

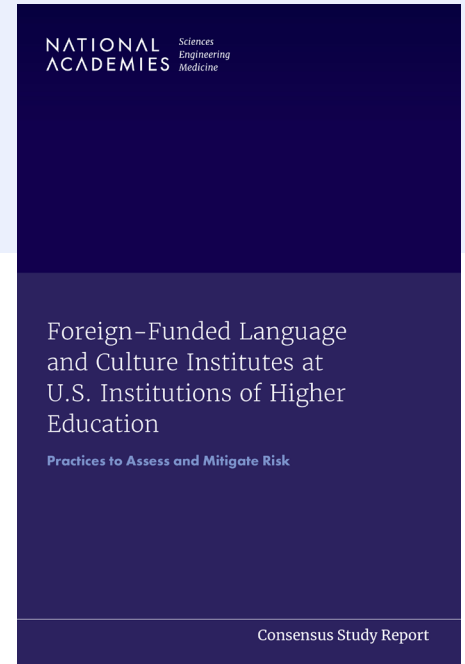
Foreign-Funded Language and Culture Institutes at U.S. Institutions of Higher Education

Practices to Assess and Mitigate Risk

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine convened a committee to recommend steps that U.S. institutions of higher education can take to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign-funded language and culture institutes on campus. This follows the committee's January 2023 report, which proposed waiver criteria that the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) could use to permit the continued presence of Confucius Institutes—Chinese government-funded language and culture centers—on U.S. college and university campuses that receive DOD funding for research. This was in response to a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.

This second report expands the committee's scope to foreign-funded language and culture institutes more broadly, encompassing language and culture programs funded by *any* foreign country at U.S. institutions of higher education. Foreign-funded language and culture institutes are established to promote positive views of a specific nation abroad, and these programs provide expanded capacity for language instruction and expose students to foreign cultures. However, foreign-funded language and culture institutes may pose risks for U.S. host institutions regarding academic freedom, freedom of expression, governance, and national security. This is particularly true if the values of the sponsoring nation do not align with the democratic values held by the United States.

Information is presented on foreign-funded language and culture institutes and their partnerships with U.S. institutions of higher education. Characteristics and features of foreign-funded language



and culture institutes are provided, which can assist U.S. colleges and universities with identifying attributes that may require additional vetting prior to entering into or renewing a partnership. Furthermore, the report highlights practical, actionable measures that U.S. institutions of higher education can take to ensure appropriate operations.

The committee developed the following set of recommendations focused on addressing concerns associated with hosting foreign-funded language and culture institutes on U.S. campuses:

RECOMMENDATION 1

U.S. host institutions should develop and implement appropriate policies, procedures, and processes to identify, address, and mitigate risks associated with foreign-funded language and culture institutes on campus.

RECOMMENDATION 2

U.S. host institutions should promote a culture that clearly articulates, ensures, and promotes the core values of U.S. higher education, including academic freedom and freedom of expression, among faculty, staff, and students.

RECOMMENDATION 3

U.S. host institutions should consider the foreign nation they are partnering with, in the event that a partner nation is considered a country of concern. In this case, U.S. host institutions should consider additional vetting to better understand and mitigate possible risks presented by a language and culture institute with ties to such a country.

RECOMMENDATION 4

U.S. host institutions should bolster the dissemination of information to administrators, faculty, and staff on the process used to initiate and review foreign-funded collaborations.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Additional research should be conducted in support of developing research security recommendations and implementable practices for institutions that are below the \$50 million federal research expenditure threshold and therefore not subject to NSPM-33.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The U.S. government, led by the Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science Foundation, should create or facilitate the creation of a publicly available clearinghouse of research security information and resources that universities can access.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The U.S. government should develop a harmonized, consistent approach across federal agencies for the reporting of foreign gifts and contracts by U.S. institutions of higher education.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Higher education accrediting bodies should subject foreign-funded language and culture institutes at U.S. host institutions to review as part of the accreditation process.

COMMITTEE ON CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES AT U.S. INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION **Philip J. Hanlon** (*Chair*), Dartmouth College; **Jayathi Y. Murthy** (*Vice Chair*), Oregon State University; **Hannah L. Buxbaum**, Indiana University; **Claude R. Canizares**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; **Robert L. Daly**, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; **Peter K. Dorhout**, Iowa State University; **Melissa L. Flagg**, Flagg Consulting LLC; **Mary Gallagher**, University of Michigan; **Jenny J. Lee**, University of Arizona; **Ivett A. Leyva**, Texas A&M University; **Elizabeth D. Peloso**, University of Pennsylvania; **Anna B. Puglisi**, Georgetown University; **Jeffrey M. Riedinger**, University of Washington; **C. Reynold Verret**, Xavier University of Louisiana

STUDY STAFF **Sarah M. Rovito**, Study Director; **Tom Wang**, Policy Theme Lead and Senior Board Director; **Frazier F. Benya**, Senior Program Officer; **John Veras**, Associate Program Officer; **Beau Nielsen**, Research Associate; **Jordan Graves**, Senior Program Assistant

CONSULTANT **Joe Alper**, Consulting writer

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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