

China Connections

Joint venture universities in China

Studying at Chinese universities in Beijing as an Indian in the 1980s was a fascinating and memorable experience. I entered Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (now Beijing Language and Culture University) for a four-year BA program in Chinese language and literature when I was still in my mid-teens. I had no prior knowledge of Mandarin and the instructors spoke no foreign languages, yet they possessed the best pedagogical tools to teach Mandarin to novice foreign students.

Tansen Sen

I WAS STRUCK MOST by the intimate relation between the instructors and foreign students at a time when contacts between foreigners and locals were still restricted. Our Chinese *laoshis* were not merely teachers, but also our host families, counselors, and friends. Thus, we received an education that went beyond class lessons and textbooks. It involved insights into the daily lives of people and a society that was on the verge of experiencing dramatic social and economic transformations.

After passing the national exams I enrolled in the MA program at Peking University. Suddenly I was taking courses with Chinese students that required significantly advanced Chinese language skills. Despite the strenuous curricular demands, the three years at Beida were equally remarkable. I had a motherly advisor, participated in various scholarly seminars, and even made trips to Tiananmen Square during the 1989 student protests. Education at the two Chinese universities has unequivocally shaped my academic career as well as personal life.

The collection of articles in this section focuses on the new rise of Sino-foreign joint venture universities. In addition to offering new educational opportunities and programs, these campuses foster unique bonding between Chinese and foreign students, faculty and staff members. While Chinese and foreign students also engage in similar opportunities at universities in Europe and the United States, the setting in China with pedagogical tools inducted from the world's leading academic institutions provide a distinct educational value, a range of innovative curricula and unprejudiced perspectives. With such shared educational training and experiences, graduates from these universities, as the articles imply, are expected to make significant contributions to the multicultural collaborations that define the globalized world of today.

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Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai

The Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai serves as the hub within the NYU Global Network University system to promote the study of Asian interactions and comparisons, both historical and contemporary. The overall objective of the Center is to provide global societies with information on the contexts of the reemerging connections between the various parts of Asia through research and teaching. Collaborating with institutions across the world, the Center seeks to play a bridging role between existing Asian studies knowledge silos. It will take the lead in drawing connections and comparisons between the existing fields of Asian studies, and stimulating new ways of understanding Asia in a globalized world.

Asia Research Center at Fudan University

Founded in March 2002, the Asia Research Center at Fudan University (ARC-FDU) is one of the achievements of the cooperation of Fudan and the Korean Foundation for Advanced Studies (KFAS). Throughout the years, the center has been working tirelessly to promote Asian Studies, including hosting conferences and supporting research projects. ARC-FDU keeps close connections with the ARCs in mainland China and many institutes abroad.

Sino-foreign joint venture universities: an introduction

Mike Gow

COLLABORATION in higher education between Chinese and foreign universities has been going on for over 30 years. The earliest collaboration, the Hopkins Nanjing Center, was established in 1986 and is still in operation today, offering postgraduate programs to both Chinese and non-Chinese graduate students. However, it wasn't until 1995 that the PRC State Education Commission developed provisional regulations to encourage Sino-Foreign collaboration in higher education. Between 1995 and 2003, 24 joint education institutes (JEI) were established, offering multiple degrees developed in collaboration with foreign universities, only two of which have since ceased operations. These JEIs are effectively colleges of existing Chinese universities.

In addition to these JEIs, single degree joint education programs (JEPs) were also permitted by the 1995 provisional regulations, with 438 being established between 1995 and 2003. In 2003, the Ministry of Education updated these regulations with a number of significant changes. Between 2003 and 2015, a further 33 JEIs and 638 JEPs were established. However, the 2003 Regulations allowed for the establishment of a new breed of Sino-Foreign HE collaboration: the joint venture university (JV).

The JV differs from previous collaborations as it involves not partner universities, but parent universities who establish a brand new university with legal person status under Chinese law. It's worth stating here that,

in the PRC, there is no such thing as a branch campus: collaborations involving foreign partners are either established within existing Chinese universities, or in the case of JVs, establish a new Chinese university. Unlike the majority of conventional joint ventures, JV universities are a form of cooperative JV where the foreign parent university's contribution is measured in their intellectual property input, with financial investment being provided from the Chinese parent and, more often, the local government in the municipality or province where it is established. Currently there are 7 JV universities in operation (see chart below left).

While the regulations under which these universities have been established are the same, there are great differences between these universities due in large part to the educational philosophy and vision of the leadership involved in their establishment. Another major factor affecting establishment and ongoing operations relates to the Chinese parent university and the location in which the JV is established. For example, NYU Shanghai's Chinese parent is East China Normal University (ECNU), which is itself located in Shanghai. ECNU is a key national university under the jurisdiction on the Ministry of Education. All JVs, however, report to the provincial education bureau or municipal education commission in which they are established, even if their parent university is a national university reporting to the Ministry of Education. This is perhaps less of an issue for NYU Shanghai who are in the same municipality as ECNU, their Chinese parent university, and who necessarily have strong existing relationships with the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission and other government bodies in Shanghai. However, compare this with XJTLU or DKU, who are both located in Jiangsu Province but whose parent universities are from Xi'an (Shaanxi) and Wuhan (Hubei) respectively, and there is an added complication in establishing relationships with the provincial education authorities; pricing bureaus who set the tuition fees, and other government bodies involved in the establishment and smooth operation of a Chinese university.

Sino-Foreign JVs are fascinating examples of transnational higher education, and also of the experimental boldness of China's higher education reforms. They have been permitted in order for China's reformers to examine new and different approaches that may be adopted to address challenges in China's vast and complex domestic higher education sector, especially with regard to China's desire to internationalize their own universities and attract both foreign academics and students.

Joint Venture	Location	Chinese Parent	Foreign Parent	Licence (Expiry)
University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) 宁波诺丁汉大学	Ningbo, Zhejiang 浙江宁波	Zhejiang Wanli University 浙江万里学院	University of Nottingham (UK)	2005* (2055)
United International College (UIC) 联合国国际学院	Zhuhai, Guangdong 广东珠海	Beijing Normal University 北京师范大学	Hong Kong Baptist University (HK)	2005 (2035)
Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University (XJTLU) 西交利物浦大学	Suzhou, Jiangsu 江苏苏州	Xi'an Jiaotong University 西安交通大学	University of Liverpool (UK)	2006 (2056)
NYU Shanghai 上海纽约大学	Shanghai 上海	East China Normal University 华东师范大学	New York University (USA)	2012 (2021)
Duke Kunshan University (DKU) 昆山杜克大学	Kunshan, Jiangsu 江苏昆山	Wuhan University 武汉大学	Duke University (USA)	2013 (2029)
CUHK-Shenzhen 香港中文大学 (深圳)	Shenzhen, Guangdong 广东深圳	Shenzhen University 深圳大学	Chinese University of Hong Kong (HK)	2014* (2044)
Wenzhou Kean University (WKU) 温州肯恩大学	Wenzhou, Zhejiang 浙江温州	Wenzhou University 温州大学	Kean University (USA)	2014* (2064)*

* Several universities were given conditional terms to recruit students prior to finalizing the JV licence. In each case, the first intake occurred in the year prior to the licence being granted.

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