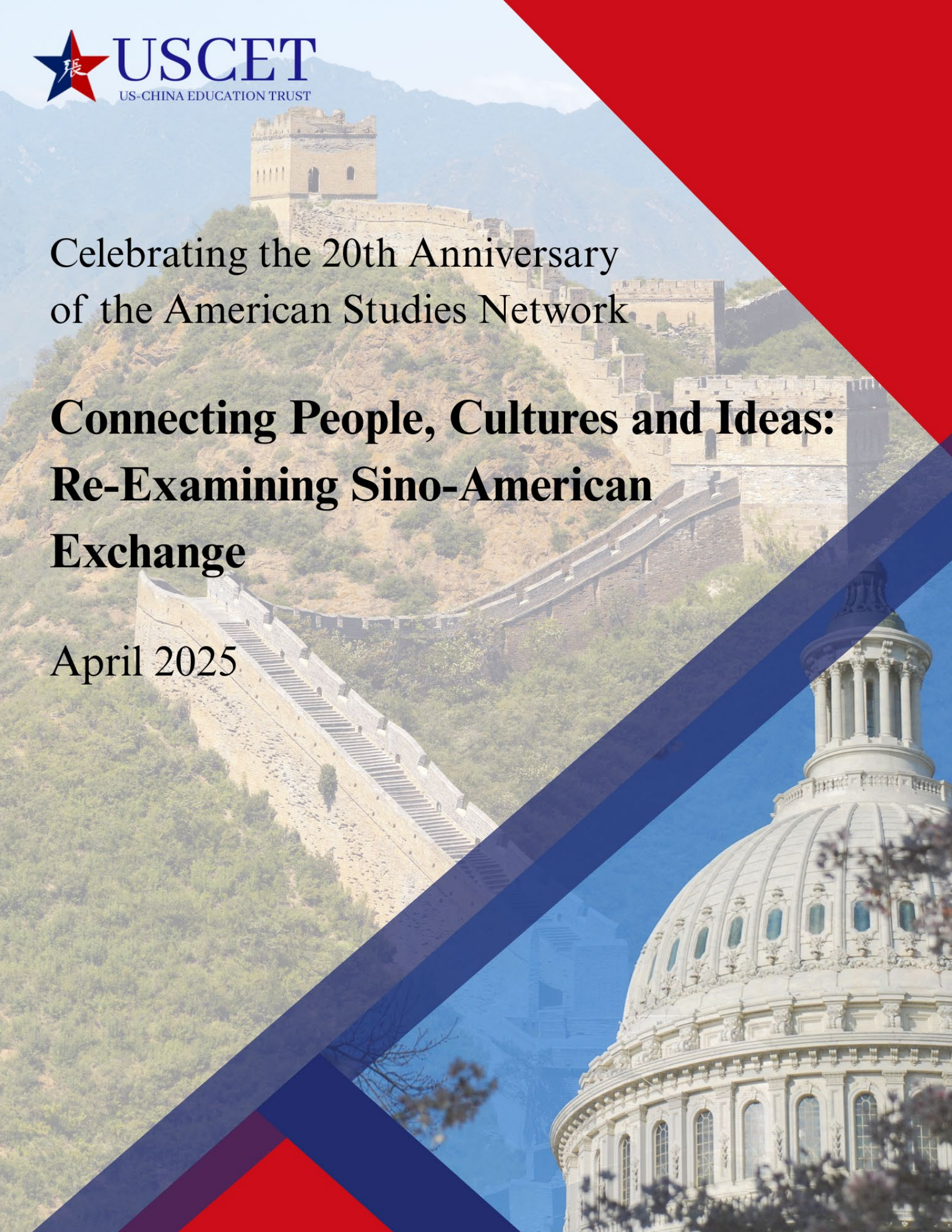


Celebrating the 20th Anniversary
of the American Studies Network

**Connecting People, Cultures and Ideas:
Re-Examining Sino-American
Exchange**

April 2025



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Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network

Connecting People, Cultures and Ideas: Re-Examining Sino-American Exchange

Conference Report

October 25-27, 2024

Beijing

Co-sponsored by:

Beijing Foreign Studies University & US-China Education Trust



This report was prepared by the US-China Education Trust, which is solely responsible for its content.



ABOUT USCET

The US-China Education Trust (USCET) is a program of the F.Y. Chang Foundation, a Washington, DC-based not-for-profit organization registered in the USA. With a track record of implementing successful projects in China since 1998, USCET is dedicated to improving understanding between the US and China through education and exchange for scholars, professionals, and future leaders. In its first two decades, USCET pioneered support programs for the study of American culture and society at Chinese universities across the country and has built a strong network of Chinese academic, think tank, and civil society partners that carry out American Studies and media education, working to engage key stakeholders and partners through conferences, workshops, dialogues, and joint activities to better educate Chinese and Americans about one another. USCET has built strong networks that have proven resilient in the face of a constrained civil society space in China and skepticism toward bilateral ties.

USCET helped to build and support a strong network of Chinese universities that carry out research and teaching on American Studies. The American Studies Network (ASN) was formally established in 2004 and now comprises 54 Chinese institutions of higher education.

FY Chang Foundation is recognized by the IRS as a tax-exempt 501 (C)(3) organization. Learn more on our website: www.uscet.org

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INTRODUCTION

The US-China Education Trust (USCET), in cooperation with Beijing Foreign Studies University, convened the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network (ASN) Conference in Beijing on October 25-27, 2024. This conference celebrated the 20th anniversary of the founding of the ASN in 2004. This milestone event was marked by the first in-person ASN conference since the pandemic reshaped global engagement, successfully bringing together prominent speakers and dynamic panel discussions centered on the theme of *Connecting People, Cultures and Ideas: Re-examining Sino-American Exchange*.

This year's conference unfolded against the backdrop of a significant and far-reaching emerging trend: Indian students outnumbered Chinese students in the United States for the first time since 2009. As highlighted by several keynote speakers at the conference, education exchange is essential in bridging two peoples, fostering deeper understanding, and reducing misperceptions. Its critical role in bilateral relations amidst the current fierce competition is irreplaceable. Yet, we are witnessing a concerning reality: Over the past few years, both the United States and China have experienced a significant decline in student exchanges. Chinese student enrollment in U.S. institutions dropped from a peak of over 372,000 in the 2019/20 academic year to approximately 277,400 by 2023/24—a decline of more than 20 percent. At the same time, the number of American students studying in China dropped from around 11,000 in 2019 to about 800 in 2024.

When USCET first established the American Studies Network two decades ago, the aim was to support the development of the American Studies field as a substantive and recognized academic discipline in China. This is a pillar of USCET's broader mission to promote US-China relations through education and exchange for China's next-generation leaders. This year's conference has rekindled a glimmer of hope in this regard.

The keynote speeches and submitted conference papers underscored the multi-faceted nature of U.S.-China relations. As Professor David Lampton pointed out, US-China relations are beyond state-to-state diplomacy; they also embolden the societal connections that have been shared over time. Encouraging, strengthening, and fostering educational exchange is only more crucial in alleviating bilateral tensions and building a foundation for future constructive engagement. From this perspective, this year's ASN conference has not only met but exceeded its stated goal.

The conference organized three plenary sessions and 12 concurrent panel discussions covering a wide range of pertinent topics in American Studies. Representing 24 institutions, more than 60 panelists brought diverse perspectives through its 12 panel sessions.

The conference attracted over 100 attendees and received 60 proposal submissions. In addition to the usual keynote sessions, concurrent panel sessions, USCET and BFSU introduced an undergraduate symposium for the first time as part of the ASN, providing a platform for emerging Chinese scholars in American studies to present their research. Meanwhile, the American Studies Essay Competition, jointly established by Beijing Foreign Studies University and the US-China Education Trust in 2016 to honor Professor Mei Renyi, underscored a shared commitment to supporting young scholars' achievements in the growing field of American studies.

OPENING REMARKS

Chair: Prof. Fu Meirong, Director, American Studies Center,
Beijing Foreign Studies University

Speakers: Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, Executive Chair,
US-China Education Trust
Prof. Sun Youzhong, Vice President,
Beijing Foreign Studies University

Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch delivered the opening remarks celebrating the 20th anniversary of the American Studies Network. She reflected on the longstanding partnership between USCET and Beijing Foreign Studies University and emphasized the critical role of education and exchange in fostering mutual understanding between the U.S. and China, even amidst strained political relations. In her remarks, Ambassador Bloch reminded the audience that while governments may disagree, people-to-people connections have the unique power to build trust and bridge divides. Despite the long shared history of public diplomacy, there has been a significant decline in educational and cultural exchange between the two countries since the Covid-19 global pandemic. Ambassador Bloch encouraged students and young scholars to embrace the responsibility of sustaining cross-cultural dialogues, particularly in this pivotal moment of heightened tension. She underscored that education, culture, and open communication are essential tools for shaping positive bilateral relations. She concluded by expressing her warm wishes for participants and reaffirming USCET's ongoing commitment to supporting initiatives like ASN that inspire dialogue, cultivate leadership, and create pathways for a more stable and cooperative future between the US and China.

Prof. Sun Youzhong delivered a heartfelt reflection on the 20-year journey of the ASN and its role in strengthening US-China academic exchange. Although unable to attend in person, Prof. Sun expressed his appreciation for having the opportunity to work closely with Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch in ASN's early years. He recalled the original vision of ASN: closing the academic gap between the two countries and fostering meaningful dialogue, research, and teaching. Over two decades, ASN has grown into a dynamic network of 54 Chinese universities, significantly advancing American studies in China and equipping students and scholars with the tools to engage with a complex global landscape. He particularly emphasized the role of Ambassador Bloch's tireless leadership in the success of the ASN, crediting her for building enduring platforms for dialogues and collaboration. Looking ahead, Prof. Sun acknowledged the growing challenges to US-China educational exchange amid rising political tensions. Yet he stressed that ASN's mission is more vital than ever: to sustain mutual learning and cross-cultural dialogue in an increasingly divided world. He urged the academic community to nurture the next generation of scholars who will uphold the value of openness, curiosity, and cooperation. Concluding his remarks, Prof. Sun reaffirmed the shared responsibility of BFSU and USCET in navigating both the challenges and opportunities of educational exchange.

PLENARY SESSION I

Chair: Prof. Li Liwen, Provost, BFSU
Speakers: Prof. David M. Lampton, Johns Hopkins University
Prof. Wang Bo, National University of Defense Technology
Elizabeth Knup, Carter Center

Plenary Session I brought together three prominent voices with decades of experience in U.S.-China relations, offering diverse insights on historical dynamics, cultural understanding, and the role of civil society in navigating geopolitical tensions between the two countries. Each speaker echoed a shared conviction: that dialogues across government, academia, and civil society remain essential to building a more stable and peaceful bilateral future.

Professor David Lampton opened the session by tracing the arc of the U.S.-China relations across the past eight American administrations. Drawing from his latest book, *Living U.S.-China Relations: From Cold War to Cold War*, he reflects on nearly six decades studying China. From the dawn of U.S.-China rapprochement in the 1970s through his field-defining academic career and extensive work in the NGO sector, he remained closely engaged with many of China's most influential leaders over the past half-century. During the session, Professor Lampton underscored the complexity of bilateral ties, emphasizing that they cannot be reduced to simplistic narratives of diplomatic success or failure. Rather than laying blame on a specific policy misjudgment, he advocated for a broader understanding of the dynamic societal and institutional connections that have historically shaped this relationship. Professor Lampton warned that the current environment of mutual mistrust and unresolved global challenges could lead to direct confrontation if left unchecked.

Professor Wang Bo offered a unique cultural lens through which to view current tensions. His work, *People of Paradox*, examined the core contradictions in American society, from valuing both government authority and deep suspicion of government power, to promoting equality while grappling with systemic inequalities. He argued that these paradoxes contribute to perceptions of instability in American approaches to China. Professor Wang also highlighted the importance of fostering positive people-to-people exchanges, particularly among the younger generation, as a means of rebuilding trust. He drew on the importance of promoting American Studies in China and Chinese Studies in the U.S. in fostering deeper cultural understanding and avoiding policy miscalculations.

Elizabeth Knup focused on the critical role that civil society plays in US-China relations. Despite rising geopolitical tensions, Ms. Knup stressed that non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and philanthropic actors remain vital bridges for engagement. Highlighting long standing collaboration on issues such as climate change, public health, and education, she argued that joint efforts between the U.S. and China have historically driven real progress in addressing global challenges. However, Ms. Knup also acknowledged that the operating space for civil society

has narrowed in recent years. She posed thoughtful questions about the future of transnational cooperation and encouraged both sides to reinvest in civil society as a means of advancing shared global good.

PLENARY SESSION II

Chair: Prof. Ran Jijun, China Foreign Affairs University
Speakers: Prof. Fu Meirong, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Prof. Yingyi Ma, Syracuse University
Prof. Shi Yi, China Foreign Affairs University

Plenary Session II explored the historical complexities and modern realities of U.S.-China educational exchange, featuring three keynote speakers whose research investigates the evolution of people-to-people ties between the U.S. and China through education and their profound impact on bilateral understanding.

Professor Fu Meirong opened the session with a psycho-historical analysis of 65 Chinese scholars who were members of the Chinese Scientific Workers' Association in the United States during the late 1940s and early 1950s. In her work, *Stranded in the Cold War*, Professor Fu explored the emotional and political dilemmas these scholars faced as they decided whether to return to China following the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. The 55 returnees, despite experiencing hardship and political turmoil upon returning, expressed little regret, pride in professional achievements, and a sense of duty. Meanwhile, the 10 individuals who remained in the U.S. contributed to American innovation and later facilitated U.S.-China collaboration, motivated by enduring homesickness and a feeling of displacement. Her presentation underscored how historical memory and individual life experiences contribute to the broader narrative of transnational scientific exchange and cultural identity.

Professor Yingyi Ma presented a sociological examination of contemporary Chinese students' experiences in the U.S. higher education system. Drawing on her recent book *Ambitious and Anxious*, Professor Ma highlighted how students from China must navigate academic pressure, cultural differences, and shifting political environments while serving as informal ambassadors between the two nations. Framing this cohort as both privileged and precarious, Professor Ma explored how social changes in China have produced students who are simultaneously confident and uncertain. As U.S.-China tensions continue to rise, she asked critical questions about how these educational exchanges might be preserved and strengthened in the years to come.

Meanwhile, Professor Shi Yi offered a policy-oriented perspective in her presentation. She emphasized the foundational role that academic partnerships have played in bilateral relations since China's Reform and Opening Up. However, Professor Shi expressed concern about the recent decline in exchange due to pandemic disruptions, restrictive U.S. visa policies, and growing international competition. She called for new efforts to expand exchange through new initiatives targeting high school youth and regional and sub-national partnerships. Her remarks reinforced the view that restoring trust through education can serve as a counterbalance to geopolitical instability.

Together, the three speakers provided both historical grounding and forward-looking strategies, reminding participants that the future of U.S.-China relations may rest, in large part, in the hands of the next generation of students, scholars, and educators.

PLENARY SESSION III

Chair: Rosie Levine, US-China Education Trust
Speakers: Robert Daly, Wilson Center's Kissinger Institute on China
Prof. Xie Tao, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Plenary Session III of the conference explored the evolving political dynamics shaping the future of U.S.-China relations, with particular attention to the 2024 U.S. elections and broader questions of American democracy, power, and global influence.

Mr. Robert Daly opened the session with a presentation titled “Implications of the 2024 Elections on U.S.-China Relations.” He examined the growing bipartisan consensus in Washington that frames China as a strategic competitor, noting that while Kamala Harris and Donald Trump differ greatly in leadership style and ideology, both represent parties that have adopted a tough stance on China. Mr. Daly reflected on a common Chinese saying that the U.S. election offers “a choice between two bowls of poison,” acknowledging the persistent tension in bilateral relations. However, he emphasized that changes in administration often lead to shifts in tone, personnel, and strategic direction. Whether under a Harris or Trump administration, 2025 will likely open a new phase in U.S.-China relations—one that will introduce both opportunities and new sources of friction.

Mr. Daly posed critical questions regarding which aspects of U.S.-China relations are shaped by enduring strategic interests, and which are more flexible depending on individual leaders or political climates. He urged scholars and practitioners in China and the U.S. to remain active voices in shaping policy, even amid geopolitical uncertainty, and emphasized the importance of cross-national academic and civil dialogue in informing more balanced and realistic foreign policy choices.

Professor Xie Tao delivered a provocative and philosophical keynote titled “Democratic Backsliding and America’s Declining Greatness.” He argued that the U.S. is experiencing a historical decline in global influence, citing signs such as gerontocracy, the erosion of democratic norms, and diminishing international legitimacy. Referencing Donald Trump’s slogan “Make America Great Again,” professor Xie suggested that such rhetoric reflects deeper societal anxieties over national identity and global status. In his view, America’s struggle lies not only in its political system but in a broader inability to psychologically accept its declining dominance in a multipolar world. He warned that this discomfort may manifest in unpredictable political behavior, both domestically and internationally, contributing to further instability on the global stage.

The two presentations together offered participants a broad analytical framework to understand how internal developments in the U.S. may influence its engagement with China. The speakers underscored that navigating the bilateral relationship in the years ahead will require not only strategic foresight but also a willingness to confront domestic challenges and manage perceptions of power and decline with clarity and humility.

PANEL SESSION I

Panel 1: U.S.-China Educational and Academic Exchange: A History

Moderator: Prof. Shi Yi, China Foreign Affairs University
Commentator: Adam Jones, CET Academic Programs
Panelists: Prof. Jennie Wang, Bilingual Academy Press
Prof. Yang Zhao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Smeets Koen, Silk Road School of Renmin University China
Cheng Hong, Great-wall Enterprise Institute

Panel 1 offered a historical lens on the evolution of educational and academic exchange between the U.S. and China drawn from personal experience, archival research, and institutional memory across political eras and cultural contexts.

Professor Jennie Wang opened the session with a reflection on the legacy of F.Y. Chang, a Boxer Indemnity Scholarship graduate of Tsinghua University and was the first Chinese graduate of Harvard Law School. As the first student sponsored by the F.Y. Chang Foundation to study in the U.S., Professor Wang emphasized the enduring legacy of educational diplomacy amidst modern challenges.

Professor Yang Zhao followed with a case study of Republican-era Chinese scholars trained in U.S. institutions in Western historiography. While many scholars focused on Chinese history, Yang highlighted the overlooked contributions of those who studied Western history and helped introduce global historiographical methods to Chinese academia. He argued that these scholars played a key role in developing the discipline of world history in China.

Mr. Smeets Koen presented on the political and economic motivations behind the re-establishment of student exchanges between the two countries in the late 1970s. Based on interviews with key American negotiators, he explored the transition from early science delegations to the formalization of academic cooperation, culminating in the restoration of the Fulbright program and the rise of school-to-school partnerships.

The session concluded with Mr. Cheng Hong presented his survey of the third wave of Chinese students studying in the U.S. during the mid-20th century. The presentation examined both academic and technical exchanges, and how returnees contributed to China's modernization while maintaining deep emotional ties to both countries.

Together, the panel highlighted the deep roots and continued relevance of U.S.-China academic exchange, reinforcing the importance of mutual understanding, shared knowledge, and people-to-people connections in the broader bilateral relationship.

Panel 2: U.S.-China Cultural Exchange: A History

Moderator:	Prof. Fu Meirong, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator:	Prof. Jia Ning, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Panelists:	Prof. Jane Hunter, Lewis and Clark College
	Prof. James McDougall, Wenzhou-Kean University
	Prof. Han Rui, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
	Liu Jingyu, Wenzhou-Kean University
	Huang Kaimeng, Middlebury Institute of International Studies

Moderated by Professor Fu Meirong, Panel 2 explored cultural exchange as a vital and enduring thread in U.S.-China relations. Scholars reflected on historical figures, literary traditions, and philosophical encounters that have shaped mutual understanding across centuries.

Professor Jane Hunter opened with a moving portrait of Isabel Brown Crook, a Canadian-born anthropologist and lifelong contributor to Chinese education and society. She traced Crook's transformation from missionary daughter to committed communist, exploring how her hybrid identity embodied deep cross-cultural engagement. Crook's life story offers a compelling case study of how Western ideals and Chinese revolutionary values can coexist in complex yet meaningful ways.

Following Professor Hunter's presentation, Kaimeng Huang revisited the legacy of General Joseph Stilwell, a key American military figure during World War II who forged enduring bonds with the Chinese people. He discussed how the Stilwell Scholarship promotes people-to-people exchanges today, with more than 60 Chinese recipients over four decades. As shown in the ongoing collaborations between MIIS and Chinese institutions, educational initiatives continue to shape bilateral understanding today.

Professors James McDougall and his Research Assistant Liu Jingyu presented a unique literary perspective by analyzing two late-Qing epic poems that reflect early Chinese interpretations of America's westward expansion and immigration policy. Focused on the writings of Zhang Weiping and Huang Zunxian, they explored poetic representations of U.S. ideals, the cultures of the transpacific, as well as the intellectual history of Chinese-U.S. relations.

Professor Han Rui offered a comparative philosophical analysis of the Confucian concept of personhood. While some American scholars have interpreted Confucian identity as role-based and relational, Professor Han cautioned against viewing this framework as incompatible with moral autonomy. His argument invites deeper philosophical dialogue across traditions while avoiding reductive contrasts.

From missionary legacies and wartime alliances to literature and philosophy, their reflections demonstrated that cultural exchange, while complex and at times contested, remains an essential space for reflection, reinterpretation, and connection. In an era of heightened global tension, such

dialogue offers a path not only to mutual understanding, but also to shared growth and new creative possibilities between the U.S. and China.

Panel 3: U.S.-China Relations: Traditional Dimensions

Moderator: Prof. Qi Hao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator: Prof. David M. Lampton, Johns Hopkins University
Panelists: Prof. Ren Xiao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Prof. Chen Zheng, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Zhang Siyi, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Chen Xirui, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Sun Wenshan, Tianjin Normal University

Drawing from diverse perspectives from the U.S. presidential election to Chinese political cartoons, Panel 3 explored the evolving dynamics of U.S.-China relations, highlighting geopolitical rivalry, political polarization, and contested narratives. Scholars addressed themes ranging from electoral behavior and economic strategy to visual satire and ideological divides, offering critical insights into the forces shaping today's bilateral tensions.

Professor Ren Xiao provided an overview of how the strategic cooperation between the U.S. and China has been eroded over the past decade. He emphasized how trade, military presence, technological competition, and global influence have become sources of friction rather than collaboration. The shared priorities of bilateral collaboration, particularly humanitarian global issues, have become increasingly challenging amidst geopolitical tensions. Professor Ren called for renewed intellectual engagement, suggesting that scholars can play a stabilizing role in reimagining future ties.

Professor Cheng Zheng shared a data-driven examination of the 2024 U.S. presidential election and its impact on the U.S.-China relations. He concluded that future relations would rely not only on ideology, but also on the ability of either administration to manage internal divisions. Sun suggested a second Trump administration could sharply escalate tariffs, technology restrictions, and economic decoupling, while Chen believed that future breakthroughs in bilateral relations may depend less on who holds power and more on their willingness to depoliticize critical global issues.

Turning to cultural expression, Zhang Siyi discussed the visual rhetoric of political cartoonist Wuheqilin. Her research traced how Wuheqilin's work, especially his viral international satires, channels cultural nationalism and critiques of Western hypocrisy. Through an analysis of 57 cartoons and over 1,200 Twitter/X comments, Zhang argued that these visual battles over "Chineseness" reveal deeper struggles over narrative sovereignty and identity in digital diplomacy.

Together, the panel discussion emphasized that the future of the U.S.-China relations will not be shaped solely by diplomatic summits or trade deals, but by electoral behavior, cultural narratives, domestic fragmentation, and shifting economic doctrines. In a period marked by mutual suspicion and rapid change, these reflections offered both diagnosis and direction, urging new thinking across political, cultural, and academic spheres to find common ground amid complexity.

Panel 4: American Studies in China

Moderator: Prof. Cai Hong, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator: Prof. Li Jinzhao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Panelists: Prof. Ben Chappell, The University of Kansas
Zhao Mei, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Prof. Huang Weifeng, Hangzhou Dianzi University
Tian Xinrui, Hangzhou Dianzi University
Zhang Xiwei, Hangzhou Dianzi University

Panel 4 examined the current landscape of American Studies in China, offering multidisciplinary perspectives on its development, linguistic framing, and shifting educational context. Scholars addressed the tension between critical inquiry and economic value, the institutional history of the field, and the expanding reach of African American literary studies in the Chinese academy.

Professor Ben Chappell reflected on the crisis facing critical education in the United States. He warned that financialized thinking risks marginalizing the very fields that foster imagination and critique of the current socio-economic order. Yet Chappell argued that American Studies retains the capacity to offer students alternative intellectual frameworks that resist purely transactional modes of learning. Ms. Zhao Mei followed with a historical overview of American Studies in China, situating its evolution within shifting geopolitical dynamics. Her presentation highlighted the field's responsiveness to external change, especially in relation to the 2024 U.S. presidential election.

Continuing the discussion of disciplinary definition, Professor Huang Weifeng explored the semantic and institutional debate over how American Studies should be translated and conceptualized in China. He advocated for the term “Meiguo Xue” over the more commonly used “Meiguo Yanjiu,” arguing that the former better reflects American Studies as a formal academic discipline aligned with the broader framework of Country and Region Studies. Huang positioned this terminological refinement as essential to cultivating talent and elevating the academic legitimacy of the field.

Tian Xinrui and Zhang Xiwei offered a detailed presentation on African American literature studies in China. Over the past two decades, they observed a substantial expansion in research range, gender balance, literary forms, and theoretical frameworks. Despite these advancements, they noted the absence of a coherent disciplinary system and called for continued efforts to establish a more independent and structured body of knowledge within African American Studies in China.

Together, the panelists reflected on the intellectual, linguistic, and institutional currents shaping American Studies in China today. From debates on disciplinary naming and critical pedagogy to the flourishing of African American literary scholarship, their insights revealed a field both responsive to global challenges and rooted in local academic transformation. In a time when higher

education faces mounting pressure from market logic and geopolitical shifts, their work reaffirmed the value of reflective scholarship and cross-cultural dialogue.

PANEL SESSION II

Panel 5: Navigating U.S.-China Educational Cultural Exchange Today

Moderator: Prof. Yang Zhao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator: Prof. Jane Hunter, Lewis and Clark College
Panelists: Adam Jones, CET Academic Programs
Prof. Gaye Christoffersen, Shandong University
Li Fangzhou, Renmin University of China
Dai Yuzhe, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Huang Chuyun, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Hu Haoyi, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Dong Jiayi, Tianjin Normal University

With a focus on the U.S.-China educational and cultural exchange, panelists drew from empirical case studies, classroom experiences, historical shifts, and fieldwork to reflect on how educational exchange can remain resilient and meaningful in a time of global uncertainty.

Mr. Adam Jones provided an analysis of the U.S.-China joint educational programs operating within China. He highlighted how these collaborations face increasing pressure from geopolitical tensions, decoupling rhetoric, and bureaucratic complexity. Following his analysis, Professor Gaye Christoffersen shared insights from her course “China on the Border,” which brought Chinese and American students together to conduct collaborative fieldwork on border regions such as Yunnan. Her experience underscored how experiential learning can powerfully bridge national and pedagogical divides.

Li Fangzhou turned the panel’s attention to the history of Chinese American inclusion within the U.S. social security system. Despite progress, systemic gaps in access to health and economic protections remain. Li emphasized that citizenship continues to shape social entitlements, and argued that international collaboration is needed to build more inclusive transnational welfare frameworks in an age of mobility. Meanwhile, graduate researchers Dai Yuzhe, Huang Chuyun, and Hu Haoyi explored how migration and education shape gender dynamics among highly educated Chinese women abroad. They called for more attention to the gendered nature of transnational experience and the ways education intersects with personal and societal expectations.

Dong Jiayi concluded the panel with a timely case study on recent visits by American teenagers to China following President Xi’s announcement of a major exchange initiative. Dong argued that the new initiative will offer significant potential for cultural immersion, language learning, and long-term people-to-people understanding, while acknowledging the persistent challenges such as language barriers, cultural differences, and program coordination.

The panelists together painted a multifaceted picture of U.S.-China educational exchange. In an age of strained bilateral relations, their discussion reaffirmed that dialogue, empathy, and critical

reflection remain essential to navigating cross-cultural education and fostering long-term mutual understanding.

Panel 6: Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power and Mutual Perceptions

Moderator: Prof. Zhao Mei, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Commentator: Prof. Chen Juebin, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Panelists: Rebecca Ash-Cervantes, American Mandarin Society
Chao Tian, Boston University
Sumeera Imran, National Defense University
Wei Hongyi, National University of Defense and Technology
Chen Yingzhi, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Zhang Runzi, Tianjin Normal University

Panel 6 explored contemporary perspectives on the U.S.-China relations through the lenses of soft power, cultural diplomacy, media narratives, generational shifts, and intercultural collaboration.

Ms. Ash-Cervantes started the discussion by sharing her research on the U.S.-China soft power competition in Mexico, a critical “third space” where both countries project influence through economic and media narratives. Drawing on local perceptions, she examined how China is framed in the U.S. as a predatory actor, and how China counters with depictions of U.S. neo-imperialism. Following her speech, Mr. Chao Tian presented how the intercultural music project *From China to Appalachia* could be a model for people-to-people diplomacy, highlighting music’s potential to reshape understanding amid geopolitical strain.

From a historical perspective, Sumeera Imran argued that perceptions of the U.S. in China have long been shaped by a legacy of imperialism and diplomatic indifference. She showed how mistrust traces back to the 18th and 19th centuries, when American involvement in China was viewed as exploitation.

Wei Hongyi advocated for embedding ethical pluralism into cultural diplomacy, arguing that recognizing multiple moral systems is crucial to addressing global challenges like climate change and public health. Wei proposed an inclusive policy framework that empowers non-governmental actors, grassroots initiatives, and equitable cultural exchange to counter the political instrumentalization of culture and promote genuine mutual understanding.

Turning to post-COVID media discourse in the U.S.-China economic rivalry, Chen Yingzhi compared U.S. individualistic portrayals of leadership with China’s collectivist narratives of national progress. She explored how media framing functions as a tool of soft power and strategic perception-shaping.

Meanwhile, Zhang Runzi examined generational differences in American perceptions of China. Although younger generations tend to hold more positive and nuanced views, their perceptions remain susceptible to stereotypes and social media bias. She emphasized that generational change could gradually impact the dynamics of Sino-U.S. relations, though not necessarily toward greater harmony.

Together, the panelists illuminated how identity, perception, media, and cultural collaboration intertwine to shape the U.S.-China relations today. Their discussion highlighted both the tensions and possibilities that emerge when cultural narratives intersect with geopolitical realities, offering new frameworks for diplomacy in an increasingly complex world.

Panel 7: American Diplomacy Beyond China

Moderator: Prof. Zha Daojiong, Peking University
Commentator: Prof. Zhang Guoxi, Sichuan International Studies University
Panelists: Prof. Zhang Yuan, Southwest University
Prof. Yan Xunhua, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Li Kening, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Wang Ziyang, China Foreign Affairs University

With the theme of U.S. foreign policy and strategic thinking, Panel 7 explored the role of public opinion, regional alliances, neorealist theory, and elite perceptions, particularly in relation to military intervention, China policy, and security frameworks in the Indo-Pacific.

Professor Zhang Yuan cited the 2011 Libya conflict in his analysis of U.S. public opinion toward military intervention. While Americans support limited military actions to protect civilians and remove dictators, they oppose prolonged involvement, boots on the ground, or democracy promotion via force, especially in the absence of direct national security threats. He argued that congressional approval plays a minor role in shaping public attitudes, which are more reactive to battlefield developments.

Drawing from Indo-Pacific security, Professor Yan Xunhua investigated why the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) has not yet evolved into an “Asian NATO.” Despite growing institutionalization under the Biden administration, the Quad remains a soft-power-oriented initiative, branching into non-military cooperation. Her analysis pointed to the twin structural forces of economic interdependence and strategic competition, as well as domestic political constraints in member states, as key factors explaining this divergence from a traditional military alliance model.

Li Kening provided a critical assessment of Robert C. O’Brien’s vision for a second Trump administration’s foreign policy, particularly toward China. Li argued that his worldview is shaped by Cold War nostalgia, anti-communist ideology, and reverence for U.S. dominance in the 1990s. O’Brien’s hardline containment strategy is deeply influenced by conservative figures such as Reagan and Thatcher, though notably lacking their openness to cultural and economic diplomacy.

Lastly, Wang Ziyang offered a theoretical exploration of Biden’s embrace of “minilateralism” using the lens of neoclassical realism. Applying the framework of relative power, perceptions, and state capacity, she showed how the Biden administration uses flexible, issue-specific coalitions to advance U.S. strategic interests without overcommitting to formal alliances. This strategy, she argued, reflects both systemic constraints and internal political dynamics, offering a pragmatic path amid growing multipolarity and domestic limitations.

The panel provided a rich and multifaceted examination of the actors, ideologies, and institutional forces shaping U.S. foreign policy today. From public skepticism of intervention to elite-driven

rivalry with China, and from regional coalition-building to realist theories of power, the discussions offered a timely look at how America navigates its evolving global role.

Panel 8: American Society

Moderator: Prof. Yingyi Ma, Syracuse University
Commentator: Prof. Wang Yige, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Panelists: Prof. Zhang Keqing, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Yang Jiaxin, Peking University
Song Yanke, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Tang Wei, University of International Relations
Lu Chang, China Foreign Affairs University

Panel 8 offered an interdisciplinary examination of identity formation, historical memory, and social justice across diverse dimensions of American society, with particular focus on marginalized experiences in aging, gender, ethnicity, and immigration.

Professor Zhang Keqing opened with a comparative life course study on cognitive aging among older adults in the U.S. and China. His study revealed significant gender differences: while Chinese women benefited most from education as a buffer, U.S. men showed heightened vulnerability. The findings reinforced the importance of early-life conditions in shaping late-life health, while pointing to education as a gender-sensitive intervention strategy.

Shifting to a literary and historical lens, Yang Jiaxin re-evaluated Pearl S. Buck's feminist legacy through her lesser-studied essay collection *Of Men and Women*. While Buck called for reciprocal efforts by both men and women to build more fulfilling partnerships, Yang noted the limitations of Buck's views and the importance of reinterpreting them in the context of evolving feminist thought. Tang Wei, on the other hand, gave literature reviews that traced the trajectory of Chinese academic research on U.S. immigration policy toward Cuba. Based on his findings, Tang called for more empirically grounded, interdisciplinary, and comparative approaches to better capture the complexity of Cuban American experiences.

Song Yanke offered a media analysis of pro-Palestine campus protests through a case study of *The Columbia Daily Spectator*. He found that while the student paper presented a seemingly balanced view, its narrative framing often portrayed student protesters as disruptive and the university's disciplinary measures as necessary. His study illuminated the subtle biases embedded in campus journalism and the implications for shaping public perception of anti-establishment activism.

Finally, Lu Chang presented a statistical study on the socioeconomic outcomes of mixed-race Asian American youth, offering a critical update to traditional assimilation narratives. Using recent American Community Survey data, Lu found that interracial marriage with white Americans no longer consistently leads to upward mobility for all Asian subgroups. Instead, intra-Asian interethnic marriages appeared more beneficial in transmitting cultural capital and promoting integration.

Together, the panel explored the intersections of memory, identity, and structure, challenging dominant narratives and offering more inclusive frameworks for understanding the American experience.

PANEL SESSION III

Panel 9: American Domestic Politics

Moderator: Prof. Yan Xunhua, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator: Robert Daly, Wilson Center
Panelists: Prof. Kong Xiangyong, Tianjin Normal University
Prof. Zhang Guoxi, Sichuan International Studies University
Prof. Guo Xinyi, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Li Linjie, Sichuan University
Jin Xiaochen, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Chen Xiao'ou, Tianjin Normal University

Moderated by Professor Yan Xunhua, Panel 9 discussed the evolving landscape of American domestic politics, examining how the intersection of ideology, institution, economy, and technology continue to shape the current and future trajectory of U.S. governance.

Professor Kong Xiangyong opened the discussion by exploring the conceptual tension between equal opportunity and equal outcome in the U.S., which he framed as the central paradox undermining democratic renewal. According to Professor Kong, the absolutization of either one value would fuel populist extremes, leading to the erosion of shared democracy values and the fragmentation of politics.

Professor Zhang Guoxi, on the other hand, offered valuable insights into the role of the tech giants in modern electoral politics. Using the 2016 and 2020 elections as case studies, he demonstrated the urgent need for new frameworks around corporate accountability, transparency, and algorithmic power.

Meanwhile, Professor Guo Xinyi analyzed how structural shifts in U.S. domestic politics have reframed foreign policy through the lens of class and labor interests. She argued that both parties now claim to champion workers, but their strategies diverge based on the socioeconomic base of their voter coalitions. These distinctions, she noted, also influence their respective approaches to China.

In a shift toward constitutional analysis, Li Linjie reflected on the paradox of popular sovereignty in U.S. constitutionalism. Li argued that the people's founding authority is structurally constrained in modern times, creating friction between living democratic will and the legacy of a rigid constitutional order. Jin Xiaochen offered a comparative legal study of landmark cases involving Nixon and Trump, highlighting how partisanship and institutional self-interest have reshaped the balance of power in the U.S. government.

Finally, Chen Xiao'ou traced the emergence of the "New Washington Consensus" under the Biden administration. Chen situated this transformation as the most radical realignment of U.S. economic

thinking since the 1970s, with wide-ranging implications for domestic politics, global economic order, and U.S.-China relations.

Together, the panelists provided a multidimensional analysis of the tensions, transformations, and recalibrations defining the current American political climate where old frameworks are being tested and new paradigms are being forged.

Panel 10: U.S.-China Relations: Non-Traditional Issues

Moderator: Prof. Gu Guoping, Beijing International Studies University
Commentator: Rosie Levine, US-China Education Trust
Panelists: Prof. Gu Lei, Professor, National University Defense Technology
Prof. Zou Xiaolong, Jilin University
Prof. Jia Yumei, Jilin University
Prof. Yang Qiang, China Foreign Affairs University
Jin Yucan, Beijing Foreign Studies University

From the lens of non-traditional factors, the panelists explored how technology, energy, climate diplomacy, and subnational engagement shape competition and collaboration between the U.S. and China, offering new insights into their shared global responsibilities amid strategic rivalry.

Professor Gu Lei started his presentation with an in-depth analysis of the U.S.-China quantum technology race. While the U.S. seeks to build international alliances and decouple from China's quantum supply chain, he argued that heavy-handed restrictions could undermine innovation and harm U.S. interests as much as China's. He called for preserving communication channels and fostering strategic dialogue to avoid escalating misperceptions in this sensitive frontier of technological advancement.

Next, Professor Zou Xiaolong and Professor Jia Yumei highlighted the dual nature of rivalry and potential alliance in the U.S.-China energy relations. They emphasized the need to shift from zero-sum framing to identifying shared interests, particularly in clean energy, where cooperation could yield tangible global benefits.

Professor Yang Qiang examined whether climate cooperation remains a viable stabilizer in bilateral ties or has become a symbolic gesture within the Biden administration's broader China strategy. He urged caution against treating climate dialogue as a diplomatic façade and stressed the importance of restoring genuine policy coordination.

Meanwhile, Jin Yuncan brought the conversation to the subnational level with a case study on California-China climate cooperation. Drawing on key initiatives like the 2017 Subnational Clean Energy Ministerial and Governor Gavin Newsom's 2023 visit to China, Jin emphasized the strategic value of decentralized diplomacy in advocating for shared climate goals. However, Jin also acknowledged the challenge of growing trade restrictions and tech transfer concerns.

The panelists together revealed how non-traditional issues are becoming central arenas in U.S.-China relations. These domains embody the complexity of a relationship where strategic mistrust coexists with deep interdependence. By spotlighting both policy dilemmas and collaborative pathways, Panel 10 offered a forward-looking perspective on how new issue areas may shape the next chapter of bilateral engagement.

Panel 11: Digital Diplomacy: Technology for New Possibilities

Moderator: Prof. Ren Xiao, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Commentator: Prof. Huang Weifeng, Hangzhou Dianzi University
Panelists: Lim Woojin, Tsinghua University
Prof. Thai Cong Dan, Can Tho University of Technology
Prof. Thai Phan Bao Han, Can Tho University of Technology
Wang Yifan, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Li Xiaoyu, National University of Defense Technology

Digital technologies have become increasingly important in shaping public diplomacy and cultural exchange. From AI governance and meme culture to subnational diplomacy and student participation, the panelists offered diverse and timely insights into how digitalization is reshaping global engagement today.

Drawing on regulatory frameworks such as the White House Executive Order on AI and China's AI Law, Mr. Lim Woojin emphasized how these divergent governance models reflect deeper ideological divides. He advocated for a dual-track approach in balancing competition with cooperation to ensure AI safety, arguing that pluralist engagement will be key to managing global risks posed by AI systems.

Professors Thai Cong Dan and Thai Phan Bao Han presented findings from a field study on Vietnamese EFL students' engagement with digital diplomacy after participating in an American culture course. By comparing local efforts within Vietnam's national digital transformation project to broader international trends, they highlighted how grassroots digital engagement fosters cross-cultural awareness and positions students as informal cultural diplomats in the digital age.

Wang Yifan shifted the conversation toward the intersection of meme culture and public diplomacy through her exploration of "meme diplomacy." By analyzing viral Trump memes on Chinese platforms such as Bilibili, Wang identified themes of populism, entertainment, and political irony that fuel Chinese grassroots support for Trump, illustrating how political memes function as vehicles for cross-border ideological expression in tightly regulated online spaces.

Following Wang's presentation, Li Xiaoyu revisited the theme of quantum technology competition between the U.S. and China. Like Mr. Lim, Li emphasized the risks of over-politicization and isolationism in tech policy and argued that managing quantum competition will require China and the U.S. to maintain open channels of dialogue, even amidst strategic rivalry.

From meme culture to AI ethics, Panel 11 challenged conventional views of diplomacy and offered a forward-looking vision for global engagement—one rooted in digital fluency, strategic caution, and the pursuit of cross-cultural connection in a fast-evolving geopolitical landscape.

Panel 12: Undergraduate Forum

Moderator/

Commentator: Prof. Zhang Keqing, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Panelists: Si Boyu, Beijing Foreign Studies University
Li Zeyu, Sichuan University
Wei Hongyi, National University of Defense and Technology
Yang Pufan, Sichuan University
Kang Yumeng, Sichuan University
Fu Ziyang, Capital Normal University
Le Yi, Sichuan University
Zhou Yuhe, Sichuan University

Panel 12 opened the floor for undergraduate students to present their interdisciplinary analyses of U.S.-China relations in the 21st century, spanning public health, education, cultural diplomacy, digital communication, youth engagement, and strategic security. Collectively, their studies highlighted the complex, multilayered nature of bilateral ties and offered constructive visions for rethinking engagement in a rapidly changing global environment.

Si Boyu shared his research on the relationship between diet and mental health outcomes among older Americans. Drawing from NHANES data (1988–2018), the study explored how meat, egg, and dairy consumption affects depression levels in seniors, with a notable gender-based divergence. According to Si, women appeared more sensitive to dietary influences on mental health, reflecting the need for gender-responsive public health policies.

Through a case study of the Sichuan University–University of Pittsburgh joint institute, Li Zeyu presented the resilience of collaborative programs in fostering global competencies and talent mobility. Based on his findings, Li called for multilateral approaches, particularly cross-cultural adaptation and digital technologies, to safeguard international higher education amid growing uncertainty.

Following the two panelists, Yang Pufan took a cultural and semiotic approach to U.S.-China engagement, reflecting on the symbolic use of the Chinese character “美” (meaning “beautiful”) in naming America. By tracing people-to-people exchanges from Yung Wing to climate cooperation, the study emphasized the role of cultural symbols in shaping people-to-people interactions and bridging divides.

In response to global crises such as COVID-19 and climate change, Wei Hongyi explored how ethical pluralism can enhance U.S.-China cultural diplomacy. His presentation highlighted the need to move beyond token inclusion and engage deeper structural differences through inclusive cultural strategies and non-governmental partnerships. Kang Yumeng, on the other hand, traced the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and 2023 Chengdu World University Games to understand the

role of youth-driven sport diplomacy. He proposed practical strategies to enhance youth diplomacy, such as multimodal communication techniques and cultural storytelling.

Fu Ziyang presented his research on the intellectual lineage of Chinese historians Lei Haizong and Ho Pingti, rooted in the tradition of the Southwest Associated University. By highlighting their dual grounding in Chinese and Western historiographical traditions, Fu illustrated how education served as a conduit for cross-cultural understanding. However, he also acknowledged how nationalism could serve both as inspiration and limitation in global scholarly discourse.

Meanwhile, Le Yi examined the growing importance of digital diplomacy in shaping public perceptions and enhancing U.S.-China ties. From live-stream diplomacy to social media storytelling, digital tools were presented as democratizing agents capable of fostering mutual trust. The study identifies the four key advantages of digital diplomacy: enhanced public participation, improved diplomatic efficiency, positive image projection, and small-scale breakthroughs with large strategic value.

Finally, Zhou Yuhe investigated the evolving U.S.-China relations in the Indo-Pacific by assessing the impact of minilateral frameworks like AUKUS and the Quad. Zhou offered policy recommendations for mitigating conflict, emphasizing the need for U.S.-China cooperation in areas such as climate change, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and global public health.

Together, these eight student researchers highlighted the diverse and evolving nature of U.S.-China relations. Whether through dietary studies, educational exchanges, or youth diplomacy, their discussion shed light on the pathways for managing complexity and fostering connection.

APPENDIX A: AMERICAN STUDIES NETWORK CONFERENCES IN CHINA

- 2022:** [*Nixon and China Plus 50: Reflections on Five Decades of US-China Relations*](#) – China Foreign Affairs University
- 2018:** [*The Impact of Education Exchange on US-China Relations: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*](#) – East China Normal University
- 2017:** [*US-China Relations after the 2016 Elections: Trump, Congress and the Issues*](#) – Sichuan University
- 2016:** [*American Studies Network Weekend*](#) – Beijing Foreign Studies University
- 2015:** [*Locality and Transnationality: New Approaches to Understanding US-China Relations*](#) – Peking University
- 2014:** [*Culture and US Relations with China and World*](#) – Zhejiang University
- 2013:** [*Transnational Currents of US-China Relations: The 10th Anniversary of the American Studies Network in China*](#) – Hong Kong University
- 2012:** [*America: 2012 Elections and Beyond*](#) – Beijing Foreign Studies University
- 2011:** [*US Soft Power and Social Equality*](#) – Northeast Normal University
- 2010:** [*The US in Crisis: Financial or Cultural?*](#) – Jiangnan University
- 2009:** [*The Obama Phenomenon: Reassessing our Understanding of America*](#) – Beijing Foreign Studies University
- 2008:** [*America in the Era of Globalization*](#) – Sichuan University
- 2007:** [*The US After September 11: Changes and Continuities*](#) – Beijing Foreign Studies University
- 2006:** [*Bridging the Sino-American Divide*](#) – University of Hong Kong
- 2005:** [*The United States in Times of War and Peace*](#) – Yunnan University
- 2004:** [*First Annual Meeting*](#) – Fudan University

APPENDIX B: CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AND AGENDA

List of Registered Participants (in alphabetical order)

Adam Jones: Director of China Programs and Special Initiatives, CET

Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch: Executive Chair, USCET

Ben Chappell: Professor, Chair of the Department of American Studies, The University of Kansas

Cai Hong: Professor, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Chao Tian: PhD Student, Boston University

Chen Xiao'ou: Graduate Student, Foreign Languages College, Tianjin Normal University

Chen Xirui: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Chen Yingzhi: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Chen Zheng: Lecturer, Country and Area Studies Academy, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Cheng Hong: Researcher, Beijing Great Wall Enterprise Strategy Institute, Peking University

Dai Yuzhe: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

David M. Lampton: Professor Emeritus and Senior Research Fellow, Johns Hopkins University

Dong Jiayi: Graduate Student, Tianjin Normal University

Elizabeth Knup: Senior Advisor, China Focus at the Carter Center; University of Pennsylvania's Project on the Future of US-China Relations

Fu Meirong: Director, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Fu Ziyang: Student, School of History, Capital Normal University

Gaye Christoffersen: Former Professor at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center; Visiting Professor, Shandong University, Weihai

Gu Guoping: Professor, Beijing International Studies University

Gu Lei: Professor, International Studies College, National University of Defense Technology

Guo Xinyi: Lecturer, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Han Rui: Associate Professor, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies

Huang Chuyun: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Huang Weifeng: Professor, Hangzhou Dianzi University

James McDougall: Research Assistant, Wenzhou-Kean University

Jane Hunter: Professor, Lewis and Clark College

Jia Ning: Lecturer, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Jia Yumei: Associate Professor, School of International & Public Affairs, Jilin University

Jin Xiaochen: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Jin Yucan: PhD Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Kaimeng Huang: Stilwell Scholar and International Advisor, Middlebury Institute of International Studies

Kang Yumeng: Student, Sichuan University

Kong Xiangyong: Associate Professor, Tianjin Normal University

Le Yi: Student, Sichuan University

Li Fangzhou: PhD, School of Labor and Human Resources, Renmin University of China

Li Jinzhao: Professor Emerita, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Li Kening: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Li Liwen: Provost, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Li Linjie: PhD Student, Sichuan University

Li Xiaoyu: Graduate Student, International Studies College, National University of Defense Technology

Li Zeyu: Student, Sichuan University

Lu Chang: Graduate Student, China Foreign Affairs University

Priscilla Roberts: Associate Professor of Business; Co-Director, Asia-Pacific Business Research Centre, City University of Macau

Qi Hao: Associate Professor, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Ran Jijun: Dean, Department of English and International Studies, China Foreign Affairs University

Rebecca Ash-Cervantes: Program Manager, American Mandarin Society

Ren Xiao: Professor, Country and Area Studies Academy, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Robert Daly: Director, Wilson Center's Kissinger Institute on China and the United States

Rosie Levine: Executive Director, USCET

Shi Yi: Professor and Director, Center for American Studies, China Foreign Affairs University

Si Boyu: SEIS, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Smeets Koen: Graduate Student, Silk Road School, Renmin University of China

Song Yanke: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Sumeera Imran: PhD Student, National Defense University

Sun Wenshan: Graduate Student, Foreign Languages College, Tianjin Normal University

Sun Youzhong: Former Vice President, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Tang Wei: Graduate Student, Department of American Studies, University of International Relations

Thai Cong Dan: English Lecturer, Can Tho University

Thai Phan Bao Han: English Lecturer, Can Tho University

Tian Xinrui: Graduate Student, Hangzhou Dianzi University

Wang Bo: Professor and Director, Center for American Studies, National University of Defense Technology

Wang Yifan: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Wang Yige: Lecturer, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Wang Ziying: Graduate Student, China Foreign Affairs University

Woojin Lim: Researcher, Harvard Kennedy School; Schwarzman Scholar, Tsinghua University

Xie Tao: Professor and Dean, School of International Relations and Diplomacy, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Yan Xunhua: Lecturer, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Yang Jiabin: PhD Student, Peking University

Yang Pufan: Student, Sichuan University

Yang Qiang: Associate Professor, China Foreign Affairs University

Yang Zhao: Associate Professor, School of History, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Yingyi Ma: Professor and Graduate Director, Syracuse University; Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Zhang Guoxi: Associate Professor, School of International Relations, Sichuan International Studies University

Zhang Keqing: Lecturer, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Zhang Runzi: Graduate Student, Tianjin Normal University

Zhang Siyi: Graduate Student, American Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Zhang Xiwei: Graduate Student, Hangzhou Dianzi University

Zhang Yuan: Associate Professor, Southwest University

Zha Daojiong: Professor, School of International Studies, Peking University

Zhao Mei: Senior Fellow, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

Zhou Yuhe: Department of International Relations, Sichuan University

Zou Xiaolong: Associate Professor, School of International & Public Affairs, Jilin University

Conference Agenda

Saturday, October 26

07:30-08:30 Conference Registration

Venue: Lecture Hall, 4th Floor, BFSU Library

08:30-08:45 Opening Ceremony:

Venue: Lecture Hall, 4th Floor, BFSU Library

Chair: Prof. Fu Meirong, *Director, American Studies Center, BFSU*

Prof. Sun Youzhong, *Former Vice President, BFSU*

Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, *Executive Chair, USCET*

08:45-10:00 Plenary Session I

Venue: Lecture Hall, 4th Floor, BFSU Library

Chair: Prof. Li Liwen, *Provost, BFSU*

David M. Lampton, *Professor Emeritus and Senior Research Fellow, Johns Hopkins University* "Living U.S.-China Relations: From Cold War to Cold War"

Wang Bo, *Professor & Director of the Center for American Studies, National University of Defense Technology*

"People of Paradox: The Impact upon US-China Relations and Some Suggestions"

Elizabeth Knup, *Senior Advisor to China Focus at the Carter Center and to the University of Pennsylvania's Project on the Future of US-China Relations*

"Addressing Global Challenges: U.S.-China Civil Society Cooperation in an Era of Geopolitical Tension"

10:30-11:45 Plenary Session II

Venue: Lecture Hall, 4th Floor, BFSU Library

Chair: Prof. Ran Jijun, *Dean of the Department of English and International Studies, China Foreign Affairs University*

FU Meirong, *Professor and Director of the American Studies Center, BFSU*
"Stranded in the Cold War: a Psycho-historical Analysis of the Life Course of the Core Members of Chinese Scientific Workers' Association in USA"

Yingyi Ma, *Professor and Graduate Director, Syracuse University, Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institute*

"Chinese Students in American Higher Education"

Shi Yi, *Professor & Director of the Center for American Studies, China Foreign Affairs University*

"Educational Exchanges Between China & US: Challenges and Opportunities"

11:45-12:15 **Q&A**

Question Master: Rosie Levine, *Executive Director, USCET*

12:30-13:45 **Lunch** [Buffet at BFSU Staff Cafeteria]

14:00-15:30 **Panel Session I**

Panel 1: U.S.-China Educational and Academic Exchange: A History

Venue: Room 111, SEIS Building

Moderator: Shi Yi, *Professor, China Foreign Affairs University*

Commentator: Adam Jones, *Director of China Programs and Special Initiatives*

Panelists:

Jennie Wang, *Professor, Founder BILINGUAL ACADEMY PRESS* "In his Wake: F. Chang and Academic Exchange between US and China"

Yang Zhao, *Associate Professor of School of History, Beijing Foreign Studies University*

"Scholars of Western History Who Studied in the United States During the Republican Period and the American Tradition of Western Historiography—A Case Study of Six Doctoral Dissertations"

Smeets Koen, *Graduate Student of Silk Road School of Renmin University China*

"Restoring a Relationship: Motivations and Negotiations of Re-Establishing-China Student Exchanges, 1970-1980"

Cheng Hong and Liu Zhi-guang, *Researchers, Beijing Great Wall Enterprise Strategy Institute, Peking University*

"China's Third Wave of Studying in America and Returning to China —The History of the West Culture Munication to China in the Middle 20thCentury"

Panel 2: U.S.-China Cultural Exchange: A History Venue:

Room 115, SEIS Building

Moderator: Fu Meirong, *Professor, Director of ASC, BFSU*

Commentator: Jia Ning, *Lecturer of the American Studies Center, BFSU*

Panelists:

Jane Hunter, *Professor of Lewis and Clark College* “Crossing Cultures in China: Christian Community and Communist Allegiance in the Life of Isabel Brown Crook (1915-2023)”

Kaimeng Huang, *Stilwell Scholar and International Advisor of General Stilwell Scholarship Committee at Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, CA, USA*

“General Stilwell’s Legacy and People-to-People Relations between US-China”

James McDougall, Liu Jingyu, *Associate Professor & Research Assistant of Wenzhou-Kean University*

“The U.S. Western Frontier in Late-Qing Literati Poetry” **Han Rui**, *Associate Professor of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies* “The Confucian Concept of the Person and Its American Interpretation: Discussions from a Comparative Philosophical Perspective”

Panel 3: U.S.-China Relations: Traditional Dimensions Venue:

Room 310, SEIS Building

Moderator: Qi Hao, *Associate Professor, ASC, BFSU*

Commentator: David M. Lampton, *Professor Emeritus and Senior Research Fellow, Johns Hopkins University*

Panelists:

Ren Xiao, *Professor of Country and Area Studies Academy, BFSU* “Current Sino-US Relations: A Diagnosis”

Chen Zheng, *Lecturer of Country and Area Studies Academy, BFSU* “2024 Presidential Election and Sino-US Relations”

Zhang Siyi, *Graduate Student, ASC, BFSU*

“Chineseness in Wuheqilin’s Art: Cultural Wars on Twitter”

Chen Xirui, *Graduate Student of the American Studies Center, BFSU* “On the Present and Future of Sino-U.S. Relations under U.S. Political Polarization”

Sun Wenshan, *Graduate Student of Foreign Languages*

College, Tianjin Normal University

“A Contrastive Study of Economic Trade Policies towards China between Harris and Trump”

Panel 4: American Studies in China

Venue: Room 313, SEIS Building

Moderator: Cai Hong, *Professor, BFSU*

Commentator: Li Jinzhao, *Professor Emerita, American Studies Center, BFSU*

Panelists:

Ben Chappell, *Professor, Chair of Department of American Studies, The University of Kansas*

“American Studies and the Possibility of Critical Education in an Age of R.O.I.”

Zhao Mei, *Senior Fellow, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)*

“A Historical Perspective on American Studies in China”

Huang Weifeng, *Professor of Hangzhou Dianzi University* “Justifying ‘Meiguo Xue’ as a Better Chinese Version of “American Studies” in the Context of Country and Region Studies”

Tian Xinrui, Zhang Xiwei, *Graduate Student of Hangzhou Dianzi University* “Studies in African American Literature in China in the Past Two Decades”

16:00-17:30

Panel Session II

Panel 5: Navigating U.S.-China Educational Cultural Exchange Today

Venue: Room 111, SEIS Building

Moderator: Yang Zhao, *Associate Professor of School of History, BFSU*

Commentator: Jane Hunter, *Professor of Lewis and Clark College*

Panelists:

Adam Jones, *Director of China Programs and Special Initiatives, CET*
“Navigating Challenges in US-China Joint Educational Programs”

Gaye Christoffersen, *Former Professor at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center; Visiting Professor, Shandong University, Weihai*

“The Sino-American Collaborative Classroom: An Empirical Case Study of

US-China Educational Exchange”

Li Fangzhou, *PhD of the School of Labor and Human Resources, Renmin University of China,*

“From Exclusion to Inclusion: Citizenship and the Transformation of Social Security for Chinese Americans”

Dai Yuzhe, Huang Chuyun, Hu Haoyi, *Graduate Students of the American Studies Center, BFSU*

“Transnational Migration and Gender Dynamics: Insights from Highly Educated Chinese Female Migrants”

Dong Jiayi, *Graduate Student of Tianjin Normal University* “Opportunities and Challenges of Sino-US Educational Exchange: A Case Study of American Teenagers' Visits to China”

Panel 6: Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power and Mutual Perceptions

Venue: Room 115, SEIS Building

Moderator: Zhao Mei, *Senior Fellow, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)*

Commentator: Priscilla Roberts, *Associate Professor of Business; Co-Director of the Asia-Pacific Business Research Centre, Faculty of Business, City University of Macau*

Panelists:

Rebecca Ash-Cervantes, *Program Manager of American Mandarin Society* “Soft Power in 3rd Spaces – U.S.-China Competition Perceptions and Exactments in Mexico”

Chao Tian, *PhD student at Boston University*

“From China to Appalachia: Forging Sustainable Dynamics in Intercultural Music Collaboration and Cultural Diplomacy”

Sumeera Imran, *PhD student of National Defense University* “US-China Early Exchanges: Impact on Bilateral Perceptions” **Wei Hongyi**, *Graduate Student, National University of Defense and Technology* “Navigating Ethical Pluralism in Cultural Diplomacy Between US-China Relations: Opportunities and Challenges”

Chen Yingzhi, *Graduate Student of the American Studies Center, BFSU* “A Study of Mutual Perceptions in U.S.-China Media on Economic Rivalry through the Lens of Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory” **Zhang Runzi**,

Graduate Student of Tianjin Normal University “Generational Differences in American Perceptions of China: Causes and implications”

Panel 7: American Diplomacy Beyond China

Venue: Room 310, SEIS Building

Moderator: **Zha Daojiong**, *Professor, School of International Studies, Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, Peking University*

Commentator: **Zhang Guoxi**, *Associate Professor of School of International Relations, Sichuan International Studies University* **Panelists:**

Zhang Yuan, *Associate Professor, Southwest University* “On American Public Opinion toward War —A Case Study of the U.S. military intervention in Libya”

Yan Xunhua, *Lecturer, American Studies Center, BFSU* “The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) under Biden: Why Not Yet an Asian NATO?”

Li Kening, *Graduate Student, the American Studies Center, BFSU* “Robert C. O’Brien’s Attitude and Perceptions Toward China: A Case Study of ‘The Return of Peace Through Strength: Making the Case for Trump’s Foreign Policy’”

Wang Ziyang, *Graduate Student, China Foreign Affairs University* “Biden’s Minilateralism from the Perspective of Neoclassical Realism”

Panel 8: American Society

Venue: Room 313, SEIS Building

Moderator: **Yingyi Ma**, *Professor and Graduate Director, Syracuse University, Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institute*

Commentator: **Wang Yige**, *Lecturer, ASC, BFSU*

Panelists:

Zhang Keqing, *Lecturer, ASC, BFSU*

“Childhood and Adulthood Conditions in Relation to Mild Cognitive Impairment among U.S. and Chinese Older Adults: A Life Course Perspective”

Yang Jiaxin, *PhD student, Peking University*

“A Study on Pearl S. Buck’s Feminist Thoughts in *Of Men and Women*” **Song**

Yanke, *Graduate Student, the American Studies Center, BFSU* “Campus Media Narrating of Pro-Palestine Protest Movements: Case Study of *The*

Columbia Daily Spectator”

Tang Wei, *Graduate Student, Department of American Studies,
University of International Relations*

“A Review of Domestic Research on U.S. Immigration Policy towards Cuba”

Lu Chang, *Graduate Student, China Foreign Affairs University* “Are the Kids Really Doing Alright? A Closer Look at the SES of Asian Americans’ Mixed-Race Offspring”

18:30-20:00 ASN MRY Banquet and Graduate Paper Awarding Ceremony

Venue: No 1 Ballroom, Second Floor, Empark Grand Hotel Beijing

Pick-Up Point: Square to the west of the BFSU Gym (Notice: No transportation will be arranged after the banquet.)

Sunday, October 27

8:30-10:00 Panel Session III

Panel 9: American Domestic Politics

Venue: Room 111, SEIS Building

Moderator: **Yan Xunhua**, *Lecturer, ASC, BFSU*

Commentator: **Robert Daly**, *Director of the Wilson Center’s Kissinger Institute on China and the United States*

Panelists:

Kong Xiangyong, *Associate Professor, Tianjin Normal University* “The Equality Paradox and Practical Dilemma of American Democracy”

Zhang Guoxi, *Associate Professor, School of International Relations, Sichuan International Studies University* “When Tech Giants Meet American Politics: Exploring the Intersection of Digital Democracy and Electoral Processes”

Guo Xinyi, *Lecturer, ASC, BFSU* “Path towards “Workers’ Party”? Domestic Political Logic of the U.S. Foreign Policies of Two Parties”

Li Linjie, *PhD Student, Sichuan University* “Between the Constitution and Public Opinion: The Constitutional Sorrow of the United States”

Jin Xiaochen, *Graduate Student, the American Studies Center, BFSU* “A Comparative Analysis of Nixon Case and Trump Cases: Continuities and

Changes of the Judicial Interpretation on Presidential Communication Privilege”

Chen Xiaoou, *Graduate Student, Foreign Languages College, Tianjin Normal University*

“The Historical Origin and Realistic Evolution of the “New Washington Consensus””

Panel 10: U.S.-China Relations: Non-Traditional Issues

Venue: Room 115, SEIS Building

Moderator: Gu Guoping, *Professor, Beijing International Studies University*

Commentator: Elizabeth Knup, *Senior Advisor at the Carter Center and University of Pennsylvania*

Panelists:

Gu Lei, *Professor, International Studies College, National University Defense Technology*

“Motivations, Practices, and Dilemmas of the United States’ Quantum Technology Competition with China Against the Background of China-U.S. Science and Technology Competition”

Zou Xiaolong, Jia Yumei, *Associate Professor, School of International & Public Affairs, Jilin University*

“The Energy Factor in Sino-US Relations: Competition and Cooperation”

YANG Qiang, *Associate professor, China Foreign Affairs University*
“The New Role of Climate Cooperation in US-China Relations: An Embellishment or a Stabilizer?”

Jin Yucan, *PhD student, ASC, BFSU*

“Subnational Agency in Science and Technology Diplomacy: Managing Geopolitical Challenges through the Lens of California-China Climate Cooperation”

Panel 11: Digital Diplomacy: Technology for New Possibilities

Venue: Room 310, SEIS Building

Moderator: Ren Xiao, *Professor, Country and Area Studies Academy, BFSU*

Commentator: Huang Weifeng, *Professor, Hangzhou Dianzi University* **Panelists:**

Woojin Lim, *Researcher, Harvard Kennedy School; Schwarzman Scholar, Tsinghua University* “Terra Incognita: The Governance of AI in US-China Perspective”

Thai Cong Dan, Thai Phan Bao Han, *English Lecturer, School of Foreign Languages, Can Tho University & English Lecturer of Faculty of Social Sciences, Can Tho University of Technology* “Digital Diplomacy and Digital Transformation: EFL Students’ Perceptions and Involvement in Cultural Competencies”

Wang Yifan, *Graduate Student, the American Studies Center, BFSU*
“Meme Diplomacy: Understanding Chinese Grassroots Support for Trump through the Lens of Digital Diplomacy”

Li Xiaoyu, *Graduate Student, International Studies College, National University of Defense Technology*
“Motivations, Practices, and Dilemmas of the United States’ Quantum Technology Competition with China Against the Background of China-U.S. Science and Technology Competition”

Panel 12: Undergraduate Forum

Venue: Room 313, SEIS Building

Moderator/Commentator: **Zhang Keqing**, *Lecturer, ASC, BFSU*

Panelists:

Si Boyu, *SEIS, BFSU*

“Meat-Egg-Dairy Consumption and Mental Health Outcomes among American Older Adults: Exploring Gender Disparities”

Li Zeyu, *Sichuan University*

“US-China Educational Exchanges Amid Tensions: Exploring Pathways for Sustaining and Stabilizing International Talent Development”

Yang Pufan, *Sichuan University*

“The Power of ‘Beautiful’: Symbolism, History, and Future Pathways for U.S.-China People-to-People Engagement”

Kang Yumeng, *Sichuan University*

“The difficulties and breakthroughs of cross-cultural communication in sports diplomacy between Chinese and American youth - with empirical studies of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and the 2023 Chengdu FISU World University Games as examples.”

Fu Ziyang, *the School of History, Capital Normal University* “The Tradition and Inheritance of the History Department of Southwest Associated University: A Study Centered on Lei Haizong and Ho Pingti” **Le Yi**, *Sichuan University*

“Mechanisms and paths for promoting China-U.S. exchanges and cooperation through digital diplomacy”

Zhou Yuhe, *Department of International Relations, Sichuan University* “The Evolution of U.S.-China Relations in the Indo-Pacific under Multilateralism: A Multidimensional Analysis of Cooperation, Competition, and Confrontation”

10:00-10:30 **Tea Break** [Lecture Hall, 3rd Floor, BFSU Library]

10:30-11:20 **Plenary Session III**

Venue: Lecture Hall, 3rd Floor, BFSU Library

Chair: **Rosie Levine**, *Executive Director, USCET*

Prof. Robert Daly, *Director, Wilson Center’s Kissinger Institute on China*
“Implications of the 2024 Elections on U.S. China Relations” **Prof. Xie Tao**,
Professor and Dean, the School of International Relations and diplomacy, BFSU

“Democratic backsliding and America’s declining Greatness”

10:20-11:50 **Panel Wrap-Ups**

Jian Ning, Qi Hao, Wang Yige, Guo Xinyi and Zhang Keqing,
ASC, BFSU

11:50-12:00 **Closing Remarks:**

Julia Chang Bloch, *Executive Chair, USCET*



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