China Initiative and Our Concerns



UAFCHA 02/22/2022

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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



Background from politics to prosecution Finding based on Survey

negative impacts and insecurity

Support we need

Background: from Politics to Prosecution

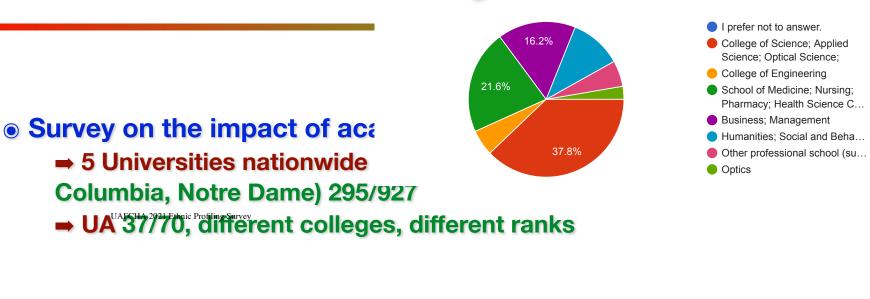
• Dramatic change of environment (2018-2021)

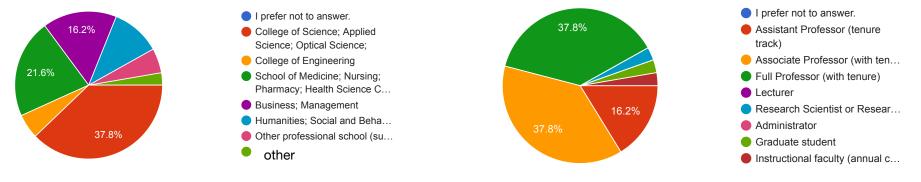
- ➡ DOJ China Initiative, NIH 10,000 letters, FBI warning brochure to academia
- implementation of new policies from federal agencies and universities
- Targeted investigation (2018-2021)
 - ➡ High profile arrests, 2021 (MIT, Prof. Gang Chen), very different University responses

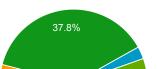
➡ Wrongly charged and later dismissed cases: Gang Chen, Anming Hu, Sherry Chen, Xiaoxing Xi, …

General fear of being wrongfully charged









- I prefer not to answer.
- Assistant Professor (tenure track)
- Associate Professor (with ten...

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Main Findings: Negative Impacts and Insecurity

Sense of Security

UA (nation-wide)

- ➡ 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/<u>Student</u> 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/<u>equality</u> 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

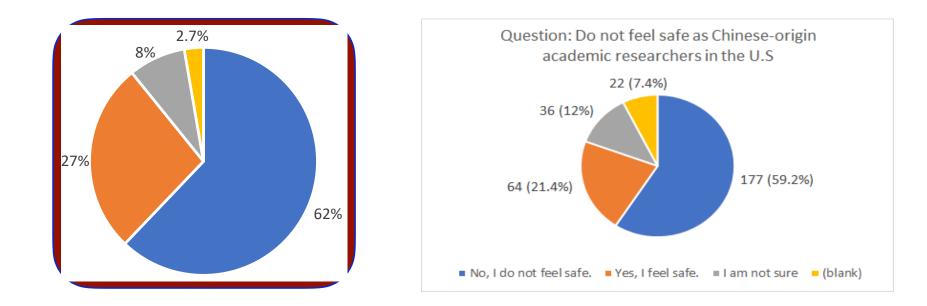
Action to improve Asian American inclusion

- Representation in leadership roles
- Voice of our community

Survey Details

#1: Sense of Security

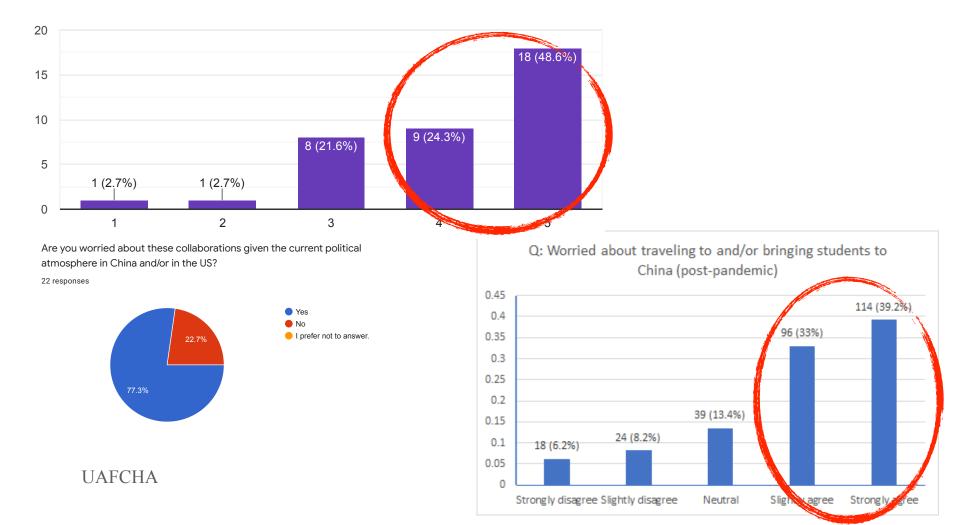
62% (59%) do not feel safe as Chinese-origin academic researches in the U.S., while additional 8% (12%) are not sure (70% total/71%)



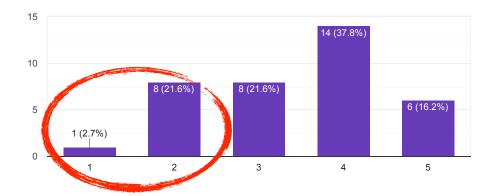
73% (72%) are worried about traveling to and/or bringing students to China (post-pandemic)

77% are worried about collaborations with colleagues in China

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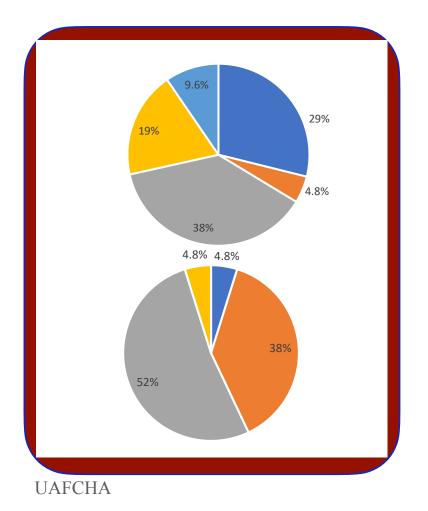


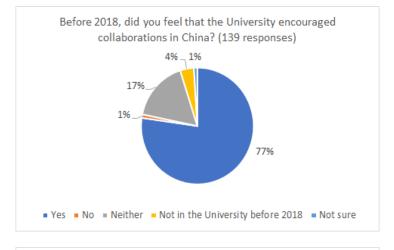
24% (40%) fear university will not support Asian American faculty, staff or students if targeted by the US government, protect faculty

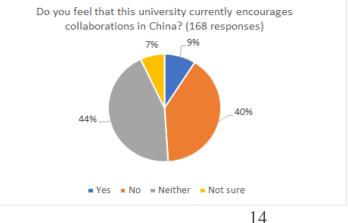




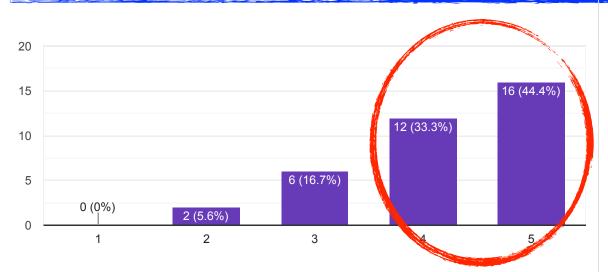
29% (77%) of faculty believe university encouraged these before 2018. Only 5% (9%) do now.



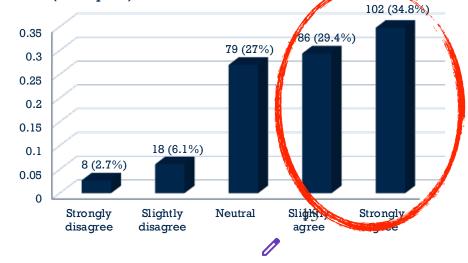




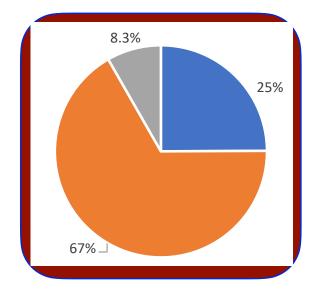
78% (64%) agree that Asian American faculty, staff and student concerns are largely invisible to University leadership

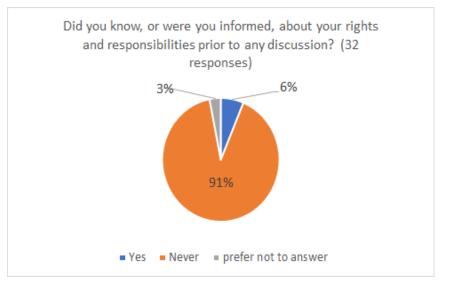


Question: Asian American faculty, staff, and student concerns are largely invisible to university leadership (293 replies)



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





Disclosure

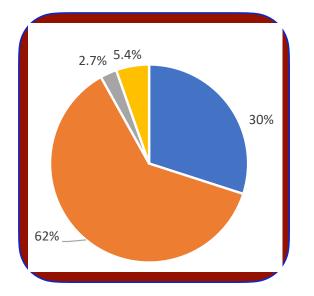
72% (81%) of researchers know WHERE they should disclose
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Only 25% (29%) know what should be disclosed to universities

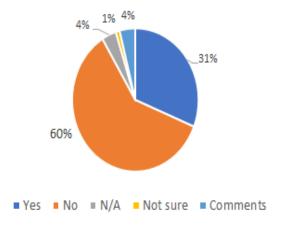
Only 26% (36%) know what should be disclosed to federal funding agencies

#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)

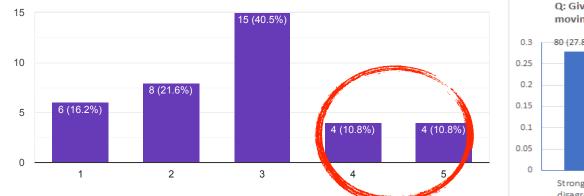


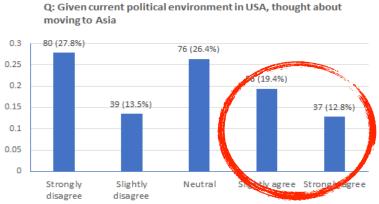
Do you have students or postdocs who have turned down offers from U.S. institutions because they feel the U.S. is not a welcoming environment for people like them? (300 replies)

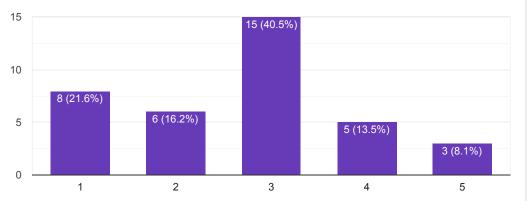


UAFCHA 2021 Ethnic Profiling Survey

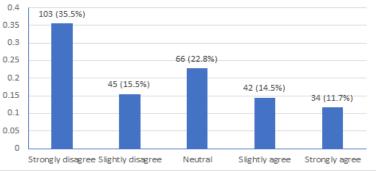
21% (32%) have thought about leaving the US for another country







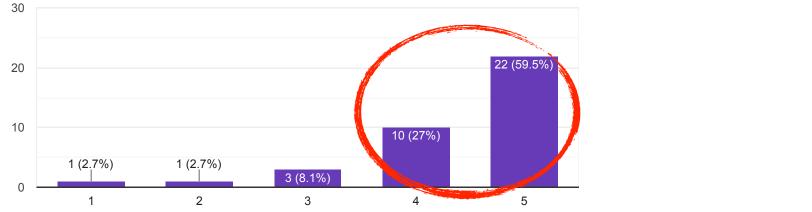




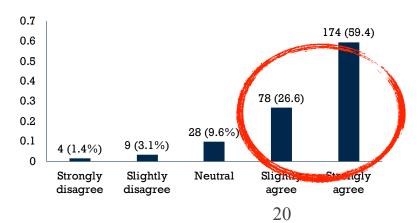
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#4: 87% (86%) agree that University leadership positions lack Asian American representation

UAFCHA 2021 Ethnic Profiling Sur



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





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

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

UAFCHA

https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/01/20/1043848/china-initative-gang-chen-mit-d202issed/

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. <u>Get it with a Times subscription.</u>

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department will soon announce changes to the <u>China Initiative</u>, 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.