

relevant security clearance requirements for this population. This addressed the slow pace of India's bureaucracy; indeed, both interested institutions and international faculty have tended to lose interest when the clearance process spanned many months. Universities can now hire foreigners directly, without clearance from the ministries of home affairs (MHA) and external affairs (MEA). Mandatory clearance is now limited to foreigners from "Prior Reference Category" countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan. The government has also allowed Indians with foreign passports who are also registered as Overseas Citizens of India (similar to a second passport) to be appointed as tenured faculty members without clearance from the MHA or MEA.

On their own initiative, the IITs have agreed to look collectively and proactively for foreign faculty. The IIT Council decided that each of the older and well-established IITs would be responsible for recruiting foreign faculty from one or more geographical areas, both for itself and for other IITs. For example, the United States was divided into three regions and allocated to IIT-Bombay (West Coast), IIT-Delhi (southern US), and IIT-Madras (East Coast). The strategy seems convoluted but does indicate that the IITs may be serious about proactively hiring larger numbers of international faculty.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

These recent initiatives by the Indian government and select public institutions—the IITs—are unlikely to be immediately successful. Even with incentives for foreign students, a "Study in India" portal will not be sufficient to attract larger numbers to India. Indian universities certainly need to be better promoted abroad. Currently, some private universities actively seek to attract students from African countries and elsewhere, but there is no wider strategy in place yet to promote "Studying in India." In addition, overall living conditions for foreigners can be challenging even in larger cities, due to poor residential facilities at universities, racism, and crime.

With respect to international faculty, the IITs will struggle to offer competitive salaries to potential faculty. Furthermore, many IITs are located in far-flung places and do not offer the comforts of larger cities. They are unlikely to be attractive for foreigners. IITs in large cosmopolitan cities such as Mumbai and New Delhi face different sets of problems. New Delhi's toxic air, for example, makes world headlines, and is a major put off for foreigners. Finally, the nature of India's current politics may also deter students and teachers from coming to India. ■

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## Critical Thinking and Ideology in Chinese Higher Education

DU XIAOXIN

*Du Xiaoxin is a postdoctoral research fellow at the National Institute of Educational Policy Research, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China. E-mail: xxdu@connect.hku.hk.*

Some may think universities in China lack academic freedom, as they are politically controlled by the party-state in various ways. For example, 10 percent of the total number of credits taken by a student must come from political education courses; academic staff need to be cautious about what they say; and discussing certain historical events in class is taboo. However, these and other mechanisms of political socialization do not necessarily eliminate all efforts of academic freedom. In an attempt to improve the global reputation of Chinese higher education, the state encourages Chinese universities to be innovative and to promote critical thinking, as expected of world-class universities. However, this may significantly counter the effectiveness of the political indoctrination that the Communist Party of China (CPC) wishes to implement throughout China's higher education system. Fudan University (FDU) in Shanghai is a leading university with a long history of pursuing academic excellence and striving for university autonomy. As such, it is an ideal case for examining the tensions between the political and academic tasks of universities. This article is based on fieldwork done in 2014 by the author, using mixed data collection methods and including document review, questionnaires, observation, and interviews.

#### DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

The tension is rooted in the different expectations placed on FDU's academic staff by the state, the university management, and the students.

For its part, the state expects FDU—and all universities in China—to be globally recognized as academically outstanding, while at the same time being politically reliable and continuously serving China's development needs, as a state-supervised entity. The state's expectations of students' education goals are captured by the 1950s slogan, "Red and Expert." In other words, it expects students to aspire to be experts in their field, while at the same time being the successors to, and builders of, Chinese socialism.

In response to these state expectations, FDU focuses on training teachers not to introduce politically incorrect content in their classes, to avoid running afoul of the National

Security Department (which oversees teaching content through indirect external observation) and the university's own security and publicity departments (which perform direct internal oversight). At the same time, however, recent speeches by FDU presidents—regarding the university's responsibility to seek the truth, remain academically independent, and preserve its staff's freedom of thought—show that the university expects to enjoy some degree of academic autonomy. This seems to contradict the state's efforts at exerting political control, especially as FDU has not dismissed or seriously punished academic staff who did talk about politically sensitive topics in class.

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**Critical thinking is encouraged, even in political education courses (PEC).**

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FDU students report having mixed feelings. To some, political education is a necessary part of university education; others see it as an obstacle to academic freedom. Generally, students expect their teachers to foster critical thinking in class.

**TEACHERS AS IMPLEMENTERS OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION**

FDU teachers practice self-censorship by recognizing and adhering to the CPC's political bottom line, thus playing the role of implementers of political socialization. Their teaching experience at the university informs their understanding of which politically sensitive topics and historical events they may and may not discuss in class—which dictates the protocol they use when self-censoring.

The core of the political bottom line is the recognition of the CPC's leadership in China; no matter what topic teachers discuss, they may not challenge the legitimacy of the CPC. The rest of the political bottom line prohibits, or at least severely restricts, discussion of specific historical events and incidents that might cast the CPC in a bad light, such as the 1989 Tiananmen Incident. Bearing these rules in mind, teachers have come up with self-censorship strategies that enable them to quietly exert their academic autonomy, while not technically violating the CPC's political orthodoxy.

The first such strategy involves replacing politically sensitive words with metaphors (e.g., saying "incident" instead of "uprising"), or using events in other parts of the world as subtle allegories for political issues in China. The teachers'

second strategy is to avoid editorializing on Chinese politics in class; for example, they may outline China's political system, but will not overtly adopt a political position. The third strategy involves teachers compromising their personal political views in their research to avoid offending the party-state and to ensure getting published—for example, setting their critiques in the context of given historical periods, to avoid giving offense to the current regime.

**TEACHERS AS ACADEMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

Despite their awareness of the political bottom line, FDU teachers generally feel free to pursue academic freedom by encouraging critical thinking among their students. For example, teachers often discuss Western values in class, including the advantages of Western political systems and social values, although doing so is not encouraged by China's ministry of education. In addition, FDU teachers sometimes introduce content challenging the legitimacy of the CPC, using various techniques to avoid crossing the political bottom line—for example, using ironic metaphors, or showing their disagreement with CPC policies or ideologies through facial expressions. FDU teachers also exercise academic judgment when selecting teaching materials, such as rejecting officially approved textbooks.

Critical thinking is encouraged, even in political education courses (PEC). Some PEC teachers even regard the practice as a form of reverse brainwashing, since it helps students to learn the importance of balanced views and allows them to contribute divergent ideas. Some FDU teachers encourage students to look for different, unofficial information sources, to be able to discuss academic issues with a more open mind. Teachers also promote discussion and debate in class to stimulate critical thinking.

**THE PHENOMENON OF ROLE SPLITTING**

The phenomenon of role splitting arises as a result of the competition between state, university, and student expectations, and as a strategy to preserve academic freedom within the political restrictions of the Chinese higher education system. In their interactions, teachers take on different roles with different responsibilities, adopt different strategies, and exhibit different, even contrasting behaviors on different occasions. Sometimes, they obediently observe the political bottom line and work within the boundaries set by the state, particularly those regarding political affairs. Other times, they challenge those norms by trying to expand the scope of their academic freedom into politically sensitive areas. This results in a unique model of higher education.

Based on these understandings of Chinese higher education, the findings show that the boundary of political con-

trol can be managed by teachers through a strategy of role splitting, which is a way to solve the tension between political control and academic freedom and allows the inclusion of alternative perspectives in higher education programs. ■

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## Research Productivity of Chinese “Young Thousand Talents”

LILI YANG AND GIULIO MARINI

*Lili Yang is a PhD candidate at the Department of Education, Centre for Global Higher Education, University of Oxford, UK. E-mail: lili.yang@education.ox.ac.uk. Giulio Marini is research associate, Institute of Education, University College London, Centre for Global Higher Education, UK. E-mail: g.marini@ucl.ac.uk.*

Implementing talent recruitment programs has become a widely adopted strategy by numerous countries seeking to attract international researchers. Countries that fail to recruit international talent and/or retain domestic talent risk facing severe brain drain. Well-designed talent recruitment programs, offering exceptionally attractive working conditions and salary packages, help in turning brain drain into brain gain.

Until the turn of the millennium, China was a country challenged with brain drain. To deal with the problem, the Chinese government issued successive policies to attract overseas Chinese and foreign talent to China. The “Young Thousand Talents” program (Y1000T), established in 2011, is arguably the most influential of these programs, recruiting early- and middle-career researchers from overseas. The Y1000T program provides attractive terms of employment in an effort to recruit young talent (doctoral degree holders under the age of 40) from overseas who have the potential of becoming leading figures. From 2011 to 2018, around 4,000 researchers have been supported by Y1000T in China. The majority are Chinese returnees. It is commonly agreed that returning talent can effectively enhance the quality and competitiveness of Chinese higher education, yet the research performance of returnees has not been compared to that of Chinese scholars remaining in other research-intensive countries, especially the United States. It is interesting to verify if China really offers better research conditions compared to other countries.

We have compared Y1000Ts selected in the years 2011 and 2012 (the “treatment group”) and Chinese researchers working in American research-intensive universities (a control group whose data has been extracted manually from institutional websites for the sake of this study). The comparison attempts to show whether Y1000Ts are able to publish at a similar rate and with the same quality as their US-affiliated counterparts. The treatment group includes 183 individuals, while the control group includes 363 researchers. While Y1000Ts work either in Chinese universities or in research institutes, all researchers in the control group

**While performance is similar in terms of gross number of publications, Y1000Ts are at a slight disadvantage in terms of quality of publications (journal impact factor).**

work in research-intensive universities. Both groups are homogenous in terms of age and discipline (life sciences, engineering and materials sciences, chemistry, mathematical and physical sciences, informational sciences, environmental and earth sciences, medicine, and public health and preventive medicine). The group of US-based Chinese researchers has been split into two cohorts in order to be compared with the Y1000T returnees.

### SIMILAR PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF RATE OF PUBLICATION

All selected researchers received their doctoral degrees around 2006. In the next five years, both groups made considerable progress in terms of number of publications. In 2013, the average number of publications among Y1000Ts was 27.1, compared to 25.7 among the control group. After coming back to China, and until 2018, this number increased to 39.0 for Y1000T, while for researchers in the control group, it was 39.4. This is not a significant difference, although the increase in the number of publications by Y1000Ts is slightly slower than that of the control group.

With respect to types of publications, after recruitment, 84.8 percent of publications by Y1000Ts were journal articles (other outputs being proceedings, chapters, or others), while for their counterparts the percentage was 76.1. There is no clear preference for publishing in an open access mode by either group. Both groups’ rates of open access publishing increased over the time span in focus here, rep-