

A STRATEGIC PLAN TO INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT OF CHINESE
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT UW-PLATTEVILLE

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A STRATEGIC PLAN TO INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT OF CHINESE UNDER-GRADUATE STUDENTS AT UW-PLATTEVILLE

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ABSTRACT

Although China has been the largest student exporting country to U.S educational institutions in recent years, the enrollment at UW-Platteville has been low, accounting for 1.4 students per year. In order to increase the recruitment of Chinese students at UW-Platteville, the author investigated the reasons of the low enrollment of Chinese students and then created a strategic plan for recruitment. Field research was conducted among Chinese alumni, current Chinese students, and admission officers in UW-Platteville. Evidence from the research suggests that UW-Platteville, in conjunction with its partner university in China, has done some limited marketing among prospective graduate students in China but there has been no significant marketing directed toward potential undergraduate students. As a result, in order to create a recruitment plan, comprehensive market research and an environmental scan were undertaken, examining both the external market environment of China and the internal environment of UW-Platteville. During the process of research, data from both Chinese and American publications and reports were collected and analyzed. Such research assisted in identifying the opportunities and threats in the external Chinese market, and the strengths and weaknesses of UW-Platteville in recruiting students from China. Through an analysis of the findings from this research, the author created an action plan for recruitment with the application of international marketing concepts.

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Charter 1: Introduction

The past decade has seen a great increase of international students studying in U.S. educational institutions. According to the *Fast Facts of Open Door* (Institute of International Education (IIE), 2012a), there were 764,495 international students in the U.S in 2012, which is 130% of the figure of 10 years ago. Among all international students, students from China rank the top with 194,029 students, accounting for 25.4% of the total figure. Compared with the number of 10 years ago, the growth rate was 300%. As international students pay out-of-state tuition, which is generally 3 times that of state-resident students (Lewin, 2012), they have also improved the U.S economy. In 2012, international students contributed \$21.81 billion to the U.S. economy (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2012). The influx of international students has greatly relieved many U.S educational institutions from the financial pressures caused by the serious budget cuts from state governments (Lewin, 2012). It has also enriched the cultural diversity of U.S. campuses and provided U.S. students and community members with opportunities to have direct contact with different cultures and people, and to expand their international understanding and connections. In addition, the influx of international students also assists U.S. universities to further develop their prestige globally. When these international students return to their countries after graduation, they usually could assist these U.S universities in many ways. Their success in education and careers will help these U.S educational institutions to build greater recognition and increase their brand name abroad.

As the benefits brought by international students are numerous, U.S educational institutions have been competing with other domestic and international universities to recruit international students. Some of them have achieved great success. For instance, in 2012, the University of Southern California recruited 9,269 international students; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign had 8,997; and the number of international students at New York University was 8,660 (IIE, 2012a). However, there were also many universities facing great challenges in tapping this market. Unlike Ivy League schools and renowned large public universities, small universities often have difficulties in recruiting international students. This is especially true for those with limited budgets, generally unknown in foreign nations, and lacking in available resources. The consequences caused by the scarcity of international students on a campus may have a negative influence on a university's finances, the campus student diversity, and the ability of students to understand and compete in global markets. In order to solve this problem, some universities have been striving to recruit more international students. One of them is UW-Platteville, where the author of this project is studying. International students at UW-Platteville accounted for approximately 1% of its total enrollment for many years and have climbed to 2% recently (UW-Platteville, 2007; UW-Platteville, 2011). Most of these international students are exchange students from China and Europe who come to study at UW-Platteville for one semester and finish the rest of their credits and degree requirements at their home universities. As for 4-year program, degree-seeking, international students, the number is limited. The hard work of university admission officers has brought in more international students, but the overall percentage of interna-

tional students, compared to those from the U.S., is still very low. With the purpose of assisting UW-Platteville in its goal of increasing international student recruitment, the author offers this educational project. The target country of this project is focused on China, which is the largest exporting country of international students to U.S. universities.

Problem Statement

UW-Platteville started to recruit Chinese students 12 years ago by establishing a joint program of the Master of Science in English Education (MSEE) with a Chinese university. Students in this program spend their first 3 semesters in China and then are offered the opportunity to study at UW-Platteville for their last semester. However, in recent years the enrollment of the MSEE program has been declining.

The number of Chinese undergraduate students on the UW-Platteville campus has remained very low. The record in the international student database shows that from 2007 to the spring 2013 there were only 10 Chinese undergraduate students studying at UW-Platteville, averaging 1.4 students per year. Compared with the great number of Chinese students pouring into many other U.S. educational institutions in recent years, the low enrollment of Chinese undergraduate students at UW-Platteville shows that something needs to be improved if UW-Platteville wants to have more undergraduate students from China. Therefore, the focus of this educational project is three fold: (1) what accounts for the relatively low enrollment at UW-Platteville of degree-seeking undergraduate students from China? (2) What strength and weakness does UW-Platteville have? (3) What opportunities and threats does UW-Platteville face? As a result of the analysis, this project will identify modifications in recruiting, admission, and enrollment practices that can be implemented to increase the enrollment of degree-seeking undergraduate students from China. An action plan will be formulated as the final phase of this project.

Significance

With the help of this project, UW-Platteville can define the factors that have been hindering the recruitment of degree-seeking undergraduate students from China. The solutions provided in this project can help to increase the recruitment of Chinese undergraduate students, whose arrival can provide a series of benefits including a more culturally diversified campus, and more opportunities to the U.S students and community members to have direct contact with the largest Asian culture and market. As China plays an increasingly important role in the world economy, a better understanding of the Chinese market is necessary, and degree-seeking students from China can provide UW-Platteville students with an insider's perspective and understanding of China, helping them to build a network of contacts and to compete in the international market. In addition, UW-Platteville can expand its brand recognition in China and improve its financial situation.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Although the reasons of studying abroad can be very different among students, there is still a pattern for the majority. Macready and Tucker point out some key findings as to why and how students choose a destination for study abroad. They include such factors as high quality study opportunities, affordable cost, universities with programs providing internationally recognized qualifications, good prospects of high returns, and visa arrangements which are favorable toward students seeking to study abroad. All these are push powers that drive international students to study abroad (Macready & Tucker, 2011). June Noronha states that international student recruitment is more likely to succeed if it is done as a result of strategic planning, which provides a framework for strategic thinking, direction, and action leading to the achievement of consistent and planned results. Developing a strategic recruitment plan, the following elements should be considered: (1) an environmental scan; (2) analysis and assessment of the external and internal environments; (3) analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; (4) development of mission and goals; (5) identification of key performance indicators or measures of essential outcome; (6) identification of objectives, an action plan, and accountability; and (7) identification of resources, needs, and expenditures (Noronha, 2009).

Among these key elements, the environmental scan involves an examination of the political, sociological/cultural, technological, economic, and environmental aspects of recruitment. These elements determine the success of international student recruitment (Noronha, 2009). For instance, if U.S. embassies refrain from the issuance of student visas or drastically reduce the numbers, the recruitment of international students would not be successful. This scenario was demonstrated during the period following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, which led to a great decline in the number of international students on U.S. campuses in the following years. In contrast, the easing of the strict visa policy on students from China has assisted to increase Chinese students on U.S. campuses from 62,582 in 2005 to 194,029 in 2012 (IIE, 2005; IIE, 2012a). The analysis of these crucial environmental factors can assist to set up a solid foundation for a recruitment plan. Meanwhile, the environmental scan should include an analysis of internal and external situations. The former enables admission staff to discover the strengths and weakness of their universities, while the latter helps admission officers to discover opportunities and threats that exist in the market (Noronha, 2009). Such a market analysis technique is often called SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) in the business sector (Mind Tools). In this way, admission officers can see what useful resources they have, what strengths they have, which part of their programs should be improved, and where they can successfully recruit students. For instance, one of the key recruitment techniques is networking, which builds up contacts and co-operation with faculty, current students, alumni, agents, overseas educational institutions and governments. As discussed in the Marking the Most of Alumni Contacts, current international students and alumni are the best representatives that an educational institution can use in recruiting other international students. Since these students are familiar with their home culture and educational system, they can provide very valuable suggestions to the admission officers.

Meanwhile, since they are regarded as fellow countrymen or countrywomen by students from their home country, the information provided by them is more persuasive to prospective students than that provided by admission officers, who are often seen as “sales people” (Foley, 2009). As Rosie Edmond, the assistant director of admission for the International Legal Studies Program at American University’s Washington College of Law, observed, “Engaging international alumni in the recruiting process is not only increasing the volume of students, it is also increasing the quality of students who apply “ (Dessoiff, 2009). The other benefit brought by the analysis of internal and external environment is that an educational institution can investigate the environment of the target market so as to see the opportunities and threats of the target market.

Based on this environmental scan, admission officers will have a more realistic understanding of the situation they face and then are able to set up a reasonable mission and goal, which guide the direction and sets up the expected outcomes (Noronha, 2009). To fulfill the mission and goal, Sonja Phongsavanh points out that an annual recruitment plan needs to be formulated, which includes budget, staffing, process and procedures (Phongsavanh, 2009). It lists duties to be completed, date of completion, marketing activities, monitoring procedures, and key performance indicators or measures of essential outcome. As many of these duties require certain techniques, staffing should be done carefully. Marketing can be used to illustrate the many facets involved in developing an action plan. To achieve the best results in marketing, for example, one needs to figure out what, where, and when to advertise (Printz, 2009). Although advertising can be very powerful in reaching a target audience, it also costs money and time. If advertising is not properly placed, it could end up fruitless. Therefore, to achieve an ideal result, an educational institution needs to answer such questions as what kind of students does the educational institution wish to target? Are they high school graduates, college or university students, or graduate students? Where are they? What majors are more popular among them? What are the most important considerations to these students when they apply for an overseas university? In figuring out the answers to these questions, an educational institution would know what it should advertise to its audience. For instance, the educational philosophy, school size, and availability of student clubs and sports teams are important considerations to many U.S. students. However, the ranking of the university and its program and educational costs are widely discussed in many reports as the first considerations to Chinese students and their parents. A highly diversified campus is not a big attraction to students from China. As Tom Melcher has noted, Chinese students and their parents prefer a campus with a high percentage of white Americans and do not like a campus with lots of Chinese and Koreans. Even though they may be reluctant to admit it directly, for many Chinese students and their parents “foreign” culture or “American” culture is really code language for white, Caucasian culture (Melcher, 2010).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology used in this research was essentially two-fold. Part of it consisted of an environmental scan and marketing analysis of the potential international student market in China. This analysis used a combination of library and internet research. The research also employed field research methods consisting of questionnaires administered to current Chinese students as well as some alumni. An interview schedule was also developed, and interviews were conducted with two of UW-Platteville's international admission officers. Both the questionnaire and the interview questions were reviewed by UW-Platteville's Institutional Review Body (IRB), which approved their use as part of this project.

Through the interviews and questionnaire, the author proposes to identify the strengths and weaknesses that exist in current international student recruitment strategies. Since all the Chinese students including alumni and current students can be divided into graduate and undergraduate students, the surveys to Chinese students are categorized into graduate and undergraduate groups. The interview of admission officers is an individual group. The objective of this project is to find solutions for the problems that are identified and to develop a multifaceted plan that will enable UW-Platteville to be more competitive in recruiting prospective undergraduate students from China. In addition, through the author's knowledge of Chinese culture and Mandarin language, existing recruiting materials of UW-Platteville were also reviewed, appropriately modified, and translated into Mandarin for the recruitment of undergraduate students from China.

Procedures

Following the discussion of key elements of strategic plan (Noronha, 2009), the author has designed a questionnaire and an interview schedule to discover elements present in the internal and external environment of UW-Platteville. During the process, the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) market analysis technique was used to analyze the situation of the institution and the target markets. Some questions in the questionnaire were open-ended, and others were multiple choice/limited response. Different methods for analyzing these data have been used. Data collected from the closed/multiple choice questions were added up and then divided by the number of participants to achieve the mean figures. The mean figures are arranged in rank order from the most to the least influential factors that students would consider in selecting a foreign university. By comparing the mean figures between these two students groups, the author intends to find some common and different factors among and between these groups. In order to discover more information for this project, library research was also conducted, and data from both Chinese and English sources have been used.

Participants

Since international students are the buyers of the educational services, the questionnaire is used to collect data from current students from China as well as from some Chinese alumni. The researcher sent out 40 questionnaires to students from China and conducted 2 interviews with UW-Platteville's international student admission officers. Twenty-six students filled out the survey, providing a response rate of 65%. However, 2 of the responses were discarded due to the incomplete answers. Therefore, there were 24 useful questionnaires. Among them, 5 of them were from undergraduate students, and the other 19 in total were from graduate students. The reason for including graduate students in this survey is because the number of undergraduate students from China is too small to discover more reliable information. Adding graduate students in this survey can be beneficial in finding some key issues that influence all students from China. As Chinese students are in graduate and undergraduate programs, data from these two groups were analyzed separately. By doing so, the researcher can discover the similarities and differences between these two groups. As will be discussed later in the analysis of results, in some cases where there appeared to be inconsistent or confusing results from the questionnaires, which were written in English, follow-up discussions were conducted in Chinese with students in order to gain greater accuracy and clarity and to determine if there were language barriers in understanding certain of the questions in English.

The two interviews with admission officers at UW-Platteville are used to explore the issues related to international student recruitment from the perspective of educational service providers. Therefore, the data from library research, the educational service buyers and providers can be analyzed to form a more accurate Chinese student recruitment plan.

Delimitations

This educational project surveyed Chinese students who are studying or have studied at UW-Platteville including the current and past MSEE program graduate students and undergraduate students from China. In addition, two UW-Platteville international student admission officers were interviewed. Library research was conducted to assist this project. It involved Chinese and English data resources. The results of the surveys and interviews are intended to be applicable primarily to international recruitment matters specifically at UW-Platteville. Other aspects of the marketing research and the analysis of library and other source materials about Chinese recruitment are intended to have broad application to a wider range of universities.

Chapter 4: Field Research Analysis

Questions in the survey focus on the background information of students, their preferred sources for obtaining information on international education, the popular programs of UW-Platteville among the Chinese students, the key influential factors in selecting a university, and their suggestions on the improvement of Chinese student recruitment. The interview questions for UW-Platteville admission officers were designed to help discover the reasons for the low enrollment of undergraduate students from China. Both the questionnaire and the interview questions are attached as an appendix at the end of this paper. The questionnaire to students is labeled as Figure One, while the schedule of interview questions to admission officers is marked as Figure Two.

Analysis of Surveys from Alumni and Current Students from China

Question 1, 2, and 3 in Figure One are designed to collect information on major, educational level and city of origin. Five out of 6 current Chinese undergraduate students at UW-Platteville completed the survey. Two of them were in engineering, 1 in math, 1 in business administration, and 1 in English literature. Because of the small numbers, it is difficult to reach any conclusion, but engineering was slightly more popular than the other undergraduate majors. Meanwhile, the international student database from 2007- spring 2013 showed that the popular majors among undergraduate students from China were Business Administration (3 students), Math (2 students), Accounting (2 students), and Engineering (2 students). All the graduate students in the survey were from the master's degree program with South-Central University for Nationalities (SCUN); hence, all of them are in the major of English Education. Since these students spend their first 3 semesters in Wuhan, they study at UW-Platteville for only one semester. All of the instruction for all four semesters, however, is provided by faculty from UW-Platteville, and the students earn a master's degree from UW-Platteville. The students' place of origin shared some commonalities between the two groups. In the graduate program, most of students were from Wuhan, where SCUN is located. Among the undergraduate students, 2 out of 5 were also from Wuhan, the rest from different Chinese cities.

Question 4 is designed to discover the information source that these students used to find the programs at UW-Platteville. To figure out the popular channel of obtaining information of study abroad, question 4 lists the following channels for students to choose (see chart below). Students were encouraged to choose all the channels that they used in obtaining information about UW-Platteville. Chart 1 on undergraduate students shows 4 ticks on Friends and Relatives, 2 ticks on Internet Search, and 1 on Teacher and School Introduction. Therefore, friends and relatives are the major information providers for them to learn about UW-Platteville. Among the graduate student responses to this question, 12 ticks were recorded for Teacher and School Introduction; Friends and Relatives had 7 ticks; and Internet Search had 3 ticks. Apparently, graduate students got to know UW-Platteville through their teachers and school recommendation. Therefore, recommendations from friends, relative, teachers and schools were the major sources for

the Chinese students at UW-Platteville to obtain study abroad information. What's more, the internet was also used for overseas education. As for other methods of obtaining information about UW-Platteville, such as TV, newspapers, education abroad fairs, and internet social media, none of the students surveyed ticked any of them. This suggests that UW-Platteville has missed multiple channels of marketing.

Chart 1: Channels for Information on Study Abroad for Undergraduate Students

Channels for Information on Study Abroad	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Friends and relatives	4	7
Internet search	2	3
Teacher or school introduction	1	12
Education abroad fair	0	0
TV advertisement	0	0
Newspaper	0	0
Internet social media	0	0

Question 5 is intended to investigate the preferred language in searching internet information about study abroad. Three out of five undergraduate students preferred to use Chinese. Similarly, among the graduate students, 11 of them preferred Chinese, 7 preferred English, and 1 accepted both equally. This shows that both the undergraduate and graduate students prefer using Chinese for searching information on the internet. Although there were 7 students who said they preferred to use English over Chinese, the answers on some survey questions suggest that students may have some language barriers. Some responses in the surveys had nothing to do with the questions. For example, when students were asked to list at least 3 changes or improvements they would suggest improving the recruitment of Chinese students, one student responded with:

Change 1: English ability, reading, writing in English;

Change 2: making friends;

Change 3: understanding American culture

This response suggests the likelihood that this student did not fully understand the question. If the survey was designed in Chinese, the researcher may have received more accurate or more responsive answers. The findings also confirm the importance of native language in the process of searching information on international education. For example, when prospective students type Chinese characters in the Internet search engines, they would mostly find webpages of Chinese education agencies. These websites provides all sorts of information on study abroad in Chinese, including visa application and the introductions of overseas universities, majors, and courses in Chinese. For instance, EduGlobal, one of the largest educational agencies in China, provides detailed information on overseas educational institutions in Chinese and even sets up exclusive Chinese webpages and advisers for different overseas universities (EduGlobal). As for the websites of those overseas universities without Chinese webpages, they would not show up on the result list of internet searches. It is partly for this reason that about 70% of self-funded Chinese students go through education agencies for study abroad (British Council, 2013).

Although there is considerable evidence pointing to the importance of providing native language service in the recruiting of international students, UW-Platteville joins a host of other U.S. universities without a Chinese-version webpage. UW-Platteville has a PDF file in Chinese providing information about the application. However, some of the hyperlinks connecting with the required forms in this file do not work. Apart from that, PDF files are very rarely found by Internet search engines due to the code requirements of search engines. To be more searchable, the content has to be webpage format.

Question 7 was designed to ask students to weigh the importance of some factors influencing their decision on selecting an overseas university. These factors are (a) Location and transportation; (b) Tuition; (c) Major; (d) Rank and reputation of university; (e) Campus and community safety; (f) Scholarship and financial assistance; (g) OPT and Employment opportunities; (h) Multi-cultural campus life; (i) Licensed/accredited by the Chinese government. Students were asked to rank these factors from 1 to 9, with 1 as the most important and 9 as the least important. Each number was to be used only once. Students ranked these factors with different numbers and then the total numbers were added up and divided by the number of participants so as to achieve the mean number. Based on these factors, two charts were created. Chart 2 was for undergraduate students. It shows that Major (2.4), Tuition (2.6), and Rank and reputation of university (3.0) were the top factors in selecting a foreign university. The least important factors were Licensed/accredited by the Chinese government (8.2), OPT and Employment opportunities (7.4), and Multi-cultural campus life (7.0).

Chart 2: Key Factors Affecting the Decisions of Undergraduate Students in Selecting a Foreign University

Key Factors Affecting the Decisions of Undergraduate Student in Selecting a University						
Key Factors						Mean
Location and transportation	8	6	5	4	2	5.0
Tuition	4	2	1	5	1	2.6
Major	5	1	2	1	3	2.4
Rank and reputation of university	2	3	4	2	4	3.0
Campus and community safety	6	7	3	3	5	4.8
Scholarship and financial assistance	1	4	6	6	6	4.6
OPT and Employment opportunities	7	8	7	7	8	7.4
Multi-cultural campus life	3	9	8	8	7	7.0
Licensed/accredited by Chinese government	9	5	9	9	9	8.2

Chart 3 is focused on the graduate students from China. It shows that the top three considerations in selecting a foreign university were Major, Tuition, and Licensed/ accredited by Chinese government. The least three influential factors were Location and transportation, Multi-cultural campus life, and Campus and community safety.

Therefore, the information collected for these two groups shows that tuition and major are the top considerations in selection a foreign university, while multi-cultural campus life is commonly regarded as less important among them. However, differences between these two groups exist.

While the graduate students regard Licensed/accredited by Chinese government as one of the most important factors, undergraduate students believe it is one of the least important factors. This is an interesting finding, which may relate to the fact that many of the graduate students in the English Education program are teachers of English or hope to become teachers of English. Upon their return to China, the recognition of the Platteville program by the Chinese government would be a very important factor in their future success.

Chart 3: Key Factors Affecting the Decisions of Graduate Student in Selecting a Foreign University

Key Factors																				Mean
Location and transportation	8	9	9	6	9	5	6	7	8	6	8	7	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	7.47
Tuition	4	4	3	3	3	4	2	2	1	3	3	8	8	2	5	2	2	3	4	3.37
Major	3	3	2	2	4	6	4	1	2	5	1	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	1	2.52
Rank and reputation of university	2	5	6	7	5	2	3	5	3	4	4	6	3	6	4	4	5	1	5	4.21
Campus and community safety	5	2	1	4	7	9	5	3	7	8	5	4	6	7	6	7	6	7	7	5.57
Scholarship and financial assistance	6	7	4	8	2	3	1	8	5	2	2	5	7	8	8	8	8	4	2	5.26
OPT and Employment opportunities	7	8	5	9	6	7	7	9	6	9	6	3	5	4	3	6	4	5	6	5.47
Multi-cultural campus life	9	6	8	5	8	8	9	4	9	7	7	1	4	5	7	5	7	8	8	6.68
Licensed/accredited by Chinese government	1	1	7	1	1	1	8	6	4	1	9	9	1	1	1	1	3	6	3	3.63

Question 10 was designed to uncover the importance of guidance during the process of applying to study at UW-Platteville. Such information could be valuable to the international student admission officer in identifying what marketing channels should be strengthened. The results revealed that only one student expressed that she/he received help from an agent. The rest of them in the two student groups answered that they applied by themselves. This result was very surprising because of the high percentage of self-guided applications for study-abroad at UW-Platteville. It is in striking contrast to the report on the British Council website that about 70% of self-funded Chinese students go through education agencies for study abroad (British Council, 2013). Because of the marked difference between this response on the written questionnaires and other studies, this researcher decided to do a follow-up discussion with these students. It turned out that all these students received help from either their teachers or their relatives in guiding their application. It was a defect in designing the question by missing third party assistance during the application process. It also reinforces the earlier point of using the students' native language as a way of increasing the accuracy of the results. By talking with these students directly, the follow-up has helped to clarify the responses to this question. Some students told the researcher that their teachers used a sample application form to instruct them on how to fill out the application form. When they applied for their visas, they also received instructions on how to prepare for the visa interviews and were accompanied by their teacher to Beijing.

Question 11 was asking about the benefits of a Chinese version of UW-Platteville's website for prospective students and their parents. Twenty-two out of 24 students expressed that they thought this would help students and their parents understand UW-Platteville and its programs better. This discovery again demonstrates the importance of native language in the target market. However, the responses on the next question, question 12, presented a different answer. When students were asked the importance of a Chinese speaking admission officer in the process of applying to a university, the responses fell into two even groups. Half of the group expressed the positive influence a Chinese-speaking admission officer has while the other half did not think it is important to have a Chinese-speaking admission advisor. As one of the answers shows, students can speak English and do not need a Chinese speaking admission advisor. However, if what these students said was true, why do most Chinese students go through an education agency for help? Why do universities like Kent State University send a Chinese-speaking employee to Beijing to establish a China office (Kent State University China Center)? If the English proficiency level of students is good enough for efficient communication, why do some of the responses in the survey suggest that students did not understand the question? Indeed, some answers on the questionnaire were not at all responsive to the question and had nothing to do with the questions. Since study abroad involves lots of money and time, students and parents are reluctant to make any mistakes. Therefore, comprehensive communication is required. To achieve the best result of communication, native language should be preferred, or at least be available as an alternative. Therefore, the author suspects that there is a defect in the design of the question, which confused these students.

Analysis of Interview with Admission Officers

Questions 1 to 3 are to discover what marketing activities have been done to recruit students from China and what marketing activities are more effective. It turned out UW-Platteville started to pay attention to recruitment of international students only a few years ago. They hired Mr. Mohammed Amin and established the international student admission office. Due to the limited budget, the international admission officers could not do overseas recruitment until 2012, when they received support from top level administration of the university to perform their first overseas recruitment in India. Later, the Chancellor and admission officers travelled separately to Brazil for international student recruitment. In this way, international student admission is getting more support. As for the marketing activities in China, they have not done any yet.

Interview question 4 asked the admission officers what majors were popular among students from China. The admission officer confirmed that English education was the most popular among graduate students. Engineering and business administration were more popular among undergraduates.

Question 5 was to find out the difficulties that admission officers have encountered in recruiting students from China. However, since they have not started recruiting in China yet, the admission officers were not able to respond specifically to this question. So far, all the Chinese students they have had are from recommendations from students' friends, relatives, or teachers.

Question 6 asked about the policy of working with educational agents. In the past, UW-Platteville has not generally been supportive of working with agents. The major exception to this was one agent in South Korea. However, this policy is changing; the admission office is now allowed to work with agents. Despite the change, the admission officers expressed that working with agents has many pros and cons so they will need to be cautious in selecting agents

Question 7 asked the international recruitment officers about future plans forgoing recruiting students from China. The admission officers disclosed that they are going to attend an international education fair in China to recruit students in 2014 and will be contracting educational agents both in the U.S. and in China. They are now preparing for the 2014 China recruitment travel.

Discussion of the Findings from the Surveys and Interviews

The surveys show that most of the students from China came to study at UW-Platteville through referrals by family, relatives, friends, and teachers, together with some internet searches. Nobody used other information sources. The underlying reason for this finding was confirmed in the interviews with admission officers. It turned out that they had not started marketing activities in China. Most of these students, including graduate and undergraduate students, were from Wuhan. This suggests that UW-Platteville has some name recognition in Wuhan, presumably due to the reputation of the MSEE program in Wuhan. The popular majors among undergraduate students were business administration, engineering, mathematics, and accounting.

Although all these students have pretty good English proficiency, Chinese was still preferred as the language for initially searching for information about study abroad. The vast majority of the students supported the idea of creating a Chinese version of university webpages. Similarly, even the mixed responses regarding the benefits of UW-Platteville having a Chinese speaking admission officer and the apparent confusion some students experienced when responding to the questions written in English suggest the possibility of some language barriers on the part of the students. As noted before, during follow-up discussions conducted with the students in Chinese, many of their responses were clarified. In the process of applying, most students got help from either their teachers or their relatives. They even had a sample of application form as reference. Thus, the findings at UW-Platteville appear to be in agreement with other publications which have pointed to the benefits of using the students' native language on alternative websites and publications and especially as a means of fostering more comprehensive communication.

The interviews with admission officers revealed that UW-Platteville hasn't done any marketing in China. Such answers explained why UW-Platteville has a low enrollment of students from China in the past years. There was no advertisement, no participation in educational fairs, no contracted education agents, no Chinese campus promotion, no school visits in China, and no alumni network. In addition, there were no Chinese versions, in print or electronically, introducing the university and its majors, nor any promotional materials toward the China market.

In order to develop a strategic recruitment plan, which requires a comprehensive investigation of the internal and external market, this project will now proceed in the next two chapters to examine the external opportunities and threats in the target market and UW-Platteville's internal strengths and weaknesses.

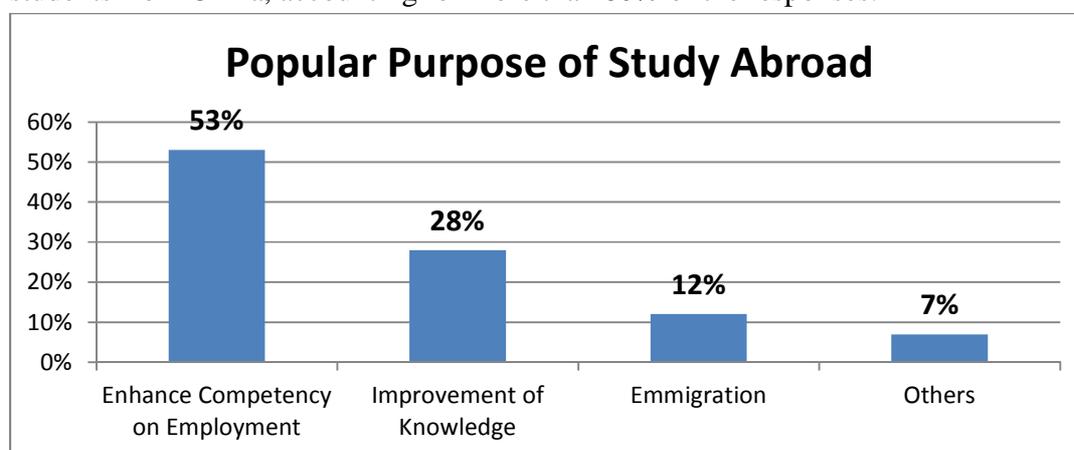
Chapter 5: External Environmental Scan

Following the suggestions of the *NAFSA's Guide to International Student Recruitment*, the author conducted an environmental scan (Heaney, 2009). This involved library research, internet sources, and review of documents written in both English and Mandarin. The environmental scan can be divided into internal and external sections. To find out the opportunities and threats in the market, the external environmental scan discusses the following questions: Why Chinese students want to study abroad? What are popular majors among students from China? Who and where are the prospective Chinese students? What services do they need? What are the key factors in selecting a foreign university? How do they meet their goal of study abroad? What are the opportunities and threats to the recruitment of students from China?

Why Chinese students want to study abroad?

- *The Purpose of Study Abroad*

Chinese students have different purposes and objectives in pursuing study abroad. According to EIC's survey, about 53% of Chinese students study abroad with the purpose of enhancing their competency for future employment, and 28% want to improve their knowledge. For 12% of them, their primary objective is to emigrate, and 7% report a variety of other reasons (EIC, 2011). These findings demonstrate that the ability of providing high quality education and the opportunity of professional training for career development will play a key role in the recruitment of students from China, accounting for more than 80% of the responses.



- *Society and Culture*

The Chinese traditionally believe that education is the right way of brightening one's life. To a large extent, education is regarded as an investment for the future of a son or daughter, and Chinese parents believe that it is their duty as parents to support their children's education. Such phenomenon is very true since China started its one-child policy. When it comes to international education, some of these parents are even willing to spend all their life's savings or sell their property to support their child's education. For instance, the parents of one of the author's friends sold their house to support their daughter to study in the U.S in 2010.

- ***Regulation and Policies***

The Chinese policy toward study abroad students is, “Support for study abroad, encouraging returning home, and freedom of movement” (Zhou, 2006). The U.S. government also has been encouraging qualified Chinese students to study in the U.S. Although obtaining a U.S. visa was very difficult for Chinese students in the past, the situation has been greatly eased since 2005. The data issued by IIE shows that the number of students from China rose from 62,582 in 2005 to 194,029 in 2012 (IIE, 2005; IIE, 2012a). What’s more, the U.S. government has extended the length of Optional Practicum Training (OPT), a program which allows international graduates from U.S. universities to accept 12 months of training related to the field in which they studied. The new policy, for example, allows students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to extend their OPT to a total of 29 months (USCIS, 2012). In all, the legal environment in China and the U.S policy toward international students is encouraging.

- ***Chinese Educational Policies***

The Chinese educational system has been criticized for its emphasis on memorization and rote learning, which limit students’ creativity. What’s more, all Chinese students face two life-changing examinations: the High School Entrance Examination (zhong kao) and the College Entrance Examination (the CEE or Gao kao). Failure on either of these exams could lead to the end of opportunity for a university education in the future. To fight for their future, Chinese students have to study extremely hard. For instance, the *New York Times* reported in June 2011 that some Chinese students were hooked up to oxygen canisters and had intravenous drips of amino acids during late-night and weekends preparing for the college entrance examination (McDonald, 2012). The students who score well on this exam can get the chance to study at a university. Unfortunately, millions are still not able to find their way to college or university. It is not simply due to poor academic performance, but to the limited number of seats available at Chinese colleges and universities in comparison to the vast numbers of applicants. Under such circumstances, looking for educational opportunities overseas has become a better way to obtain professional training, well-rounded development, and a better chance for a good job.

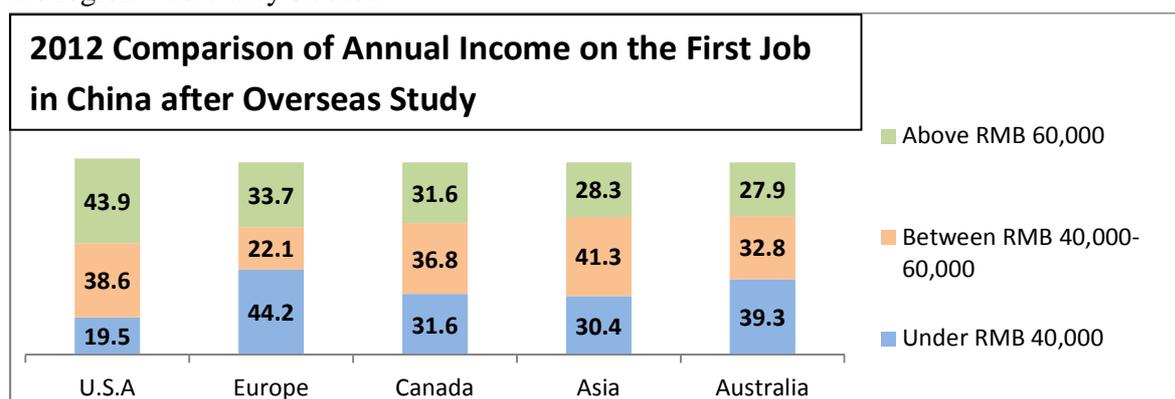
- ***Better employment opportunities with overseas education experience***

University graduates with overseas educational experience have much better employment opportunities than those without. According to the *2012 Employment Competency Report on Chinese Returnees with Overseas Education* issued by the EIC group, although their starting annual income is not significantly different from those without overseas educational experience, after one year of employment, the average annual income of those who have studied abroad reaches RMB 83,000, and then RMB 130,000 after 3 years of employment. As for those with more than 5 years working experience, their annual income could reach RMB 327, 000. It is predictable that their career development will far surpass those without overseas educational background (EIC, 2012).

- ***The Influence of Successful Hai Gui***

Hai Gui is a Chinese term for all the Chinese who studied abroad and then returned to China. Their success in employment may serve as a useful role model to younger Chinese students. According to the *2010 Chinese Billionaires Survey Report* (CUAA, 2010) from 1999-2009, among the top 500 Chinese billionaires, 130 of them had an overseas educational experience. Among these 130 millionaires, 55% of them studied in the U.S.A. Such facts make people believe that studying abroad can lead to great success.

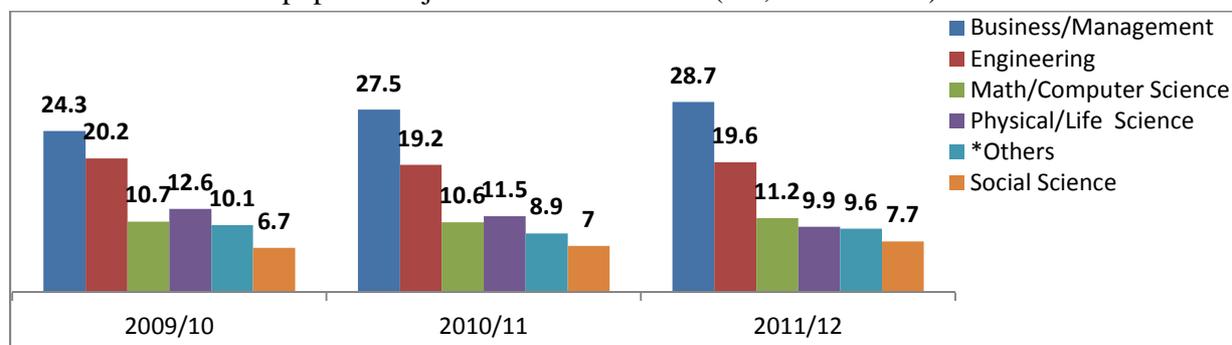
In addition to these super successful Hai Gui, however, the ordinary Hai Gui also enjoys better pay in their jobs. The survey report issued by the China Education Online shows that graduates from U.S. educational institutions have much higher incomes, compared to those who graduated from universities located in other countries. About 82.5% of them have annual incomes more than RMB 40,000 or \$6,500. In contrast, only 60.7% of Chinese graduates with an Australian educational background have annual incomes above that level (EOL, 2013). The chart below provides a comparison of salary levels for the first job for Chinese who studied abroad according to the region where they studied.



What are popular majors and educational levels among students from China?

- ***Popular Majors among Students from China***

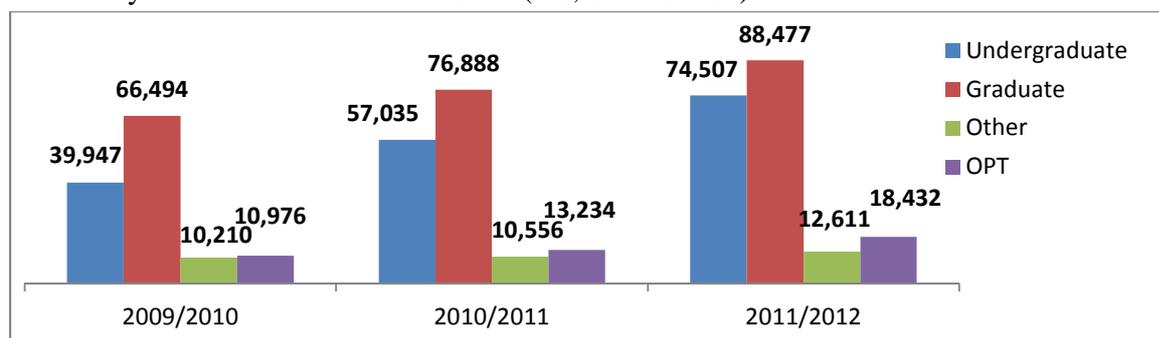
Data issued by Institute of International Education on the *Fields of Study by Place of Origin* shows that business/management, engineering, math/computer science, and physical science have been the 4 most popular majors from 2010 to 2012 (IIE, 2010-2012c).



- **Popular Levels of Education**

The *Fact Sheets by Country* from 2010 to 2012 show that China saw steady increases in the number of Chinese students studying in the United States for both undergraduate and graduate students. Most significant is the increase in the number of undergraduates. Between 2010 and 2012, the number of Chinese undergraduates increased by 87%. Although the total number of Chinese graduate students in the U.S. still exceeds that of Chinese undergraduates, that pattern will change if the growth rate among undergraduates continues. The rate of increase among graduate students over the three-year period was 33%, still an impressive increase but far short of the 87% increase for undergraduates.

During the same time period, the number of Optional Practicum Training (OPT) participants has also been increasing. As noted previously, OPT is a program which allows international students who are seeking degrees (studying on an F-1 visa) to extend their stay in the U.S. in order to work in a position related to their field of study. Under this program, students can work for a year under their student visa and without the need to obtain an H-1B work visa. The work experience is viewed as practical training which enhances the student's educational experience. As calculated from the numbers on the chart below, OPT participation among Chinese students increased by 68% between 2010 and 2012 (IIE, 2010-2012b).



Who and where are the prospective Chinese students?

- **Regions with Better Academic Students**

Accompanying the fierce competition on the College Entrance Examination (CEE) in China, Chinese universities also set up different enrollment standards for students from different regions. For instance, in 2012 students in Beijing could be enrolled in first-tier universities as long as their scores on the CEE reached 495 for liberal arts and 477 for science (out of a total possible score of 750). At the same time, students in Guangdong province could not be enrolled if their scores on the CEE did not reach 589 for liberal arts and 585 for science (Koolearn, 2012). The difference in these two regions was more than 100 points. Therefore, it was more difficult for students in Guangdong to get into universities than their counterparts in Beijing. Based on the data available on admission and CEE scores throughout China, the author of this paper created the following chart to rank 6 regions requiring the highest scores for admission, compared to 6

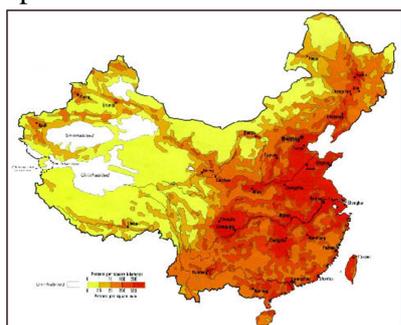
regions requiring the lowest CEE scores. Since the full points on the exam sheet varied somewhat in some areas, the required scores for admission to first-tier universities were different. Therefore, the author decided to use the mean figures of the liberal arts and science to compare the full points of the exam. As a result, a percentage between the mean and full points is achieved. The different percentages show that Guangdong, Shandong, Hebei, Zhejiang, Anhui and Jiangxi had the highest score requirements, while Qinghai, Ningxia, Xinjiang, Xizang, Neimeng, and Beijing had the lowest score requirements to be enrolled in the first tier university.

Chart: Regions with the highest and lowest requirements on CEE

Regions with lowest required scores	Full point	Mean	Percent to the full points	Regions with Highest re-quired scores	Full	Mean	Percent to the full points
Qinghai	750	417	0.55	Jiangxi	750	558.5	0.74
Ningxia	750	464.5	0.61	Anhui	750	560.5	0.74
Xinjiang	750	469	0.62	Zhejiang	810	599.5	0.74
Xizang (Tibet)	750	475	0.63	Hebei	750	568	0.75
Neimenggu (Inner Mongolia)	750	481	0.64	Shandong	750	577.5	0.77
Beijing	750	486	0.64	Guangdong	750	587	0.78

• *Population Distribution*

According to Facts and Details, China has a population of 1.34 billion people in 2010, the majority of whom live in the fertile, humid lowlands of the east, with about a third of China's people living along China's coastal regions (Hays, 2012). The map shows the density of Chinese population by region. The darker red represents higher population density, the lighter color shows the less population density. The higher populated areas offer more potential for recruitment of prospective Chinese students for UW-Platteville.



• *Regional Disposable Income Per Capita*

Chinese economic development has been uneven. Such difference can be seen not only between urban and rural areas but also between the east and west, south and north of China. Generally speaking, people in the east and south of China enjoy higher disposable income annually than the other areas of China. Therefore, students in these areas have more money to study abroad. The

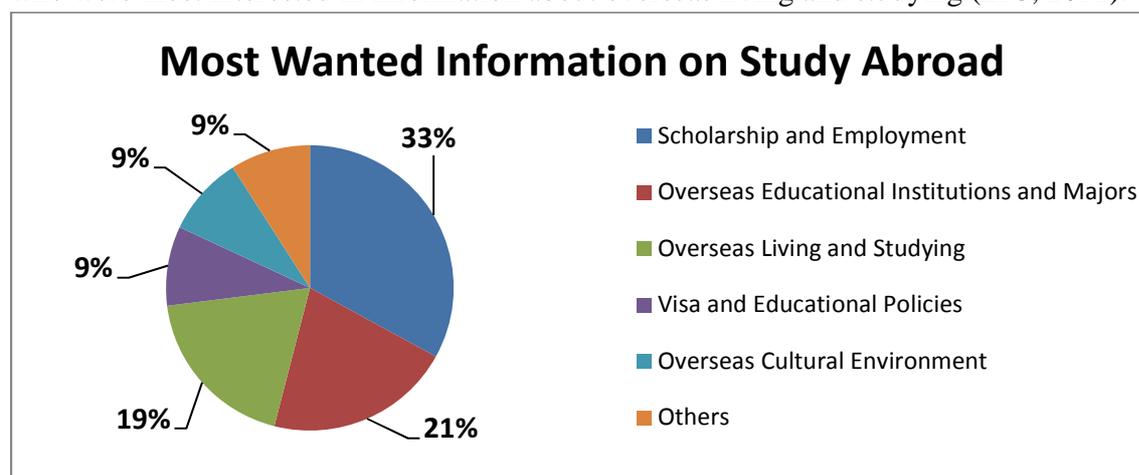
following chart shows the top 10 urban areas ranked according to disposable income per capita in 2011 (China News, 2012).

	Region	2011 Urban Disposable Income Per Capita (RMB)
1	Shanghai	36,230
2	Beijing	32,903
3	Zhe Jiang	30,971
4	Tian jin	26,921
5	Guang Dong	26,897
6	Jiang Su	26,341
7	Fu Jian	24,907
8	Shan dong	22,792
9	Liao Ning	20,467
10	Inner Mongolia	20,408

What services do they need?

- *The most wanted information on study abroad*

A survey conducted by EIC Group on the overseas education intention among Chinese students in 2011 showed the major types of information that many Chinese students and their parents were seeking from education agents were scholarship and employment, which ranked first and accounted for 33% of the respondents. Information about overseas educational institutions and majors ranked second highest, with 21% of the respondents, compared to 19% of the respondents who were most interested in information about overseas living and studying (EIC, 2011).



- *Difficulties of Study Abroad*

The policies, procedures, documentation, and other requirements connected to study abroad can be a confusing and intimidating obstacle course to Chinese students. A survey conducted by the EIC Group on the difficulties of study abroad showed that 47.5% of the Chinese students who responded did not know what documents are required by U.S. educational institutions, and 44.3%

of them had no idea of how to make a study plan. Similarly, 42% did not know how to select a suitable educational institution, 41.6% were not sure about how to apply to an overseas educational institution, and 32.9% did not know the procedure for applying for a visa (EIC, 2013). The figures below suggest that U.S. and other predominantly English-speaking educational institutions need to improve their efforts in communication and guidance with prospective students. Many U.S. educational institutions believe that they have provided ample information on the internet. However, due to language barriers and insufficient marketing in China, Chinese students and their parents are still struggling with obtaining reliable information from their ideal universities. Many of them have to pay a high service fee in order to get help from educational agents in China.

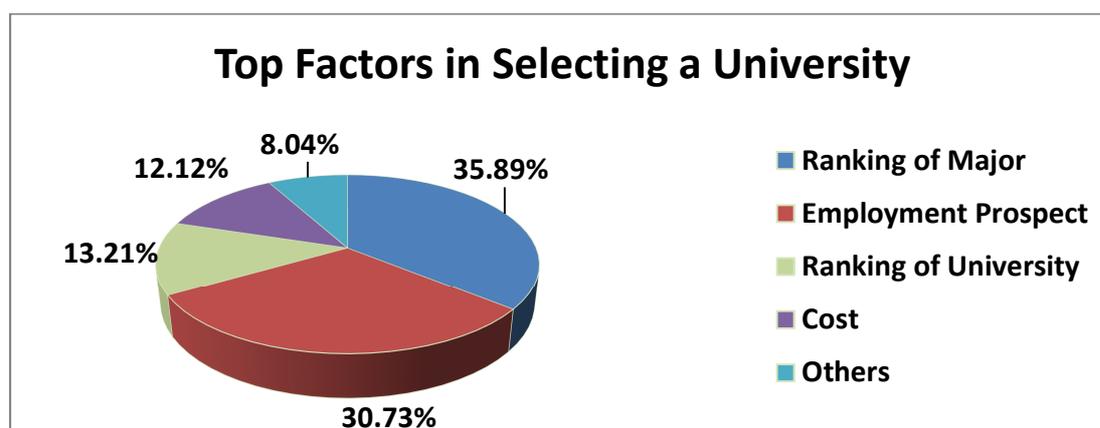
Difficulties encountered in the process of study abroad (%)	U.K.	U.S.A.	Canada	Australia
Do not know the required document	46.4	47.5	58.7	51.4
Do not know how to make a study plan	49.3	44.3	58.7	36.7
Do not know how to apply overseas university	42.8	41.6	47.6	41.3
Do not know visa application procedure	52.9	32.9	50.8	45.0
Do not know how to select an ideal institution	37.7	42.9	47.6	43.1
Do not know much about the country	34.8	28.8	39.7	37.6
Do not know how to select a suitable major	19.6	23.3	28.6	31.2
Do not know the language requirement	13.0	15.1	20.6	19.3

What are the key factors in selecting a foreign university?

- *Top Influential Factors in Selecting a University*

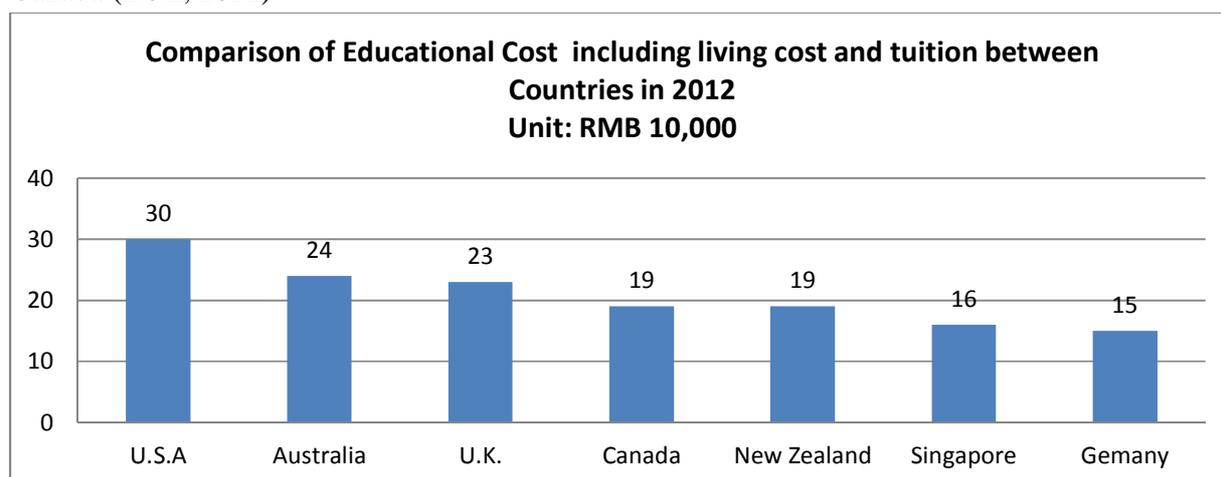
1. Ranking Matters

The way of measuring the education quality of Chinese universities is to see if a university is a member of “211” or “985,” which are two projects conducted by the Chinese government in categorizing elite higher education institutions. (Shen). Since Chinese do not know how to measure the quality of U.S. universities, they tend to rely on the rankings found in such magazines as the *US News and World Report* (Melcher, 2010). In 2011 the EIC Group, one of the largest Chinese educational agencies, conducted a survey among Chinese students which showed that the ranking of the major topped the list of factors in selecting a university, with 35.89% of the students identifying it as the most considered factor, followed by employment prospects (30.73%). The ranking of the university (13.21%) was third in importance (EIC, 2011). In fact, these top three factors are closely related to each other. It shows that a university should emphasize the ranking of its top majors and employment prospects associated with those majors in its marketing.



2. Tuition and Other Educational Expenses

The cost of study abroad plays an important role but one that is inferior to the ranking of major and university, and employment prospects. As the future of their children outweighs the cost of education, Chinese parents are willing to pay for it considering the brand and ranking of the university. To them, ranking and brand are regarded as the symbol of higher educational quality and represent a greater opportunity for career success in the future. In his research, Melcher pointed out, “Cost and financial aid are an after-thought for most applicants to undergraduate programs. In contrast, they are important considerations to graduate students from China (Melcher, 2010).” However, in view of the fact that educational costs are the highest in the U.S., compared to the costs in a number of other developed countries, a U.S. university needs to be cautious in raising its tuition. According to the survey of China Education Online, the average educational cost in the U.S. in 2012, including tuition, living expenses, and other hidden costs, is RMB300,000 per year. A Chinese student has to pay RMB 110,000 or \$18,000 more than those who study in Canada (EOL, 2012).



- *Less influential factors in selecting a foreign university*

- 1. Safety is Vital**

The highly publicized gun tragedies that have happened on some U.S. campuses have aroused deep concerns among Chinese parents over the safety of their children in the U.S. Since each Chinese family typically has only one child, who often shoulders the hopes and dreams not only of their parents but also of their grandparents, the safety of students is a vital concern to their family. For this reason and because of the strong identity with the family and their influence on choosing a foreign university, universities need to emphasize their campus safety record and the warmth and friendliness of the campus and surrounding community.

- 2. Diversity of Student Population**

Unlike some universities which boast about the great diversity of their student and faculty populations, Chinese have much less interest in these factors. Instead, they highly appreciate Caucasian culture. As Melcher has observed, Chinese students and parents simply equate American culture with Caucasian culture. Many of them also dislike schools full of Chinese and Koreans (Melcher, 2010). As one student said in the survey conducted by the author of this paper, “The reason that I came to study in the U.S. is to experience the U.S. culture, not any other.” Therefore, a university with a diversified student population is not a big factor in the process of recruiting Chinese students. Although many Chinese students still attend U.S. campuses with a relatively high proportion of Chinese students, this is very likely due to their good ranking, well-known brand, or aggressive marketing in China. Rather than the diversity of the student population, it is probably more important that the campus be viewed as a friendly and welcoming environment to many different types of students.

- 3. Location**

Some universities worry that the remote location of their campus would negatively influence the recruitment of students from China. However, both the surveys conducted by Melcher and the author of this paper show that location is not a key issue influencing the choice of university. They have more important issues to worry about than location. What’s more, Chinese students and parents clearly understand that their purpose in going to the U.S. is for study. Big cities can be full of distractions and risks, which could cause the student not to be successful and waste the great investment of their parents in the student’s education.

- 4. Sports and Campus Clubs**

Compared to U.S. students, Chinese students and parents basically have very little interest in sports and campus social organizations. To them, the most important goal is to achieve academic success (Melcher, 2010). What’s more, if they fail their course, they might be forced to go home, which is a shame to them and their family and would result in a loss of face, which is strongly to be avoided in Chinese culture. Therefore, sport and clubs are not so attractive to students from China. The author has observed that Chinese students as well as many Asian students are not

active in student club events. Therefore, sports and campus clubs are not influential factors in attracting students from China.

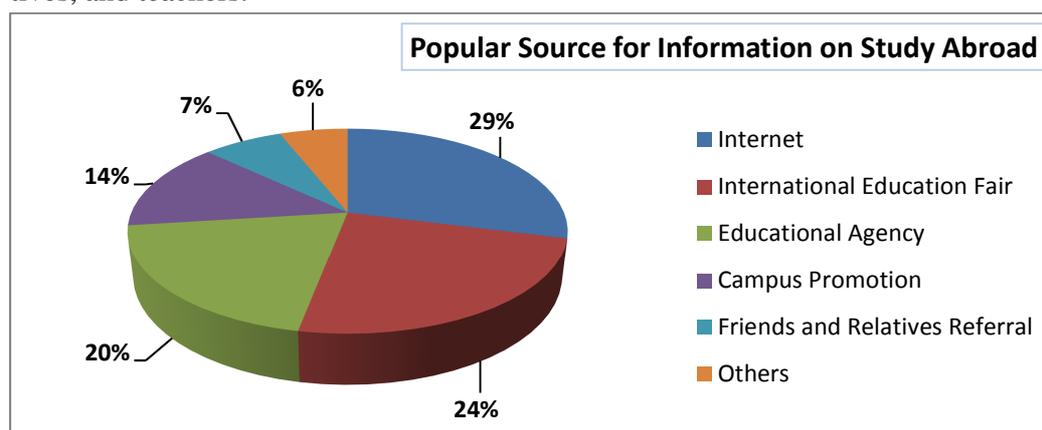
5. Housing and Food

Compared with the crowded dormitories in China, where 4-8 students live in one room with great noise, little comfort, and regular cut offs in the availability of electricity, the living conditions in U.S. university residence halls are very comfortable. Due to the great differences between Chinese and U.S. food, the lack of Chinese food has been one of the main complaints. However, no student would quit his/her study due to this reason. The research done by Tom Melcher has shown that most Chinese applicants do not pay much attention to residence hall amenities or special cafeteria offers when they are selecting a foreign university (Melcher, 2010).

How do they meet their goal of study abroad?

- *Popular source for Obtaining Information of Study Abroad*

In 2011, EIC conducted a survey among 17,500 Chinese students and parents in 14 cities. It showed that the Internet (29%), international education fairs (24%), educational agencies (20%), and campus promotions (14%) were the top 4 sources by which students obtained study abroad information (EIC, 2011). Although referrals from friends and relatives may be low (7%) compared with other information sources, it may have a very high rate of success. Based on the survey conducted the author of this project among the past and current Chinese students in UW-Platteville, all of them selected UW-Platteville to study due to the recommendations from their friends, relatives, or teachers. This is very likely the result of the fact that students trust their friends, family, teachers, and relatives. The initial information about study abroad may come from these other sources, but it would be discussed in considerable detail with family and teachers. Compared to advertisements from educational agencies, information from the internet, and information obtained at educational fairs, people prefer to place greater trust in their friends, relatives, and teachers.



What Opportunities Exist in the Market of Chinese Student Recruitment?

- **Market potentials**

China Education Online, one of the largest Chinese educational agencies, reported that nearly 339,700 Chinese students went to study in other countries in 2012, accounting for 14% of all the international students in the world. China ranked as the world's largest student outsourcing nation (EOL, 2013). Among all these students, U.S. educational institutions have received the biggest share compared to other countries. According to the Institute of International Education (IIE, 2008-2012a), U.S. campuses have seen increasing numbers of students from China in the past few decades. Since 2010, China has surpassed India as the largest student exporting country to U.S. educational institutions. The chart below shows that U.S has received almost half of all Chinese study-abroad students. There is still a great potential market in China.

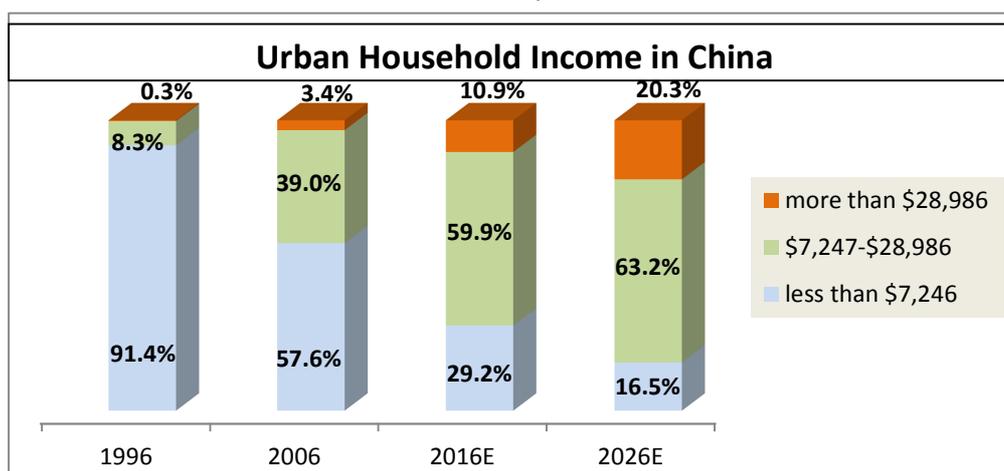
Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Chinese students study abroad	179,800	229,300	284,700	339,700	399,600
Students study in the U.S.	81,127	98,235	127,628	157,558	194,029
Percentage of total Chinese students study abroad	45%	43%	45%	46%	49%

- **Age and Population**

According to data released by the CIA in 2012, China has a population more than 1.3 billion. Among them, 32.6% are at the age of 0-24 (CIA, 2013). This means that there are over 423.8 million young Chinese who are school-age or at the age for university. Compared with the same age category in the U.S., there are 105 million school-age young people (CIA, 2013). The potential market in education in China is about 4 times bigger than the U.S. To put this into perspective, there are more school-age and college-age young people in China than the entire U.S. population (436.8 million young people in China, compared to the total U.S. population of 315 million).

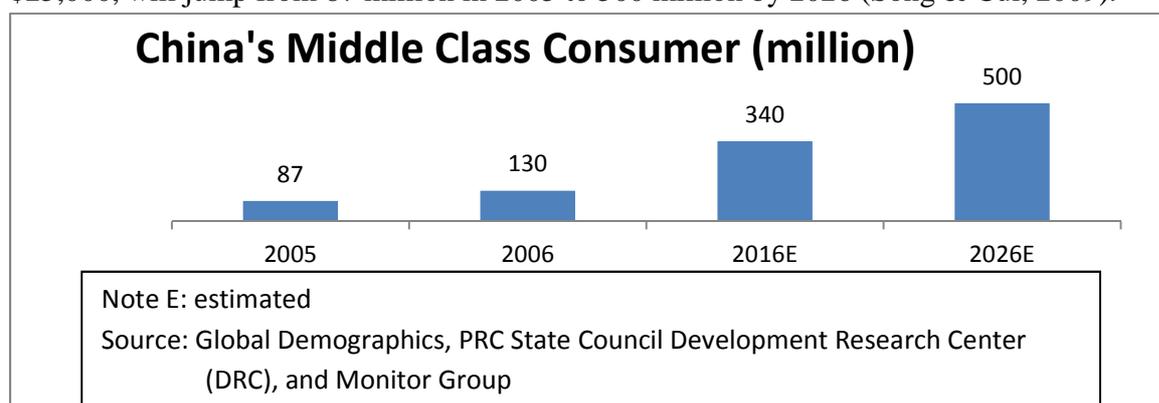
- **Increasing Income**

According to the Global Demographics, PRC State Council Development Research Center (DRC), and Monitor Group, the urban Chinese household has seen a great increase in their income from 1996-2006. For instance, only 0.3% of Chinese families had annual household incomes above \$28,986 in 1996. By 2006, the figure rose up to 3.4%. It is estimated that this figure will climb to 10.9% in 2016 and to 20.3% in 2026 (Song & Cui, 2009). The increasing household income will enable more student to afford to study in the U.S.



- ***Growth of Middle Class***

Meanwhile, China has seen a great increase in its middle class. According to MasterCard Worldwide, Asia Pacific, China's middle class, defined here as annual earnings of \$6,000 to \$25,000, will jump from 87 million in 2005 to 500 million by 2026 (Song & Cui, 2009).



- ***Development of Internet***

The power of the internet can never be underestimated. As Mandy Hansen, the director of international admission and recruitment at Northern Arizona University said, "Internet recruiting has become so important that I have one staff member that is focused on Internet recruiting (Dessoff, 2009)." Modern technology in China has been under rapid development. According to the report of the Top 20 Internet Countries with the Highest Number of Users in 2012, China ranks on the top of the list with 538 million, followed by the U.S. with 245.2 million, and India with 137 million (Internet World Stats, 2012). The development of the internet has shortened the distance between China and the rest of the world. It enables Chinese students to easily obtain information of their ideal overseas universities, view pictures, watch videos, and communicate with university admission officers. They can also communicate with their overseas friends via email, instant message systems, phone calls, and through some social media tools. It should be noted, however, that popular websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are either totally inaccessible in China. Although Google is not totally blocked, it is very slow. In contrast, there are some equivalent websites available to Chinese users. They are Baidu (Google), RenRen (Facebook), Sina Weibo (Twitter), and Youku (YouTube). All these websites have huge numbers of internet users in China (see chart below). Baidu, for example, occupies 78.6 percent of the Chinese internet search market. In contrast, Google, the most famous internet search engine in the world, has limited access in China, accounting for only 15.6% of the Chinese internet search market according to China search engine market quarterly data in 2012, released by China Internet Watch (CIW Team Stuff, 2012). When marketing through internet search engines, the most rapid type of advertisement is through Pay-by-Click. Using this method, search engines will list the information of a university on the top of the list of the search result. However, such university will be charged every time an internet user clicks on its advertisement. The final cost can be very ex-

pensive. The other method is free but works slower than Pay-by-Click and requires a university to have some internet technical experts. It uses Search Engine Optimization (SEO) methods to promote its programs. SEO is a method which uses internet techniques to help search engines locate your website and content. As Google points out, it costs nothing to appear in Google's organic search results. Free resources such as Webmaster Tools and training course can assist users to become acquainted with these techniques (Google, 2013).

Social media includes Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and other popular websites, which are widely used by U.S. educational institutions for marketing. However, U.S. educational institutions seem fall behind their UK and Australian competitors in exploiting the Chinese social media. While some UK and Australian educational institutions have already attracted tens of thousands of followers on their social media accounts, only 62 American colleges have taken action to exploit it, including the University of Michigan and Duke University. Social media has been playing an increasing role in Chinese student life. For example, the University World News notes that 80% of China's university students use weibo (micro blog), and 42% of them use it on a daily basis (Genius Recruiter, 2013). The social media network is gaining popularity as a cost-effective tool to reach out to Chinese students and break down the barriers of distance. There is a lot of potential growth for overseas universities to tap this market. The following chart provides the number of users on some of the major Chinese social media (Resonance Team, 2013).

Website	Number of Users (millions)
Qzone	712
Tencent weibo	507
Sina Weibo	500
RenRen	172
Kaixin 001	113

What Threats Exist in the Market Chinese Student Recruitment?

- ***Ever Increasing Competition from Universities in the World***

Seeing the great financial, technical, cultural, and academic benefits in the international educational market, governments have been improving student visa, employment, and immigration policies to attract international students. The major competitors include educational institutions in the U.K, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, and even countries in the European Union. Canada is a good example of this attempt to be more appealing to potential international students. Off-Campus Work Permits (OCWP) and the extended Post-Graduation Work Permits (PGWP) are more widely accessible to international students and have proven to be extremely popular. In addition, the Canadian government encourages international graduates to remain in Canada in order to contribute to the country. For instance, the Canadian Experience Class program enables international students to apply for permanent residency (Macready & Tucker, 2011). After earning a four-year undergraduate degree, international students can apply

to work in Canada for up to three years. With only one year of employment, these international students can apply for a green card.

- ***The increasing competition among U.S universities in the China market***

Many U.S. educational institutions are conducting aggressive recruitment in China. Hiring educational agents and providing decent commissions are common practices. For instance, UW-La Cross had 9 agents and UW-Stevens Point has 13 agents recruiting international students for them (Ziff, 2012). A new practice is setting up China offices or appointing a China representative to conduct recruitment directly in the target market. For example, Kent State University set up a Beijing office in spring 2008. By the fall of 2008, 45 new Chinese students enrolled in the university, and 53 enrolled in 2009 (Lucci, 2009).

- ***Possible change of political and educational policy***

With the increasing number of students from China, U.S. community member may worry about a negative impact on the opportunities for local students. In addition, plagiarism is also being reported. These factors may lead to changes in visa and educational policies.

Chapter 6: Internal Environmental Scan

UW-Platteville, located in a small city in the Upper Midwest, has managed to keep a fairly consistent enrollment of students from China with limited budget and resources. The university set up an international student admission office in 2009/2010 and staffed it with one person exclusively focusing on international student recruitment. The international student database showed that the enrollment of undergraduate students from China increased after the establishment of the international student admission office. As of spring 2013, UW-Platteville had 10 undergraduate students from China, and 6 of them are still on campus. However, as early as the year 2000, UW-Platteville signed an agreement with a Chinese university to start the Master of Science in English Education. This program began to attract master degree-seeking students from China. Although there are now more than two hundred graduate students from China through the MSEE program throughout these years, the students spend most of their time in China and come to study at UW-Platteville for only one semester. Meanwhile, their tuition is much lower than that of other international students. To obtain more accurate information on recruiting students from China, the graduate students from the MSEE program were included as part of the survey. With the completion of the survey among current Chinese students, Chinese alumni, and international student officers, the following results were discovered.

Strength of UW-Platteville

- **Ranking and Accreditation**

Although not a member of Ivy League schools, UW-Platteville still has some privileged programs that enjoy decent rankings in national and regional areas in the *US News and World Report*. Although this magazine is not a government organization, it is the most widely used tool for Chinese students to measure the quality of a U.S. university. In addition, the MSEE program has been listed on the website of the Chinese Ministry of Education as one of the accredited programs. This approval by the Chinese government helps Chinese students to build up confidence. Such approval is important to joint programs such as the MSEE because the diplomas need to be accredited by the Chinese government in order for students to secure jobs in China after graduation. Because of this, it is important to list those rankings and accreditations, which can help to attract the interest of Chinese students and their parents.

20th on the 2010 Top Public Schools in Midwest in *U.S. News and World Report*

62nd on the 2011 Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs (no PhD Schools) in the U.S

70th on the 2010 Regional University in Midwest in *U.S. News and World Report*

Accredited by Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA-HLC)

Accredited by American Chemical Society (ACS)

Accredited by National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

Accredited by National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT)

Accredited by National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

Accredited by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Accredited by Foundry Education Foundation

- ***Advanced Majors***

According to EIC, the top three majors among students from China during 2009 to 2012 were business/management, engineering, math/computer science, and physical science. UW-Platteville is well-known for its engineering school. Meanwhile it also has majors in business, math, computer science, and English education. Although these majors are not as famous as those at some other universities, UW-Platteville can offer excellent opportunities to those students who are not able to be enrolled in those more famous universities. Therefore, it is better for UW-Platteville to emphasize these programs through its marketing. This will be considered in more detail in the action plan in Chapter 7.

- ***Rich campus resource for international student recruitment***

UW-Platteville has a pool of experts who can be very helpful in Chinese student recruitment. First, the university has many experts in its publication office in charge of all electronic and print materials, such as pictures, brochures, booklets, and flyers. Besides the publication office, there are the professionals in media tech services, who are in charge of video products. Some of them have already been to China and have video-recorded many events and students. As a result, they can make professional campus and program introduction videos for prospective Chinese students. Second, the university also has a group of internet and website professionals who create and maintain the university website. They have recently updated the UW-Platteville webpage with more functions and an appealing layout. When the university needs to do some improvement on the website to recruit Chinese or international students, these professionals can be very helpful. Third, many faculty at UW-Platteville have visited or taught in China. They have gained solid experience in dealing with students from China. These professors can be a great resource for student recruitment and retention. Fourth, the other important resource is the Chinese alumni. Over the past 12-15 years, the university has built up a pool of several hundred Chinese alumni. Many of them are working in Chinese educational institutions. These alumni could provide a great opportunity for UW-Platteville professors or admission officers to go to China to give presentations or to be introduced to the high schools where these alumni studied. They could help UW-Platteville to establish new programs or partnerships in China.

- ***Safe campus and friendly community***

Both Chinese students surveyed and admission officers interviewed mentioned that UW-Platteville is very safe. It is regarded as one of the safest campuses in the nation. Located in a small city in the Midwest, Platteville and the local communities in the region are also very friendly. Indeed, the host family program is a good example of the extent to which Platteville families reach out to international students.

- ***Established partner relationships with Chinese university***

The partnership with South-Central University for Nationalities (SCUN) in Wuhan is now about 13 years old. Through this partnership, faculty and administrators of UW-Platteville have visited China many times, and many faculty and administrators from SCUN have visited UW-Platteville. As a result, this campus has built up a substantial number of faculty who are familiar with China and Chinese students.

- ***Scholarship***

UW-Platteville provides scholarships for international students up to \$5,000 per year, totaling up to \$20,000 over four years. This is higher than the scholarships at some of the sister universities in the University of Wisconsin system.

- ***Lower Requirement on TOEFL and IELTS***

Compared with other universities in Wisconsin, including the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, UW-Platteville has a lower requirement of TOEFL and IELTS scores. This helps to recruit some students whose English proficiency score has not reached the requirement of other universities. It is important, of course, to make sure that the scores are low enough to attract students but not so low that they would pose a problem to the student's academic success.

Weakness of UW-Platteville

- ***Absent of marketing in China***

In the past decade, UW-Platteville hasn't done any marketing in China targeted toward undergraduate students. There was no advertisement, no participation in educational fairs, no contracted educational agents, no Chinese campus promotions, and no visits to schools in China.

- ***Tight Budget***

UW-Platteville did not start putting effort into international student recruitment until a few years ago. The admission officers still do not have an exclusive budget dedicated to international student recruitment. Although they conducted their first overseas recruitment visit to India in 2012, it was funded from the Provost's account. The limited budget has negatively influenced international recruitment. The university did not do any marketing in China. The survey conducted among students from China shows that most of them come to UW-Platteville through recommendations of their friends, teachers, or relatives. In contrast, the other sister universities in the University of Wisconsin system have frequent exposure at international educational markets. For example, from 2010-2013, UW-Milwaukee, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Lacrosse, and even WESLI in Madison appear on the list of exhibitors in the annual China International Education Exhibition Tour, the largest educational exhibition in China (China International Education Exhibition Tour, 2010-2013). Attending such an event provides opportunities to the admission officers to observe the recruitment practices of other peers, establish direct contact with students,

and may even offer opportunities to visit local schools, agents, and universities. However, the admission officers at UW-Platteville did not attend these kinds of educational exhibitions nor did they visit local schools or agents. In addition, there was no promotional activity targeted toward prospective undergraduate students from China.

- ***Lack of Multiple Partnerships in China***

About 13 years ago, UW-Platteville started the MSEE program with SCUN in Wuhan, China. As of 2013, UW-Platteville still has only this one partner university in China. Partnering with only one university has limited the access of UW-Platteville to more prospective Chinese students and the development in China. Apart from that, no Chinese educational agency has been hired to work on student recruitment. In contrast, UW-Stevens Point had 13 agents and UW-La Cross had 9 agents. Although the news did not report where these agents were, one could still see that these universities were hiring educational agents. Besides the shortage of partnership in China, UW-Platteville has not engaged its professors in recruitment efforts. For instance, although the university has sent faculty to teach in China during winter and summer breaks over the past decade, they were not commissioned with the extra duty to recruit students in China nor were they given any funding to do so.

- ***Shortage of translated electronic and printed promotional materials***

Examples of promotional materials include University Introduction brochures, Application Guide, E-brochures, University Introduction videos, video of campus events, and testimonial videos of current international or Chinese students and even of their parents. Such material can provide a very persuasive method to encourage prospective students to apply. Since the cost of study abroad is so expensive, prospective students and their parents are very cautious in selecting an overseas university. They need to obtain clear and accurate information on the university, their ideal major, the opportunities for success in their studies and future employment, the requirements for admission, and guidance on the visa application process. Although prospective Chinese students are supposed to have good English proficiency to read English webpages, the information translated into Chinese is often preferred, especially at the initial period of collecting information on universities. Therefore, documents translated into Chinese are often necessary. For example, UW-Stevens Point has translated recruitment documents into Chinese. Western Michigan University serves as a good example of a university that has embraced the importance of using native language as a recruiting tool and has gone far beyond just providing a translation of English documents and brochures. Its international Outreach Calls program adopted a calling service with multiple languages, including Chinese, Arabic, Japanese, and Kiswahili. Within one year of adopting this program, international student enrollment doubled at the campus (University Leadership Council, 2009).

- ***Shortage of Internet Utilization***

Unless one specifically inputs the name of UW-Platteville into a search browser, it is almost impossible to find UW-Platteville in either Google or Baidu. To make it more complicated, all new applicants have to register an account with the application website before they can see the application form. Compared with the situation of UW-Platteville, UW-Stevens Point can be searched on the internet more easily. For instance, when the author types “study in Wisconsin” in Chinese language, UW-Stevens Point appears, together with UW-Madison. This is very likely due to the promotion of their Chinese agents because all the links lead to agents. Meanwhile, the application form on the official website of UW-Stevens Point can be directly downloaded without setting up an account with UW-Stevens Points first. In addition, UW-Platteville does not have a Chinese version of its webpages and does not utilize the Chinese social media. Having seen the great power of the internet, some U.S educational institutions have created their own Chinese version websites, such as University of Cincinnati, University of Utah, University of Idaho, and Illinois Institute of Technology. Building Chinese versions of university webpages can help these universities to be more searchable on Baidu, the largest internet search engine in China.

Apart from official university webpages in a Chinese version, social media should be utilized including blogs and videos. However, since websites like Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook are totally blocked in China, it is better to use their Chinese substitutes: Baidu (Google), Sina Weibo (twitter), Renren (Facebook), Youku (YouTube). Each website has millions of users and is free to exploit. Kent State University is a good example of a university using Chinese social media. It has a Chinese website, a blog account with Sina weibo, a webpage with RenRen, and a video account with Youku (Kent State University China Center). The purpose of creating Chinese pages and using Chinese social media is not only to pass information to prospective students in China, but also to make UW-Platteville more searchable in China. To do these, admission officers can put links of UW-Platteville website in the blogs and pictures so as to increase the exposure of UW-Platteville in China.

- ***Remote Location***

UW-Platteville is somewhat remote in its location and has very little public transportation available. It is very difficult for international students to get out of Platteville for shopping and modern city life. Apart from that, it is very difficult for international students to get necessary daily living supplies, such as food or food materials from their countries. Such a situation would not influence the enrollment of students from China before their arrival to the campus. However, it might influence their level of satisfaction in living at UW-Platteville.

- ***Lack of Intensive English Program (IEP)***

Intensive English Programs enable universities to pre-enroll prospective students whose English is not good enough for full enrollment. Offering IEP can benefit a university in a variety of ways. For instance, while international students with strong English proficiency may have opportunities for admission at better known universities, an IEP can attract students who might not be

able to get into these top universities. The IEP can attract students, and maybe more importantly it can help improve their English language skills to the point where they will be more successful academically once they are admitted. In addition, the university can make a lot of money through IEP. For instance, UW-Milwaukee charges students \$4,285 for a 16-week course. If adding the cost of books, insurance, housing, food, and the application fee, a student needs to pay almost \$9,000 (University and College Intensive English Programs, 2012). During the process of their English training, students become more familiar with life on campus, the surroundings, and people. As time goes by, students will develop a sense of familiarity and belonging with the university, which might help them to stay for their further education. While UW-Platteville does not currently have an Intensive English Program or English for Second Language Learners (ESL) program, it is reported that a project is now underway to establish one over the next few year. Therefore, what is currently a weakness at UW-Platteville may well become a strength.

- ***Lack of Alumni Database and Network***

Many articles have discussed the benefits of alumni in recruitment. As alumni are familiar with the university, they can provide very personal and convincing advice to prospective students. If university officials are often regarded as “sale persons,” alumni are thought of as fellow countrymen and countrywomen whose opinions are more acceptable (Foley, 2009). Alumni also can assist in building contacts between the U.S. university and the high schools where they studied. Some of them can even offer help in international education fairs and interview prospective students. However, UW-Platteville has not built up a strong Chinese alumni network although it now has more than two hundred Chinese alumni. No records for these Chinese alumni exist in the current International Student Database at UW-Platteville. Considering the likelihood that most of these alumni were from different high schools and that today many of them may be working in different Chinese educational institutions, it is a great waste of valuable resources not to compile a more comprehensive network.

Chapter 7: Action Plan

Executive Summary

International student recruitment has been one of the major priorities for UW-Platteville in recent years. With the goal of increasing the number of international students on campus, this recruitment plan is targeted toward China, the largest student exporting country in the world. By exercising this plan, it is projected to have 8 newly enrolled undergraduate students from China in 2014, 10 new students in 2015, and 12 more in 2016. This international student recruitment plan is part of a global recruitment strategic plan for UW-Platteville.

Campaign dates: June 2013—October 2016

Campaign investment: \$27,000

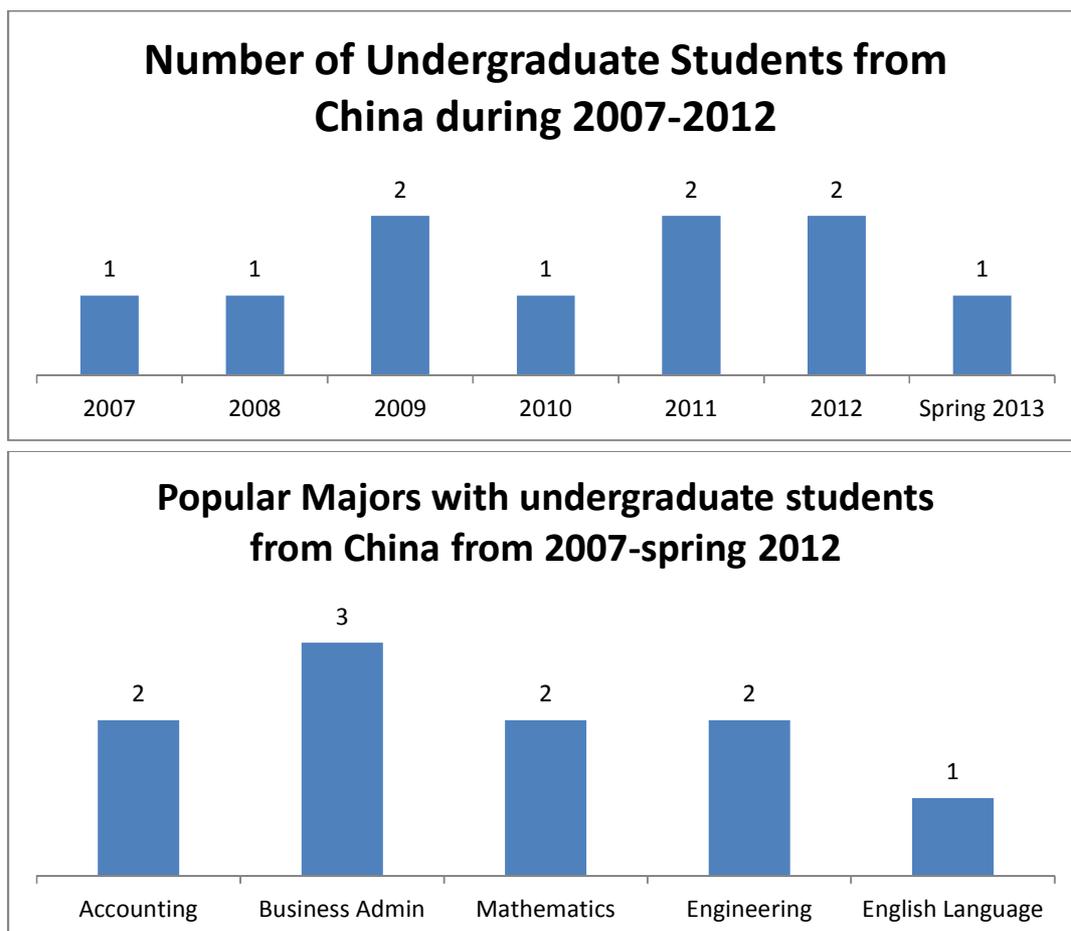
Evaluation: Evaluation report on the activities outlined in this plan will be prepared in each year

Background

With the purpose of creating an international learning environment and multicultural campus and relieving the financial pressure from budget cuts, UW-Platteville has begun putting efforts into increasing the number of international students on campus to an acceptable percentage in the years to come. To develop the international student recruitment market, the author has done field research among Chinese alumni, current Chinese students, and international student admission officers in 2013. In addition, internet and library research was conducted to establish an environmental scan and assess the potential market for potential students in China. The recommendations from the research have formed the activities outlined in this plan.

Current Situation

China has been the largest student exporting country in the world. According to Open Door Report, China has provided 157,558 students to U.S. educational institutions in 2010/11 and 194,029 in 2011/12. However, educational institutions in the world have seen increasing competition in the Chinese educational market in recent years. Unlike Ivy Leagues schools and other famous universities in the U.S., which are often crowded with students from China, smaller universities, especially those with tight budgets, have relatively few Chinese students on campus. Located in a small city in the Upper Midwest, the international admission advisors at UW-Platteville have managed to maintain a small but fairly consistent number of students from China despite their office's limited budget and resources. The annual enrollment of undergraduate students from China was 1.4 persons per year from 2007 to spring 2013. The popular majors among them were Business Administration, Mathematics, Accounting and Engineering. See the chart below.



Source: UW-Platteville International Student Database

Objectives

The objectives of the activities outlined in this plan are to

- Increase the brand and recognition of UW-Platteville in the Chinese market
- Increase the number of enquiries received from prospective Chinese students (email, phone, web form, and social media network)
- Increase the interest of prospective Chinese students in UW-Platteville programs
- Increase the enrollment of undergraduate students from China
- Establish partnerships with Chinese high schools, colleges, universities and agents
- Engage Chinese alumni to be referrals for Chinese students

Marketing Mix Strategy (4ps)

Product Strategies

The ultimate purpose of study abroad for most Chinese students is for employment or for career development. To fulfill this goal, Chinese students and parents pay great attention to the ranking of majors and reputation of universities, which help employment. Tuition is an important consideration and should be equal to the ranking of the university. UW-Platteville will market the following key issues: identification of some of its strongest and best known majors, the university's ranking by regional and national standards, and its accreditation by the U.S. and Chinese government organizations, affordable tuition, availability of campus jobs, and opportunities for scholarship awards. Location should focus on the beautiful and tranquil study environment of UW-Platteville and its friendly surrounding communities. Simply speaking, UW-Platteville needs to create the image of a high quality, affordable, helpful, friendly and beautiful educational destination for Chinese students. In order to impress Chinese students and their parents, UW-Platteville should focus on the following key messages:

Accreditations and Rankings

- 20th on the 2010 Top Public Schools in Midwest in *U.S. News and World Report*
- 70th on the 2010 Regional University in Midwest in *U.S. News and World Report*
- 62nd on the 2011 Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs (no PhD Schools) in the U.S.
- Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and the Higher Learning Commission (NCA-HLC)
- Accredited by Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
- Accredited by American Chemical Society (ACS)
- Accredited by National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- Accredited by National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT)
- Accredited by National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
- Accredited by Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China

Renowned Majors of Potential Interest to Chinese Students

- Agricultural Business
- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Engineering Physics
- Mathematics
- Civil Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Industrial Engineering

- Mechanical Engineering
- Software Engineering
- Microsystems and Nanotechnology Engineering
- Industrial Technology Management

Student Academic, Financial and Professional Services

- Small faculty and student ratio enables meetings with professors convenient
- A 400 acre modernized research farm
- Nanotechnology Center for Collaborative Research and Development
- Atomic Force Microscope
- Forensic Investigation Crime Scene House (one of only 3 in the United States)
- More than 200 student organizations providing opportunities for leadership, professional, interpersonal, and organizational skills development
- Host Family Program providing international students with experience with local American families
- English Conversation Partner Program pairing international students with American students to improve their English and develop friendship
- University Career Center assisting students throughout their employment
- Ideal location for a safe and peaceful study environment with a short distance from city life
- Free transfer to more famous universities

Price Strategies

To be competitive, UW-Platteville needs to keep its tuition equal to or within an acceptable range of similar-sized universities in the Midwest. What's more, the amount of the scholarships for international students can be emphasized. However, it should be treated as an opportunity rather than being viewed as an entitlement or taken for granted. In addition, international students need to be informed of the ample opportunities for jobs on campus. During recruitment activities, admission advisers need to point out these key messages to prospective Chinese students. By comparing the educational costs, enrollment standards, and academic requirements, and availability of scholarships and campus jobs, UW-Platteville should be able to leave prospective Chinese students an image of a suitable university. It might not be the most famous, but it is an ideal one to meet their needs.

- Full list of scholarships to international students vary from \$1000-\$5000 per year
- 1,500-1,800 jobs available on campus for students
- Textbook Rental Service, which helps students save \$1,168 per year on the price of purchasing textbooks
- Free services at the Writing Center helping students with their English writing skills

- Free career consultation including resume review and job interview training
- Free shuttle bus service on campus and through the city

Promotion

Given the rapid development of technology, the blockage of U.S. social media networks in China, the strong Chinese cultural traditions toward education and family and the potential of language barriers, it is recommended that UW-Platteville utilize the following tailored approach for marketing and recruitment activities.

- **Translated Promotional Materials**

Rationale: Translated marketing material can help students, parents, and spouses gain a better understanding of UW-Platteville and its programs. Therefore, translated electronic and printed materials are necessary in recruitment.

However, translation is time consuming and needs to be informative and accurate.

- **Internet promotion**

Rationale: Internet is the most effective way to reach the greatest number of potential students. Apart from many payment required websites, there are still many free internet resources available. Compared with attending international recruitment fair and trip, Internet recruitment can be the cheapest.

However, it requires knowledge of internet techniques, internet marketing skills, as well as foreign language skills.

- **International education fairs**

Rationale: Attending international education fairs can help international admission advisors observe the conduct of representatives from peer universities and gain knowledge of recruiting students in a foreign country. Since the participants at the fair are students who are interested in studying abroad, the opportunity for successful recruitment is higher than other methods.

However, small universities will face great pressure from a pool of competitors at such fairs. What's more, education fairs are costly and lack flexibility with regard to scheduling. As a result, the better way is to attend part of the fair and spend the rest of the time visiting local schools and partner organizations.

- **School Visits**

Rationale: It is a relatively effective channel for recruiting international students. It is because it provides face to face contact with prospective students, which enables the most effective communication. As such activities are through local teachers and school officials, it is more trustworthy to students. Establishing partnership with as many high schools and colleges as possible can ensure a stable and constant supply of international students. In addition, high school and college teachers are also potential graduate students at UW-Platteville. When these teachers graduate, they will be a great resource of referrals for Chinese student recruitment. Apart from that, UW-Platteville may start short-term program of sending students over to these high schools to teach English. Such opportuni-

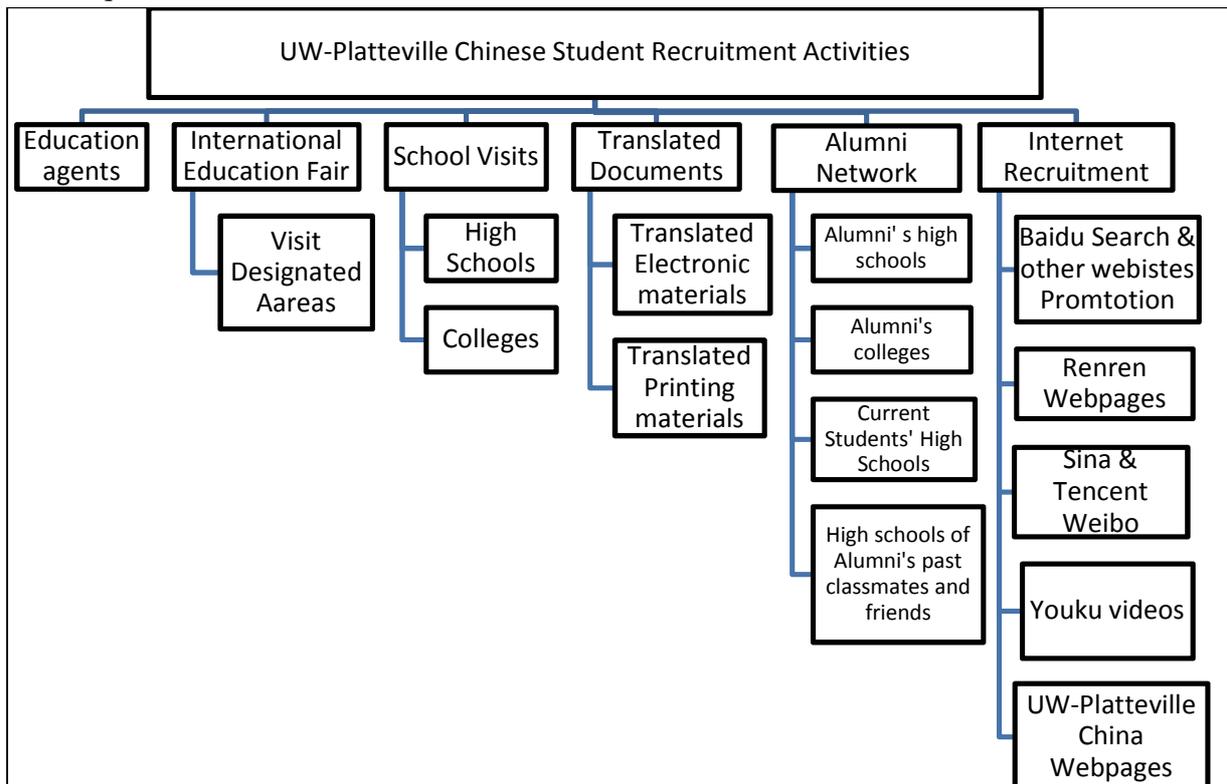
ty should be very beneficial to the U.S. students and enhance the exposure of UW-Platteville among these students.

However, establishing a partnership takes time to build up trust. Without recommendation, it is very difficult to build up contact and trust. The better way is to go through current Chinese students, alumni and their friends and relatives.

- **Alumni Network**

Rationale: A Chinese alumni club needs to be established and regular gathering be hosted to strengthen the relationship between the members and club. By establishing such a club, a network of resources can be developed and utilized. As these alumni have connections with their past or current educational organizations or enterprises, they can help to put these educational organizations and UW-Platteville together. Apart from that, these alumni's high schools can also be visited. Under some circumstances, alumni can possibly assist in extending UW-Platteville's visit to include the high schools of their classmates or friends.

However, as alumni have their own job and family duties, they do not have enough time or may be bit reluctant in assisting the recruitment. Therefore, a certain amount of incentives should be offered. To be effective, training should be provided to prepare them to be qualified referrals.



Place

According to research, the following provinces are on the list of the top 10 Disposable Annual Incomes in China and have higher enrollment standards on Chinese College Entrance Examination (CEE). Students from these areas have a much better financial and academic background than students from many other areas of China. Meanwhile, as most of UW-Platteville's Chinese alumni are now working in educational institutions in Hubei, Hubei is selected as one of the target areas for student recruitment. Therefore, the recruitment activities will be focused on the following areas.

- Shandong
- Jiang su
- Zhejiang
- Fujian
- Guangdong
- Hubei

People (Target Audiences)

The activities outlined in this plan aim to the following audience:

- Chinese high school students
- High school leaders and teachers
- Students at 2-year and 3-year colleges in China (equivalent to U.S. community colleges)
- Staff in partner institutions in China
- Alumni in China

Key Activities

The following key activities will be incorporated in the marketing and student recruitment activities to promote UW-Platteville:

- ***UW-Platteville Chinese webpages***

Adding few Chinese pages on UW-Platteville website can help students to understand better about the programs. It also makes the UW-Platteville website to be more searchable in China. The Chinese version of webpages should include program introductions, videos on students' academic and campus activities, campus maps and scenery pictures, and guidance/ instruction on the application process for Chinese students. A sample of a completed application form is helpful too.

- ***Publications***

To promote UW-Platteville programs to prospective Chinese students, their parents, Chinese high school teachers, alumni, and staff at partner institutions in China, the following publications will be made available on the UW-Platteville webpages and distributed through partner institutions in China.

UW-Platteville International Student Guide in Chinese

Regular electronic newsletters on students' achievements and university development

Recruitment flyers

- ***Advertising***

Advertisements promoting engineering and other STEM programs at UW-Platteville will run on Baidu search engine (This site accounted for 78.6% of the Chinese market, compared to 15.6% for Google China in 2012). It can be done by Pay-by-Click or free SEO techniques.

Creating a webpage of UW-Platteville with RenRen (popular website particularly among Chinese high school and university students).

Posting UW-Platteville pictures and videos with Chinese social websites including Sina weibo, Tencent weibo, Youku video and make them easy to be found.

Invite students to write blogs on campus life, life in the U.S. to promote UW-Platteville

- ***Providing Guidance and Consultation through Chinese Social Media Tools***

A trained bi-lingual (Chinese and English) admission adviser will be appointed to interact with and advise prospective Chinese students or partner institutions in China via QQ (711.7 million users), MSN and Skype for instant online communication, Sina weibo (500 million users) and Tencent weibo (507 million users) for the development and achievement of UW-Platteville and international students' life experience at UW-Platteville, RenRen for UW-Platteville Student Recruitment webpages in China (172 million users), and Youku for video posts.

Direct Marketing

The following direct marketing activities will be implemented to allow for targeted communication with particular target audiences:

- Regularly modify the key words in webpages, blogs, pictures and videos for search engines
- Posting UW-Platteville's information on major educational websites
- Sending articles to Chinese mass media
- Regular e-mails to UW-Platteville partner institutions in China (particularly communicate new/changed programs on offer)
- Monthly e-newsletters to prospective students, partner schools, alumni in the database
- E-mails to Chinese alumni concerning the progress of UW-Platteville
- Regular posters in schools, colleges and other partner educational institutions

Student Recruitment Visit

To recruit students from China, visits to Chinese high schools and participation at recruitment fair have been planned for March 2014. This will be the first official recruitment that UW-Platteville has done in China. The draft schedule for the visit is below. Admission officers need to understand Chinese or hire someone who can translate and make arrangements for the trip.

Date	Activity
March 10-13	Arrive Shanghai then fly to Shandong for school visits

March 14-16	Fly from Shandong to Hubei and then visit local schools and meet alumni
March 17-19	Fly from Fuzhou , visit local schools
March 20-21	Attending China International Education Fair in Fuzhou
March 22-23	Attending China International Education Fair in Guangzhou
March 24-26	Visit high schools in Guangzhou
March 27-29	Transfer to Zhejiang for school visits
March 30, 31	Transfer to Shanghai for flying back to the U.S.A

Action Programs

Work Position and Name: TBD

Requirement: Bi-lingual (English and Chinese) expert in international student recruitment

Marketing Objectives: push UW-Platteville into market and strive for 600% increase in the first year.

Activities to Be Performed:

- Translate recruitment documents and create Chinese webpages
- Set up UW-Platteville account with Sina weibo and Tencent weibo,
- Build up alumni network,
- Establish Chinese high schools and college partnerships,
- Upload videos of UW-Platteville to Youku.com
- Establish database of Chinese high schools
- Confirm visits to Chinese high schools in designated areas
- Attend China International Education Fair
- Conduct recruitment tour to Chinese high schools and colleges

Completion Date: 5 months prior to the China recruitment tour in March 2014

Work Position and Name: Student Assistants

Requirement: Bi-lingual (English and Chinese)

Marketing Objective: providing assistance to international student admission officer in promoting UW-Platteville to Chinese market.

Activities to Be Performed:

- Assist in translating promotional materials into Chinese,
- Write short stories for UW-Platteville's blogs on Chinese social media networks.

Completion Date: 3 months prior to the China Recruitment tour in March 2014

Assistance from Other Departments

Work Position and Name: TBD

Marketing Objectives: web design

Activities to Be Performed:

- Design UW-Platteville China webpages,
- Provide SEO technique assistance on Chinese search engines and other educational sites
- assist in creating UW-Platteville webpages on Renren.com

Completion Date: 5 months prior to the China recruitment tour in March 2014

Work Position and Name: TBD

Marketing Objectives: Creating UW-Platteville brochure and promotional flyer

Activities to Be Performed:

- Working together with the international admission officer to create a bi-lingual UW-Platteville and Program Introduction brochure, promotional flyers and e-newsletters.
- Providing pictures on students, university campus, academic activities, etc.

Activity to Be Performed: 3 months prior to the China recruitment tour in March 2014

Work Position and Name: TBD

Marketing Objectives: providing promotional videos on international student recruitment

Activities to Be Performed:

- Work together with international student admission officer to provide pictures and Chinese subtitled videos concerning introduction of UW-Platteville, popular programs, and international student life at UW-Platteville.

Completion Date: 3 months prior to the China recruitment tour in March 2014

2014 China Visit:

Date	Activity
March 10-13	Arrive Shanghai then fly to Shandong for school visits
March 14-16	Fly from Shandong to Hubei and then visit local schools and meet alumni
March 17-19	Fly from Fuzhou, visit local schools
March 20-21	Attending China International Education Fair in Fuzhou
March 22-23	Attending China International Education Fair in Guangzhou
March 24-26	Visit to high schools in Guangzhou
March 27-29	Transfer to Zhejiang for school visits
March 30, 31	Transfer to Shanghai for flying back to the U.S.A

Financial Projections

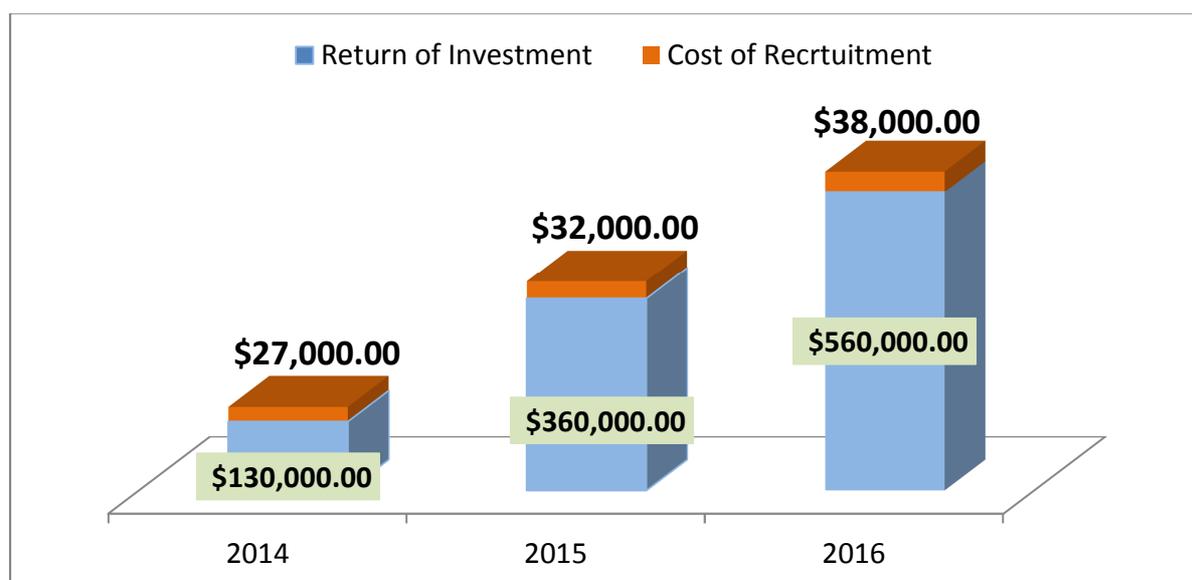
Recruitment projection

Previous Years' Enrollment from China: average 2 Undergraduate students per year

New Enrollment Forecast: 8 Enrollment in 2014, 10 in 2015, and 12 in 2016

Cost Estimates:	
Translated Electronic Promotional materials:	\$2,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baidu SEO 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese version of UW-Platteville webpages • Sina Weibo account • Tencent Weibo Account • Renren. com Webpages • Youku videos • QQ, MSN, Skype 				
Translated Print Material: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UW-Platteville and Programs Introduction Brochure • International Student Recruitment Flyers and Posters • Printing and shipping cost 	\$1,000			
China Recruitment Visit (2 recruiters): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Transportation • Domestic Transportation • International Education Fair • Accommodations • School and Alumni Visits • Gifts 	\$24, 000			
Projected Break Even Point:	\$27,000			
Projected Enrollment and Return of Investment (ROI) in 3 years				
Year	Number of New Enrollment	Continuing	Total	ROI
2014	8	Students enrolled before this project do not count	8	\$130,000.00
2015	10	8	18	\$360,00.00
2016	12	18	30	\$560,000.00



Monitoring Procedures

In order to ensure the success of recruitment, each admission advisor will be assigned a list of duties, workload, and dates of completion. Weekly meetings will be conducted during the period of preparation and daily meeting will be carried out during the process of oversea recruitment. After the deadline of application in each semester, an evaluation form will be used to measure the final outcomes.

- **Preparation Period**

One designated admission officer and two student assistants will be in charge of all the translation of promotional materials, updating blogs and UW-Platteville's China webpages.

Activities	Deadline	Completion	Remarks
Weekly meeting			
Translate UW-Platteville			
Introduction Brochure Translate International Student Recruitment flyer			
Chinese version webpages contents			
Set up accounts with Chinese social media websites			
Subtitle videos on university and program introduction			
Interview International Students life on UW-Platteville			
Building up alumni network			
High school contacts database			
Baidu search engine SEO			
Upload videos on Youku			
Post pictures and articles on Renren			
Write blogs on Sina Weibo, and Tencent weibo.			
Booking booth for Chinese International Education Fair			
Make appointments with Chinese high schools			
Make appointment with Chinese colleges			
Make appointment with Chinese alumni			
Apply Travel documents			
Book hotels and transportation tickets in China			

- **Student Recruitment in China**

Two persons (one U.S. citizen, one Chinese or person fluent in Mandarin) travel to the designated areas in China for international student recruitment fair, school and alumni visits.

Activities	Deadline		
Daily Discussion			
Chinese International Education Fair			
Visit Chinese high schools			
Visit to Chinese colleges			
Chinese alumni Reception			

Staff meetings will be held on a weekly basis to keep everyone updated on the progress of each assignment. Issues and concerns will be discussed during meetings for solutions.

Evaluation of Programs

To check the effectiveness of China Recruitment Campaign, the following index will be used to measure the outcomes.

Index	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of Undergraduate Students from China				
Revenues Generated				
Number of Webpage visit from China				
Enquiries				
Number of partner schools in China				
Number of Supportive Alumni in China				

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Appendix

Figure One:

Questionnaires to Chinese students studying or studies at UW-Platteville

This survey is conducted with the approval of the Institutional Review Board for Human Subject Research at University of Wisconsin-Platteville. It is aimed to assist UW-Platteville to improve the recruitment of Chinese undergraduate students. All data will be held in strict confidence and will only be used for academic research.

1. What is your major in UW-Platteville?
2. Do /did you come to UW-Platteville for your graduate or undergraduate study?
3. In which city did you live before you joined your UW-Platteville program of study?
4. Please tick the following channels, through which you heard about UW-Platteville (Check all that apply). Other channel (s), please write them down.
 - Friends and relatives
 - Internet search
 - Teacher or school introduction
 - TV advertise
 - Newspaper
 - Internet social media
 - Oth-
ers: _____
5. When searching study abroad information on Internet, do you prefer to check a Chinese or English version website first?
6. What major reasons (up to three) influenced your decision to attend your UW-Platteville program of study?
7. Here are some popular factors affecting students' decisions to study abroad. Please use 1-10 to mark the following factors from the most important to the least important in your opinion. You can also add some factors you like. For example, 1 major, 2 tuition, 3 rank of university, etc.
 - ___ Transportation
 - ___ Tuition
 - ___ Major
 - ___ Rank and reputation of university
 - ___ Campus and community safety
 - ___ Scholarship and financial assistance
 - ___ OPT and Employment opportunities

___Multi-cultural campus life

___Licensed/accredited by Chinese governments

Other reason(s), please list:_____

8. Please list at least 3 changes or improvements that you would suggest to improve the recruitment of Chinese student?
9. Please list at least 3 changes or improvements that you would suggest to improve the campus environment for Chinese students?
10. When you applied to study abroad, did you get help from an agent or apply by yourself?
11. What benefits, if any, do you think a Chinese version of the university website would provide to prospective students and their parents?
12. What benefits, if any, do you think the availability of a Chinese-speaking admission advisor would have had on influencing your decision to apply this university?
13. What do you think about the idea of creating a UW-Platteville Chinese Alumni Club?
Would you be interested in helping to build such a club?

Figure Two:**Interviews with university admission faculty**

This survey is conducted with the approval of the Institutional Review Board for Human Subject Research at University of Wisconsin-Platteville. It is aimed to assist UW-Platteville to improve the recruitment of Chinese undergraduate students. All data will be held in strict confidence and will only be used for academic research.

1. In the past few years, UW-Platteville has been recruiting students from China. Can you tell me what methods have you been using to recruit Chinese students?
2. In your opinion, what were the most effective methods?
3. What were the least effective methods?
4. What are the most popular majors among Chinese students?
5. During the process of recruiting Chinese students, what difficulties did you encounter?
6. What do you think about working with agents to recruit Chinese students?
7. What plan do you have for the next step in recruiting Chinese students?