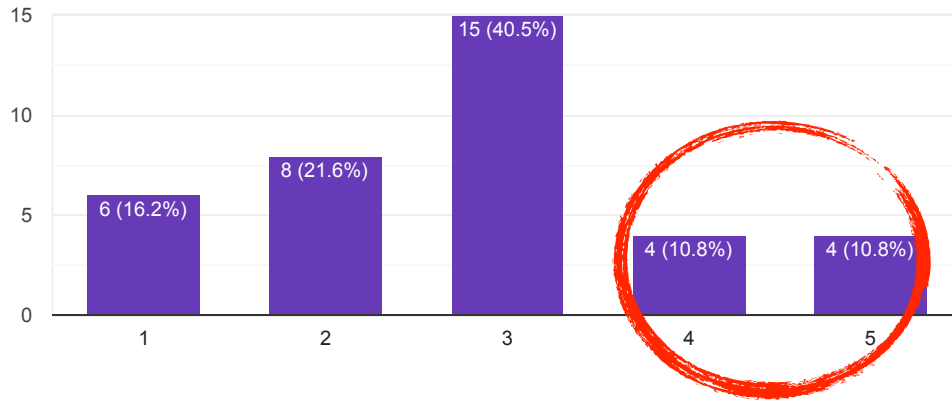
30% (31%) have students/postdocs who have turned down offers from US institutions because they feel the US is not a welcoming environment (reduction of application pool + hard to recruit + faculty reluctant to take Chinese students)



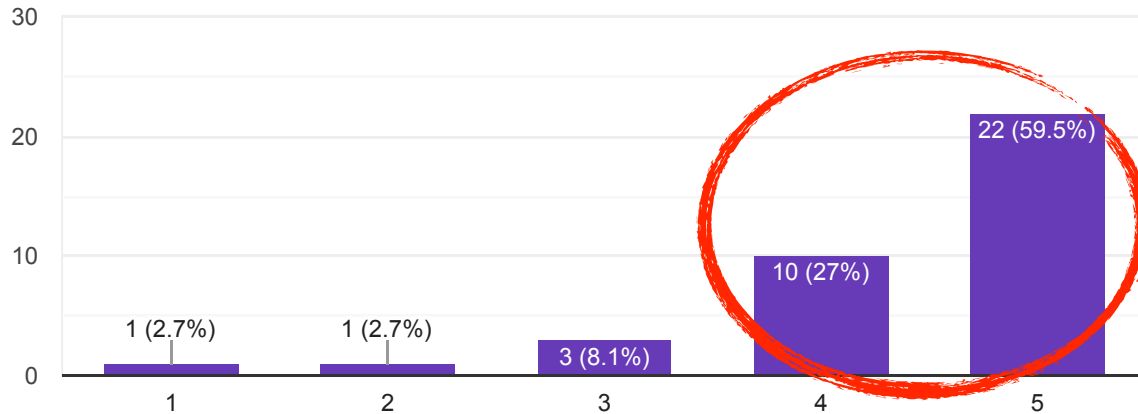
Do you have students or postdocs who have turned down offers from U.S. institutions because they feel the U.S. is not a welcoming environment for people like them? (300 replies)



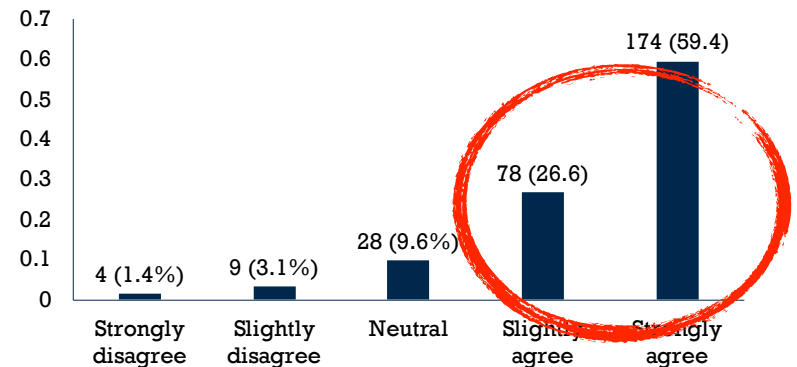
21% (32%) have thought about leaving the US for another country



#4: 87% (86%) agree that University leadership positions lack Asian American representation



Question: University leadership positions lack Asian American representation (293 replies)



Background

In 2018, Department of Justice (DOJ) established the “China Initiative” with objectives to investigate and prosecute trade secret theft and economic espionage

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-jeff-sessions-announces-new-initiative-combat-chinese-economic-espionage>

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) published a brochure warning academic institutions: China, the Risk to Academia

<https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/china-risk-to-academia-2019.pdf/view>

National Institute of Health (NIH) sent 10,000 letters to all research universities/institutions warning undisclosed foreign ties

<https://www.science.org/content/article/nih-letters-asking-about-undisclosed-foreign-ties-rattle-us-universities>

China Initiative

Since 2018

- 19 out of 77 (25%) economic espionage
- 23 cases (30%) grant or visa fraud by academics
- 130 out of 148 (88%) individuals charged under the initiative are scientists of Chinese heritage

Research Integrity cases - MIT Technology Review's China Initiative Database

Defendant	Category	Charges	Disposition	Technology Area	Affiliation	Country of Citizenship	Race
Feng Tao	Research integrity	Wire fraud,Federal program frau	Pending	Chemical engineering	University of Kansas	People's Republic of China	Asian
Zhengdong Cheng	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements,Co	Pending	Physics	Texas A&M University	United States	Asian
Mingqing Xiao	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements,Fal	Pending	Mathematics	Southern Illinois University - Carbondale	United States	Asian
Lin Yang	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements	Pending	Biomedical	University of Florida	People's Republic of China	Asian
Yanqing Ye	Research integrity,Agent of a foreign government	Visa fraud,False statements,Act	Pending	Physics	Boston University	People's Republic of China	Asian
Meyya Meyyappan	Research integrity	False statements	Pleaded guilty	Nanotechnology	NASA	United States	Asian
Simon Saw-Teong Ang	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements,Fal	Pleaded guilty	Electrical engineering	University of Arkansas	United States - Naturalized	Asian
Turab Lookman	Research integrity	False statements	Pleaded guilty	Physics	Los Alamos National Laboratory	United States	Asian
James Patrick Lewis	Research integrity	Federal program fraud	Pleaded guilty	Materials science	West Virginia University	United States	Not Asian
Xiao-Jiang Li	Research integrity	Making and subscribing a false	Pleaded guilty	Biomedical	Emory University	United States	Asian
Song Guo Zheng	Research integrity	False statements,Federal progr	Pleaded guilty	Biomedical	The Ohio State University	People's Republic of China	Asian
Zaosong Zheng	Research integrity	Smuggling goods from the Unit	Pleaded guilty	Biomedical	Beth Israel Deaconness Medical	People's Republic of China	Asian
Charles Lieber	Research integrity	False statements,Filing false tax	Found guilty after jury trial	Nanotechnology	Harvard University	United States	Not Asian
Gang Chen	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements,Fal	Charges dismissed by the government	Nanotechnology	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States	Asian
Qing Wang	Research integrity	False claims,Wire fraud	Charges dismissed by the government	Biomedical	Cleveland Clinic Foundation	United States	Asian
Juan Tang	Research integrity	Visa fraud,False statements	Charges dismissed by the government	Biomedical	UC Davis	People's Republic of China	Asian
Xin Wang	Research integrity	Visa fraud	Charges dismissed by the government	Biomedical	UC - San Francisco	People's Republic of China	Asian
Guan Lei	Research integrity	Visa fraud,False statements,Des	Charges dismissed by the government	Machine learning	UCLA	People's Republic of China	Asian
Chen Song	Research integrity	Visa fraud,Destruction and alter	Charges dismissed by the government	Biomedical	Stanford University	People's Republic of China	Asian
Kaikai Zhao	Research integrity	Visa fraud,False statements	Charges dismissed by the government	Artificial intelligence	Indiana University	People's Republic of China	Asian
Haizhou Hu	Research integrity,Theft of trade secrets	Unauthorized access to comput	Charges dismissed by the government	Robotics	University of Virginia	People's Republic of China	Asian
Anming Hu	Research integrity	Wire fraud,False statements	Acquitted by judge after mistrial	Nanotechnology	University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Canada	Asian
Van Andel Research Insititute	Research integrity	None	Settled with government	Biomedical	N/A	N/A	N/A

Background



Andrew E. Lelling

Partner, Investigations & White Collar, Jones Day
3d · Edited

When we created DOJ's China Initiative in 2018, we were responding to long-term concerns about economic espionage involving an emerging geopolitical rival. This was sound policy, but the initiative has drifted and, in some significant ways, lost its focus. DOJ should revamp, and shut down, parts of the program, to avoid needlessly chilling scientific and business collaborations with Chinese partners. MIT Technology Review did a great job breaking down the Initiative's record, three years in. #china #whitecollarcrime #researchintegrity



The US crackdown on Chinese economic espionage is a mess. We have the data to...

technologyreview.com



By **Katie Benner**

Feb. 20, 2022, 5:00 a.m. ET

Sign Up for On Politics A guide to the political news cycle, cutting through the spin and delivering clarity from the chaos. [Get it with a Times subscription.](#)

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department will soon announce changes to the [China Initiative](#), a Trump-era effort to combat Chinese national security threats, after civil rights proponents, business groups and universities told the Biden administration that the program had fostered suspicion of Asian professors working in the United States, chilled scientific research and contributed to a rising tide of anti-Asian sentiment, according to people briefed on the matter.

The likely changes, including retiring the China Initiative name, are the result of a three-month evaluation undertaken by Matthew G. Olsen, the head of the Justice Department's national security division.