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# THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

**July 14, 2021**

## **WE NEED TO KNOW MORE, RESEARCH SECURITY PANEL TELLS U.S. OFFICIALS**

*Jeffrey Mervis | Science | July 9, 2021*

Dialogue without data is a waste of time. That's what members of a new U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine panel looking into the threat posed by other countries trying to steal federally funded research yesterday warned a panel of U.S. government watchdogs. Members of the National Science, Technology, and Security Roundtable—formed last year to promote discussions among federal officials, academic leaders, and national security experts—complained that presentations from a trio of major research agencies lacked the baseline data needed to determine the scope of the problem and what the research community can do to minimize risks. "I hope you can sense our frustration," Maria Zuber, a co-chair of the roundtable and vice president for research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said at the end of a 2-hour online session. "It's impossible for us to gain an understanding of the challenge we face with the information we are being given."

Read the full article [here](#).

## **HOW THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT IS BUYING ITS WAY INTO UK UNIVERSITIES**

*Freddie Hayward | New Statesman | July 12, 2021*

When Professor Peter Nolan warned against debating the plight of the Uighurs or the suppression of democracy in Hong Kong at Jesus College, Cambridge, he exposed the impact of China's growing influence in UK universities. In comments reported by the Sunday Times in early June, Nolan, the director of the college's China Centre, advised colleagues to avoid contentious issues on China's human rights record lest they be seen as a "campaigning college for freedom for Hong Kong, freedom for the Uighurs". According to the Times, Nolan's professorship was funded by a £3.7 million donation to the university from the Chong Hua foundation, a trust allegedly controlled by the daughter of Wen Jiabao, a former Chinese prime minister. Nolan also sits on the board of China International Capital Corporation (CICC), a Chinese state-backed investment bank. Nolan's case highlights the risks of the Chinese government's rising influence in UK universities. Through financial support, the Chinese state is potentially able to mould the boundaries of debate on UK campuses – sometimes explicitly, sometimes more insidiously.

Read the full article [here](#).



## **AN AUSTRALIAN DARPA TO TURBOCHARGE UNIVERSITIES' NATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH: SECURELY MANAGED DEFENCE-FUNDED RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS IN FIVE-EYES UNIVERSITIES**

*Robert Clark and Peter Jennings | Australian Strategic Policy Institute | July 14, 2021*

More than at any time since World War II, science and technology (S&T) breakthroughs are dramatically redesigning the global security outlook. Australia's university sector now has a vital role to play in strengthening Australia's defence. In this paper, we propose establishing a formal partnership between the Defence Department, defence industry and Australian universities. There's a significant opportunity to boost international defence S&T research cooperation with our Five-Eyes partners: the US, UK, Canada and New Zealand. We outline how this can be done. Central to this partnership proposal is the need to restructure current arrangements for Defence funding of Australian universities via the creation of an Australian Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)— based on the highly successful American model, which the UK plans to emulate in 2022. In Australia, implementing these initiatives will contribute significantly to a vital restructuring of the university sector's research funding model.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **CHINA IS FAR FROM ALONE IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES' SELF-INFLICTED WOUNDS**

*David Brophy | The Guardian | July 9, 2021*

Outside the political sphere, much of Australia's China panic centres on university campuses. This is hardly surprising, given the deep connections of the Australian higher--education sector to China. In 2019, before the Covid--19 pandemic hit, higher education brought in some A\$12bn in export revenue, most of it from China. With more than 150,000 Chinese international students enrolled, some institutions relied on that single revenue stream to make up a quarter of their total budget before the current drop--off. Mandarin is the second language of campus life in most universities these days; Confucius Institutes have been established at 13 universities; partnerships and MOUs with Chinese universities proliferate in many fields. Australian academics now collaborate more with colleagues in China than in any other foreign country: one report found that an incredible 16.2% of scientific papers by Australian researchers – almost one in six – were co--authored with researchers in China, with papers in the fields of materials science, chemical engineering and energy topping the list.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **'CULTURAL SENSITIVITY' CAN BE A COVER FOR CHINESE PROPAGANDA IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES**

*Kurt Mahlburg | MercatorNet | July 12, 2021*

I started the [Twitter] account because I was in Australia. I thought it was safe here. I thought they wouldn't be able to trace it back to me. In March 2020 the local police department contacted my parents and asked my parents to come to the police station and issued an official warning and they told me to "shut the [expletive] up" and that I will pay a very heavy price if I come back home. They said I must shut down my Twitter, stop spreading anti-government messages and if I don't cooperate, they may charge me with a crime if I ever come back home. They said I would face a minimum three years. They didn't call me. Just contacted my parents. So far, it's ok. I deleted the Twitter account. Because I'm worried about my parents. These are the words of Li Wei, a student from mainland China who came to study at an Australian university in 2019.

Read the full article [here](#).



## SENATE TO PROBE FOREIGN STATES' MEDDLING IN UNIVERSITIES

Jane Marshall | University World News | July 10, 2021

French senators have set up an investigation into the 'influences' on French higher education of meddling non-European countries – notably, allegedly, China, Turkey and some Gulf states. The parliamentary inquiry into "non-European states' influences in the French university and academic world" was established at the initiative of senators belonging to the Rassemblement des Démocrates, Progressistes et Indépendants group. It was launched last week, starting with a questionnaire to universities distributed through the Conférence des Présidents d'Université, the body representing university heads. Timing will be tight, with hearings planned to take place during the summer and conclusions presented at the end of September, according to a statement from the Senate. The statement said the issue of foreign influences on the values of the French university world was little researched; whereas countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom reported "alarming instances of foreign influence and interference in their universities", and set up parliamentary inquiries on such practices as funding of university chairs, manipulation of research for ideological or political ends, or pressures exerted on their expatriate students and, potentially, teachers.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## TRUMP BID TO RESTRICT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISAS DROPPED

Brendan O'Malley | University World News | July 10, 2021

Joe Biden's administration has withdrawn a proposal by his predecessor, Donald Trump, to bring in visa restrictions for academic students, exchange visitors and representatives of foreign media. In a statement on 6 July, the US Department of Homeland Security announced that it was withdrawing the Trump proposal, which would have replaced a 'duration of status' admission period with a fixed time period of stay. Currently, international students can remain in the US indefinitely without reapplying for a visa, provided that they stay enrolled in college and in compliance with the requirements governing their visa status. Under the Trump proposal, non-immigrants seeking to remain in the United States beyond their fixed period of admission would have been required to apply for an extension of stay directly with US Citizenship and Immigration Services or to depart the country and apply for admission with US Customs and Border Protection at a port of entry.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## THE SENATE WILL STUDY THE INTERFERENCE OF FOREIGN STATES AT THE UNIVERSITY

The Canadian | July 8, 2021

Pushed by André Gattolin, elected The Republic in motion of Hauts-de-Seine and connoisseur of China, who will be rapporteur, a Senate information mission on "Extra-European state influences in the French university and academic world" started his auditions on Thursday July 8. She will have very little time to deal with this vast and sensitive subject, as she is due to deliver her conclusions at the end of September. But "The Senate can already identify the problem, name it by distinguishing between the "soft power" and what would constitute a threat, then formulate recommendations to respond to it ", estimates the president of the mission, the senator (Les Républicains) of the Rhône, Etienne Blanc. The work should, in fact, be confined to a few important states: Turkey, China, Gulf countries. "It is about identifying those who hijack the purpose of the university – the dissemination of French thought, openness to the world, the tradition of welcoming foreign students", adds the senator.

Read the full article [here](#).



## GOVERNMENT SET TO CURB FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON UNIVERSITIES

Yojana Sharma | *University World News* | July 8, 2021

Singapore is looking at possible legislative measures to curb foreign influence on organisations including universities, its minister of home affairs said after parliamentarians raised concerns about foreign influence operations and foreign intelligence recruitment from the city-state's universities in the wake of espionage cases involving academics. While the government did not specify countries of concern, academics have warned in recent years about China reaching out to ethnic Chinese in Singapore. In a parliamentary question, MPs noted concern over foreign influence operations and foreign intelligence recruitment, "particularly those that play on cultural affinity". Singapore's Minister for Home Affairs K Shanmugam said in a written reply to a parliamentary question on 6 July that the ministry was studying the approaches of other countries with the possibility of putting forward new "legislative levers to prevent and counter foreign interference" in Singapore's domestic policies. Shanmugam noted the ministry would "move on the proposals" when ready.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## CRACKDOWN IMPOSED ON SCIENTISTS VIEWED AS DETRIMENTAL TO WASHINGTON

Lia Zhu | *China Daily* | July 7, 2021

Chinese scientists are being investigated in the US merely for their ethnicity, while postdoctoral scholars from China are returning home or going to other places where they feel welcome, according to two prominent US scientists. The scientists also said that anti-China policies are harming the US national interest. Steven Chu, co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Prize in physics and secretary of energy during the Obama administration, said: "Many of my Chinese American colleagues feel they're under increased and unjustified scrutiny by the US government. The Department of Justice's China Initiative is creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation." The China Initiative was launched in November 2018 with the aim of investigating cases of economic espionage. The program, which has resulted in dozens of prosecutions, has been widely criticized as racial profiling against researchers with Chinese backgrounds.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## NEW REPORT ON CHINA'S REPRESSION IN AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION A WARNING TO U.S. UNIVERSITIES

Sarah McLaughlin | *The Fire* | July 8, 2021

Last week, Human Rights Watch released a troubling new report that examined the effects of Chinese surveillance and censorship laws on Chinese international students studying in Australia. The findings are worrisome, to say the least. The report, "'They Don't Understand the Fear We Have': How China's Long Reach of Repression Undermines Academic Freedom at Australia's Universities," suggests that self-censorship may be the norm, not the exception, for Chinese students studying abroad, and the growing influence of China is presenting new and difficult challenges for international higher education. While the report focuses on censorship in Australian institutions, U.S. universities — increasingly facing similar problems — should take note. To compile the report, HRW conducted interviews with 48 individuals — including 22 academics and 24 international students studying at Australian universities, 11 from mainland China and 13 from Hong Kong — who support pro-democracy activism.

Read the full article [here](#).



## **GERMANY WANTS INDEPENDENT CHINA EXPERTS AS CONCERNS ABOUT CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES AND BEIJING'S INFLUENCE OVER UNIVERSITIES GROWS**

*Rachel Zhang | South China Morning Post | July 3, 2021*

Germany is building up its own knowledge base about China as it seeks to diminish Beijing's influence over its universities. The education ministry announced on Tuesday that it was investing €24 million (US\$28.4 million) in a programme running between 2017 and 2024 to strengthen "independent China competence" in its universities and research institutes. The aim of the project is to support science and research cooperation with China that is "based on European values", according to a statement from the education ministry. Anja Karliczek, the education minister, said the country still wanted to engage with China and needs more talents who understand Chinese culture, language, society and history. But she added such efforts must be conducted independently by Germany, and called on universities to cut off cooperation with the Confucius Institutes, a state-funded educational partnership that offers courses in Chinese language and culture.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **MITIGATING FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS**

*Council on Competitiveness | June 29, 2021*

The undersigned members of the Council on Competitiveness believe that scientific research and the engagement therein of foreign students, faculty and researchers serves the United States national interest both from an economic and national security perspective. And the line between these two interests is increasingly uncertain, as dual-use disruptive technologies—such as quantum computing, gene editing, artificial intelligence, and high-performance computing—come to the forefront of the U.S. research enterprise. Research into these and other applications is science at the edge, often requiring long-term commitments and global collaboration. Whether pushing the boundaries of what can be seen at vast distances or at quantum scales, new technologies are disrupting industries, jobs and economies across the globe, as well as shaping how humans will progress and how society will advance.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **CHINA'S GENE GIANT HARVESTS DATA FROM MILLIONS OF WOMEN**

*Kirsty Needham and Clare Baldwin | Reuters | July 7, 2021*

A Chinese gene company selling prenatal tests around the world developed them in collaboration with the country's military and is using them to collect genetic data from millions of women for sweeping research on the traits of populations, a Reuters review of scientific papers and company statements found. U.S. government advisors warned in March that a vast bank of genomic data that the company, BGI Group, is amassing and analyzing with artificial intelligence could give China a path to economic and military advantage. As science pinpoints new links between genes and human traits, access to the biggest, most diverse set of human genomes is a strategic edge. The technology could propel China to dominate global pharmaceuticals, and also potentially lead to genetically enhanced soldiers, or engineered pathogens to target the U.S. population or food supply, the advisors said. Reuters has found that BGI's prenatal test, one of the most popular in the world, is a source of genetic data for the company, which has worked with the Chinese military to improve "population quality" and on genetic research to combat hearing loss and altitude sickness in soldiers.

Read the full article [here](#).



## HOUSE DEMOCRATS TAKE DIFFERENT APPROACH TO ECONOMIC, NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS POSED BY CHINA

Mariana Alfaro and Marianna Sotomayor | *The Washington Post* | July 5, 2021

In a fractious Washington, any deal that would inject billions in new federal spending into the economy and receives overwhelming support from a bitterly divided Senate would seem a good candidate to move swiftly through the House and onto President Biden's desk. But a sprawling bipartisan Senate proposal that passed on a vote of 68 to 32 last month and would spread \$250 billion across several key industries to counter China's growing technological and economical prowess is being viewed warily in the House. The skeptical response by Democrats is motivated by policy concerns and a feeling among members of the House that they aren't going to rubber stamp a bipartisan Senate bill simply because it is so rare that one emerges.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## UNIVERSITIES FIGHT SCRUTINY OF FOREIGN FUNDING IN SENATE CHINA BILL

Michael Stratford | *Politico* | May 27, 2021

Colleges and universities are rushing to fend off a new round of federal scrutiny of their foreign dealings as the Senate negotiates last-minute changes to bipartisan legislation aimed at countering China's economic influence and power. Higher education groups have cheered on the massive boost to science and technology research in the bill, which is a top priority for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer that he was pushing to finish this week. But universities are fighting a range of provisions that would impose new federal controls on foreign donations to U.S. campuses and contracts that schools have with partner institutions or other entities abroad. Democrats and Republicans on Thursday were also still negotiating changes over how to structure a key portion of how the U.S. government would set up new mechanisms to monitor foreign donations, particularly from China, to American campuses.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## ECONOMIC STATECRAFT TOWARD CHINA FROM TRUMP TO BIDEN: MORE CONTINUITY THAN MEETS THE EYE

Joshua Kirschenbaum | *Alliance for Securing Democracy* | June 23, 2021

In the final year of the Trump administration, the U.S. government issued a flurry of actions related to China, utilizing a diverse basket of economic statecraft tools in furtherance of national security objectives.<sup>1</sup> These ranged from targeted asset freezes of individuals undermining Hong Kong's autonomy to restrictions on the importation of goods suspected of being produced with forced labor in Xinjiang. The two most high-profile actions were Commerce Department restrictions on the provision by businesses of certain services to the social media platform TikTok and the messaging app WeChat in August and September of 2020, followed by November 2020 sanctions prohibiting the purchase of the stock or bonds of Chinese military-linked companies.

Read the full article [here](#).

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