

Internationalizing Chinese Higher Education Institutions

by

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Abstract

In this qualitative case study, I explored how internationalization is interpreted at a higher education institution in Shanghai, China. By using a theoretical framework containing Knight's (2004) model, Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) concept of 'Glo-nal', and Tierney's (1998) academic culture, I attempted to answer three main research questions: How is internationalization interpreted at the national level, in terms of strategies, approaches, and rationales? How is internationalization interpreted at the institutional level, in terms of activities and rationales? At the core of the internationalization of higher education in China lies potential academic cultural clashes. How is this clash manifested, and how is this clash addressed at the institutional level?

This study took place at School of Economics, Pacific University in China. Data collection took place from late March through mid-April 2011 using a strategic sample of participants including domestically trained scholars, returnee scholars, and senior administrators in the school. Data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews and document collection. Interviews were conducted in Mandarin and were digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically.

The findings of this study suggest that internationalization of higher education has taken a narrow and pragmatic approach in China's national policy level: internationalization is treated as a means to achieve national goals in technology innovation and creativity, and economic competitiveness through building world-class universities. However, there is a lack of well-articulated strategies of how to achieve the world-class university status. The absence of concrete strategies imposed from the

national level does make room for suitable strategies and activities at the institutional level internationalization process. The case study institution has developed a set of strategies for internationalization, including overseas recruiting and strengthening academic environment, curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality, emphasis on research and intensifying academic exchange. Nevertheless, true internationalization does not come easily. A lack of collegial academic culture is shown at the case study institution between the domestically trained faculty and returnee scholars. From a macro perspective, this study also indicates a frequent interaction among the local, national, and global levels during the process of internationalizing a Chinese higher education institution.

Preface

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CHAPTER 1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of the problem

In the last two decades, the internationalization of higher education in China has been an important element of national policy and has taken a different form than in the West. By heavily investing in a small group of universities with the potential to become world-class research universities, the Chinese government has linked the transformation of higher education closely to the need of upgrading the nation's science and technology, and therefore to the building of an economy that relies on innovation rather than imitation (Li, Whalley, Zhang, Xiliang, & Str, 2008). However, in the West, internationalization is considered as “integrating international, intercultural, or global dimension into post-secondary education” rather than a means to achieve economic goals (Knight, 2004). Given the contrasting rationales, a framework constructed to understand the internationalization of higher education based on American or European experiences may not be adequate for the Chinese context.

Special attention needs to be paid to the different situations Chinese higher education faces in internationalization. For instance, Chinese higher education institutions face unique challenges. Mok (2002) observes that despite various policies of decentralization, Chinese higher education institutions still face a tough state whose role as a regulator and overall coordinator has been strengthened rather than weakened. Therefore, compared to their Western peers, as Altbach (2010) argues, institutions in China have little self-governance and strong governmental bureaucratic controls. This has put Chinese higher education institutions into a situation different from that in the West.

On the one hand, universities in China, especially top-tier ones are now financially capable to initiate reforms toward internationalization, such as large-scale recruitment of overseas-trained Chinese scholars, due to China's economic development over the past three decades. On the other hand, limited autonomy may constrain the scope of internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions.

Moreover, the potential clashes between domestic and foreign higher education cultures and practices needs to be addressed. To be specific, as pointed out by Altbach (2004), internationalization of higher education is an unequal process, because powerful Western higher education institutions mainly control the process and set the norms, whereas institutions and systems with fewer resources and lower academic standards in countries like China have been left in the follower's positions. Under this situation, conflict between domestic and Western educational cultures and practices become inevitable when one tries to marry the two. Therefore, the potential clash of academic cultures deserves due attention in understanding the internationalization of higher education in a non-Western context.

Realizing and addressing these differences will not only benefit higher educational policy-making in China, but also will be informative to individual institutions in their practices of internationalization.

1.2 Purpose of the study and research questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Chinese universities navigate their ways through internationalization, facing both the opportunities posed by shifts in China's higher education policy as well as remaining constraints derived from China's

higher education system. It intends to explore the strategies, approaches and rationales of the internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions, and pays special attention to how Chinese higher education institutions would address the potential clashes of academic cultures in their internationalization process. I chose the School of Economics at Pacific University (SOE)¹ as a case to study this issue. To be specific, the study attempts to answer two main questions:

1. How is internationalization interpreted at the national level, in terms of strategies, approaches, and rationales?
2. How is internationalization interpreted at the institutional level, in terms of activities and rationales?
3. At the core of the internationalization of higher education in China lies potential academic cultural clashes. How is this clash manifested, and how is this clash addressed at the institutional level?

1.3 Positionality

My interest and views on the internationalization of Chinese higher education are shaped by my experience. I was a university student and also a graduate school in China prior to my studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

Through these experiences I appreciate that internationalization of higher education does not come easy. As an international student at UBC I expected more international content in the curriculum and in the overall academic environment. I

¹ Pseudonyms are used throughout for the names of higher education institutions.

realized that this was quite challenging for faculty, particularly those without an international background.

Given my own academic background, the class experience itself was challenging. I was used to a passive learning environment and found instead an active setting for the presentation and discussion of material in my UBC classes. Moreover, international students have a lot to offer in class discussion but due to their more passive learning backgrounds feel less comfortable exchanging ideas within the classroom. This suggests a challenge for faculty in international settings: to create active learning experiences which are conducive to discussion for students from a wide variety of higher education backgrounds.

This experience in Canada helps me to better evaluate the difficulties of internationalization in China. Many of the faculty do not have adequate experiences outside of China and thus are challenged to provide an international context and broader content for their courses.

One remedy, of course, is to hire faculty trained abroad to provide this perspective. But this sets up the academic culture conflict that is the focus of this thesis.

The conflict arises in a couple of ways. First, there is the content of Economics, which differs between the East and the West. Second, there is the nature of training. In the West, students are trained to be critical thinkers, but not in China. These are two examples of the types of conflicts I have appreciated through my educational experiences in the East and the West.

1.4 Significance of the study

The current research on internationalization of higher education is fragmented, primarily based on American and European experiences (Yang, 2002). Even those studies on Chinese higher education institutions focus almost exclusively on the post-1949 era and prior to 2000, a time period when the scope of the internationalization activities was limited to few scholarly exchanges (Yang, 2002). Later studies focus on a rather macro perspective, mostly from looking at the national level (e.g. Liu, Cheng, Liu, & Zhao, 2002; N. Liu, Liu, Cheng, & Wan, 2003; Pan & Xiao, 2008; Chen & Pan, 2009; Tam & Chen, 2010) with a lack of speculation at the institutional level practices.

With the fast changing landscape of Chinese higher education over the past two decades, this study will be a timely investigation of the recent understandings and practices of internationalization at Chinese higher education institutions. Moreover, with its special focus on SOE, one of the first social science schools in China to initiate radical reforms since 2004 by recruiting overseas trained scholars and adopting a number of other strategies, this study adds the voice of the locally trained people and of those from the West to the debate of the internationalization in China. In doing so, this study not only fills the current gap in the empirical study on internationalization of higher education in China, but also will be instructive to SOE's peers in China, as well as to other higher education institutions that face the similar situations in a non-western higher education context.

1.5 Organization of the thesis

This introductory chapter outlines the main components of the study: statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, and significance. Chapter Two is a review of the literature which is divided in two sections. In the first section, I review higher education development in the 20th century China, mainly drawing on Hayhoe (1996) to provide a historical background of higher education in China, and then examine discussions including critics on the most recent higher educational policies changes with an emphasis of promoting elite universities and a dimension of internationalization. The first section also examines the empirical studies on the internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions, drawing mainly on Yang (2002)'s work on a few universities in Guangdong, one of the most outward-looking regions in China. In the second section, differing theories are employed to help me construct a theoretical framework for my study, including Knight's (2004) internationalization model, Marginson and Rhoades (2002)'s Global-National-Local agency heuristic, Tierney (1998)'s framework on academic culture in higher education settings, and Pan and Chen (2005)'s critiques on dependency theory and discussion on independent innovation of China's higher education when introducing a Western educational model. In Chapter Three, I describe the research methodology based on my ontological and epistemological positions, and my rationale for choosing a qualitative case study approach, which utilizes a series of semi-structured interviews coupled with document collection as the main method for data collection. The methodology also discusses logistical and ethical issues, and limitations of the study. Chapter Four and Five present the core findings of the research, which are organized according to the research questions of the study. Chapter

Four discusses findings derived from analyzing the national higher education policy texts from 1985 to 2011, which attempts to address the first research question (internationalization interpreted at the national policy level). Chapter Five presents findings related to the second and third research questions (internationalization and academic culture clash at the institutional level) and discusses these findings in light of theoretical frameworks utilized in this study. In the last chapter, highlights from the findings, the current perceptions of internationalization among Chinese higher education practitioners and the interaction among glo-nal-cal are emphasized. Recommendations for institutional initiatives as well as for future research on internationalization are given based on this case study.

CHAPTER 2 Context and Review of Related Literature

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section include three subsections: (1) The description of higher education development in the 20th Century China is intended to provide a historical account of the founding of modern higher education in China. (2) The recent higher education policy in China provides a general picture of China's most recent policy shift and critics of it. (3) Empirical studies on internationalization at the institutional level of Chinese universities are scarce. Yang's (2002) case studies on several universities provide precious literature in this respect. It also makes it possible for me to compare with my findings later on. Therefore, the first section of this chapter establishes the social, historical and empirical foundation for understanding the most recent development in internationalization of higher education in China.

The second section draws upon both Western and Chinese theoretical frameworks in understanding the internationalization, including Knight's (2004) internationalization model, Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) Global-National-Local agency Heuristic, Tierney's (1998) framework on academic culture in higher education settings, and Pan and Chen's (2005) critiques on dependency theory and discussion on independent innovation of China's higher education when introducing Western educational model over the last more than one hundred years.

Section I. Higher education in China

2.1 Higher education development in the 20th Century China

In order to analyze the current Chinese national higher education policy related to the internationalization and to better understand the fervent embracing of world-class

standards, I think it is not enough to only focus on what is happening currently. It is necessary to take a look at the higher education history and development in the 20th century China in order to understand the social and political contexts within which the higher education system today was formed.

Higher education in the Western sense in China did not start until 1895 (Pan, 1997; Pan & Xiao, 2008). Previously the imperial academies were the closest ones to the modern sense of higher learning institutions (Hayhoe, 1996). However, back then, higher education circles confined their dissemination of knowledge to the provincial level and remained isolated from the rest of the world, and these institutions lacked a liberal arts tradition and autonomy to decide their own directions (Yang, Vidovich, & Currie, 2007).

With the collapse of the imperialism at the junction of the 19th and 20th century, China moved away from a Sino-centered worldview to gradually accept the West-centered worldwide development (Hsü, 2000). Reformers suggested that Western instructors be invited into Chinese institutions. According to Bastid, by 1905, normal and vocational schools were established, and students were sent abroad for training, mainly to Japan, the United States and Europe (Yang et al., 2007).

The first half of the 20th century saw a great opportunity for the development of China's higher education. China's returnee scholars, including Cai Yuanpei, the first minister of education of the Republican China and the most important founder of China's modern higher education, from Western countries as well as Japan largely contributed to the debate and practices in establishing modern universities in China. Coupled with the lack of central government from 1911 to 1927, the Chinese university achieved the Western sense of autonomy and academic freedom (Hayhoe, 1996). According to

Hayhoe (1996), during the Republican Era (1912 – 1949), Chinese universities continued to develop into mature institutions, striving for a balance between a Chinese identity and the ability to link with universities in other parts of the world.

However, after 1949, under the strong influence of the Soviet Union, great tensions were seen in the development of higher education. The focus of development became establishing a highly centralized national system. Along with the emphasis on technical education and the introduction of a unified set of plans for student enrolments, job assignments and curriculum content, the academic autonomy and freedom established in the previous era were destroyed.

The Great Leap Forward (1958 - 1966) and the Cultural Revolution (1966 -1976) destroyed China's higher education even further. The post-Mao era saw a more rational, economic-oriented path in China's social development. This pragmatic mentality highly influenced the development of China's higher education system on its way to revive the old system with the residue of foreign models (Yang et al., 2007).

So the 20th century witnessed China's higher education being founded and influenced by Japanese, German, French and Soviet models as well as marred by political turmoil. After the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which almost destroyed China's entire higher education system, higher education in China was in a situation where it needed to make strides to catch up its Western peers while struggling to maintain its Chinese identity (Chen, Pan, & Liu, 2007).

2.2 Higher education policy in China, 1985 - 2011

The term “internationalization of higher education” had become popular in public discourses as early as 1983 when Deng Xiaoping posed “Three-Oriented” education

concept, one of which was education being “internationally oriented”. However, the internationalization of higher education was not included at China’s national policy level until the 1990s.

This section mainly analyzes China’s higher education policy changes from 1985 to 2011. I divided this time span into three periods, 1985-1993, 1993-2010, 2010-2011, marking periods of higher educational policy changes that focused on: 1) “meeting the needs of economic and social development” to 2) developing “key universities, disciplines” and “world-class universities”, and eventually to 3) some dimension of “internationalization”. The findings are therefore presented according to the same chronological order. It shows that China’s higher education policy is directly linked with its desire to develop and transform its economy. This theme has not changed much over the time span that I examined. The internationalization is rather a tool to enhance its higher education quality and international competitiveness. The latest policy has some dimension of intercultural exchange, yet it serves a rather pragmatic purpose, to promote Chinese culture. This discussion also reveals that China’s national policy with regard to internationalization of higher education could only be seen as a macro-plan; it did not provide any concrete strategy.

2.2.1 Meeting the needs of economic and social development

The Decision on the Reform of the Educational System was issued by the CCPPCC (Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) in 1985. This educational policy was born at the time when China abandoned the planned economy and adopted the so-called commodity economy. It was also a time when there was a heated debate about the relationship between higher education and a commodity economy.

Higher education itself was adapting from a model heavily affected by the Soviet-style specialist training to one that would allow some flexibility. The *Decision* posed that “education must serve the building of socialist society and socialist construction must rely on education”. This also set the tone for the development of higher education in the following decades. According to the text of CCPCC’s Decision in May 1985,

The key to success in the reform of the higher educational system is to transform the management system of excessive government control over the institutions of higher education, expand the autonomy of institutions under the guidance of the state’s unified educational policies and plans, strength the links between institutions of higher education and production organizations, scientific research organizations, and other social sectors, and enable the institutions of higher education to take the initiative to meet the needs of economic and social development (Ministry of Education, 1985).

The Decision on the Reform of the Educational System did bring fundamental changes to the higher education system: it allowed a certain degree of autonomy and freedom regarding curriculum, admission of students, etc.; it allowed the diversification of institutional types; it also allowed both vertical and horizontal governance coordinated at central, provincial, and municipal levels. However, by stating that “to take the initiative to meet the needs of economic and social development”, it firmly set the direction for the higher education development in the years to come. The tie between higher education and the nation’s economic performance became more and more apparent thereafter (Wang, 2010).

2.2.2 From “key universities” to “world-class universities”

The initiation of *Project 211* and *Project 985* has strengthened the tie between higher education and the nation’s economic growth. *Project 211*, a priority-funding policy that channels extra money to the nation’s top universities, was first announced in 1993, and implemented in 1995 (Yang & Welch, 2011). According to the text of *Outline of the national education reform and development* issued by the CCPCCC and the State Council in February 1993,

In order to meet the challenges derived from the worldwide new technological revolution, we should centralize resources from both central and local governments to build 100 key universities and a number of key disciplines and fields. The goal is to achieve a higher international stature by the beginning of the next century in such areas as education quality, scientific research, and management. Science and technology research in higher education institutions should keep in line with the national policy on the development of science and technology, adhere to the belief that “science and technology constitute a primary productive force”, to the focus of economic development, and to persisting in the integral of teaching and research (CPCCC & State Council, 1993).

Since the implementation of the *Outline* in 1993, approximately 100 universities (*211 Project*) have been approved to receive additional funding to improve facilities and curricula. Particular emphasis has been placed on programs that will positively affect the country’s social and economic development, scientific and technological advancement and national defense system (Yang & Welch, 2011). This can be seen as China’s reaction to the so-called new technological revolution in 1990s. “Science and technology” became

the focus of this policy text, with no mention of social science and humanities at all. By stating that “science and technology constitute a primary productive force”, from the national educational policy level, the development of science and technology disciplines has been connected directly with the nation’s economic development. The *Outline* therefore has led a pragmatic and unbalanced direction for the higher educational reform and development in China. If there was any mention of the internationalization of higher education, it would be the vague term of “a higher international stature”, which did not provide any definition or criteria.

Project 985, first announced in 1998, was another state-initiative to more heavily concentrate central and local resources in a smaller number of universities with the potential to enter the world-class university league (N. Liu et al., 2003; Wang, 2010). The first phase of the *Project 985* was introduced in the *Action Plan for Invigorating Education in the 21st Century*, issued by the Ministry of Education in December 1998. According to the policy text of the *Action Plan*,

In order to achieve modernization, China must have a number of world-class universities. To do so, we need to concentrate the limited national financial resources, motivate the enthusiasm of many, start from several key disciplines, and increase the investment in a small number of higher education institutions and key disciplines with the potential to achieve international standards. The goal is to have a number of universities and key disciplines to achieve world-class status in the next ten to twenty years. (Ministry of Education, 1998)

The second phase of the *Project 985* was launched in 2004, with the intention to

continue the success from the first phase of the Project along with the recognition of the time-commitment of building the world-class universities (Ministry of Education & Ministry of Finance, 2004). According to the policy text of *the Advice on the Continuation of the "985 Project"*,

Our primary aim is to build a number of world-class universities and a few world-renowned research-intensive universities, and to reform our current management system of higher education institutions, firmly gripping the opportunities posed in the first 20 years of the 21st century. We should concentrate our resources, focus on key universities and disciplines, adhere to the great-leap development, and develop a model with Chinese characteristics for building world-class universities. We should also aim at the world advanced level and the major national demands, enhance the country's core competitiveness, resolve the emerging problems in the nation-building, through "985 Project" to contribute significantly to a moderately prosperous society. (Ministry of Education & Ministry of Finance, 2004)

Therefore, from *Project 211* to *Project 985*, China's national higher educational policy focus have moved from "a higher international stature" to "world-class", from "key universities" to "a small number of higher education institutions and key disciplines with the potential to achieve world-class status". "Adhering to the great-leap development" has shown a mentality that "instant success" can be created by choosing a small number of universities for intensive development and substantial investment.

Yet the policy which introduces the second phase of the *Project 985* has some discussion of development of disciplines other than science and technology.

Focus on building a number of *Project 985* Innovation Platforms and the *Project 985* of Philosophy and Social Science innovation Programs, to promote the formation of a group of world-class disciplines and to promote the development of these disciplines. (Ministry of Education & Ministry of Finance, 2004)

The theme of “internationalization” also became visible in this policy, as seen in the passage below.

International exchange and cooperation is conducive to building an international academic exchange and collaborative research environment. Therefore, we should hire world-renowned scholars to give lectures, cooperative research, carry out substantive collaboration with world-class universities or institutions, establish joint training of high-level talents and research institutions, initiate high-level international cooperative research projects, hold international academic conferences, and attract more international students to in Chinese higher education institutions, *to promote the internationalization of higher education in China*. (Ministry of Education & Ministry of Finance, 2004; emphasis added)

So this period still saw a strong pragmatism that was abundant in the national higher education policy. Focal attention was paid to science and technology, which was seen as vital for the economic development of the country. This is consistent with what Chen (2006) observes, the state-initiatives like *Project 211* and *Project 985* are not out of nowhere; they are always consistent with other macro-national policies on economy, science and technology development.

This period can also be considered as the actual starting point for the internationalization of China’s higher education. By setting up the goal to achieve world-

class university status, although there was no clear definition or criteria about the world-class university, the national higher education policies have directed Chinese universities to look beyond the scope of China, but to measure up to their Western counterparts. As Marginson (2006) indicates, top Chinese universities no longer compete just between themselves; they are now embracing a larger international sense of themselves.

2.2.3 Internationalization

The *Outline of the National Medium- and Long-Term Program for Education Reform and Development, 2010 – 2020* issued in 2010 by the Ministry of Education was seen as trying to address the issues that many academics and government officials in China have been crying out for years: that the country's education system is outmoded, overstretched, and ill-equipped to train its citizens for the 21st century (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2010). The *Outline* stressed the need for better teaching and research, greater diversity in what is taught at universities, and closing the quality gap between rich and poor universities.

However, the plan still keeps in line with previous policy--namely, that higher education institutions should serve economic and social development through science and technology innovation (Ministry of Education, 2010). According to the policy text of the *Outline*,

Higher education institutions undertake the responsibilities of training highly qualified specialists, developing science, technology and culture, and improving the nation's socialist modernization. Improving the quality lies at the core of higher education development, and it is the basic requirement for China's to become a higher education powerhouse. Therefore, by 2020, the structure of

higher education system should be more efficient; the characteristics are more distinctive, talents training, scientific research and societal service should be more advanced; we should have a number of internationally renowned, high-level higher education institutions, and a number of universities close to world-class level; and the nation's international higher education competitiveness should be significantly enhanced. (Ministry of Education, 2010)

Although the theme of “internationalization” became more obvious and more specific international academic exchange activities were talked about as in the above text, internationalization was seen as a means to “improve the quality” of China's higher education, to enable China to become “a powerhouse”.

As Yang and Welch (2011) comment, “China's ambitions remain undimmed, and its sense of urgency as great as ever” (p.3). Along with the word “accelerate” that was used so many times in such a short paragraph below, an urgency from China's national leaders wanting to copy the country's fast economic-success model to its higher education sector becomes apparent.

Accelerate the construction of first-class universities and world-class disciplines. Focusing on the building of key disciplines, continue to implement “985 Project” and Advantageous Discipline Innovation Platform project, continue to implement “211 Project”.

Accelerate the pace of building world-class universities and high level universities, train a number of top-notch creative talents, form a group of world-class disciplines, conduct world's leading original research, and therefore

contribute to enhancing China's comprehensive national strength. (Ministry of Education, 2010)

The tone became more urgent in Hu Jintao's (the current president of China) speech during Tsinghua University's 100th anniversary in April 2011. Chinese presidents' speeches are always treated as official documents as they point out directions for future development. Hu's speech at Tsinghua was no exception, mentioning the quality of higher education in China and its relationship with social and economic development. According the text of this document,

In order to promote the social and economic development better and faster, and in order to realize the great rejuvenation of Chinese nation, science and technology is the key, top-notch talent is the core, and education is the foundation. Higher education institutions should improve the quality of higher education, and consider this as the most urgent task, therefore to improve the modern higher education institution system with Chinese characteristics. (Hu, 2011)

Furthermore, Hu gave guidelines concerning how to improve the quality of higher education in China:

In order to comprehensively improve the quality of higher education, we must strive to enhance our scientific research capacity. Higher education institutions must actively adapt themselves to meet the needs from economic and social development, conduct strategic research to meet the needs from the nation's development, conduct prospective research in cutting-edge fields of science and

technology, and involve in public non-profit research concerning major welfare issues.

In order to comprehensively improve the quality of higher education, institutions must vigorously serve the nation's economic and social development. Expedite the transformation of scientific and technological achievements into industrial production, and transform "Made in China" into "Created by China".

In order to comprehensively improve the quality of higher education, we must vigorously promote the cultural heritage and innovation. Higher education institutions should actively participate in cultural exchange, acknowledge the cultural and technological trends in other countries, make known the higher education development in contemporary China, and enhance China's cultural soft power and international influence of Chinese culture. (Hu, 2011)

In Hu's speech, the task of transforming China's economy from one relies on cheap labor to one that drives by innovation has been directly linked with higher education; promoting cultural exchange during internationalization activities was seen as a means to enhance China's soft power. The direction Hu's speech has led to is not only pragmatic, but also too much one-sided, focusing too much on translating the research capacity of higher education into industrial productivity, without any consideration of student's development or teacher's development.

2.2.4 Commentary on China's national approach of internationalization

Overall, this period's pragmatic policy orientation can be seen as China's reaction to the pressure from competition with its Western counterparts in the more globalized world. It happened after China had kept a high economic growth for more than a decade.

Along with the worldwide emphasis on the knowledge economy, higher education institutions in China today have also been closely linked with economic innovation and creativity (Peters, 2001; Peters, Marginson, & Murphy, 2009). The importance of higher education institutions becoming powerhouses for innovation and creation has thus been exacerbated. Therefore, believing that first-class universities increasingly reflect a nation's overall power, the Chinese government has fervently embraced the international norms, not only to improve China's higher education quality, but also to elevate the comprehensive competitiveness of the nation eventually. Internationalization has been treated as a means to achieve these goals.

Moreover, these policies did point out a different frame of reference for Chinese universities, especially the elite ones, however, none of these policies give concrete strategies for how to achieve the world-class standard, except pouring money into to a small number of universities. The consequence of the recent policies definitely is worth a wider range of scholarly investigation and discussion.

China's national approach of internationalization strongly embodies the characteristics defined in Marginson's (2010) Confucian Model of higher education derived from his study on systems of Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong China, Taiwan, Singapore and Vietnam. Especially two features of the Confucian Model are highlighted in China's internationalization strategy: (1) strong nation-state shaping of structures, funding and priorities, and (2) accelerated public investment in research and world-class universities (p.587). China's national government plays a stronger role in setting up educational and research priorities than in the English-speaking systems and most

Western Europe. As Marginson states, Chinese higher education, like other Confucian Model systems, faces the challenges of “developing both educational participation and research quantity at the same time, while also improving the quality of the leading institutions and research”; therefore efficiency becomes the priority on the policy agenda. This strategy works in the short run as it lifts the global position of China’s top higher education institutions, especially in the sciences and technology. However, in the long run, strong nation-state steering and control hinders academic creativity.

But interestingly Marginson (2010) observes that there are “feisty academic cultures in many places, with free constructive criticism of government policy” (p. 606). Therefore he speculates that the academic creativity of Chinese universities is not killed by the government control, but rather by the “limits on communicative freedom in the civic environment outside the universities, particularly in relation to social and policy issues, the humanities and the arts” (p. 607).

2.3 Empirical studies on the internationalization of higher education in China

Prior to 2000, Yang is one of very few scholars working on the topic of higher education internationalization China. His study on internationalization at three different types of universities in Guangzhou (one of China’s most dynamic and outward-looking regions) provides valuable background regarding the internationalization of higher education institutions in China between the early 1980s and 2000. His major findings are discussed below.

First, based on his aggregated survey among faculty and staff from 17 universities in Guangzhou, Yang (2002) finds that due to the traditional paternalism of Chinese society and strict governmental control on higher education practices, there was a lack of

initiative towards internationalization. Moreover, understandings of internationalization revealed from the survey were rather narrow, as only international activities or exchange programs were seen as internationalization. As well, an overwhelming majority of the academics thought it was administrators who should play the most fundamental part in the process of internationalization (Yang, 2002, p. 97).

From the case study of a provincial university in Guangzhou, Yang (2002) then recognizes that provincial institutions, if not key research universities highly invested by central government, are fundamentally restricted by local conditions, including financial resources, university members' perspective, and the institution's role within the national higher education system (Yang, 2002, p. 111).

His next finding is based on a case study of a university of technology in Guangzhou. Owing to its peculiar location, at the Southern gate of China adjoining Hong Kong and Macao, this university of technology greatly benefited from Guangzhou's early lead in opening itself to the outside world and thus from the regional economic development. It not only had strong financial support from the local government to gear its teaching and research to the society, but also adopted a more open attitude towards internationalization. As Yang observes, "nearly all the interviewees emphasized that there was no fundamental conflict between international activities, and service to the local society" (Yang, 2002, p. 132).

The last case study is on a comprehensive university with a historic reputation of linking closely to the outside world. However, it failed to measure up to its strength in the past, due to the increasing competition of national/regional resources among universities. Yang then points out that "China's universities couldn't free themselves

from the general trend toward policy convergence in higher education and internationalization, thus adopting quasi-market approaches to management of higher education sector” (Yang, 2002, p. 148).

Yang’s (2002) in-depth study on internationalization realizes that contextual factors including social culture, national higher education policy, scope of self-governance, geographic features, and individual institution’s history definitely influence the process of internationalization. At the same time, Yang (2002) also points out that both China’s higher education community and Chinese government’s attitudes indicate their narrow understanding of internationalization: they primarily focus on the practical aspects, rather than understanding its broad meaning of reciprocal exchange of people, ideas, good and services between nations and cultural identities. Yang (2002) associates this narrow understanding with the Sino-centrism mentality: Chinese learning as the essence, Western learning for its utility. He criticizes that it is this deeply rooted mentality that leads to towards a particularly Chinese understanding of internationalization: as a means to achieve international standards. Yang (2002) also shows his deep concerns with the fact that very few Chinese scholars acknowledge the inconsistency between the discourse from the outside world (predominantly the West) and the development of their local universities and regional societies.

Over the past ten years, as mentioned earlier, Chinese higher educational policy has moved dramatically from supporting massification of higher education to heavily investing in a small group of universities with the potential to attain world-class university status. The national policy shifts have encouraged elite Chinese universities to actively participate in internationalization. Meanwhile, worldwide flows of technologies,

people, finance, language and ideas, especially the instantaneous transmission of data and ideas in real time, have also intensified in the past decade and accelerated the internationalization process (Castells, 2011). Internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions in this changing political, social, and economic context has shown both similarity and divergence from Yang's (2002) study. My review suggests there are four categories in the literature of internationalization of Chinese universities over the past decade: (1) intensified transnational higher education, (2) elite Chinese university's internationalization strategy, (3) internationalization of curriculum, and (4) challenges for Chinese higher education.

First, transnational higher education has been growing dramatically in China; more than 1000 programs and institutions are approved by the government from the mid-1980s to 2010 (Fang, 2011). The national higher education reforms in recent years, especially Project 985 and Project 211, are stratifying universities in China by creating a hierarchical structure of research and teaching universities. Therefore, transnational higher education is developed and perceived differently in these two categories of universities. Fang's (2011) findings indicate that for teaching universities, transnational higher education is the most active internationalization activity on campus and it is used to expand enrollment. For research universities, transnational higher education is one of the many activities on campus and its major function is to provide academic opportunities for those aspiring for advanced professional degrees (Fang, 2011).

Second, more international dimensions are added to conventional curricula offered in Chinese universities. An increasing number of universities are offering courses partially or fully taught in English, both in the undergraduate and graduate programs,

especially in the elite universities where they have teaching resources to offer such programs. More importantly, internationalization of curriculum at some Chinese universities has gone beyond just offering of bilingual programs or merely intensifying the exchanges of scholars and students. For example, conventional teacher-centered Chinese teaching model has been changing in Jiang's (2010) case study at Nanjing University in China, largely facilitated by the transformation of information and communication technology (Jiang, 2010). Another case study at the same institution provokes deeper issues concerning internationalization of curriculum in Chinese university. Wang's (2010) participatory case study on curriculum development at Nanjing University indicates that international and trans-cultural dimension of higher education does not come easy. In Wang's (2010) study, a graduate English course was designed to offer selected readings of classical works from both Eastern and Western civilizations, with a view to helping students recognize cultural differences and enhance international awareness by comparative study. Not only the course content was modified, but also the pedagogy was reoriented in a way to encourage students to think for themselves rather than to passively learn in a conventional way. However, Wang (2010) finds that this new course orientation is challenging both to teachers and students. For students, "they were used to being instructed and the heavy reading task left them little time to think over what they had read. They apparently expected my instruction and inspiration" (Wang, 2010, p.182). This situation therefore requires "tremendous commitment and enthusiasm" from the teacher in order to truly realize the international dimension of curriculum and teaching (Wang, 2010, p.187).

Despite the above review on the international dimension of curriculum, the discussion on the internationalization of curricula receives very little attention in the academic literature in the context of Chinese higher education. The scope has not gone much beyond discussion about English being the medium of instruction, or courses for intercultural communication. Even the above discussion on curriculum development only explores the field of English teaching. In general, the concept of internationalization of curriculum has not been examined in-depth in light of Chinese socio-cultural contexts, and the improvement of curriculum from international perspectives seems far behind the ideal.

Third, literature on institutional strategies of internationalization becomes abundant; yet the quality varies a lot. Yang and Welch (2011)'s case study on Tsinghua University, one of China's flagship universities, seeks to answer the question of how far Tsinghua embodies the qualities of a world-class university. It points out essential issues hindering the cultivation of world-class university in China. First is the issue of academic independence as Tsinghua has benefited significantly from the "political affiliation between Tsinghua's senior administrators, government officials and national leaders" (Yang & Welch, 2011). The second issue stems from Tsinghua's emphasis on strategic, rather than basic research. These are both important issues that the university managers should consider if they were seriously considering improving Tsinghua's international competence. Unfortunately, it seems that Yang and Welch (2011) fall short of defining what is the quality of world-class higher education and how to measure it. Another case study on Shanghai Jiaotong University published by the World Bank's most recent issue on higher education, *The Road to Academic Excellence*, is also

disappointing. It states that Shanghai Jiaotong University is “dedicated to achieving a quality standard that transcends national borders and to building itself into a world-class research and higher education institution” (Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2011, p.33). However, there is no further analysis than just a seemingly translation of the university’s strategic plan.

Finally and most importantly, challenges from globalization and from China’s own higher education system to the universities receive considerable attention from international scholars. International organizations such as OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) have been involved intensively in the research of internationalization of higher education over the past decade. Its publications on this topic acknowledge the role of China in an increasingly globalized higher education sphere (Altbach, 2010). From a comparative perspective, Altbach (2010) gives a lengthy examination of historical developments and current characteristics of Chinese and Indian higher education systems in OECD’s volume on Globalisation, *Higher Education to 2030*. With regard to China’s higher education system, valuable diagnoses are made. According to Altbach (2010), “establishing an academic culture that promotes meritocracy, honesty, and academic freedom is mandatory for a successful academic system” (Altbach, 2010, p.192). However, in China’s higher education system,

Challenge remains to embed a transparent and competitive academic culture to reward merit in hiring and promoting academics up the ranks. Petty corruption persists at some institutions, as do overly bureaucratic controls, formal and informal limitations on academic freedom, the practice of inbreeding, and other

problems. These issues hinder creating a world-class academic culture (Altbach, 2010, p.194).

Based on his analysis, Altbach predicts that it is less clear that China's higher education system will be globally competitive in the near future despite the fact that it is one of the world's largest academic systems (Altbach, 2010, p. 179).

Similarly, Zhang (2010) also points out persistent problems related to quality, equity and administration mechanisms in China's higher education system. Instead of just complaining the system is inefficient, Zhang (2010) traces the roots of these problems from a cultural and historical perspective. He states that inconsistencies in education aims, education contents, and management mechanisms result mainly from "the understanding and treatment of the relationship between globalization trends and unique Chinese traditions" (Zhang, 2010, p. 132). For example, he observes that although the tradition Chinese education was challenged since the Opium Wars (1840-42) when Western education began to emerge in China, a unified resolution was never truly reached between Western citizenship education and traditional Confucian education. He further explains that "Confucian teaching excludes any concept of justice; many generations of Chinese educators influenced by Confucius attach great importance to the Chinese sense of collectivism as a central value, which is fundamentally incompatible with the key concept of justice in citizenship education" (Zhang, 2010, p. 133). With regard to inconsistency in education contents, he states "on the one hand, the natural science subjects in universities' curricula have been structured in line with Western standards; on the other hand, humanities and social sciences have stayed very Chinese" (Zhang, 2010, p. 134). Furthermore, he points out "contradictions also exist in the

administration sector between superficial reform activities and the hidden assumptions underlying them” (Zhang, 2010, p. 135). For example, “corruption in the processes of student enrolment, infrastructure construction projects, and even international cooperation projects remains and is incurable” (Zhang, 2010, p. 135). That is why, Zhang (2010) states, “although universities have adopted the Western-style administrative and managerial organization, the methods are largely Chinese, and the outcomes are negative and ineffective” (Zhang, 2010, p. 135). Zhang also observes “the majority of Chinese officials, most ordinary people and even a significant number of intellectuals still pay attention solely to the technical side of Western civilization, with a strong belief that Chinese culture, in the mental domain at least, is absolutely superior than its Western counterpart” (Zhang, 2010, p. 136). He concludes that “unfortunately, the Chinese have not yet developed an adequate awareness of the international connection and, far from assuming a correct position and defining an identity relative to the emerging global whole, it is obvious that almost all of the international cooperative projects and programs in Chinese universities are conducted in a passive, instrumentalism-oriented way without clear objectives for cultural interaction” (Zhang, 2010, p. 135).

Zhang’s (2010) analysis is thorough and in-depth. He attributes the roots of various inconsistencies in higher education practices in China to unresolved tensions between Western education and Confucian learning since the Opium wars (1840-42). His analysis from a historical and cultural perspective helps to understand current policies and practices of China’s higher education.

Overall, the quantity of internationalization of higher education has increased substantially over the past decade on the one hand; the quality varies hugely on the other

hand. There is definitely a need of research in this field to provoke further discussion about how to address various issues arising from internationalizing China's higher education. Meanwhile, in-depth analysis of the institutional level practices needs to be conducted as more active approaches towards internationalization are taken up over the last decade. Potential culture clash between Western educational model and the Chinese is brought to the forefront. This study gives voice to both domestically trained and Western trained scholars who are experiencing the internationalization of Chinese higher education as well as academic cultural clash, if there were any.

Section II. Theoretical framework

In order to investigate the research questions from different angles, this study draws upon multiple theoretical frameworks, including Knight (2004)'s proposed internationalization model, Marginson and Rhoades's (2002) global-national-local heuristic, and Tierney's (1988) framework in understanding academic culture (as shown in Table 1).

Theoretical Frameworks Research Questions	Internationalization Model (Knight, 2004)	Glo-na-cal Heuristic (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002)	Academic Culture (Tierney, 1988)
1. National level strategies, approaches, rationales	√	√	
2. Institutional level activities, rationales	√	√	
3. Academic culture clash			√

Table 1 Theoretical framework in relation to research questions

√ indicates that theoretical framework in the column is utilized in analyzing the corresponding research question in the row.

2.4 Internationalization remodeled: definition, approaches and rationales

The international dimension of today’s higher education cannot be detached from globalization. The effects of globalization are challenging universities everywhere to radically reassess fundamental assumptions about their missions and modes of operation. With regard to the concept of globalization, I use Held and McGrew's (2003) definition that “the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of interregional flows and patterns of social interaction” (p.4). The relationship between globalization and internationalization is always complicated and confused. Scott (2000) points out that universities are challenged by globalization because of their close identification with national cultures and because of the standardization of teaching through the impact of communication and information technology and the emergence of global research cultures and networks. Knight (1997) argues that internationalization of

higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation.

Scholars have been trying to clarify the relationship between the two over the last few decades. Knight's (2003, 2004) model is the most cited framework for studying internationalization within a globalizing context. She proposes that internationalization at the national/sector/institutional levels is “the process of integration an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p.11).

She also provides clear operational definitions of the terms related to internationalization. The following are the definitions that she proposed. The term *process* is deliberately used to convey that internationalization is an ongoing and continuing effort. *International* is used in the sense of relationships between and among nations, cultures, or countries. *Intercultural* is used to address the aspects of internationalization at home. *Global* is included to provide the sense of worldwide scope. *Integrating* is used to ensure that the international dimension is central. *Purpose* refers to the overall role and objectives that postsecondary education has for a country or a region. *Function* refers to the primary elements or tasks that characterize a national postsecondary system or an individual institution. *Delivery* is the offering of education courses and programs either domestically or in other countries. Therefore, Knight establishes a conceptual framework to systematically analyze the phenomena involved in the internationalization of higher education.

The definitions provided by Knight (2003, 2004) recognizes that internationalization of higher education can take place at the national, sectoral, and

institutional levels, either independently as the case is in some countries or in an integrated manner as in other countries. Knight points out that national policies on foreign relations, development assistance, trade, immigration, employment, science and technology, culture and heritage, education, social development, industry and commerce, and others have direct implications on the internationalization of higher education at the sector or institutional level. Various academic mobility programs or international research initiatives are devised and implemented as policy instruments. At the sector level, as Knight indicates, all the policies that relate to the purpose, licensing, accreditation, funding, curriculum, teaching, research, and regulation of postsecondary education have a direct bearing on the internationalization of higher education. At institutional level, Knight notices that individual institutions would take up international strategies to respond to policies and programs implemented at the national and the sector levels. Thus the term *internationalization strategy* is used to include the idea of more planning, integration and strategic thinking.

Knight also describes the classical rationales that have driven internationalization of higher education in the following four groups: social/cultural, political, academic, and economic. To be more specific, at the national level, human resources development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, national building, and social and cultural development are listed as main rationales. At institutional level, international profile and reputation, student and staff development, income generation, strategic alliances, research and knowledge production are the ones that drive the internationalization of higher education.

Knight's framework seems quite inclusive, in that it almost covers all aspect of activities one can relate with the international dimension of higher education, and it considers a wide range of driving forces of the internationalization. However, it is still useful to examine whether there are differences or similarities between the Chinese practices and what is included in Knight's (2004) framework based on Western practices.

2.5 Global-National-Local agency heuristic

Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) 'glonacal agency' heuristic is also a prevailing model to look at the international dimension of higher education in a context of globalization. To analyze the global, national and local interactions of higher education policies and practices, Marginson and Rhoades draw a picture of their heuristic as a set of interconnected hexagons in three-dimensional space that form a constellation of agencies and agency. The 'glonacal agency' heuristic identifies different dimensions of the influence of organizational agencies and collective human action: 'reciprocity', 'strength', 'layers and conditions' and 'spheres'. 'Reciprocity' refers to the notion that influences flow in more than one direction, suggesting two-way exchanges between all levels from global to local. 'Strength' indicates both the magnitude and the directness of influence, in addition to resources at the disposal of agencies and agents. 'Layers and conditions' refers to resilient historical structures and practices of institutions, systems and countries that impact on their influence and activity. Finally, 'spheres' indicates the scope of influence (geographical and functional) of agents and agency (as cited in Vidovich, 2004, p. 343).

The 'glo-na-cal agency' heuristic is complimentary to Knight's (2004) framework in analyzing the interfaces between the local, the national, and the international in the

process of internationalization.

2.6 Academic culture in higher education settings

Although Tierney's (1988) framework to understand organizational culture in higher education settings was not merely about academic culture, this holistic framework includes six essential concepts that constitute organizational culture in a higher education context, and thus is useful to examine academic culture in this study. From a holistic perspective, Tierney (1988) proposes that one has to look at all six concepts in order to analyze academic culture in a higher education setting: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. Specifically, he poses the following questions related to those six concepts in order to examine higher education institution's organizational culture:

- How does the organization define its environment? What is the attitude toward the environment?
- How is the mission defined? How is it articulated? Is it used as a basis for decisions? How much agreement is there?
- How do new members become socialized? How is it articulated? What do we need to know to survive/excel in this organization?
- What constitutes information? Who has it? How is it disseminated?
- How are decisions arrived at? Which strategy is used? Who makes decision?
- What does the organization expect from its leaders? Who are the leaders? Are there formal and informal leaders? (Tierney, 1988, p.8)

These specific questions posed in Tierney's (1988) framework will be particularly useful to examine how academic culture has been evolving at SOE since it started its reforms in 2006. However, being constrained by the length of my fieldwork in Shanghai as well as the limit budget, I tried my best to explore the complex academic culture in this setting as deeply as possible. So, I focused on two aspects of academic culture within Tierney's (1988) framework: mission and socialization.

2.7 Reference - transcendence

Pan is one of the few Chinese scholars doing theoretical research on higher education in China. His study focuses on Chinese higher education history and theories. Even though he does not propose a specific model to examine the internationalization of higher education in China, his critiques of the "dependent development" and "reference – transcendence" views shed light on internationalization in a Chinese context (Chen & Pan, 2009). Based on his examination of the problem created in Latin America's higher education system by largely borrowing Western models without adapting accordingly to its own educational history and traditional practices, he argues that in practice the "dependent development" model of developing higher education in a non-Western context simply won't work in the long run. He concludes that for Chinese higher education to close the gap between China and the powerful nations in the world, its higher education should strive to build its own model by means of cultural consciousness and independent innovation.

Chapter 3 Design and Methodology

3.1 Methodology

Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue that inquiry methodology can no longer be treated as a set of universally applicable rules or abstractions because of the “blurring of genres” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 197). However it will still be necessary and fruitful for a researcher to figure out his/her paradigmatic stance before starting research, because these imply a researcher’s assumptions of the nature of reality and knowledge, the kinds of questions to explore, and how to go about doing so (Glesne, 2010).

My own position is in line with social constructivist paradigm. Holstein and Gubrium (2011) argue that constructivism “resists a single portrait but is better understood as a mosaic of research efforts, with diverse philosophical, theoretical, methodological, and empirical underpinnings” (p. 341). According to constructivist ontological assumptions, reality is “constructed intersubjectively through the meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 204). Social constructivists admit that multiple realities exist and are dependent on the individual (Schwandt, 1994). They also contend that we construct knowledge through our lived experiences and through our interactions with other member of society. Therefore, as researchers, we must participate in the research process with the subjects to ensure we are producing knowledge that is reflective of their reality (Y.S. Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

Concerning epistemology, social constructivists assume that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know (Creswell, 2007). The investigator and the object of

investigation are linked such that who we are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others, and the world (Y.S. Lincoln et al., 2011). Therefore, research itself is considered an ongoing relational process of construction and the value-laden researcher and the participants in a particular cultural and historical setting are equally parts of this construction process (Karataş-Özkan & Murphy, 2010).

Consistent with social constructivism, I assume the meaning of internationalization of Chinese higher education and the conflict stemming from this transformation are socially, culturally and historically constructed within the Chinese context, therefore potentially different from that in the West. Thus it makes the framework proposed to understand internationalization of higher education based on Western experiences inadequate for practices of Chinese higher education institutions. What is real or what makes sense to understand the complex of internationalization of higher education in a Chinese context will be co-constructed by researcher's co-constructions with Chinese academic community.

As social constructivists have realized, the construction itself is subject to “temporal and historical conditions that gave rise to the community (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 205)”, I believe my findings will only reflect contemporary understandings of internationalization in Chinese academic circles and the academic cultural clashes represented in the study may take a different form in the future. Because the internationalization of Chinese higher education is still an on-going process, it will be still shaped by social, cultural, economic, and political changes within the nation, therefore, the contemporary construction of knowledge about it and conflict stemming

from it are subject to my participants' social locations, and their meaning-making of their social locations, in this changing context.

3.2 Overall approach and rationale

A case study was conducted to investigate this topic of interest. The term “case study” itself means different things to different people, even though a case study as a research strategy is widely used in different disciplines. For instance, Stake (2005) contends that case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied. Creswell (2007) gives a clear definition: case study research is “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case-based themes” (p.73). In this project, I adopt this definition from Creswell.

Following Yin (2009), this is a single-case embedded case study. My research studies these research questions at a single academic institution. Thus it is a single-case design. As emphasized by Yin (2009), a single-case design is instructive if it is critical for evaluating a theory and representative (p. 40). The interviews from SOE makes clear the informativeness of studying academic culture clashes at this institution. Further, the SOE is typical of the 20 elite institutions open to Western trained economists.

The study is embedded as it makes use of multiple layers within the SOE structure. In particular, my interviews include discussions with the administration of the school along with faculty members. This is quite instructive to understand the different perspectives on the academic culture.

The rationale for using a case study method is threefold. First of all, the possibility of developing a holistic and integrated comprehension of the case by using this research tradition makes it a natural choice for this study. In my inquiry of understanding internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions through the lens of SOE as an instrument, internationalization of SOE as a contemporary phenomenon, its process, and SOE itself thus set clear boundaries in terms of events, time, and place. Case study research tradition thereby allows me to unravel the complexities of this case in a holistic manner rather than a fragmented way. For instance, it is appropriate to not only describe and interpret the activities related to SOE's internationalization, but also analyze the contexts which involve situating the case within its setting as well as within its larger, overall environment.

Secondly, case study research tradition enables me to collect in-depth and detailed data that involves multiple sources of information including interviews, and documents. Moreover, the practicality of using multiple sources of data in case study makes triangulating the data from different sources possible.

Thirdly, because my purpose is to unravel the difficulties and challenges for Chinese higher education institutions in general, conducting a case as an instrument to study is an adequate strategy to follow.

3.3 Site of the study

The study focuses on a School of Economics in Shanghai. Like Beijing and Guangdong, Shanghai is one of the most prosperous cities in China, and one that has attracted most of China's returnee scholars from the West due to its unique location and opportunities available. I chose SOE because as the first social science school in China to

conduct radical reforms towards internationalization, it is ideal and representative.

However, more importantly, I want to provide insight into internationalization of Chinese higher education by examining SOE. In other words, the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates the understanding of my research topic (Altbach, 2010).

Teaching and research at SOE had been dominated by Marxist political economics since it was resuscitated from the Culture Revolution of 1966-1976, which most severely disrupted the Chinese higher education system (SOE, 2010). However, as China implemented its Reform and Open Policy in the 1980s, Western Economics favoring market ideologies have recently become popular in China. This influenced the SOE to begin its Western Economics program in the late 1990s (SOE 2010). Changes have actually been constant since then, including starting new academic programs, enlarging student recruitment, etc. However, the reforms towards internationalization since 2004 have been the most radical in its history (SOE, 2010). As a graduate student at SOE six years ago, I had experienced its curriculum reforms when it first initiated the transformation. Now at a time when there are 41 overseas trained economists and 35 locally educated economists constituting the whole faculty body of SOE, this reform went far beyond the curriculum, including arguments between short-term targets and fundamental educational goals, the ideal and the reality, etc.

3.4 Sampling procedure

I applied purposeful sampling to select participants from the Western Economics Department, which is the largest department among the three departments of SOE², because it is the only one that has both Western and locally trained faculty (approximately a 3:1 ratio). Based on the literature, it seems reasonable to tackle the academic culture question within the boundary of a department (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Therefore, given the above characteristics of the Western Economics Department, I purposefully have chosen all eight participants from this department, with both the Dean and the Associate Dean themselves also from this department. Since the majority of SOE faculty members are male (approximately a 7:1 ratio), I was able to set up a sample proportioned according to gender representation.

This purposeful selection of interviewees allowed me to understand the institutional strategies, rationales and approaches towards internationalization from the leadership's perspective, and to investigate the academic culture from the faculty member's perspective. This selection also enabled me to triangulate voices from these different angles.

To be eligible to participate in the study, candidates had to meet the following criteria: (1) senior administrator candidates had to be actively involved in SOE's strategic planning and decision making since 2004; (2) faculty member candidates were from the Department of Western Economics and had to be actively teaching and/or advising and/or

² School of Economics has 79 faculty members in total, among which 60 are from the Western Economics Department.

doing research in the past six years; and (3) all candidates had to be available to meet with me to participate in interviews on at least one occasion during late March-early April, 2011.

3.5 Interview participant selection

Before I flew back to Shanghai in late March 2011, I had been in contact with one of the senior administrators at SOE, notifying him of my intended schedule for the recruitment of participants. He reminded me that it was the beginning weeks after the holiday for traditional Chinese New Year so that not all the faculty members were around. I then decided to send emails to all the faculty members with the invitation letter attached (the email addresses were retrieved from SOE's website). The invitation was written in both Mandarin and English; it included information about the interviews, as well as my contact information. I was hoping that by the time I arrived in Shanghai, I would have received some responses. However, to my disappointment, I did not get any replies by the time I got to Shanghai. After waiting for a couple days, I decided to make phone calls to each faculty member's office from the office where I was assigned to at SOE's main building. So eventually those who were interested in the project called back, and I selected eight participants based on the criteria described in the above section. This included seven male participants and one female participant; among them two were locally trained, and six earned their doctoral degrees in the U.S.

Once I recruited the participants I set up individual appointments to conduct interviews and I invited them to select the place where the interview would take place. I had made provisions to meet the participants in off-campus locations, as I was concerned

about ethical implications of conducting interviews on campus regarding the level of comfort of the participants and my ability to protect their privacy. To my surprise, with the exception of the Dean who was in the U.S. the whole time during my fieldwork, all the other participants decided that the most convenient and comfortable place would be in their offices. With the Dean who was in the U.S. and therefore not available until later when I returned from Shanghai, the interview with him was conducted via skype.

I then sent each of participants the interview protocol the day before each of the interviews. Before conducting each interviews, I explained both the purpose of my research and the interview process to them. Once the participant decided to go ahead with the interview, I presented him or her with the consent form written in both Mandarin and English. I also informed them that they could withdraw from the study any time without any negative consequences, yet none of them chose to do so.

3.6 Methods for data collection

The collection of data involved semi-structured interviews (see Appendices for interviewing questions), observations, departmental documents retrieved from the school's web and nationally higher education policy since 1985. Since the majority of the participants were fluent in both Mandarin and English, they were given the choice of conducting the interview in either language to ensure they felt comfortable during the interview. However, all of them chose Mandarin, the native language for all of them. The questions in the protocol were given to the participants before the interview began so that he or she had an opportunity to ask questions about the protocol and the interview process. The questions for the faculty members were clustered as follows: (1) participants

perceptions of academic environment change before and after 2004 when the reform started; (2) participants academic activities both within the institution and internationally; (3) participants socialization within the department; and (4) participants' understanding of the internationalization.

A different protocol was used to interview the senior administrators. The questions in this protocol were clustered as follows: (1) participants' understanding of the internationalization and rationale of SOE's internationalization; (2) SOE's negotiation with the government(s) about funding and support; (3) challenges of SOE's internationalization process; and (4) efforts in bridging the academic culture between western and locally trained scholars.

After each interview I took field notes to see if there were any key concepts or ideas that were worth keeping in mind as I went through the interview process. All the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. The transcripts of each interview were sent to the interviewees respectively. I confirmed approval and received feedback. The feedback I receive from each participant was taken into consideration for transcript and coding process and it was later stored in a private file and the email was deleted to keep the anonymity of the participant.

The data collection also involved a number of institutional documents. The reason to collect documents is that they can provide historical information that is unavailable or not complete from other sources (Glesne, 2010). This proved to be the case for my study. For example, the history of SOE and previous curricula of its various programs were available from some of the archives instead from the interviews. Also collecting documents gave me new sources of information that I did not expect. For example, SOE

has put together a series of policy recommendations to Ministry of Education, in order to inform higher education policy making based on its own experiences of trying to integrating Western and Chinese higher education practices (Institute for Advanced Research, 2011). These policy recommendations produced by SOE provided a useful data source for triangulation with my own findings. The collection of the national higher education policy was mainly for the purpose of investigating the first research question. As I did not get the chance to interview any national higher education policy maker, these related government policy texts seem to be the only source for analyzing the national level interpretation of the internationalization.

3.7 Interview transcription

The interviews were conducted in Mandarin and translated into English. Bucholtz (2000) claims that transcription involves both interpretive decisions (What is transcribed?) and representational decisions (How is it transcribed?); therefore she believes that “transcription is an act of power” (p. 25). Bucholtz (2000) further explains that “the transcription of a text always involves the inscription of a context. The conditions of the transcribing act are often visible in the text; the transcriber’s goals; her or his theories and beliefs about the speakers; her or his level of attention to the task and familiarity with the language or register of the discourse; and so on” (p. 25). Keeping in mind that transcribing is as complex process, I was aware of my position as an insider-outsider all the time. I was aware that it gave me advantage of being familiar with interviews and the language they used, whereas I should not put pre-assumptions on the interpretations. So I did listen and re-listen the original digital recording for many times to make sure that I did not omit any significant nuance in the interviewees’ speech.

Tilley (2003) suggests that detailed decisions during transcribing should largely depend on the design and purpose of the research, as well as on the transcriber's assessment of what is relevant or not. This study is primarily to explore the perceptions and experiences of the participants during an institutional internationalization process, and is not designed for a more specialized linguistic analysis. Therefore I did not attempt to create a detailed verbatim record of the interviews. Nonetheless, I always went back to the digital recording to make sure I was capturing the tone of the participant's speech as well as the words. I also tried to capture the original meaning and contexts included in the interviewees' speech by using Mandarin *Pinyin* terms instead of verbatim translation, for example, *Jiegui* and *Xue Shu Feng Qi*. However, as Bucholtz (2000) cautions, no matter how hard the researchers try, there are always limitations of the interpretive and representative decisions we have made, so it is always good to work from digital recording rather than transcripts as much as possible.

Each transcript was identified with the initials of the interviewees. Once the transcripts were checked for accuracy and reviewed by the participants, the files were stored in my computer, password protected. Upon returning from Shanghai to Vancouver, I printed a hard copy of each transcript and kept them in a locked file cabinet.

3.8 Data coding

I applied Saldaña's (2009) coding method for descriptive/interpretive analysis after I transcribed the interviews. According to Saldaña, a qualitative code is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data. In the case of

this study, the data consisted of interview transcripts, field notes, documents produced by SOE, and website of SOE.

Saldaña (2009) proposes two cycles for the coding process. He believes that, “First Cycle coding processes can range in magnitude from a single word to a full sentence to an entire page of text to a stream of moving images. In Second Cycle coding processes, the portions coded can be the exact same units, longer passages of text, and even a reconfiguration of the codes themselves developed thus far” (p.3). He also designed a codes-categories-themes model to represent the process of coding. Following his suggestion, I took these steps to develop my codes and categories:

1. When I read the interview transcription for the first couple times, I paid attention to the content that was striking to me, as well as the content that deals directly with the research questions. I highlighted the relevant lines, tried to identify topics and abstracted the topic words in the margin of the transcription. While I was reading and marking, I always went back to the original transcription or even digital recording if there was any confusion in determining the meaning. I also assigned numbers to all the short codes I wrote down so that I could always go back and locate them in the original transcription.
2. I copied all these the shorts topic words that were developed in the first step as well as their assigned numbers to a MindnodeTM file, which allows me to easily drag and drop the numbered short topic words when I was trying to connect the similar or related ones. I then dragged and clumped together the related topics,

and chose a name for each clump that captured the gist of the topics. This became my preliminary list of codes.

3. I copied all the preliminary codes into a new Mindnode file. Then I went back to the transcription, and read it along with the preliminary codes to see whether some information was relevant to research questions but had been omitted from the previous steps. When this happened, I would add the relevant topics to the Mindnode's list of codes.

4. Once the above step was completed for all the transcriptions, on the same Mindnode file, I categorized all the codes according to their frequencies, made a list of topics that occurred in all or most of the transcriptions, and tried to determine which topics were the most relevant in terms of the research questions. With the beauty of Mindnode, I then easily make connections and identify relationships among these topics. I then assigned a final name for each of the categories, and a conceptual map with the categories, subcategories and connections was formed.

Although this preliminary coding was done, I agreed with what Creswell (2007) says: this is a process that does not follow a fixed linear fashion; instead it is more like a spiral in that steps are interrelated and often go on simultaneously. In the data analysis stage later on, I found myself always needing to go back through these steps again, either to rename or to reassign data as I saw fit. As Glesne (2010) cautions, in addition to working to analyze relationships among all the coded data, the researcher also need to be cognizant of what was not said or demonstrated in some way. She asks

what kinds of things appeared taken for granted or were not discussed? Using differing theoretical arguments, can you raise questions about why some topics or perspectives might be ignored? I found these questions really helpful when I realized that there was a single positive voice about the academic integration as SOE that I almost missed if I took the dominated negative voices for granted and did not take go back to the original transcriptions many times.

3.9 Data analysis

Glesne (2010) contends that “analysis is a continuation of the coding process” (p.197). In practice data organizing and data analyzing are intertwined. I continued my analysis with the help of Mindnode by developing conceptual maps of themes with relations to research questions once the coding process was complete. For each of the research questions, I designed a tree-shape figure through Mindnode with the branches showing different categories. Within the tree I constructed subcategories for each main category to reveal the themes that were relevant for the corresponding research question. Next, I drew lines with different colors among the tree branches to link and contrast the themes and tried to determine whether there were significant differences or similarities between them. I then analyzed the findings in light of the theoretical frameworks as presented in the review of the literature. Finally, I triangulated the findings with the institution's own perception of the internationalization. The latter was determined from the institutional policy recommendations concerning the reforms at SOE written to the Ministry of Education.

Finally, one thing I bore in mind during the process was the question that numerous qualitative researchers have raised: how as researchers can we speak authentically about the experiences of others (Frisby, Reid, Millar, & Hoerber, 2005)? There is no doubt that my own position, an international student in Canada, coming from China and having had work experiences in an European institution in Italy for half a year, would frame how I write about and interpret my findings about internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions. Rather than making grand claims that I was representing the perceptions and experiences of all those who participated in my study, I was always mindful of my position as a researcher in the research as well as an insider-outsider to SOE and that my social locations have created a certain lens for my interpreting the findings.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world; their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). To protect the participant's rights, I have employed the following safeguards: (1) the research objectives were articulated verbally and in writing, both Mandarin and English, so that they were clearly understood by the participants, (2) written form of consent was sent to the research participants in advance, and the research proceeded after getting their permissions, (3) the research proposal was approved by the Behavioral Research Ethics Board of the University of British Columbia, and this study was strictly in accordance with ethical guidelines at the University of British Columbia, (4) the participants were informed of all data collection devices and activities, (5) transcriptions and written interpretations and reports were made available to the participants, (6) the participant's

rights, interests and wishes were considered first when choices are made regarding reporting the data, and (7) all the people interviewed remained anonymous throughout the analysis of the data and in the writing of the thesis (Creswell, 2009).

3.11 Time line

After my supervisory committee reviewed and approved the research proposal, I submitted it to the UBC Behavioural Ethics Review Committee on February 25, 2011. The proposal was approved by the Committee at the end of March 2011. In late March, I travelled to Shanghai to spend four weeks conducting the interviews, collecting documents, as well as transcribing them for analysis. I began coding, analyzing and interpreting the data collected in May 2011.

3.12 Limitations of the study

The potential weaknesses in this research relates to the geographic location of SOE. It is located in Shanghai, China's major economic powerhouse and a major city to attract returning Chinese scholars. This gives SOE advantages in attracting returnees, besides its prominent academic reputation. Therefore, SOE's practices and experiences cannot represent the majority of Chinese higher education institutions; they may only be representative of the top-tier universities in China. Thus one has to be careful to draw generalization of the internationalization of Chinese higher education institutions from this research.

Another aspect of limitation relates to the nature of the institution I was investigating. As SOE's focus is on Economics discipline, one of the few social science disciplines that was very well funded and supported by the government, other social

sciences cases mostly likely will be very different from the internationalization of this discipline. As Liu (2011) observes, social sciences in Asia have been and continue to be poor cousins to natural and physical sciences in terms of funding and visibility concerning national priorities. If it was not because of time and budget constrain, it will be more fruitful to look at other internationalization at other institutions that are not merely concentrating on Economics.

Moreover, it is important to emphasize that the interviewees in this study offer only one set of views of the experiences during the internationalization of a higher education institution in China. Other positional perspectives are likely to differ, and further research could, and should, triangulate with other views. For example, different perspectives would include those from students, who have been privileged in the internationalization of the institution, but whose voices are not often heard in the policy-making arena.

CHAPTER 4 Findings

Deriving from the interviews with senior administrators about their understandings of internationalization, strategies, and activities at this case study site, three main themes emerged: motivations, the Western model, *Jie Gui* and academic integration, as shown in Table 2. These themes provide an adequate framework for presenting the findings.

The first theme describes motivations for internationalization at the case study institute, including political and economic forces, and historical reasons. The second theme derives from interviewees' understandings of internationalization at a Chinese higher education institution with regard to Western models. This relates to: (1) *Xue Shu Fen Wei*³, and (2) the role of the Western model. The third theme *Jie Gui*⁴ provides the specific strategies, activities, as well as the academic culture differences, including (1) overseas recruiting and strengthening *Xue Shu Feng Qi*, (2) curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality, (3) emphasis on research, and (4) intensifying academic exchange. The last theme on academic communication and integration further addresses the third research question regarding academic culture clash at SOE.

³ *Xue Shu Fen Wei* is a Mandarin term, similar to academic ethos or academic atmosphere. It is explained in detail on page 70.

⁴ *Jie Gui* is also a Mandarin term, literally meaning to connect two railway tracks. It is explained further on page 68.

Institutional interpretation of Internationalization at SOE			
1. Institutional motivation for Internationalization	2. Institutional understanding of Internationalization	3. Institutional strategies of Internationalization	4. Academic culture clash
1.1 Political and economic forces	2.1 The role of Western model	3.1 Overseas recruiting and strengthening academic ethos	4.1 Difficult academic communication and socialization
		3.2 Curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality	
1.2 Historical reasons	2.2 Resistance	3.3 Emphasizing on research	
		3.4 Intensifying academic exchange	

Table 2 Themes in relation to institutional interpretation of internationalization at SOE

Although these themes provide a lens to examine the findings in relation to interpretations of the internationalization, it is not always possible to establish clear boundaries between and among them. In reality, these categories are interconnected to one another. For example, the importance of Western models in interviewees' understanding of the internationalization directly affects the strategies and activities at this institute.

Furthermore, this chapter also draws upon the framework of internationalization discussed in the review of the literature to discuss the findings from the perspective of glo-na-cal interactions and academic culture. The interactions between three levels: local, national and global in the case study institution's internationalization process are discussed. I also utilizes Tierney (1988)'s framework to examine the mission and

socialization at the case study institution, academic culture differences becoming a barrier on its way to further implement internationalization is highlighted.

4.1 Motivations

The desire to measure up to the so-called international standard through internationalization at the case study institute stood out as soon as I began analyzing the interviews with the senior administrators. The motivations towards internationalization at this institute are presented in the following aspects: (1) political and economic forces, (2) historical reasons.

4.1.1 Political and economic forces

The findings in this section reveal two prevailing assumption and beliefs held by senior administrators. First, administrators believe there is an increasing competition within higher education at a regional, national and global level. Second, the case study institution is very responsive to the national higher education policy shift toward internationalization. The leadership has seized this opportunity to pursuit institutional changes.

Both senior administrators I interviewed perceived the pressure from competing with other local higher education institutions as constituting one of the major driving forces behind SOE's internationalization. As the Associate Dean illustrated thoroughly:

The president of this university faced a lot of pressure. Located next to Fudan University, a comprehensive university with higher reputation, SOE as a specialized university has to compete with the school of economics of Fudan.

There is also Jiaotong University. The Antai School of Management of Jiaotong University was not well known at all in the beginning: most of its teachers were temporarily hired from SOE; it largely relied on joint programs with other universities. But it has developed very fast. With competition from other institutions in Shanghai, SOE need changes, at least to see how it would go. In order to do so, it needs to hire someone from overseas to initiate these changes. (Ou Wen⁵, Associate Dean)

Moreover, the senior administrators agreed that the national higher education policy shift also provided impetus to changes at the institute.

When it first started, the 985 Project included 20 universities, most of which are comprehensive universities. There was no specific ways to evaluate the performance of these universities relative to how the money was spent. The allocation of resources is always unequal in China. This is especially true in the education sector. At the beginning, people were quiet about this. But gradually, they did not want to put up with it. At this time, the Ministry of Finance was also thinking about possibilities of funding individual disciplines or programs instead of heavily investing in a small group of comprehensive universities. I think it was the critical moment: there was demand of reform, and the central ministries wanted to do so. It was only then that the central government was willing to fund individual programs. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

⁵ Pseudonyms are used throughout for the names of interviewees.

It is obvious that the senior managers at SOE were quite aware of the policy shift at the national level and the space for negotiation with central government. They also realized that this shift of policy had provided economic reasons for individual institutions to change so as to compete for governmental funding. So they took the initiative to persuade the central ministries to support SOE's reform, even though as an institution only focusing on Economics and Finance, SOE was not initially in the consideration of the central ministries' plan. SOE's response to national policy shift and its negotiation with central governments reflect that policy-making is just "temporary settling of struggles and conflicts through strategies of negotiation" (Gale, 2003, p. 51)

Since being incorporated into the *Project 985*, SOE continuously receives heavy funding from different levels of government. As illustrated by the Associate Dean,

By 2006, SOE's 'Economics Innovation Platform' was incorporated into the 985 key discipline innovation Project. This way, this project was not only supported by the university, but also got long-term support from the Office of the State Council, and from two other central government offices in Beijing. In 2008, this project had become very mature, very well known. Shanghai municipal government also decided to give financial support to this project, the same amount of money as from various central ministries. So this project has received a lot of money; initially 40 million, then another 40 million from the Shanghai municipal government, plus annually 20 million from the Ministry of Education; we received 0.16 billion by early last year. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

4.1.2 Historical reasons

The senior administrator participants both received their doctoral degrees from prestigious graduate schools in the U.S. and have spent over ten years in the U.S. They considered the institute's history as another rationale for changes toward internationalization. As stated by the Dean:

When I first came to SOE, the faculty of economics was in pretty bad shape. The curricula of its academic programs and the research still had very strong planned economy characteristics; they were designed to study planned economy rather than to keep updated with the current economic issues in China. (Lei Gong, Dean)

The Associate Dean shared this view as well:

The faculty of economics was very old: the programs were the same as they were in the planned economy era; faculty members were not paid very well. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

There is a bigger picture underlying their concerns over the previous curriculum: the social sciences in the planned economy era were strongly associated with Marxist ideology. With the adoption of the market economy, coupled with other socio-cultural reconfigurations nationally, social science research is gradually moving away from the dominance of Marxist ideology. Also indeed the participants' experiences in the U.S. academic environment have affected their views of curricula changes at SOE.

Besides the above academic concerns, the Dean's further comments on the motivations of internationalization were somehow patriotic and pragmatic in that he linked the internationalization of higher education closely with the rise of China.

With the rise of China, it needs the first-class talents in order to transform from a big country to a powerful country, from a developing country to an innovative country. For a higher education institution, it has to closely follow the trend, which is internationalization, and globalization. To some degree, internationalization is a must, and the fundamental reason is from the needs of strategic development of the nation, and from the needs of the rise of China. We have been pursuing the dream of becoming a big and powerful country since 100 years ago. It was a pure dream before. It is not enough to only have the ideals and aspirations; we also have to figure out ways to let them become true. I think education reform is the most important aspect. (Lei Gong, Dean)

4.2 Understandings of the internationalization

How the faculty members at the case study institute, especially the academic administrators, understand internationalization is essential. Their interpretations of internationalization influence what strategies and activities will be taken up at the institute. The findings reveal that the perception of internationalization at the institute mainly derives from its faculty members' oversea experiences and is affected by the policy text of central government to measure up to the Western standard. The internationalization as a trend in higher education is widely shared by its faculty

members. Even though there are different views over the internationalization of SOE, the major difference lies in how to achieve it.

4.2.1 The role of the Western model

When asked about their understandings of internationalization, all the interviewees expressed their views with reference to the Western models. This is yet not that surprising when noticing that over half of the faculty members at the institute earned their doctoral degrees from prestigious graduate schools in the U.S., Canada, or Europe⁶. It is natural for them to think about the internationalization process based on their past doctoral study experiences. As one of the faculty member trained in Canada said,

I received my doctoral degree in Canada, where I had spent 7 years in school. I grew to be quite familiar with the research and teaching environment in there.

Before coming to SOE, I was hoping that the environment here would be somewhat similar to that in North America. (Kun Le, a returnee scholar)

For him, internationalization is to “reform our educational models with reference to top institutes of Economics in North America”.

This view was shared and explained in detail by the Associate Dean,

⁶ Among the six returnee-scholars in this study, five of them obtained their doctoral degrees from American institutions, only one from a Canadian institution. During the time of data collection at the research site, there was not any faculty member around who graduated from European institutions.

I think internationalization is to change our teaching, research, especially the management model, with reference to the Western (*Xi Fang*) practices. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

Here the word “Western” is the literal meaning translated from the Chinese term “*Xi Fang*” which was used by various interviewees. It is worth discussing here because the phrases “*Xi Fang*” and “*Xi Fang* models” were frequently used by the participants. When asked about why the Western models or practices were considered as benchmarks at the case study institute, the Associate Dean said,

Because modern universities originated from the West, and have been practiced for centuries. More importantly, the curricula of various disciplines, and evaluation system of teachers at Western higher education institutions are more scientific and widely accepted. Higher education reform in China needs to look up to the Western standard. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

But clearly, as mentioned before, the interviewees who received their doctorates from the West are exclusively from the U.S. and Canada. The Western models they referred to are primarily based on their educational experiences in North America, although during interview conversations they did not explicitly distinguish North American models from other Western models. In other words, the Western models they referred to more precisely should be interpreted as North American models as opposed to other Western education models, for example, “the state managed and primarily state funded autonomous British university, the state administered and funded Humboldtian institutions in Germany and the Nordic countries” (Marginson, 2010, p. 594).

To the participants, the concept of “*Xi Fang*” is defined in opposition to the Chinese model. The admiration of the “*Xi Fang*” model is mainly derived from the disappointment at the incompetence and failure of Chinese higher education practices in such aspects as curricula design, research, and academic environment. Therefore among higher education practitioners there is a strong desire to learn from the “*Xi Fang*” model.

When I asked senior academic administrators what they wanted to learn from the “*Xi Fang*” model in the internationalization process, the Associate Dean said,

I think academic autonomy is the most important thing is to learn. What it means is that students have options to select courses, and courses have to meet the needs of the market. This is especially true for a university specializing in finance and economics. For SOE students, especially the M.A. students, their orientation should be applied and practical.

Not only students, faculty members should also have autonomy. Academic freedom can only happen when there is academic autonomy. Research should not be directed by the government. Innovation happens only when there is academic freedom, only when there will be high quality research. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

The Dean also showed his admiration for Western model, although he did not explicitly tell what to learn from the Western model. He commented that “internationalization should engage Chinese faculty members or administrators who have worked years in Western institutions and only those who are familiar with the laws of motions of both systems will help internationalize Chinese universities” (Lei Gong,

Dean). He also stated that for students internationalization means “international perspective, vision, and the ability to communicate with others” (Lei Gong, Dean).

As this section suggests, although there is no agreed-upon definition of the Western model, the participants all agreed that the Western model should play a leading role at SOE’s internationalization process. As consistent with the methodology employed in this study, how internationalization is preceded at the case study institute should be culturally and historically situated. In other words, how the participants understand internationalization would determine the strategies and activities at the institute.

4.2.2 Resistance

Even though there are a number reasons for this institute to internationalize as revealed in the finding from the last section, they are still differing views at SOE about the way it is internationalizing. During my stay at SOE, I learned that a few faculty members had left SOE at the early stage of its reform towards internationalization. I learned more about this from part of the interview with the Dean, as he seemed quite aware of the resistance from locally trained faculty.

Of course there has been a lot of resistance. Some are just outdated ideas; some people do not really know what is going on; others are over cautious. ‘What you are doing won’t fit into the Chinese context’. ‘Is it just to Westernize SOE? ‘It would turn into a disaster’. ‘Is it really necessary since we are already so good’? ‘Do we really need so many mathematical models in economics’? I think they are too short sighted. (Lei Gong, Dean)

Participants who were locally trained and who had stayed on at SOE had positive views of internationalization, as one of them commented,

Sooner or later, it comes. It is better to come early so that our locally trained faculty members would be more prepared earlier than later. It would only be more competitive for individuals staying in academia. Moreover, Economics is different from other disciplines like mathematics or physics, which are more internationalized. With regard to Economics, the gap between here and the West is huge. Therefore, internationalization is inevitable. Of course, this puts a lot of pressure on locally trained faculty members, who do not have the same knowledge structure as those trained in the West. (Lu Yang, a locally trained scholar)

The other participant who was also locally trained had slightly different views than Lu Yang.

Internationalization is a good thing for Chinese higher education institutions. What we need to consider more than anything else is how to achieve this. As far as I am concerned, internationalization should be reflected in three major areas, research, teaching, and faculty members. (Wang Ning, a locally trained scholar)

As revealed later in the analysis, Wang Ning was very much concerned about the way the internationalized is conducted at the institute.

4.3 *Jie gui* yet difficult integration

“*Jie Gui*” is a Mandarin term; it literally means connecting two railway tracks. During interviews, participants used this term interchangeably with

“internationalization”. As it is a vivid expression of Chinese conformity with international ideals, it is worth exploring its origin and meaning.

Yang (2002) was among the first to explain the context and meaning of *Jie Gui* in the field of higher education. According to him,

Jie Gui was a catchword in the early 1990s when China finally decided to adopt a market economy. A relative agreement upon the meaning of *Jie Gui* was first reached in the context of rising international trade of commodity and technology, and efforts to reform previous Chinese system and regulations that had not been consistent with international conventions. The usage of *Jie Gui* moved far beyond international trade thereafter. Even on some formal occasions, its usage goes beyond the original scope. Starting from the mid-1990s, *Jie Gui* has been often and formally used in higher education. (Yang, 2002, p.75)

Moreover, Yang (2002) stated that *Jie Gui*'s basic meaning is to link up China's educational practice with international trends. The central target of *Jie Gui* is to regulate China's education according to the criteria and mainstream of international practice (p.75). Yet, as Yang pointed out, the key words used to define *Jie Gui* are vague and disputable, such as 'trend', 'mainstream', 'quality', and 'efficiency'; there is a lack of theoretically framed definition or explanation of *Jie Gui*.

However, the point I want to make here is that in practice, it is the ambiguity of and almost blind conformity to the international standards embedded in *Jie Gui* that shapes the way of internationalization in a Chinese higher education institution. This also

gives rise to the academic cultural clash between the Chinese and the Western norms which will be explained later in this study.

In this section, I elaborate how *Jie Gui* is represented in the case study institute's international strategies and activities, especially in these four aspects: (1) overseas recruitment and strengthening *Xue Shu Feng Qi*, (2) curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality, (3) emphasis on research, and (4) intensifying academic exchange. However, it is good to keep in mind that in practice, these different aspects of internationalization activities are not isolated from each other; they are rather intertwined together. Coupled with discussions of these activities towards internationalization, each of the four subsections is also organized in a way that shows the contrasting views of the locally trained faculty group and the returnee group. This helps understand the contrasting academic cultures between the Western and the Chinese as the differences in academic cultures are embodied in these activities. In the last subsection, I highlight the difficulties pertaining to academic communication and integration at SOE.

4.3.1 Overseas recruiting and strengthening *Xue Shu Feng Qi*

Among all the activities intended to foster *Jie Gui* at SOE, overseas recruiting was the first major step and the most aggressive one since the beginning of its internationalization process in 2004. As stated earlier, SOE has hired over 40 overseas trained Ph.D.s over the past six years, exclusively from prestigious graduate schools in North America, including Harvard University, Princeton University, Yale University, University of California at Berkeley, etc. When I asked why overseas recruitment was the most important step at SOE, the Dean said,

Initially the strategy was to recruit 10 people each year. We realized that it would not work if there were very few people coming back, because few people will be easily assimilated by the local *Xue Shu Feng Qi* (academic atmosphere). They won't focus on teaching and research, rather they would go out for profitable projects or engage in some other activities. Only when there are a large number of returnees, they will bring back the advanced knowledge, but more importantly they will help revive the *Xue Shu Feng Qi*. (Lei Gong, Dean)

Before further analysis, I want to explain the term *Xue Shu Feng Qi*. It is a Mandarin term, similar to academic ethos or academic atmosphere. Similar to the case of *Jie Gui*, it has not been well defined in literature, although frequently used in public discourses related to corruption in China's higher education sphere. As Yang's study on *Corruption in China's Higher Education System* showed,

The term academic corruption in mainland China usually refers to such violations as misrepresenting one's educational background or work experience, plagiarism, distortion of research data, affixing one's name to someone else's publications, and making false commercial advertisements, as well as other acts. Yet, the scope of infractions is much broader than imagined and includes corrupt behavior on the part of individuals and groups that is actually endemic to the entire system. Since the 1990s, corruption has seriously threatened Mainland China's universities in their teaching, research, service to society, and international links and exchanges. (Yang, 2005, p. 18)

Yang and many other researchers' (Liu et al., 2002; Yi, 2010) articles have also showed that many Chinese diaspora scholars with good intentions to return and serve

China shrink back at the sight of bad '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*'.

Therefore, the educational reforms conducted in China's higher education sphere often target on changing the corrupt *Xue Shu Feng Qi*. It is also the case at the case study institute. The Dean's words above implicitly indicated the dissatisfaction with the local '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*' and the underlying rationale to change the situation: infusing new blood to the old system.

I asked him where the bad *Xue Shu Feng Qi* came from at the institute, he responded:

The reality in China's higher education system is that the administration has too much power. For example, the dean or the supervisor alone can decide who gets admitted to graduate programs. Therefore, there is large room for corruption and satisfying self-interests. So it is easy and possible to be a dean without contributing to the institute. That is also why the reform has been so hard, as it tries to remove the interests of so many people.

He also said that he wrote a report about it to the University President and then it was published on the university's website. This report was written one year after the Dean took his job at the institute. In this long report on '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*', the Dean expressed his views on specific aspects of '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*' at the institute, including teaching, learning, and teaching evaluation:

- Most teachers are not investing enough on teaching; course designs are often too vague; and course contents mostly are not up-to-date. There is a lack of effective evaluation system to see how much students have learned during

the semester except the final exam, for which students only need to spend minimal amount of time to prepare (Lei, 2005, p.2).

- The current teaching evaluation is too abstract. It hardly can reflect the real teaching and learning results. The direct consequence of this is that teaching and learning become almost disconnected, which should be an integral process (Lei, 2005)p.2).

The Associate Dean shared this view when talking about the need to train local teachers at the institute:

There are over 40 local faculty members who do not have any overseas educational experiences. They are not familiar with practices at Western higher education institutions. They have no idea that there has to be quiz, homework, midterm, final exam, office hours, and syllabus, and that this information has to be posted online for students. You have to tell students ahead of time what this course is going to offer, a detailed syllabus, and the information has to be symmetric. But local teachers have no idea about this, and students sometimes just get used to this teaching style. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

Given their understanding of the institutional '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*', both the Dean and the Associate Dean thought aggressively attracting overseas trained talents was an important step towards improving the '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*'. They believed that by participating in teaching, research and some managerial work, and by interacting with locally trained faculty members and administrators, returnees would help re-build the institute's '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*'. A strong '*Xue Shu Feng Qi*' will eventually attract the best

and brightest overseas talents as well as to keep the current ones in the long run.

One returnee's comment confirmed this rationale behind the large-scale overseas recruitment,

As more people return to SOE, *Xue Shu Feng Qi* becomes stronger here, especially for me. There was no other macroeconomists but me when I first came.

(Kun Le, a returnee scholar)

What was not expected was that, as the Associate Dean pointed out, what happened at SOE also has affected practices at similar institutions. As more higher education institutions started to recruit overseas trained scholars, a stronger job-market has formed to protect returnees. Therefore, not only the *Xue Shu Feng Qi* at SOE matters overseas scholar's decisions, but also the *Xue Shu Feng Qi* beyond this institute started to exert positive influence as well.

Now there are so many universities conducting similar reforms, including Fudan and Jiaotong University. Therefore, there is a market, instead of just one institute, to protect the interests of returnees. If he/she thought he/she was undervalued in one place, he/she has the option to move to another place. With such a market to protect him/her, he/she could realize his/her greater potential in China. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

4.3.2 Curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality

As mentioned in the Motivation section, the need to update 'old' academic programs became one of the driving forces of the internationalization at the case study

institute. Curriculum reform therefore constitutes another important element of the institute's internationalization strategy. As stated by one senior manager:

The curriculum reform mainly looks up to the Western standards. This is particularly true for Economics Discipline. There is even no qualified Economics textbook written by Chinese economist. We have to adopt others, from curriculum design to textbooks. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

According to him, Economics as a discipline originated and developed in the West, primarily in the United States, and American economists mostly dominate the research of this field. This is a perception that practitioners cannot ignore when internationalizing programs at a Chinese institute. Changing the 'old' programs according to the Western practices does not mean that they want to discard Marxist Economics, the major component of the 'old' programs at SOE. Instead, reforming the curriculum is just one of the strategies to keep up with the international for SOE, as seen below.

Specifically, following changes were made to the 'old' curriculum at the institute:

1. Advanced Microeconomics, Advanced Macroeconomics, Advanced Econometrics, and Mathematics for Economics, which are considered as the foundation to master modern Economics at the institute, became core courses for all the graduate programs.
2. A new course was offered at the graduate level, Reading Marx's Capital, a way to integrate the modern Western curriculum with the previous curriculum which was heavily influenced by Marxism.

3. New Mathematics courses were offered at different levels for both undergraduate and graduate programs, such as Linear Algebra, Mathematical Analysis, Measure Theory, Probability, Random Processes, etc., in order to strengthen students' Mathematics.
4. More field courses were offered as teaching resources were expanded as more faculty members returned from overseas and joined the SOE team (p.24, Educational Reform at SOE).

Overall, the reformed curriculum has a stronger mathematical component, a necessary foundation that will equip students, especially graduate students, with quantitative skills for advanced Economics research. In fact, the core curricula of Economics programs in top Western institutions are relatively standardized. This makes it relatively easy to copy the curriculum design for core courses from Western Economics institutes. What has been recognized as difficult is to offer field courses with focus on China's economic issues, because these courses always require instructors who have extensive research experiences on relative topics. The difficulty in achieving this is explained in the next section, where the emphasis is on research.

In accordance with their educational background, participants trained overseas all agreed with the above curricula changes, whereas strikingly different views on the new curriculum divided the locally trained faculty members. One participant thought the curriculum reform was beneficial to the students as those quantitative tools enabled them to do better research. As he explained in detail,

At the national level, only SOE has such systematic and complete curriculum according to the Western standard. These courses are very useful for doctoral students that are research oriented. For example, the research assistants working with me right now are much better at doing research than before. This is mainly due to the curriculum reform (Lu Yang, a locally trained scholar).

However, another participant thought the reformed curriculum was more destructive to the consistency of the educational practices than keeping it up with the international standard. As he argued,

Ever since the overseas trained people came back, the previous curriculum was interrupted. They (returnee scholars) are not clear about what the students' orientations are, especially Master students. Advanced macroeconomics, advanced microeconomics, and econometrics became required. But previous core courses which I think are important are all gone. For example, the labor economics course was taken away from the curriculum of the Labor Economics program. Today I was told that they also wanted to cancel the social security course, labor law, and organizational behavior course. My impression is that each of them is only familiar with their particular research area, but they don't have an integrated perspective on curriculum for all the programs (Wang Ning, a locally trained scholar).

Clearly, Wang Ning's complaint about the curriculum reform was embedded in his different views of the orientation of the Master programs at SOE. In his mind, the Master programs should be career-oriented, rather than research-oriented. He thought that Master students would look for professional jobs upon graduation, so those courses that

bridge the gap between school and workplace, rather than those that develop research skills, would be more beneficial for students.

These differing views also provoke the invisible debates between transforming SOE into a research institute and keeping the status mainly as a teaching institute. Wang Ning's view is representative of those who were mainly trained in China ten years ago. They were trained in a time when there was no such thing as research universities in China, and they were mainly to be teachers rather than researchers. As described by Wang Ning,

Previously there would be multiple circles of preparation before one could go teach. And teachers have to be familiar with educational psychology and pedagogy. Now all of these requirements are gone. They go teach as soon as they are hired. I do not think they are good at teaching (Wang Ning, a locally trained scholar).

Therefore, as one consequence of this curriculum reform, a gap was formed between those who thought SOE should primarily be a teaching institute and those who agreed that in order to achieve the international standard, SOE should be transformed into a research-intensive institute.

4.3.3 Emphasizing research

As mentioned in the previous section, with the goal of achieving world-class status along its internationalization process, the concept of the research institute was introduced to SOE. When asked to define a research institute, Lei Gong, the Dean commented, "*like Harvard, or Yale, those research-intensive universities*". Clearly, the

term research institute is not very well-defined though it is widely used in a number of SOE's institutional documents.

According to Mohrman and her colleagues, a research university possesses eight characteristics:

A mission transcending the boundaries of the nation-state, research-intensive, new roles for faculty members, diversified funding, new relationships with stakeholders, worldwide recruitment, greater internal complexity, and global cooperation with similar institutions. (Mohrman, Ma, & Baker, 2008, p. 29)

For SOE, among the above eight characteristics, research is definitely considered crucial in its internationalization process. With the goal of competing with world-class universities, the institute is clearly moving from a higher education institution that rewards teaching towards one that heavily invests in and rewards research, as well as high-quality publications. The majority of the overseas trained interviewees were in agreement on this point. They believed that one way to raise the reputation of a higher education institution was through faculty publications. Especially for newly hired faculty members from overseas, evaluation criteria largely depend on their publications in top Economics journals in the field. When asked what they thought about these criteria, most of them thought that this was consistent with their career goals, which is "conducting high quality research". And they thought a good measurement was quantity of publication in top journals in their related field, as a marker of quality. One of the overseas trained faculty members commented,

Since the only way or the best way to raise SOE's reputation is to have faculty

members publish in top international Economics journals, this is also the only evaluation criterion for many Western research institutes. It will be unrealistic to ignore this fact. (Kun Le, a returnee scholar)

Therefore, with a mindset of achieving world-class status, the quantity and quality of publications have been equated with international reputation at the institutional level of SOE.

However, one returnee faculty member saw the emphasis on publication in Western journals very differently,

Why does the SOE need to hire scholars from overseas, since the aim is not only to publish in top Western Economics journals, but more importantly to serve China's economy. I think our orientation should be that through us, the Western trained economists, to learn the modern economics theories and tools. The fundamental aim of this education reform should be serving China's economy, and to deal with the problems that China has met in its economic development. However, the institute now emphasizes too much on publishing in western journals. Some of the publications might be irrelevant within China. Of course, I am not against this. But I think the institute should encourage faculty members to be concerned more about China's economic problems. With the current orientation of only pursuing quantity of publications in top western journals, it has deviated from the original intention of this reform. (Zheng Hao, a returnee scholar)

As mentioned at previous sections, one concrete goal of SOE's internationalization is to internationalize the academic research, which SOE interpreted as using advanced Western Economics tools to analyze and help solve economic problems in China. In other words, it is to help effective policy making in order for China to transition from a labor-intensive economy to one that relies on technology and innovation. However, in reality, SOE is facing this dilemma that Zheng Hao has pointed out: its current emphasis of pursuing publication quantity in top journals has deviated from this original intention of the reform.

Hearing what Zheng Hao said, I was wondering, why not integrate the two goals, researching China's economic issues and producing high quality papers? My question then found an answer during the interview with another returnee scholar Kun Le, who said:

Integrating the two would be ideal: researching China's economic issues and producing high quality papers. However the reality is that it is pretty difficult to achieve this. For example, using the same model to study an economic issue, the one on the U.S. has a better chance to be published than the one on China, since the American economists dominate this discipline. So if you want to study China's economic issues, and you want to publish in top international Economics journals, your paper has to be much better than the one on American economic issue. (Kun Le, a returnee scholar)

It is hard to test the validity Kun Le's statement about the international competition for space in top journals, however, from the faculty member's websites, I

found that the majority of their work is on theoretical topics rather than empirical issues. This is true for many other disciplines in China and elsewhere: there is an ongoing debate between doing empirical research and doing theoretical research. At SOE, however, another complex reality is that the majority of the faculty members want to conduct empirical research on China's economic issues, yet, with the pressure to publish, the major of them choose to focus on theoretical research.

Ou Wen, the Associate Dean, better explained the reasons of this complex reality. He pointed out that it was both external and internal reasons that lead to this awkward situation at SOE. First, the inequality of resource distribution directed by various central ministries in Beijing among higher education institutions is one major cause externally.

The central policy, specially the policy from the Ministry of Education, is heavily leaning towards institutions in Beijing. In particular, the research projects related to policy study are all assigned to specific higher education institutions or research institutions belonging to the central ministries. This market is basically a monopoly market. Every higher education institution in Beijing has its own connections, which are way too important in China. Without a strong connection with the central ministries, it is really hard to get their projects, hard to get their support. Therefore, a major difference between us and the universities in Beijing is that, we have so many overseas recruited faculty members, there are only few doing empirical research with Chinese data. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

Second, according to Ou Wen, it takes time for a junior researcher to accumulate the skills and experiences to conduct empirical research. Moreover, the majority of the

faculty members at SOE are junior and there is a lack of senior researchers who have the capacity to involve other people in doing empirical research. As he explained,

People doing empirical research are more competitive and more popular than people doing theoretical research. Those people who do research on both Chinese and international economics issues are extremely competitive on job market. So far, it has been almost impossible to hire these people back to China. For a junior researcher, if you have never done empirical research, and do not have a deep understanding of China's economic issues, it is going to be really hard to conduct empirical research. Therefore, because of the pressure to publish, and a huge time commitment to conduct empirical research on China's economics issue, the majority of overseas trained faculty members gave up on doing this, and focus on theoretical research instead. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

Therefore, even though it seems like an ideal model of internationalizing research at SOE by combining Western economics tools with empirical research on China's economy, in reality, SOE is facing a number of challenges mainly due to a lack of *Xue Shu Feng Qi* which encourages doing such research.

4.3.4 Intensifying academic exchange

The last component of SOE's internationalization strategy entails frequent academic exchange, including both going-out and coming-in activities.

On the one hand, with more Chinese scholars returning from overseas, they also bring back strong academic ties with the rest of the world to the institute. With these

enlarged academic networks, the academic exchange became intensified at the institute. For example, seminars were introduced to the institute and are held at least twice a week now. Previously academic seminar was not a tradition at a Chinese higher education institution. It invites famous economists from overseas frequently, including noble prize laureates, to give talks or seminars. It has held over ten international conferences in related field over the last six years (SOE, 2010, 2011).

Not only faculty members, but students at SOE also have benefited from its intensified academic exchanges. For example, since 2006 the institute has invited at least one world-renown economist each year to give mini-courses to its graduate students. The number of students who were admitted to top Economics institutes overseas has increased every year; there have been up to one hundred students who have gone to graduate schools abroad for further study, at places including Stanford University, Columbia University, Cornell University, and the University of Michigan (SOE, 2010). Alumni who have been pursuing further degrees abroad also have a positive influence in current SOE student's future international educational decisions.

Moreover, SOE has contributed to the national Economics community. It has organized free summer courses every year for domestically trained Economics teachers all over the country since 2007. So far there have been 514 people from different parts of China who have benefited from this program (SOE, 2010b).

On the other hand, there have also been constant going-out activities for both faculty members and students. First, the SOE, along with the China Scholar Council, fund faculty members and students for overseas academic exchanges. These programs

last from half a year up to four years. Second, owing to its frequent collaborations with overseas scholars and institutions and broaden academic networks, its faculty members were constantly invited to overseas institutions (SOE, 2009).

However, from the interviews I learnt that SOE's faculty members did not benefit from the intensified academic exchange equally. Language is the first major barrier for those who are left out, exclusively domestically trained faculty members. As true for most academic institutions in the world today, English has become the official language in various academic activities including seminars, conferences, talks, etc. The same is true for SOE. Therefore, most domestically trained faculty members who are not fluent in English choose not to participate in these international activities. As one of the local faculty member explained to me,

Honestly, the *Xue Shu Feng Qi* has been changed. For example, it is more convenient to communicate with researchers from overseas, through seminars and conferences held at the institute. However, not everyone benefits from this, mainly because of the language barrier. Most locally trained faculty members won't go to seminars organized by returnees, because first the topics are irrelevant to their own researches; second, their English is not good enough to participate. Locally trained people do not belong to the same academic circle as the returnees do. (Wang Ning, a locally trained scholar)

Another issue related to English as the major academic language at SOE, even though none of the interviewees pointed out explicitly, is that this language barrier also makes it hard for locally trained faculty to publish in English journals. So they primarily

publish in Chinese journals, which is not rewarded as much as publishing in English ones.

Furthermore, as Wang Ning pointed out, the difference in research topic between the returnee group and the locally trained faculty group is another obstacle that prevents them from participating in academic exchanges.

I have to admit that a major difference between the two groups is that we do not have the same knowledge structure as they do since we were never trained in their way. For locally trained faculty, most of us are doing empirical research, which involves very little theoretical models. It is difficult for us to learn the tools and models that are popular in modern Western economics. (Wang Ning, a locally trained scholar)

4.4 Academic communication and integration at SOE

As stated earlier, this section continues the analysis on academic culture at the institute, which was embedded in previous discussions on the activities of the internationalization the institute, including overseas recruiting and strengthening Xue Shu Feng Qi, curriculum reform, emphasis on research, and intensifying academic exchange. Differing views shown over these activities shed light on the academic culture differences between the locally and internationally trained faculty. To continue the analysis with this respect, the presentation of the findings in this section focuses on academic communication and integration of two academic cultures represented by these two groups at SOE.

As mentioned in the last section, even though there is intensified academic exchange at the institute, due to the language barrier and differences in research methodology, locally trained faculty do not benefit from the exchanges equally as returnees do. During the interview, all the participants had quite similar views about academic communication and integration at SOE: the communication between locally trained and overseas trained faculty members is rare. As one returnee said,

To be honest, there is no academic communication with them (locally trained faculty) so far, at least no co-authoring so far. (Kun Le, a returnee scholar)

The senior managers seemed to be quite aware of this segregation of the two groups when I asked about the efforts to bring them together. The Associate Dean said,

For sure we tried, but basically it is not so successful. On the one hand, we pay for at least one local faculty member to get re-training in the U.S. every year.

However, there is a huge fixed cost for these faculty members to change [their research focus or methodology]. On the other hand, 90% of our newly recruited faculty members are junior. For them, it is very difficult to find new topics with the capacity to involve others in their research. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

He then explained with a bit of frustration,

I think the major difficulty is that we do not have any senior faculty member from overseas who could be the leader of our research teams, or who has the capacity to combine various research topics and research methodologies. Academic

activities like seminars, or international conferences, are indeed good ways to find co-authors. But still it is hard; there is no academic leader in this area.

Only an empirical and applied scholar is able to bring together the two groups. Researchers doing theoretical stuff lack the instruments; often times they won't consider too much about things that have happened in real life. Although local faculty members are good at doing applied research, individual attempts to integrate with each other were not that successful either. There are a few junior faculty members doing empirical stuff in China who are pretty good, such as Rae, but she is also on her own. (Ou Wen, Associate Dean)

What Ou Wen has explained revealed the difficulty in internationalizing Economics research at the institute and he has also linked this difficulty with lack of communication between returnee group and local faculty group at the institute.

On the one hand, the challenge pointed out by Ou Wen was consistent with understandings of the same issue at other Economics institutions in China. A workshop on "Economics Education and Reform in China" that also celebrated the 80th birthday of Gregory C. Chow was held at Xiamen University in June 2010 (The Wang Yanan Institute for Studies in Economics, 2010). Gregory Chow was among the first Western Economists to introduce modern Western Economics to China and he had advised the Chinese State Education Commission on economics education in China, and the Prime Minister and the State Commission for Restructuring the Economic System on economic reform in China around 1980-1990s (Liu, 2007; Chow, 2011). During this workshop, Chinese economists from the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Hong Kong, as well as from

the mainland, identified the challenge of internationalizing Economics research and teaching in Chinese institutions. This challenge lies primarily in utilizing Western Economics tools to do empirical research on economic issues in China.

On the other hand, a locally trained faculty member thought differently concerning the reasons leading to the lack of communication between the two groups.

Unlike Fudan, where the local and the returnees are always involved in various research projects together, at SOE, the two groups are separate. The local faculty members are always asked to do trial things such as collecting data, instead of participating in the core research part. Other kind of collaboration based on personal relations varies among people. It is very rare. It is because of the research topics and methodology difference, like what I said previously. So overall, the integration of the two groups depends on people, as well as the orientation of the institutional in general. (Wang Ning, a local scholar)

Wang Ning thought that the returnee group dominated the academic culture at SOE: the local faculty group was marginalized and they were less valued than before. He believed that if the institution took more responsibility for integration of the two groups, the lack-of-communication situation would be improved. Wang Ning's response was always with a negative tone and his was the only negative response among all the interviews. At the end of our conversation, I wanted to give him a chance to express his view of the internationalization of China's higher education in general. He did think it is a must to internationalize Chinese higher education. Yet, he turned his attention to SOE again.

Internationalization is a good thing for Chinese higher education institutions.

What we need to consider more than anything else is how to achieve this. As far as I am concerned, *Jie Gui* should be reflected in three major areas: research, teaching, and faculty members. However, the only accomplishment so far is the number of overseas trained faculty members, around 40. In contrast, we have only 20 local faculty members left. (Wang Ning, a local scholar)

With my interviews with returnee faculty group, even though none of them had collaborated with local faculty thus far, they were all optimistic about future possibilities to work together. As one returnee said,

I am doing empirical research, which requires lots of collaboration with colleagues, including data collection and methodologies. I have tried once to work with colleagues at SOE, but it failed because the data collection did not work out.

There are only a couple colleagues here whose research is close to mine. As far as I know, this is also true in most North American institutions, where only a small number of people doing research in the same field. The Economics department normally is not a big one at most higher education institutions. My research field is Industrial Organization, very empirical. There are colleagues here doing theoretical research in this field, and there are always overlaps between theory and practice. In general there are connections between my research and others. (Wen Juan, a returnee scholar)

These findings reveal that differences in academic culture are major barriers for SOE's integration of the two groups. In this case, the academic culture difference is

embodied in the socialization of faculty members, different research traditions, and different views on the mission of the institution (teaching v.s. research). Resolving the academic culture differences seems to be the key to internationalizing Chinese higher education.

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 Discussion on national and institutional strategies and rationales

Knight (2004) proposed a working definition of internationalization and she categorizes strategies, rationales, and approaches of internationalization at national, sectoral and institutional levels. This study based on a Chinese institution finds commonality as well as differences compared to Knight (2004)'s model.

In terms of policies and strategies related to internationalization, China's case has shown that there is a lesser distinction between national and sectoral policies or strategies. This is related to the fact that China still has a very centralized government. Policies made at the sectoral level, for example Ministry of Education, have to be approved by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council.

China's national policy does not show a well-articulated rationale for internationalization except its decisive tone in linking the economic and social development with the performance and research capacity of its higher education institutions. This shows similarity to the findings from Knight (2004): internationalization at the national level connects with nation building and national economic competitiveness. In terms of national level strategies, China has moved away

from supporting massification of higher education in the 1990s toward aggressively investing in its elite universities, those with potential to enter world-class university league. Moreover, it has strengthened financial support for Chinese students to study abroad at graduate level in those so-called key disciplines. Other than these, there has not been any concrete plan to support the most fundamental aspects of internationalization: intercultural or global education. So a broad sense of internationalization is neglected in China's national policy.

As Knight (2004) argues, an approach to internationalization reflects or characterizes the values, priorities, and actions that are exhibited during the work toward implementing internationalization. Accordingly, China's expectation of creating instant success through heavy input and improving the quality of higher education through internationalization have shown a very utilitarian approach toward internationalization. This mentality traces its roots to the history of China's higher education as discussed in Chapter IV.

Again, as Knight (2004) argues, there is a close liaison between national-level and institutional-level rationales, but it is not always as close as one would expect. This is especially true for the case in China. Other than the national level rationales which closely link to the needs of economic and social development of the nation, the institutional level rationales are primarily out of academic concerns: to improve the quality of Economics teaching and research. The rationale for SOE is in line with Knight (2004)'s accounts of institutional level rationales: student and staff development, strategic alliances, and knowledge production. All in all, for individual institution,

internationalization is seen as a way to gain a competitive edge for its higher education. In terms of strategies, besides academic programs, research and scholarly collaboration as categorized by Knight (2004), one distinct strategy of the case study institute is overseas faculty member recruitment. This major difference lay in the well-known notion that Chinese higher education is corrupt and lags in quality. Therefore, attracting overseas trained people is like infusing new blood to the old higher education system. Although this strategy is disputable, it has been adopted by many elite institutions in China.

4.5.2 Discussion on interactions among the global, national and local

From a macro perspective, it is hard to say internationalization of higher education in China is a bottom-up or top-down process. Applying Marginson and Rhoades (2002)'s glonacal agency heuristic into this case, it is more accurate to say that there is a dynamic two-way interactions among three levels: global, national and local.

The interaction between the national and the local is very frequent when China decided to heavily finance elite institutions and it is a top-down force directly from the national government to the local institution through its financial power. The local institute then seizes this as an opportunity to develop its own academic capacity and it also actively negotiates with the national policy makers in order to get more support for its own development. Therefore, the two-way interaction between the national and the local becomes visible.

Meanwhile, the local institution searches in the global space for human capital. When the returnee scholars joining the local institution, the academic exchange between the local and the global is strengthened, through academic conferences both home and

abroad, short-term exchange programs of students and faculty members, and overseas renowned scholars offering mini-courses at the local institution. This stage sees more frequent two-way exchanges between the local and the international level than exchanges between the local and the national. The local institution in this process becomes a competitive player in the global space.

What is less evident in this case is the exchange between national agency and international agencies. Unlike cases in other countries, for example Australia, where international organizations such as OECD have played a significant role in policy harmonization and dissemination, there has not been any evidence showing that China is significantly influenced by supranational agencies. But it might happen in the future.

The dimensions of 'reciprocity', 'strength', 'layers and conditions' and 'sphere' in Marginson and Rhoades (2002)' heuristic can be fruitfully applied to the internationalization process at the case study institution. Reciprocity is clearly evident in the two-way influences between all levels of the internationalization process. The interesting part in this case is the powerful bottom-up influences from institutional level upwards to national level, afterwards to the global level. Meanwhile, the flow from institutional/local to national and global is not linear; rather, there is simultaneity of flows. Strength or magnitude of influences operating upwards from local/institutional is evidently stronger than the influences operating downwards from international level at the beginning stages of internationalization implementation at the institute. However, as this process continues, international agency or agencies might exert more influences on the national/institutional level. Layers and conditions also play a major role in the

institute's internationalization process, for example, the resistance from some locally trained faculty at the very beginning. Spheres can be measured as the influences from institutional level go beyond national level, even extending to global level.

Overall, the 'glonacal agency heuristic' that Marginson and Rhoades propose provides a useful conceptual framing to analyze of the global-national-local dynamics during a local institution's internationalization. As it reveals, there are significant two-way exchanges among institutional, national and international, although the exchange between the national and the international agency is not evident yet. And influences of the institutional level practices go beyond national level, extending to the international level.

4.5.3 Discussion on differences of academic culture between the West and Chinese

If internationalization is seen as the reaction toward globalization as a number of scholars argue, globalization exerts inevitable influences on a country's higher education system and institutions mainly through market competition (de Wit & Knight, 1999). It is changing the way Chinese universities operate, and cultivating a culture of competition, corporate managerialism, efficiency and accountability in China's higher education (Yang, 2002). This is especially true for the case study institution in that it intentionally brings a large number of returnee scholars back, and it aggressively embraces Western practices. So the differences, if there was any, between Western academic culture and Chinese, are shown its extreme at SOE. From this study, even though I could not get as much as I expected due to time and budget constrains, it still shows that the differences in academic culture is worth the attention from higher education practitioners in China. The

differences are explicitly reflected in a couple of aspects: (1) the mission of a higher education institution: research institution versus teaching institution, (2) differing research methodologies due to different knowledge systems for those trained in the West and those in China. These aspects are directly related to mission and socialization within Tierney (1988)'s framework for academic culture at higher education settings.

These findings have also shown disparity from Yang (2002)'s argument about Sino-centrism mentality of learning from the West. He argues that unlike other south-east Asian countries, China never entirely succumbed to colonial incursions, therefore, the mentality of Sino-centrism remains relatively unchanged, and prevailing attitudes toward Western culture and education still largely fits within the old formula: "Chinese learning as the essence, Western learning for its utility". However, SOE's intentional embracing of Western practices despite of its awareness of bringing together the Western and the Chinese has shown that the old formula might not work any more. In line of this argument, only Pan (2005) theoretically points out not to blindly copy the Western models or practices; there is a severe lack of scholarly debate in China with regards to respecting its own educational traditions while absorbing good practices from the West. So probably more than anything else, it is worth debating how to bridge the differences of academic culture without muting one voice over the other.

CHAPTER 5 Conclusion

In conducting this study, I intended to investigate how a Chinese higher education institution is going through its internationalization process. I set out to answer three main questions:

1. How is internationalization interpreted at the national level, in terms of strategies, approaches, and rationales?
2. How is internationalization interpreted at the institutional level, in terms of activities, and rationales?
3. At the core of the internationalization of higher education in China lies potential academic cultural clashes. How is this clash manifested, and how is this clash addressed at the institutional level?

To answer these questions, I conducted a series of interviews with various faculty members and administrators of the School of Economics at Pacific University. The analysis of these interviews provided interesting answers to the three research questions. In this chapter, I summarize the findings presented in the previous chapter and draw conclusions from them in light of the framework of internationalization discussed in the review of the literature. This chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section I summarize the findings pertaining to the internationalization at a Chinese institution. In the second section, current understanding of internationalization among Chinese higher education practitioners and the interactions among global, national and local levels are further highlighted. In the last section I address implications and

recommendations for institutional initiatives and future research directions of internationalization based on this study.

Before presenting the conclusions, I will go back to the initial research questions and address the key findings from Chapter IV and Chapter V with an intention to examine to which extent this study has achieved its intended purpose.

5.1 Summary of findings

With regard to the first research question: *how is internationalization interpreted at the national level, in terms of strategies, approaches, and rationales?* From analyzing major policy documents from 1985 to 2011 pertaining to internationalizing higher education in China, this study has shown that China's approach to the internationalization has been quite utilitarian. It has strongly linked the nation's economic development and higher education institutions, especially top tier ones, being the powerhouse for talents, creativity and innovation. This is true for other nations with the worldwide emphasis on knowledge economy over the past decade, but China is probably the only country that has deliberately chosen a small number of universities for substantial investment and for the so-called world-class universities. Only very recently, 2004, did the term internationalization appear in China's official policy documents, with the primary intention to catch up with its Western peers. Although the tone is decisive as it can be, there is no mention of concrete plans or strategies of how to achieve this ambitious goal, except the amount of money pumping into those top-tier universities. This is different from most Western countries, where an emphasis of intercultural education is

incorporated in the internationalization strategy and concrete plans are laid out in the policy frameworks.

The second research question attempted to examine how internationalization was interpreted at the institutional level. The findings based on the case study institute SOE indicate that compared to China's national policy, internationalization at the institutional level has a more structured strategic planning and implementation process. Senior administrators at SOE saw political and economic forces as well as the institute's own history drive its internationalization process. In more detail, the competition for national financial resources among regional and national universities constitutes the major drive behind the internationalization initiatives. What is interesting about SOE's case is that it reveals the negotiation between the institution and the central government along the policy making process. This coincides with Gale (2003)'s observation that policy making is a temporary settling of struggles and conflicts through strategies of negotiation.

Participants' understandings of the internationalization are useful in interpreting the strategies taken up at SOE. The findings have interestingly shown that the Western model became a benchmark in participants' interpretations of internationalization, yet with a strong emphasis on integrating Western disciplinary tools and empirical work on China's economic issues. The participants showed awareness of not falling into the extreme of Westernization. Senior administrators were aware of the resistance from faculty members who have not had much Western educational experience. Generally speaking, faculty members who were trained in China and who chose to stay showed positive perceptions on SOE's internationalization. Although one locally-trained faculty

member did express his dissatisfaction with SOE's strategies and activities, he also believed that internationalization was a must for China's universities.

Furthermore, from interviews and analyzing SOE's official documents, the findings have also shown that internationalization was reflected in four dimensions of SOE's activities: 1) overseas recruitment and strengthening *Xue Shu Feng Qi* (similar to academic ethos or academic atmosphere), 2) curriculum reform and strengthening teaching quality, 3) emphasizing on research, and 4) intensifying academic exchange.

During the interviews, *Jie Gui* was used all the time instead of the literal translation of internationalization in Mandarin. *Jie Gui* is a term borrowed from the economic arena, and has been widely used in public discourses related to higher education reform in China, yet shows a very strong conformity to Western norms and practices. In this study, the findings have also shown the conformity to the Western norm imbedded in *Jie Gui* creates the clash between the academic cultures, even though the participants were aware of not falling too far to the Westernization extreme. The conflicts were embodied in the four major strategies listed above at SOE: 1) aggressive overseas recruitment and doubts about whether more returnee scholars will for sure strengthen the institutional *Xue Shu Feng Qi*, 2) Westernized curriculum given the standardized curriculum of Economics and differing thoughts on what is truly useful for students in China, 3) emphasis on research coupled with the national policy agenda of building up world-class research universities and worries about sacrificing the quality of teaching, and 4) intensifying academic exchange and people being excluded due to insufficient English skills as a major barrier.

The third research question, with its focus on the potential for academic culture clash between the returnee group and locally trained faculty group, is actually a continuation of the second research question. As explained in the last paragraph, the conflict or clash of academic culture is embedded in the practices and activities of internationalization at SOE. The findings also show that the difficulty of academic communication and integration primarily lies with differing research topics and methodologies between the two groups. It is also to do with the Western normative view of what is good economics research. Even though the institution has been putting efforts in bridging the differences, the reality is there is a lack of communication between the two groups.

Overall, as can be seen, the answers to the first and the third questions are truly indeed embedded in the exploration of the second question. This is consistent with the adoption of the case study method in this study, which explores not only the case itself, but also the external environment exerting influences on the bounded system.

5.2 Discussion of findings

5.2.1 Discussion on perceptions of internationalization among Chinese higher education practitioners

As mentioned in the literature review, Yang's (2002) empirical work on three Chinese universities provides valuable resources for a comparative analysis of the findings from this study. From a macro perspective, the conception of internationalization to the national policy makers remain almost the same as Yang (2002) points out: the Chinese government regards internationalization as a strategy to strengthen national

economic competitiveness. This tone is even more urgent than back then, along with China's dedicated commitment to build world-class universities. This national policy shift affects the institutional practices because projects based on economic and social development needs are more likely to get considerable funds from the central government.

Yet, at the institutional level, internationalization is more broadly understood in this study compared with understandings from Yang (2002)'s participants about nine years ago. It is closer to how it is interpreted in the West: it is a process to integrate an international dimension into teaching, research and service. More importantly, in the case study institution, these aspects of internationalization are reflected in their day-to-day practices, going far beyond the academic exchanges and international collaboration with overseas institutions. It pays attention to education quality at the institutional level, trying to combine Western practices with local needs. This is partially because of the interviewees' education experiences in the West, most of whom gained their doctorates in North America and some of whom have years of teaching and research experiences in the West. They themselves are aware of combining Western learning with Chinese and local context.

As pointed out in the limitation section earlier, the case study institute is somewhat unique due to its peculiar geographic location and its prestige in Economics research and teaching therefore its ability to attract returnee scholars. So the contrast between now and then in terms of conceptions of internationalization might be different for other higher education institutions. This is in line with Yang (2002)'s observation that

there is a world of difference between the top-ranking institutions in big cities, and the struggling provincial universities in isolated areas with regard to conception of internationalization (p.180).

What is lacking in the discussion of internationalization at the case study institute is the international student. Neither the institute's web site nor its official documents mentions international students, although I had encountered international students before from my own experience of being a student at SOE. The lack of documentation and discussion of international students by the institute proves Yang's (2002) argument: international students have not been sufficiently regarded as a human resource; they remain isolated, and are poorly integrated into mainstream campus life; overseas students' skills and backgrounds have not been fully utilized (p.152). Unfortunately the case study institution does not show any change of this segregated situation for international students.

5.2.2 Further discussion on glo-na-cal interactions

As Marginson (2011) speculates, although global capacity in education and research are becoming more plural, the US still maintains an advantage in innovation. This creates a difficult situation for higher education in other traditions. "The challenge is to find a way to become both engaged in and potent in the global dimension while sustaining control over self-identity" (Marginson, 2011, p.23). So if previously there were any worries about introducing the Western higher education practices will endanger Chinese higher education tradition, SOE's practices have brought the tension between the two traditions to the forefront. This case study has both shown the interactions among the

global, national and local levels, and highlights the struggles of individual institution in maintaining its identity in the process of internationalization.

China's national government has responded to the pressure from globalization in an active way, by implementing a coherent national policy and heavily funding selected universities and disciplines. This on the one hand improves the competitiveness of the top national higher education institution; on the other hand, it exerts controls on educational practices and research agenda. Fortunately, global systems of information, knowledge, people flows and relations between networked institutions have a growing power to generate action. This global dimension becomes "a source of scope for greater university freedom beyond the bounds of the nation-state" (Marginson, 2011, p. 25). The university becomes not just nationally referenced, but globally referenced. The institution sees its position in the global context.

However, struggles exist, especially at the institutional level, in maintaining its identity. Should a Chinese higher education institution be Chinese, or truly internationalized? And how to realize these goals? SOE's case shows a lack of discussion of education aims, and education content before they initiated any internationalization activities. I am not suggesting that this kind of discussion will minimize the gap between locally trained and Western trained Chinese scholars. But it will help raise their awareness of differences in academic cultures, and may help them to create a collegial academic culture than being segregated from each other.

5.3 Implications for future institutional and research direction

This section, based on the case study of SOE, identifies courses of action and gives recommendations for institutional initiatives as well as for future research on internationalization.

5.3.1. Expertise on internationalization

Based on SOE's practices and experiences, internationalization at a Chinese higher education institution does not come easily. As Knight (2004) points out, working in the field of internationalization requires an additional set of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and understandings about the international/ intercultural/global dimension of higher education. This not only has implication for administrators, but also academics, and policy makers. Based on this study at SOE, all these parties involved in the field of internationalization have to raise awareness of cultural differences and pay attention to the coming-in activities of internationalization. For example, how to better serve needs of international students in China? How to help returnee scholars cope with the reverse culture shock? How to truly internationalize curriculum?

5.3.2 Future research on internationalization

Higher education itself is not a strong research field in China; internationalization receives even less attention. To enrich the research on internationalization of higher education in China, based on my own research, I hope the further work will focus on the following areas: (1) a broader examination of internationalization of universities or institutions, including those non top-tier universities; (2) a broader investigation of internationalization of different disciplines and differences among disciplines; (3) the

changing academic culture in Chinese higher education institutions; (4) evaluation of the quality of individual initiatives toward internationalization.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Invitation to participate in interview

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Department of
Educational Studies**
Faculty of Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z4
(604) 822-5374

Invitation to Participate in Interview for Research Study

Study Title: Internationalizing Chinese Higher Education Institutions

In the last ten years, Chinese higher educational policy has moved from supporting massification of higher education to heavily investing in a small group of universities with the potential to become world-class universities. This national policy shift along with the intensification of globalization has posed great opportunities for Chinese higher education institutions to undertake reforms towards internationalization. At the same time, constraints remain due to the lack of autonomy compared to western counterparts. This research project intends to better understand the experiences and practices of the internationalization process at a Chinese higher education institution.

As a faculty member at the School of Economics, Pacific University (SOE), you are invited to participate in this study as an interviewee. Interviews will require approximately 30 minutes, and will take place on the SOE campus or another convenient location. If you are interested in participating, please email *** or call *** by March 23 to learn more.

Eligibility requirements: Must be either:

- 1) a senior administrator who has been actively involving in SOE's strategic planning and decision making since 2004 or
- 2) a faculty member from the Department of Economics who has been actively teaching and/or advising and/or doing research in the last six years.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Chinese universities navigate their ways through internationalization facing both the opportunities posed by the shift of China's higher education policy as well as remaining constraints due to the lack of autonomy. It intends to explore the strategies, approaches and rationales of the internationalization of

Chinese higher education institutions, and pays special attention to how Chinese higher education institutions would address the potential clashes of academic cultures in their internationalization process.

Interviews with senior administrators and faculty members will help us to better understand the challenges and opportunities the institution has encountered in the internationalization process.

How Results Will Be Used:

Your identity will be kept strictly confidential. Your participation is voluntary and will not influence your standing with the School, or your academic career. Data collected will be used in a Master's thesis which will be publicly available from the University of British Columbia library website.

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Amy Scott Metcalfe, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies, Faculty of Education.

Co-Investigators:

Huacong Liu, Master student, Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC,

Dr. Kjell Rubenson, Professor, Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC,

Dr. Tom Sork, Professor, Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC.

Contact: If you are interested in participating in this study or have any questions about the study, please contact Huacong Liu at *** or call ***.

Appendix B: Interview consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Department of
Educational Studies**
Faculty of Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z4
(604) 822-5374

Interview Consent Form

Internationalizing Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Amy Scott Metcalfe, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies

Co-Investigator: Huacong Liu, Master student in Higher Education Program,
Educational Studies

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Chinese higher education institutions navigate their ways through internationalization at a time when Chinese institutions more actively integrate into world university community than ever before. You have been invited to take part in this research because you are a faculty member at School of Economics, Pacific University (SOE). You were selected due to your fit with study eligibility criteria, with consideration for gender, educational background, and length of stay at SOE.

Consent:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. It is normal for some research subjects to decide not to participate, and you will not be penalized in any way for not participating.

Study Procedures:

You have volunteered to participate in a one-on-one interview with the co-investigator of this study. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and will be held in your office on the SOE campus or other mutually agreed upon location. The interview will be

digitally recorded for the sole purpose of making an accurate transcription after the interview is over.

Data collected during the interview may be included in a Master thesis which will be publicly available from the University of British Columbia library website.

Potential Risks:

As a result of participating in this study, you may experience some emotional discomfort or be inconvenienced due to time spent. However, participating in this study will not affect your standing within the School. No one outside the research team will be informed of your participation.

Potential Benefits:

There are numerous benefits to participating in this study. Your participation may help the researcher to better understand the opportunities and challenges for Chinese higher education institutions in the internationalization process, and therefore may help to contribute to the literature on internationalization of higher education in China. Your responses may help other Chinese universities to work more strategically in their internationalization initiatives. You can have the personal satisfaction of knowing you assisted a former SOE student and a current UBC student in conducting her thesis research, and that this research may help other higher education institutions in China to be more successful in their internationalization process. You will be provided with a summary of the findings by email and will be able to access the thesis through the UBC library's website.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept strictly confidential at all times, excepting in a case if you were to reveal information that may be perceived as indicating serious breaches of academic integrity. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. Any identifying information from the interview will be removed in any reports from this study. All documents and recordings will be kept in a locked, secured location for up to five years, at which time they may be destroyed.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, please contact *** or ***.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

Appendix C: Interview questions for faculty members

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Department of
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Faculty of Education
2125 Main Mall
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(604) 822-5374

Interview Questions for Faculty Members

Internationalizing Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Questions for locally trained faculty members:

1. How do you perceive SOE's academic environment changes since 2004?
2. Have there been any changes on curriculum since 2004? How are decisions like this made? Are you happy with the curriculum or the curriculum changes?
3. Do you advise PhD students? How many PhD students do you advise? How are your advisees determined?
4. How often do you attend seminars? How would you benefit from these seminars? How often do colleagues comment on each other's paper?
5. How often do you socialize with other professors? What types of interactions do you have with them, seminars, advising students or other departmental activities?
6. How would you comment on SOE's internationalization process so far?

Questions for western trained faculty members:

1. Before joining SOE, what were your expectations about the academic environment? Where did those expectations come from? Did these expectations matter to you when you considered taking a job here?
2. Have you been involved in curriculum design at SOE? How are decisions surrounding curriculum made? Are international aspects considered? Are you happy with the curriculum for the undergraduate program or PhD program?
3. Do you advise PhD students? How many PhD students do you advise? How are your advisees assigned to you?
4. How often do you attend academic seminars or conferences? How do you find the level of academic exchange at these sessions, and does this differ when these are held in China or in other countries?

5. How often do you socialize with locally trained professors? What types of interactions do you have with them (such as seminars, advising students or other departmental activities)?
6. What do you think about SOE's internationalization process so far?

Appendix D: Interview questions for senior administrators

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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Interview Questions for Senior Administrators

Internationalizing Chinese Higher Education Institutions

1. How did SOE get funding from the central government in the beginning? What are the government's strategies to support SOE? Why do you think the government supports SOE's growth and its international transformation?
2. What is your understanding of internationalization? What were the specific goals of SOE's transformation towards internationalization when you first took this position? How has it evolved in the last six years?
3. Why did SOE initiate this transformation towards internationalization? What are the strategies and approaches?
4. What were the foreseeable challenges to initiate this transformation towards internationalization? What were the unexpected challenges along the way? How have they been resolved?
5. Does SOE try to bring together western and locally trained scholars? What efforts have been made? Has this gone smoothly, or have there been conflicts?

Appendix E: Interview questions for faculty members in Mandarin

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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对本土培养的教师的访谈问题

课题：中国高等教育机构的国际化

1. 在经济学院2004年开展改革以来，您怎样看待其科研环境的变化？
2. 您参与过课程设置吗？对于您所教授过的课程，在决定教学大纲和教材方面，您有多大的自主权？对于您比较熟悉的本科／硕士／博士的课程设置您满意吗？
3. 您指导博士学生吗？您指导多少博士学生？学生和导师是如何选定的？
4. 你多久参加一次学术研讨会？您从这些学术研讨会中受益多少？您和同事之间经常点评彼此的论文吗？
5. 您跟系里的其它老师交流的机会多吗？在什么场合下比较多？比如学术研讨会，指导学生，还是系里的活动？
6. 您对经济学院的改革或国际化进程总体上作何评价？

对西方培养的教师的访谈问题

课题：中国高等教育机构的国际化

1. 在来到经济学院之前，您对科研环境的总体期望是什么？这些期望是如何形成的？这些期望是如何影响您来经济学院的决定的？
2. 您参与过课程设置吗？对于您所教授过的课程，在决定教学大纲和教材方面，您有多大的自主权？对于您比较熟悉的本科／硕士／博士的课程设置您满意吗？
3. 您指导博士学生吗？您指导多少博士学生？学生和导师是如何选定的？
4. 你多久参加一次学术研讨会／学术会议？就学术交流的层次来说，您觉得这些研讨会／会议在中国举行或在其它国家举行有差别吗？
5. 您跟国内毕业的老师交流的机会多吗？在什么场合下比较多？比如学术研讨会，指导学生，或是系里的活动？
6. 您对经济学院的改革或国际化进程总体作何评价？

Appendix F: Interview questions for senior administrators in Mandarin

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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对管理人员的访谈问题

课题：中国高等教育机构的国际化

1. 经济学院的改革一开始是如何得到中央政府的支持的？政府支持学校改革的战略具体有哪些？您认为政府为什么要支持经济学院国际化的改革？
2. 您对中国的高等教育国际化是如何理解的？您六年前来到经济学院时，当时走向国际化改革的具体目标有哪些？六年中这些目标有无变化？
3. 经济学院为什么要进行这次改革？具体的战略步骤有哪些？
4. 改革之初可预见的挑战或阻力有哪些？改革六年的过程中有哪些挑战是当时没有遇见到的？他们是如何被化解的？
5. 经济学院有没有力求融合本土培养和西方培养的学者？做出过哪些具体的努力？这些努力的结果如何？
6. 您对经济学院的改革或国际化进程总体上作何评价？