



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 11, 2015

China in the Classroom: How the Reds Are Reaching American Students' Minds

The university was prohibited by an arm of the Chinese Ministry of Education from hiring a professor who would discuss Tibet. So, instead, a classical Chinese poetry chairman who wouldn't dare broach the topic was retained. Of course, this type of state control of teaching isn't unusual in superficially Marxist and un-officially fascist China, where censorship is a ship-of-state staple.



Except that this didn't happen in China, but the United States.

And the targeted institution was Stanford University.

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How could this happen? It's the result of a little-known exercise of Chinese soft power, via entities known as "Confucius Institutes." Billed as being "dedicated to promoting the understanding of Chinese language and culture, and to fostering friendly relations between China and the world," as a Webster University website [reports](#), the institutes are a perfect fit with American "multiculturalist" education, in which all cultures are, ostensibly, deemed equal. But Confucius Institutes definitely have the goal of ensuring that one culture will be presented as more equal than others.

These entities are run by Confucius Institute Headquarters, known as Hanban, which is essentially an arm of the Chinese Ministry of Education. And the faculty teaching its programs are made in China, exported to the United States in what critics complain is "an exception to the tradition that a university judges who is fit to teach its students," [wrote](#) the *Chicago Tribune* in December.

Reporting on the topic last week, *Campus Reform's* Kaitlyn Schallhorn put the matter in no uncertain terms, citing foreign policy experts and [writing](#). "China has infiltrated American colleges and universities" and is "stifling freedom of debate and creating a base for 'industrial espionage.'" And how? Follow the money. As Schallhorn tells us:

When American higher education institutions partner with Confucius Institutes ... the Institutes will provide the school with an initial \$1 million on top of additional funding anywhere between \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year, according to a [report obtained exclusively](#) by *Campus Reform* from the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank.

"Universities are always on the lookout for money and this money they have gotten comes at a very high price in terms of their integrity and in terms of their academic freedom," [Mike Gonzalez](#), a senior fellow at Heritage and author of the report, told *Campus Reform* in an interview.

And this price is being paid across America — and beyond. As Gonzalez [relates](#) in his report, "In the United States, there are some 97 [Confucius Institute] units at universities and close to 400 'Confucius classrooms' in K-12 schools." Moreover, "The latest statistics from Hanban show that by the end of 2014, 476 Confucius Institutes and 851 Confucius Classrooms have [sic] opened across 127 countries



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and regions,” the *Shanghai Daily* [tells us](#).

Critics could point out that this red carpet rolled out for Red Chinese propagandists is much as if the Cold War United States had invited Soviet agents to openly teach in American schools. (While such individuals were causing mischief on our shores, they found it necessary in their more traditional time to masquerade as something they weren't.)

But much as with the self-avowed communists who can now openly work in our government — such as Barack Obama's ex-green-jobs “czar” Van Jones — the mask is off. And the results are plain. Writes the *Tribune*, “Critics ... say that [Confucius Institute] classes avoid controversial subjects such as the Tiananmen Square massacre and Falun Gong, a religious sect outlawed in China. Some schools that host the programs have canceled visits from the Dalai Lama under pressure from Beijing.” Schallhorn adds, “[China's] government is intent on portraying a version of itself that is harmonious and happy,’ Gonzalez told *Campus Reform*. ‘None of the bad things that happen in China, in the PRC, [that] are because of its government are ever portrayed.’”

These Chinese “educational” efforts mirror Beijing's censorship of American entertainment, where, as *The New American* [reported](#) in December, the regime's powerful State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (S.A.R.F.T) uses an economic carrot-and-stick approach to try to ensure that our movies present a sanitized version of China.

As for the sanitization in American academia, Gonzalez provides an outline of Confucius Institute trespasses in his report, writing:

- Hanban/Confucius Institutes misrepresent themselves when they stress the link to the PRC's Education Ministry. Hanban reports directly to political apparatchiks in the Politburo, not to educators in the Ministry (who are, as likely as not, members of the Chinese Communist Party in any case).
- The agreements between universities and Hanban that establish the Confucius Institutes include nondisclosure clauses that make the entire enterprise opaque.
- The Confucius Institutes have been set up as bases of industrial espionage and to pursue Chinese students and other Chinese nationals who stray from the party line here in the United States.
- By adhering to Chinese law and barring the hiring of people whose activities are illegal in China — for example, adherents of the Falun Gong religion — the Confucius Institutes break U.S. labor and employment laws.

In fact, Gonzalez believes that the Confucius Institutes could pose a threat to U.S. national security. As Schallhorn writes, “I can tell you that anybody from any communist government, I don't care which communist government — Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, China — that is overseas is going to be asked by the government to come conduct espionage activity,’ Gonzalez said.” She also reports that Steven Mosher, a social scientist and expert on China, warned that the “Institutes employ ‘a number of individuals’ who ‘have backgrounds in Chinese security agencies.’”

Yet there has been some push-back. The University of Chicago severed its relationship with Hanban, as has Penn State, the Toronto School District in Canada, and Stockholm University in Sweden. The American Association of University Professors has issued a statement urging other academic institutions to follow suit, [writing](#), “Allowing any third-party control of academic matters is inconsistent with principles of academic freedom, shared governance, and the institutional autonomy of colleges and



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universities.” And in December, a House panel chaired by New Jersey Republican congressman Chris Smith investigated Hanban. The panel heard testimony from academicians such as University of Chicago professor emeritus Marshall Sahlins, who warned, [reported](#) the *Chicago Tribune*, “A Confucius Institute on campus is the foreign branch of a political power structure that stretches back to China and to the highest levels of its government.”

So many Americans may wonder, with much of our manufacturing having already been shipped overseas and with outsourcing the order of the day, must our education also be made in China?



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