

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.

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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.

China Connections *continued*

A philosophy from the trenches – University of Nottingham Ningbo

James Mirrione

PLATO ONCE REMARKED that the origins of education were in the activity of play. As a theatre and drama specialist I have endeavored not to lose sight of that axiom. Throughout forty-five years of teaching, I have never known a student to praise me for following the syllabus. Instead, I treat the syllabus as a clock to run against. I drag my students to any detour deemed more important than the pre-conceived path. I also force my students to stay with a difficult piece of literature, because the joy of discovery is what I believe lies at the core of true education.

I have constantly straddled the worlds of art and education and I have found these ruminations to be especially relevant to my teaching experience in China and with Chinese university students; although, they could just as easily be applied to any setting or population. However, in China there is a need to remind students that you, the teacher, are a living human being. Very often, I have found myself in a class that has me competing with laptops, cell phones, iPads and electronic dictionaries. This has occasioned me to blurt out such non-sequiturs as “Two guys walk into a bar...” The Chinese students then have the following reactions: (a) Do I take notes? (b) Do I download this and, if so, what is the link? (c) Bar? Did two men hit their heads? (d) Who are you and where is the teacher? Technology has threatened all professors who make their livings by being animated human beings; and, China has moved farther down the not-so-golden-avatar brick road. Therefore, may these axioms serve as possible palliatives to the above dilemma and, as a primer as to what I do as a teacher.

1. Get out from behind the desk

You are on stage whether you like it or not. Students want to see the whole of your corporeal essence when you start to teach, not some disembodied head that constantly looks down

at your dog-eared copy of the text that you read from, quoting your pearls of wisdom from the margins. Unless you are Stephen Hawking, this is a losing strategy; and, by the way, he is not shy at showing himself in full view so what's your excuse?

2. If students could, they would steal your book and then you would become irrelevant

You are not Moses reading from some elevated tome that has all the answers that students think they need, because all you do is read to them from it. Use the text as jumping off point; spin that verse, explore that image, wrestle that metaphor to the ground and be happy to get your fingers burned whenever an incendiary idea or concept reveals itself in the writing. If you do your students' work for them they will treat you to this version of a singing waiter: “*I could read the menu, but I will just let this guy drone on and decide for me in the hope that he shuts up.*”

3. When you do read, make it dramatic

You don't have to stand on the desk (although that might help) but put some life into it! If professors were judged on how intriguing, beguiling, riveting, motivated and passionate they were about the given subject matter, and its delivery, then we might have a more accurate determinant as to their 'mastery of the material'. It certainly would become a challenging approach to what now passes for erudition, which is only that same misguided notion that has ruined Shakespeare, Beowulf, Milton, Dante (the list is long), for countless students who have had to endure only an anemic rendering of the words. Just because many of these authors are dead doesn't mean you have to be. Make them read with you; let them be a character who is in opposition to your character; and, if you are doing a play, cast your students in as many roles as possible. You will be surprised to discover some latent thespians just waiting to take center stage.

4. The unexamined student is not worth your living with them for the period of the class

I always tell my students that they might not always understand me or agree with me but, they will never be bored. The classroom in the Bunsen burner to

set fire to the cobwebs of sloppy logic, to the lazy-boy-recliner of easily spouted prejudices and to the presumed flame retardant natures of religious, social and political propaganda. If all you are is a parrot then students might as well buy the real aviary version of the creature. You were hired to be a gadfly whether the institution knows it or not and even if it never lists that as a learning objective.

5. Strive for humor, not some academic version of Draco

It was Horace who said it best: “... drama is the form of forms: there is no power to equal the dramatist's art for moving the mind and mirroring the magical vision of art.” For me, this is a summation of my belief in the efficacy of my approach to use drama and theatre as a teaching tool; and, to treat education as an opportunity to create drama and theatre. This is where the classroom changes from a room to a stage and a stage into a platform for ideas. However, the challenges of teaching in China put to the test all of these prescriptions. This is due to the complexities of language and the lack of familiarity with critical thinking. There is still an extreme learning curve for students to comprehend that to be critical is not akin to heresy; nor is it disrespectful to believe that teachers are not infallible. Finally, these adages have been submitted, as well, to inject some reality into the rhetoric of cross-cultural learning that so many of our intuitions of higher learning traffic in whenever they are proposing joint Sino-Western educational ventures.

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A global supply chain of teaching and learning – Duke Kunshan University

Andrew Field

I HAVE BEEN Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs at Duke Kunshan University for nearly two years now. Until our undergraduate degree program starts in Fall 2018, my main role is overseeing our Global Learning Semester (GLS). This program has offered many challenges and opportunities for the advancement of higher learning in China and for providing an international and China-focused educational experience to both faculty and students from all over the world. The semester-long GLS program brings undergraduate students from over 20 partner universities in China, together with international students, in a liberal-arts style program at DKU. In addition to our Duke faculty who come to Kunshan to teach, we have a small team of DKU faculty who teach language and writing courses. Most of our Chinese students choose our Academic Writing course, which involves intensive training in US-style academic writing.

The first challenge that I faced when starting as Associate Dean, was to ensure that the processes of selecting courses and faculty, approving syllabi, and orienting our faculty all go smoothly. All the courses and syllabi for our GLS program are vetted and pre-approved by a committee of Duke faculty and are added to the Duke course catalog. Since our courses

involve teaching many students for whom English is a foreign language, we have to ensure that the courses for our GLS program account for the different learning environment at DKU (opposed to Duke), while still maintaining the high quality of Duke courses, especially because our GLS program courses are awarded Duke credits.

In addition to running a Duke-quality program, taught mainly by Duke faculty in Kunshan, we also face the challenge of attracting students from Duke and other universities. Attracting more American students is challenging for several reasons: Duke students have to meet their major course requirements and other distribution requirements; and US students have the choice of many programs in China, some that are located in more well-known cities than Kunshan. Instituting a Kunshan Innovation Scholarship starting in spring 2017 has helped to attract more students from the USA, including students from liberal arts colleges that do not have China-based programs of their own. Word of mouth has also been helpful, since most of our American students have greatly enjoyed the experience of living and studying with a largely Chinese student body in an international university setting with top-quality facilities and faculty. One of the great values of the GLS program for Chinese students is that it serves as a powerful springboard for students wishing to do graduate work abroad. Studying in an English-language Duke-quality liberal arts program greatly enhances their reading, writing, speaking and critical thinking skills, and they receive much assistance in applying to graduate schools abroad.

Despite the challenges, the GLS program has been a great success in terms of providing a high-quality academic and extracurricular educational experience for



Andrew Field with his Shanghai History students and special guest Betty Barr Wang, who spoke about her experience in a Japanese internment camp in Shanghai in the 1940s. Courtesy: Duke Kunshan University

all involved. Over 300 students have completed this program already, and we will run it for one more year before launching our 4-year degree program in fall 2018. Running this program has taught us a great deal as an institution, and this program's success has at least partially vindicated the model of providing a liberal arts higher education to a largely Chinese yet also international student body. I am very proud of our work and pleased to have helped to bring this ambitious goal to fruition.

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A student's experience of multi-cultural immersion

Xuehan (Shirley) Zhao

I COULD SPEND YEARS telling you how much I appreciate my decision to come to NYU Shanghai, but here I will share with you one aspect of my experience: multi-cultural immersion, and how it contributed to my understanding of global education. I am a Chinese national, born and raised on the Mainland, educated in key-point (*zhongdian*) public schools until Gaokao (Chinese College Entrance Exam). By studying and living with professors and fellow students from over 70 countries and even more cultural backgrounds from around the globe, I've been motivated to see things through a new lens.

Some things that I take for granted may appear novel to my non-Chinese friends. For example, I once mentioned the

legal duty of Chinese people to take care of our parents, only to be unexpectedly interrupted by an exaggerated “What?” from my non-Chinese friend. “*You break the law* if you don't support your parents? No way!” I could tell how surprised she was, and, to be honest, so was I. I didn't know how to respond to her reaction because... you know... “why would you *not* take care of your parents?” We ended up having a vigorous discussion about parent-child relationships, exchanging experiences in our own countries and bringing in various texts we had read in class on moral philosophy. Such occasions happen to me often. They surprise, excite, and inspire me and make me reexamine my world from various angles.

Being immersed in a multi-cultural environment also means being confronted with more serious differences. Sometimes my friends and I hold opposite opinions that can only be resolved by suspending the debate with “let's go and get some

food”; sometimes we joke about and mock one another's living habits. Be it a casual chat or formal discussion, we don't seek to convince others; instead, we acknowledge, understand and respect the unique positions and views that each of us holds.

I consider ‘multi-cultural immersion’ to be an essential part of a global education. For my education to be truly global, I'm not satisfied with knowing about, or touching upon, something non-Chinese. I want an immersion of variety, where I spend day and night with people of diverse backgrounds, worldviews and living styles. I'm eager to embrace the world, and am equipped with the ability and confidence to do so. Wherever on this globe I end up, I know I can and will thrive!

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A new campus as Utopia – Wenzhou-Kean University

Jennifer Marquardt



The Wenzhou-Kean campus building Courtesy: Wenzhou-Kean University

AS A SCHOLAR AND FICTION WRITER, I am interested in utopian narratives and the ways that places designed upon an ideal can influence the population that inhabits them. So it isn't surprising that I classify Wenzhou-Kean University (WKU) as a type of utopia. Our university is utopic, not in the sense that it is a perfect place, but in that our community was conceived of as a remedy to educational issues, such as China's alleged education system that tends to prioritize memorization over the development of problem-solving skills with real-world application and Chinese students' lack of preparation in developing global citizenship.

Sociologist and utopian expert Ruth Levitas writes "utopia is the expression of the desire for a better way of being or of living".¹ The utopic solution in this case is a seemingly simple one: provide a western education in a western language. Campus buzzwords are critical, creative, and English-only. Students are promised an education that builds these skills and provides preparation for further education and employment abroad. Our course curriculum is the same as that of our home campus

in New Jersey and our pedagogy emphasizes student-centered learning, a contrast to the passive learning of power point-centered lectures that most Chinese students are used to. But these are only superficial techniques emerging from a larger, philosophical desire to shift the student from a consumer of knowledge to a producer of it.

Like traditional utopias, ours is rather isolated, situated at the foot of a mountain in the outskirts of Wenzhou, a city that has incorporated western business models and is known for its economic and industrial development, but is slow to accommodate western culture. This can be limiting; unlike Tier 1 cities that host a large population of foreign experts, our students' access to English-speakers is restricted to those they find on campus. But the isolation of the campus is also one of the benefits. It is a blank slate where what is needed can be created. When students and faculty expressed the desire for coffee and a café-culture, rather than ask the canteen to provide coffee we invited students to submit business proposals for coffee shops. The winning team now operates Social Dog, a coffee shop on the fifth floor of our campus building and where they know just how I like my Americano. Similarly, we recognized the need for heightened verbal interaction and built the necessary elements into our introductory speaking courses. Groups of students interrupt classes (with an ok beforehand from the professor) to shout a line or two of poetry or a song. We term this 'song

bombing' (my personal preference is to be 'bombed' with lines of Whitman). This can get competitive, with classes keeping records of who 'owes' who. The process may seem purely ludic, but it incorporates the elements of gamification, a growing field in western education. Students are not only practicing pronunciation, they are developing identities as proactive members of a community.

Developing more sophisticated levels of interaction, WKU has worked to make debate central to our campus culture. Fostering the students' debating skills increases participation and builds analytical skills. Students who were once shy now argue aggressively and persuasively with one another – and sometimes their professors. While aggression may not always be desirable, it is an overcorrection that will eventually balance out. More importantly, this willingness to engage is a mark of the successful global personality that our students desire to embody.

This atmosphere of engagement has developed further community-building. While faculty and staff organize lectures and activities, students have developed a debate club, a salon society, a finance club, and a host of other clubs as well as a media club to document and celebrate these clubs and their accomplishments. They are no longer passive observers, but people who shout lines of Whitman or Szymborska to one another, debate me in the hallway, and who are capable designers of the space they inhabit now and the spaces they will inhabit in the future.

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The Global University model – NYU Shanghai

Joanna Waley-Cohen

NYU SHANGHAI is a research university that includes a comprehensive four-year liberal arts and sciences education. It rests on the premise that, in the 21st century, active and substantive internationalization of learning is crucially important if we are to fulfill our commitment as educators. The city of Shanghai and the new business district of Pudong invited NYU to create the first Sino-US joint venture in higher education, in partnership with East China Normal University (ECNU), with a view to offering a possible model for the transformation of higher education in China. So NYU agreed to plant its third degree-granting campus (after New York and Abu Dhabi) in this rising global city, with the mission of uniting the intellectual resources of NYU with the multi-dimensional richness of China. From whole cloth it created a university with a highly international faculty; a university where research is peer-driven, not directed from the top down; where the curriculum is dynamically geared to our changing world; and where students learn in deep and lasting ways to become effective in a multicultural setting.

An NYU Shanghai education operates on the premise that the world of higher education has changed in the past half century as the result of three major phenomena, namely: the revolution in information and communications technology; the 'new machine age' in which machines do many of the tasks formerly performed by humans; and globalization. A broad and deep liberal education of the old-fashioned kind remains important, but is no longer enough. Today young people need to develop in three incredibly important areas: 1) they need to become completely at home with the tools of the new information and communications technology including developing a basic understanding of algorithmic thinking; 2) their education needs to create the conditions in which creativity, humans' leading edge, can take place, a creativity that requires imagination and often is the outcome of connecting things that are seemingly quite disparate, hence the need for students to gain a broad range of experiences; and 3) they need to learn how to work effectively with people from different cultures in order to function optimally in our globalized world.

At NYU Shanghai half of the student body is Chinese and the other half comes from over sixty countries around the world. Non-native speakers of Chinese must learn Chinese to at least an intermediate level, and non-native speakers of English must learn to communicate effectively in spoken and written English, so that everyone graduates with bilingual capability. Students take a range of courses in social sciences, humanities, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math), and have the opportunity to explore new interests, so that when the time comes they can choose majors that spark their passions. Every student spends at least one semester studying elsewhere in the world.

Beyond the classroom, in what may be the most educational experience of all, every Chinese student has a non-Chinese roommate and vice versa. Our first cohort of students will graduate in 2017; many have already found jobs in China and internationally, gained admittance to top quality graduate and professional schools such as Harvard and Cambridge, and won prestigious international fellowships such as the Schwarzman Scholarship. The NYU Shanghai project presents great opportunities and great challenges, which sometimes seem almost to mirror one another. One major opportunity is, of course, redesigning a liberal arts education for the 21st century, along the lines outlined above. Moreover an institution without entrenched traditions is more likely to be able to nimbly adjust as needs surface, yet starting a new university inevitably involves missteps; it also can be challenging to convince skeptics, particularly with the demand for a more obviously instrumentalist approach. We have the opportunity to learn by doing what true multicultural effectiveness means in education, in the workplace, and in life experiences more generally, and this is just as true for faculty and staff as it is for students. We have the opportunity to make a difference in China, in both individual and institutional terms. For those of us whose professional lives have been bound up in China one way or another, it can be deeply rewarding to participate in China's extraordinary transformation.

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Students working on their projects in the IMA (Interactive Media and Arts) lab. Courtesy: NYU Shanghai

'The man with the key is not here' – Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

David Goodman

I'M AN ACADEMIC WORKING on social and political change in China. With the dramatic changes after 1978, I increasingly came to think that there would be an advantage in having students learn about China, as well as learning Chinese in China. The approach is one of the lived China experience. At the same time, for myself and other academics, there are advantages to be had from living, working, and conducting research in China. The opportunity to experiment with these ideas came in 2013 when I was invited to help develop a Department of China Studies at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) in Suzhou.

XJTLU is a Joint Venture University (Xi'an Jiaotong University and University of Liverpool are the parents) located in Suzhou Industrial Park, to the east of the old city of Suzhou. Currently there are about 9,500 domestic Chinese students and 610 international students enrolled in 35 undergraduate degree programs and 27 postgraduate coursework programs. Teaching Chinese students in China is great fun. The students are enthusiastic and engaged, determined to succeed. Of course, their approach to China Studies is different to their international peers, not least because of schooling and socialisation. This difference sometimes makes for unnecessary gaps in the learning environment, in both directions, which the department has to provide through short courses and additional activities.

Working in China is of course not without its challenges. Many people outside China, even some of those who have been there in the past, assume that we have no academic freedom, that we are constrained in what we can teach or research, or even that we are told what to do and how to do it. On the whole, such problems are minimal. Of that kind the only real problem is that book suppliers will sometimes act on the side of caution if asked to provide a book to the Library or students. Fear of getting into trouble is their motivator, sometimes without any reasonable basis of thought. I was recently stopped from importing a Chinese language version of Mao Zedong's commentaries on literature and art. It was a book originally published openly in China, where it had been purchased. I am still trying to work out why importation was not permitted.

More serious are the problems of living and working in a society developing from a radically different social system, by importing some of the technologies and practices from elsewhere. As all our students know, mobile phone usage and Internet access require VPN installation. Luckily the market demand is well met by Chinese providers. Office administrative practice usually fails to keep up with the speed of change: functions in the workplace most usually stop when someone with a specific task is on leave or is sick; there is little client service mentality. In the 1970s when I first lived in China we used to talk about "the man with the key is not here" – the phenomenon of the lack of access to something when a request was made. These days it's "I'm sorry, my colleague whose responsibility to approve your emergency need for a replacement computer is away for two weeks."

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