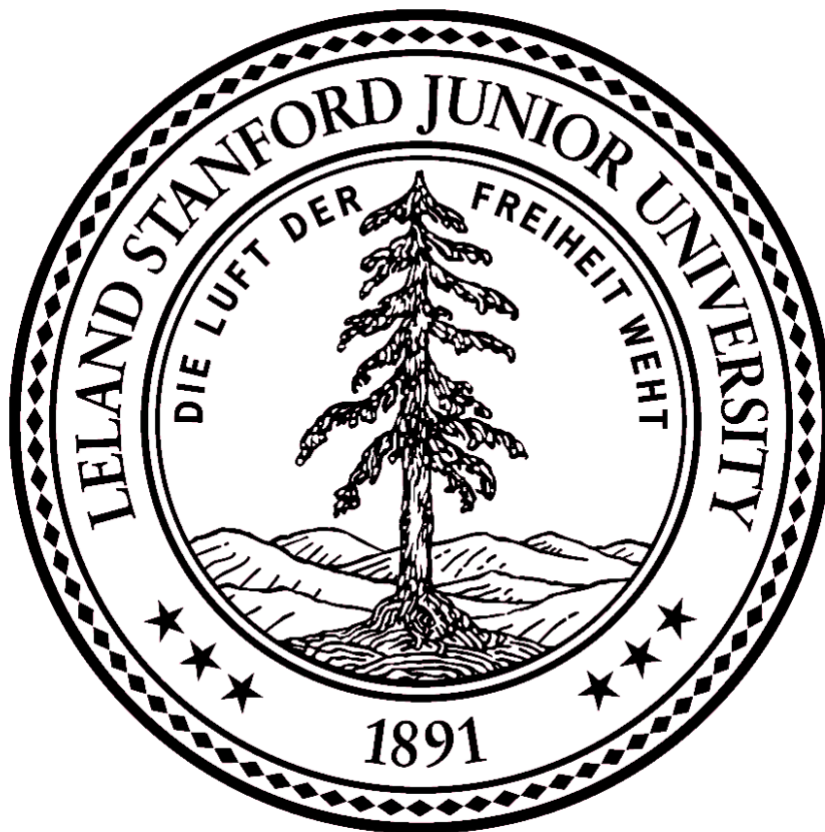


INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
LIVING AND LEARNING IN TWO CHINA-BASED
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS



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Master of Arts Paper
International Education Policy Analysis
Graduate School of Education
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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ANALYSIS

**Internationalization in Higher Education: Living and Learning in
Two China-based Scholarship Programs**

Yixuan Liu

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of the requirements for the degree of *Master of Arts***

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Abstract

This qualitative study analyzes two prestigious China-based international scholarship programs, the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China (CSCPRC) and Schwarzman Scholars, and their interactions with host campuses through the program-related policies and space. Data came from twelve one-hour-long interviews with four CSCPRC fellows and six Schwarzman fellows regarding reflections and understandings of how program policies shaped their experiences. Findings show that even though fellows gained access to a myriad of resources through the program, they had limited interactions with the rest of the campus. Participants suggested perceived tensions between programs and campus students, which alienated the program from the host community and generated misunderstandings for both sides. Institutions should pay attention to programs' unique positionality on campuses and in societies and their potential to strengthen political influence. This study provides references for future international programs in higher education to have inclusive policies and interactive initiatives.

Keywords: international program centers; higher education; spatial segregation; international exchange; Chinese public diplomacy; CSCPRC; Schwarzman Scholars

Introduction

Globalization re-defines the societal role of higher education and conceptualizes education as a crucial part of constructing societies (Schofer et al., 2021). Responding to this global interconnection, universities cultivate characteristics for an international-oriented model, facilitating international exchanges for students and intellectuals. As one major component of this movement, student mobilities capture not only the geopolitical distribution of resources but also the power dynamic that flows underneath. Tracking student-sending and -receiving countries over the past decade, we witness an increase in international students in Asian countries, marking the start of a transition through which Asian institutions have begun to get more international recognition (Mok & Ong, 2011). This transition suggests a new model of international mobility of students as opposed to the periphery-to-core that has traditionally drawn international students to the global north for educational resources (Teichler, 1999). Scholars theorize this trend as the “internationalization” of higher education (Buckner & Stein, 2020), suggesting the global tendency toward cross-national interaction between students and professionals, and toward global perspectives.

Responding to the global trend of internationalization, Tsinghua University—one of the most prestigious universities in China—received a US\$300 million endowment from Blackstone CEO Stephen A. Schwarzman in 2013, creating a fully-funded one-year master’s program, Schwarzman Scholars. Since the program hosted the first cohort in 2016, Schwarzman Scholars has become one of the best-known scholarship programs for its prestige and competitiveness. However, China-based scholarship programs have a much longer history. In the late 1960s, the

National Academy of Sciences (NAS), Social Science Research Council (SSRC), and American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) established an international exchange program, the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China (CSCPRC), wishing to improve the scholarly exchange between the United States and China (Brown, 1974). CSCPRC assigned fellows to top Chinese universities after the two countries normalized their diplomatic relations during the 1970s (Lampton, 1986).

Both programs presented themselves as exclusive and established program centers that only program-affiliated personnel could access. The campus, as a place of teaching, nurturing, and growing, has historical and cultural figures of prestige. The nuances of the campus's physical environment, such as building placements, classroom arrangements, and dorm locations, are crucial to students' experience. Considering universities as responders to global trends, we can identify factors that have caused changes over time in higher education in China. For international scholarship programs such as CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars, there is an extra layer of transcultural communication carried through higher education, which places universities at the intersection between intellectual exchange and cultural understanding.

I combined "socio-spatial segregation" (Schnell & Yoav, 2001) and "public diplomacy" (Tuch, 1990) theories to analyze the relationship between campus design and learning experience, forming a theoretical lens for the research topic. Investigating what internationalization catalyzes in Chinese higher education, the study aimed to explore the CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars programs and the interaction between such programs and their host institutions through in-depth interviews with students and scholars. This paper answers two research questions 1) How do program center designs shape the experiences of international scholars and students who participate in these programs? 2) What is the significance of

separating scholars and students from the rest of campus? The results show there were spatial and intellectual separations between programs and host institutions, which created misunderstandings and tensions within student communities. By establishing unique spaces and rules, these two programs failed to encourage face-to-face interactions, limiting the programs' potential to bridge societies and cultures.

Background

To provide context for CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars, this section demonstrates the varying historical and social backgrounds for educational exchange in China during two distinct periods. This section introduces the general landscape of higher education and scholarly exchange in China, in which these two programs have significant roles. They mark different stages of development, and it is crucial to understand the various driving forces that may shape the characteristics of the programs.

With the development of international perspectives in higher education, scholarly exchange between different cultures has become fundamental for universities (Enders, 2004; Hudson, 2015). International exchange programs have since thrived, encouraging discussion about student mobilities and cross-cultural exchange in a globalized context (Fabricius et al., 2011; Greenall, 2012). Exposed to the global environment, universities in China have also embraced the trend, promoting international collaboration and gathering global perspectives (Mulvey, 2020).

From 2002 to 2012, the number of international students admitted to study in China increased from 37,338 to 102,991, and the percentage of students receiving government aid

increased from 6.19 to 15.27 percent (Mok, 2016). As seen in Figure 1, in 2018, the number of international students in China reached 490,000 (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2019). Students studying in Chinese institutions came from 196 countries or territories, and the United States was listed as the fifth largest sending country.

[Figure 1 about here]

Most international students come to China through joint study abroad programs between their home universities and Chinese universities. China has become increasingly popular as one of the destinations for studying abroad over the years. According to data from the International Institute of Education in 2019, China hosted the third largest international student population in higher education (International Institute of Education, 2019). Realizing the importance of education exchange, many Chinese universities have established exchange programs over the past two decades, collaborating with overseas scholars and institutions (Ferdjani, 2012; Lee, 2019; Yang, 2020; Oleksiyenko et al., 2021). Though it has historically been an outbound-driven country, China is gradually creating a friendly institutional environment for hosting a more diverse student body.

CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars

CSCPRC was founded in 1966 and sent one of the earliest U.S. delegations to China in 1978 after the reestablishment of diplomatic relations (Brown, 1974; Gu, 2006). Postdoctoral fellows and graduate students made up the bulk of this group, applying either to study at top Chinese universities or to conduct research in China. CSCPRC's first delegation in 1978 supported about 50 researchers and students to pursue academic interests at the most prestigious

universities in China (Blumenthal, 1981). Despite increased political tension during the Cold War, CSCPRC was one of the first exchange programs between China and the U.S. after the Cultural Revolution. Existing literature on CSCPRC includes program reports and journals that focus on its political significance and broad intellectual exchange between China and the U.S. (Millwood, 2021; Wang, 2007). There are few studies researching program fellows' lives on campus or their learning experience on the program.

In 2013, Tsinghua University received a US\$300 million endowment from Stephen Schwarzman, creating scholarships for a one-year master's program. Students study China-related subjects and are expected to become future leaders with expertise in different fields of Chinese society. Schwarzman Scholars soon gained tremendous attention, becoming one of the most well-known international scholarship programs in the world (Kirby, 2014; Metzgar, 2016). This program was expected to "rival the Rhodes scholarship in prestige and influence" (Bradsher, 2013). Schwarzman fellows come from all over the world and receive full scholarships including living stipends and subsidized meals. According to the official website of Schwarzman Scholars (2016), the program enlisted Robert A.M. Stern Architects to design a program center, Schwarzman College, a 200,000-square-foot collection of campus houses with advanced education facilities. Inside Schwarzman College are designated dorm buildings, an auditorium, a library, a dining hall, and social spaces for informal conversations exclusively for the purpose of the program.

Critical Literature Review

International engagement has become a significant topic in higher education. Universities try to frame a world-class institution by modifying their administrative structures and core values of the institution (Deem, et al., 2008; Jang & Kim, 2012; Song, 2017). Observing the systematic nature of higher education, scholars look at the interconnection of universities and are interested in the process that generates the ideal model of a world-class university (Buckner & Stein, 2020; Schofer et al., 2021). Internationalization is one of the aspects that has increasing significance to the legitimacy of a university. In 2004, Jane Knight defined the internationalization of higher education as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 11). Expanding the discussion, Van der Wende (2007) approaches internationalization from a neoliberal perspective, articulating the necessity of internationalization under the development of a globalized economy. Understanding internationalization as apolitical is fundamentally inaccurate. Unpacking the narrative of international/non-international is crucial to understanding the power dynamic. Education cannot escape from this broad social frame, and universities must be included as key actors that project sociopolitical stands.

How can we critically analyze the sociopolitical significance of internationalization in higher education through specific programs? Combining theoretical dimensions with an institutional structure, such as China-based scholarship programs, universities become vital factors for facilitating internationalization. Universities and campuses play crucial roles in attracting international students. For institutions that host international students, the campus is also inextricably intertwined to form a “sense of place” for campus community members (Kuh et al., 2010, p. 93). The campus is the primary site for a unique community to develop intellectual insights and seek social interactions. The campus and its buildings provide locations for informal

learning, such as socialization and collaborative activities (Chism, 2006). For international students, moving from overseas to join a university can be challenging since the learning involves more than academic progress. Linking back to the nature of the university as a combination of formal and informal learning, international students must overcome more hardships to interact with peers and faculties. Researchers have found that they face difficulties adapting to different teaching styles and establishing friendships. These contribute to their feelings of isolation and loneliness as international students (Trice, 2004; Sawir et al., 2008).

Learning new languages and cultural norms that are expected during social interactions renders barriers for international students to integrate with local students' groups. Taking China as an example, Gong et al. (2021) suggest that international students in China commonly face academic challenges, socio-cultural challenges, and language incompetency. The transition they must undergo involves many aspects of the individual's life. To encourage a smooth transition between different environments, close interaction with local students has been proven to develop one's social network that encourages both sociocultural and psychological adaptations to host societies (Zhang & Goodson, 2011), while having a sense of community with fellow international students and local students allows for cross-cultural communication, which can be theoretically supported by communication-oriented arrangements within residential areas and communal spaces. Securing space for student interactions on campus benefits individuals' academic and social wellbeing. Therefore, on the one hand, the strategic planning and design of university campuses regulates students' learning and living experiences as members of communities (Temple & Barnett, 2007; Tian & Lu, 2018). On the other hand, providing access to locations for socialization or collaborative activities enhances the participation of individuals

and their sense of belonging (Temple, 2008). Hence, program centers contribute to forming student identities and internalizing a sense of community for their fellow candidates.

Recent scholarship has investigated the social and political expansion of China-based exchange programs. Scholars interpret the increase in China-based exchange programs as an expansion of China's public diplomacy system (Ding, 1955; Barr, 2011; d'Hooghe, 2011). These programs attract more international students and scholars to China and encourage studies about Chinese societies, which gives exposure to the country and allows ideas to spread. By accepting international students, Chinese universities serve as institutional outlets for portraying China's international image (Hartig, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

Argument

I examine the interaction between the sociopolitical functions of these programs and their separate arrangement of program space, such as the program center, dormitory, and gathering space. I argue that the exclusiveness of program space regulates environmental exposure and mobility of fellow students, which suggests a different sociopolitical function of programs. To form a theoretical lens, this study addresses the contradiction between the extroversive feature of international programs and separative space arrangement that renders inequality, exclusion, and segregation through practices of everyday life. To highlight the significance of space, I introduce sociospatial segregation theory, exploring the impact of program space from the segregation lens (Schnell & Yoav, 2001).

Sociospatial Segregation

As a vital topic of social, cultural, and geographical research, segregation has been extensively studied to address social exclusion and inequality (Carlile, 2012; Wang et al., 2012; Ribeiro et al., 2016; Zheng et al., 2023). Schnell and Yoav (2001) investigate segregation indices in race and ethnicity discourse and address the importance of an “exposure index,” which indicates the probability of face-to-face encounters in people’s everyday life (p. 622). They highlight sociospatial isolation, emphasizing the importance of people’s social space “in which they practice their everyday life, mingle with meaning others, and develop their sociospatial networks” (p. 623). Further theorizing sociospatial segregation, Kwan (2013) adds time and human mobility to better understand barriers for social groups to access social facilities and resources. Their analysis conceptualizes segregation as a socially defined process, not only in respect of spatial separation but also in respect of social resource accessibility, attracting more public attention to nuances among groups and their activities.

Applying sociospatial segregation to urban studies, Li and Wang (2017) expand the analysis to various forms of segregation in large cities. Ethnicity is no longer the sole factor for segregation but one of the elements that contribute to “the great diversity” of societies (Li & Wang, 2017, p. 482). This approach understands isolation through individuals’ daily experiences and broadens the theoretical framework of segregation to accommodate the development of societies better. Understanding contemporary sociospatial segregation theory is crucial for organization leaders and policymakers to create inclusive environments and identify segregation factors.

Therefore, program spaces are not merely facilities but locations that uphold specific social networks, circulations of resources, and collective identity formation among program fellows. Unpacking the function of space is crucial for analyzing the broader significance of CSCPRC and Schwarzman. Having access to exclusive spaces distinguishes programs on campus and generates a sociospatial segregation model that forms inequality and exclusion in university communities. This model restricts interactions between programs and host institutions, reducing broader intellectual exchanges and transcultural communication. Exclusivity accelerates interpersonal bindings within programs but isolates programs and prevents them from being more sociopolitically significant.

Public Diplomacy and Broad Connection

Situating the study in a broader field of higher education, this paper explores the significance of China-based international scholarship programs from different societal and cultural dimensions, using Tuch's public diplomacy theory, which suggests different categories for enhancing a nation's international influence (1990). Aiming to articulate such influence further, I consider international scholarship programs as strategic tools to improve national power (Nye 1990, 2004). CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars, as the places hosting the international scholarship programs, fall into the realm of public diplomacy and influence the global perception of China.

Public diplomacy theories are often combined for their considerable overlap. Public diplomacy lists "international exchanges," "cultural diplomacy," and "international broadcasting" as the main aspects of its theory (Cull, 2008, p. 32–34). By developing diplomatic

strategies within these dimensions, nations strengthen their soft power and become more appealing to the international audience. From this angle, international scholarship programs also create a claim concerning China's soft power and categorize them as diplomatic projects, strategically constructing the nation's image.

This research seeks a novel comparative analysis of the CSCPRC program space and Schwarzman College, investigating the nuances of sociospatial isolation and its impact on learning. The conceptual framework can guide the analysis of the connection between programs and their sociopolitical position, demonstrating why specific space arrangements were adopted and how they were shaped by the trend of internationalization and local environments.

Research Questions

This leads to the following research questions:

- 1) How do program center designs shape the experiences of international scholars and students who participate in these programs?
- 2) What is the significance of separating scholars and students from the rest of campus?

Data & Method

Strategy of Inquiry

To answer the study's two research questions, I adopted a qualitative method and conducted interviews with perspectives from CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars fellows. Through in-depth analyses of the program centers, this project uses a case study design.

Additionally, I consider spatial separation as a shared experience among participants. Through collecting detailed information about participants' lived experiences around program centers, this case study also employs a phenomenological approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research observed and examined the first-hand reflection of fellow students, investigating how they perceive their experience in the program, which signifies participant meanings and demonstrates the reflexivity of the research.

Research Methods

I conducted in-depth one-hour interviews, guiding participants to reflect on their experiences and recall memories. During two rounds of interviews, I drafted personalized questions based on the information shared from the previous interview and themes appearing in other interviews to cross-check the validity of the data. With their narratives and stories as participants of China-based international scholarship programs, I explored different types of space arrangements and how they shaped students' experiences. Each participant was given a pseudonym that is used throughout the findings and discussion sections.

Data Collection & Analysis

CSCPRC was founded for the exclusive purpose of improving China-U.S. intellectual communication. Candidates were graduate students and scholars from American postsecondary institutions. I interviewed four CSCPRC fellows, of whom one was recruited as an administrator after his study and continued to participate in the daily management of the program. All four

participants joined the program in different years between 1979 to 1982, and three of them worked on law-related topics and were assigned to Beijing University. The other participant worked on a history project and went to Nanjing University for close access to the archive.

Based on the information collected from Schwarzman participants, the yearly quota for admission is twenty percent mainland Chinese students, forty percent American students, and forty percent students from the rest of the world. To gather diverse perspectives, I recruited two Chinese students, two American students, one student who came from the Philippines and received postsecondary education in the UK, and another student from Malaysia. Among all six participants, five were from the same cohort, studying public health, economics, political science, engineering, and international development. One participant graduated in a different year and currently works with the program.

Interview transcripts are the primary data for this research. The coding process combined deductive and inductive approaches. Throughout the coding process, I followed an “open, axial, and selective coding strategy,” preparing to process more content and modify the codebook accordingly (Williams & Moser, 2019, p. 47). In the first stage of open coding, I collected concepts, summarizing and classifying similar terms. Secondly, I categorized concepts from the open coding stage and compiled them into themes. Finally, the selective coding organized themes and created structures that enable theorization and meaning-constructing process. To test the validity of the coding process, I evaluated the inter-coder reliability (ICR) to assess the credibility of my theories and analysis (Nili et al., 2020).

Results

“Bubble” and Isolation: The Boundary Between the Program and the Campus

CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars adopted different strategies in the process of facilitating their programs. CSCPRC focused on physical isolation, and Schwarzman Scholars added intellectual separation in addition to physical dimensions. Based on my interviews with former CSCPRC fellows who participated in the program in 1981 and 1982 and studied at Peking University—the neighbor and peer university of Tsinghua—CSCPRC fellows had separate housing, dining halls, and gathering spaces. In addition to a similar spatial distinction, there were also systematic divisions in educational materials and administrative structure for Schwarzman Scholars. Participants described their programs as “bubbles” that formed unique spaces for cohorts to bond and limited them from reaching out to broader student communities on campus.

For CSCPRC, the physical separation was enforced through restrictions. According to the participant who joined the program as an administrator later, Peking University launched construction projects for housing international students from all over the world. At the same time, CSCPRC fellows were restricted from entering libraries and archives that stored interior materials for party members. Three CSCPRC participants studied law, and they experienced more hardship since law was considered a sensitive topic that only authorized individuals could study.

They construct a new building for international students. These are dorms that have been there since the 1950s. In 1981. They built a brand-new complex for foreign students called the Shaoyuanlou. And we were there. When I was back as a teacher in 1983, I lived in the faculty building. We have a two to a room, and you know all our Chinese classmates live eight to a room. (Sam)

Boy, it was really rough that first year. They never got near a law department like that was impossible. (Rosemary)

In addition to physical separations through housing and study spaces, CSCPRC fellows also recalled challenging socializing conditions on campus where interacting with internationals was not yet socially and politically acceptable.

Things loosened up over the years, I mean every year seems a little bit better than here before, in terms of like people having Chinese friends. But it became easier to, you know, hang out with the Chinese people, and you know, like when I was there, we always worried about the Chinese friends we made getting in trouble, but people said that sort of ease up over time, and you know the society in general became more accepting.
(Rosemary)

Supported by the program and the university, CSCPRC fellows enjoyed significantly better living conditions than Chinese students on campus. However, they faced restrictions in terms of providing dormitory access to Chinese friends, as the Shaoyuanlou building was guarded, and Chinese students needed to register for formal access if they wished to visit anyone who lived inside. While socializing with Chinese students, the fellows encountered resistance and were subject to regulations on campus. Many believed that the university arranged for party members to monitor their activities, causing international students to worry about implicating their Chinese friends.

Similar to CSCPRC, Schwarzman College also provided comfortable environments and convenient facilities that supported students' needs but restricted access to only program fellows. Schwarzman College is an enclosed space on the Tsinghua University campus. It is a U-shape building with a security guard at the entrance, and only program-related personnel have access to the building complex. Inside the College, there are classrooms, a gym, a library, and cafeterias at lower stories where the program offers subsidized dining. Taking elevators up, students can return to their single studios that are above all common spaces without leaving the College. All six participants interviewed pointed out that Schwarzman scholars had significantly better living

conditions than Tsinghua students. However, this comfortable space also formed a “bubble” that prevented students from interacting with the rest of the campus.

So, because we are too comfortable here, of course. Why bother to go out and experience everything when you can just communicate with other Schwarzman scholars? Yeah, but I think most of us are trying to get away from the bubble because it can really add value to our China experience, like we’re living in China, after all, why not take advantage of that? But then, on the contrary, some other people are saying, you know, this is still a global program. It just happens that it’s based in China. (Ping)

They just want the scholars to focus on studying and not worry about other things like, for example, if I have a class at 2 pm. I can leave my room like 3 minutes before that. I don’t have to cycle or run. (Frank)

According to their reflection on the “bubble” experience, Schwarzman scholars acknowledged the conveniences of living in the College where resources and facilities were in close proximity. However, with less motivation for exploring the outside environment, their life circles and social networks were restrained in the College, which reduced communications between international and Chinese students.

Within the “bubble” space, the program designed innovative curricula that were incompatible with the wider university structure. Instead of using semesters as the rest of the campus, Schwarzman Scholars arranged one academic year into four quarters, recruiting faculties globally to work on courses exclusively for the program.

I think there are 15 or 20 classes we can take (outside of Schwarzman College). But the problem is that they follow a different schedule than Schwarzman. For example, Schwarzman has 4 modules, versus Tsinghua is on a semester schedule. And holidays and grading systems are also different. (Theresa)

Theresa did not recall an explicit restriction for Schwarzman fellows taking classes outside of the College. However, the process required additional planning and applications. It was most common for fellows to follow the recommended course plans in the College. Therefore, the

separation of Schwarzman Scholars from the wider student body was also academic, intellectually dividing the two groups.

The CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars adopted different strategies in forming boundaries between the program and the host institution. Schwarzman optimized the College's spatial function by combining living, dining, socializing, and learning activities into one exclusive space. This strategy encouraged students to spend most of their time with their cohort, limiting interactions with communities outside the program. CSCPRC did not construct such a multifunctional program space but instead increased barriers for fellows to interact with campus students and regulated their lives through restrictions.

“Embassy” on Campus: the Tension among the Program, the Larger Student Body, and the Rest of the Campus

The word “tension” appeared in interviews with participants from both programs. They used this term to describe the relationship between program fellows and Chinese students as well as with their host campuses. Instead of integrating the program, universities gathered extra resources for each program and treated fellows as distinguished guests. Due to such exclusivity, information inside the programs failed to spread to the rest of the campuses, encouraging misunderstandings and stereotypes. Program fellows failed to connect with campus students, and they sensed hostile attitudes during interactions with Chinese students.

Campus students perceived the programs as alienated groups that maintained unique norms and followed different rules. For Schwarzman, the global pandemic further heightened the tension with campus students. Strict quarantine regulations and lockdown restrictions incited

mixed emotions for students. Theresa described a case during lockdown when campus students reported a group of international students violating the no public gathering policy, assuming they were Schwarzman Scholars.

I think that's just more broadly suspicion about Schwarzman. There's even a case, a bunch of non-Schwarzman but international students. They visibly look non-Chinese, partying on the lawn, and people had the police called on them, because they're like "Schwarzman are parting on the lawn." There's a lot of tension on campus. (Theresa)

During the campus lockdown, students were not supposed to gather for private events on campus. According to Theresa, the police responded to the report and found out that individuals from the party were not Schwarzman fellows but other international students. Through indirect interactions and rumors, Schwarzman fellows realized that their program formed a unique identity and were stereotyped within the host institution.

Campus students call us 'embassy' They don't really want to hang out with Schwarzman scholars. (Mike)

The term "embassy" not only emphasized the diverse demographic but also surfaced campus students' perception of the program. This nickname portrayed the Schwarzman College as a protected compound and an alienated residency with its own autonomy. Campus students realized there was a status difference between them and Schwarzman fellows, with a hierarchy maintained by unprecedented policies.

According to participants, Schwarzman follows the Chatham House Rule, an internationally recognized agreement that enables speakers to share personal opinions and discuss controversial topics in a given space. The Chatham House Rule created a unique environment inside Schwarzman College, allowing individuals to exchange ideas without sociopolitical considerations.

You're supposed to have more conversation, but also, I think, because of our proximity to China, or like, because we're actually in China, and in China, it is strong. It has a stronger

hold over what should be said or what cannot be said. And being in this political environment that's kind of where this need for this rule to come up. (Frank)

As Frank pointed out that political censorship was a significant concern for fellows in the program, and to address this, the Chatham House Rule was utilized as a safeguard to facilitate discussions aligned with the interests of the students. Fellows interpreted the rule as a mechanism to protect intellectual freedom, which allowed for exceptions that would have been otherwise impossible in Chinese higher education. However, such a policy differentiation creates more layers in Schwarzman scholars' positionality in relation to the host society, prioritizing their needs over existing social norms. While the rule detached the program from external pressures, it also fostered misunderstandings and stereotypes, leading to conflicts with campus students.

Discussion

Based on the findings regarding the CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars, these programs played a significant role in the creation of exclusive spaces within the host institutions. The program centers were intentionally designed to provide exclusive environments for program fellows, resulting in the formation of sociospatial segregation. This segregation manifested not only through physical separation but also through an intellectual divide. Fellows were isolated in an enclosed "bubble" with limited exchanges with the rest of the campus. The experience of living in a "bubble" contributed to the development of a distinct social space that effectively separated them from the larger student community. Other students perceived programs as the "embassy" owing to the universities' unique treatment of the students in these programs, further

demonstrating the challenge of interactions. The differentiated status for program fellows made them stand out in student communities and created barriers for cross-program communication.

The concept of sociospatial segregation, as highlighted by Schnell and Yoav (2001), emphasizes the significance of face-to-face encounters and social resource accessibility in people's daily lives. When applied to the CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars, these programs played a central role in fostering segregated structures. Through intentional designs, program centers within the host institutions created exclusive environments with academic, networking, and career supports that physically and socially distanced program fellows from the larger student communities.

Consequently, program participants found themselves enclosed within a “bubble” that encouraged socialization within the cohort community but restricted their interactions with a diverse range of perspectives and social networks. The narratives of program participants expressed consistently their longing to break free from this isolation and actively engage with the broader environment, recognizing the potential for enriched experiences through connections with local students and communities. Unfortunately, the design and policies of program centers, such as Schwarzman College and the CSCPRC dormitories, acted as physical and social barriers that perpetuated sociospatial segregation.

Restricting physical and social interactions not only limits the potential for broader impact but also deprives dynamic intersectionality among diverse groups (Bettencourt et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). Students are aware of the filter that has been created around them. Segregation through program spaces extends beyond its impact on the daily interactions and experiences of program participants. It significantly influences their access to resources and their ability to engage with the broader campus

community. Kwan's (2013) conceptualization of sociospatial segregation, encompassing dimensions of time and human mobility, provides insight into the challenges faced by social groups in accessing social facilities and resources. In the context of these programs, program fellows not only contend with limitations in physical space but also encounter constraints in terms of broader social interactions with local communities.

Sociospatial segregation was deepened further in other ways. Having to follow a quarter system, it was challenging for scholars to attend other university classes that were scheduled according to the semester system, which ultimately limited their selection range and led fellows to focus on program-only courses. The implementation of the Chatham House Rule by Schwarzman Scholars created micro-environments with exceptions and regulations. Separating program fellows through conditional intellectual exchanges further alienated programs from campus students and generated tensions and misunderstandings. Consequently, the exclusive spaces of these programs transcended being mere facilities; they actively shaped social networks, resource circulation, and collective identity formation among program fellows.

Policies such as the Chatham House Rule segregated programs from ordinary sociopolitical settings, further implying their unique positionality in conveying information to international elites who are interested in aligning their careers with China. Even though programs tried to provide well-designed experiences with limited interactions with locals, fellows could gather informal opinions from campus students and found flaws. The so-called 'protection' failed to deepen fellows' understanding of China but intensified campus students' reactions to the differentiated treatment. This is inevitably against the public diplomacy principles of promoting international communication through foreign policies and facilitating authentic interactions among communities (Tuch, 1990; Cull, 2008; Byrne & Hall, 2013; Sevin et al.,

2019). Strengthening public diplomacy would be the ideal outcome for CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars as they did and continue to bear dual functions in international cultural and intellectual exchanges.

The implications of exclusivity should not be overlooked, as they not only limit intellectual exchanges but also hinder transcultural communications between the programs and the host institutions. By creating physical and social divides, the potential impact of these programs to promote diversity, understanding, and collaboration is diminished. It underscores the need for program organizers, university leaders, and policymakers to critically examine the design of program spaces and consider the implications of exclusivity on social integration, knowledge exchange, and the cultivation of diverse perspectives. By creating more inclusive environments and fostering interactions between program participants and the larger campus community, China-based international scholarship programs have the potential for more meaningful cross-cultural engagement and the promotion of China's soft power by constructing the image of the state (Van Ham, 2008).

To acknowledge a limitation of this study, this study presented perspectives from participants, focusing on their experiences throughout the program, and did not include administrative perspectives. Therefore, the institutional intention of forming segregated policies remains unclear. To comprehensively understand China-based scholarship programs, it will be crucial to investigate the programs' own narratives and their reasoning regarding political circumstances and restraints.

Conclusion

This research sheds light on the dynamics among CSCPRC and Schwarzman Scholars programs, fellow students, and campus students. Focusing on the experiences of participants and their reflections on the programs, this study reveals that programs create exclusive spaces that physically and socially separate participants from the larger student community and restrict their interactions and access to resources. Even though the institutional intention is to bring future leaders from various fields and encourage communication among talented young professionals, the program should nonetheless consider community engagement. International programs are opportunities for developing mutual understanding among different groups, and programs such as Schwarzman on campus have the potentials to shape the way that Chinese societies interact with international communities through face-to-face activities among students. However, spatial and administrative arrangements become barriers that not only de-value fellow students' experience but also render misconceptions.

To enhance cross-program collaborations, universities should consider implementing initiatives that encourage collaboration and interaction between program fellows and students from the broader campus community. This can be achieved by organizing joint events, workshops, and projects that promote interdisciplinary exchanges and shared learning experiences. By breaking down the barriers between the programs and the rest of their campuses, students can engage in meaningful interactions, fostering a sense of inclusivity and promoting the exchange of diverse perspectives.

At the program level, committees should create shared spaces and partially open access to program spaces, developing shared spaces within the host institutions that facilitate interactions between program fellows and the larger student communities. Designing common areas such as study lounges, cafeterias, and recreational spaces that are accessible to all students inside and

outside of centers can encourage spontaneous conversations, networking opportunities, and the formation of social connections. These shared spaces can act as catalysts for integration and bridge the sociospatial divide between different student groups.

Programs and universities can strengthen their alliances by offering more courses that are open to all students, regardless of their program affiliation. By expanding the range of courses available, students from different programs can come together in shared learning environments, fostering authentic connections and intellectual exchanges. This interdisciplinary approach to education encourages students to explore diverse perspectives and disciplines, broadening their horizons and enriching their educational experiences. In addition to encouraging intellectual exchanges, establishing peer support networks that facilitate connections between program fellows and students from the broader campus community can also be beneficial. These networks can be created through student-led organizations or clubs focused on cultural exchange, academic interests, or community service. By providing a platform for informal mentorship, social interactions, and mutual support, program fellows can develop meaningful relationships with local students, fostering a sense of community and integration.

These policy recommendations aim to address the challenges of sociospatial segregation and limited interactions between program fellows and the larger student community. By promoting open access to program centers, balancing the difference between program and campus policies, and encouraging community outreach, programs can create an inclusive and vibrant campus environment that values collaboration, diversity, and engagement. These initiatives recognize the importance of bridging the gap between program participants and the broader student body, ultimately enhancing the overall educational experience for all students.

This research recruited ten participants from two programs, and most of them graduated from the same cohort. Programs that have small cohorts such as Schwarzman have unique cohort dynamics every year. To investigate if themes are consistent throughout the years, future research should focus on recruiting a broader and more diverse sample of participants from different cohorts and exploring their dynamics and experiences over time. Additionally, more comparative studies across international programs can provide insights into variations in sociospatial arrangements and community engagement approaches in different countries. In terms of evaluating the long-term outcomes and impacts of these programs, longitudinal studies that track participants' careers and global perspectives are necessary.

This research focused on campus dynamics among different groups. By revealing the significance of space in creating an inclusive environment, this study emphasizes the importance of breaking down barriers and fostering community engagement within these programs. These findings hold broader implications for creating authentic learning during the trend of internationalization of higher education and deepening cross-cultural understandings. By promoting inclusivity and collaboration, these programs have the power to foster positive intercultural exchanges and the potential to promote political influence through constructing positive international images.

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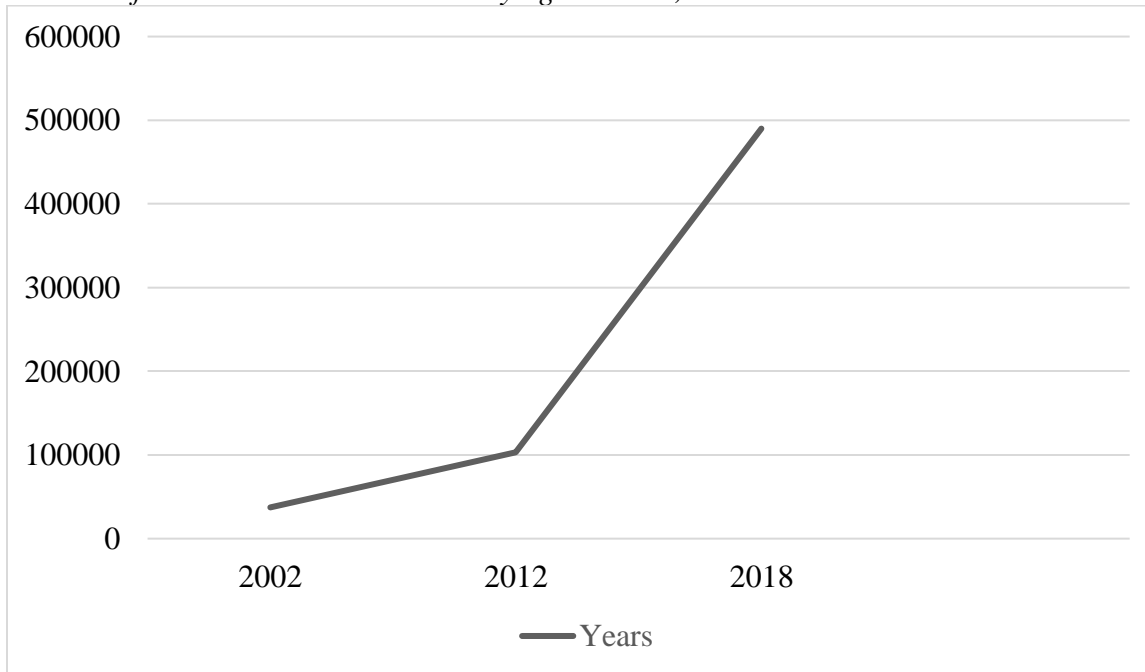
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Figure & Appendices

Figure 1

Number of International Students Studying in China, 2002 to 2018



Note. Data from Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2019).

Appendix 1 First-Round Interview Questions

For program fellows:

1. What did you like about the program?
2. Why did you decide to apply for the program?
3. How did you like living on a university campus in China? How was that different from your experience prior to coming to the program?
4. What was your most memorable story during the program?
5. How did you think of the program buildings comparing to the rest of the campus?
6. Where was the program center located on campus?
7. How long did it take you to get to the main campus from the program center?
8. Where was your favorite place on campus? Where was your favorite place in the program center?
9. Where did you spend most of your time on campus?
10. Could non-program fellows access the building? If so, how often did they come and interact with program fellows? If no, do you know why?
11. Where did you normally go for classes on campus?
12. Did you take classes outside of the program? If so, how was that different from classes in the program?
13. Did you live on campus? If so, how was the dorm? Did you have roommates?
14. Have you been to other dorms on campus? If so, how were they different from yours?
15. How was social life on campus?
16. How did you normally make friends?
17. Did program organize social events for fellows? If so, what were some events? Who were invited?

For administrator:

1. What do you think of the separated program space on campus? Did you participate in this decision-making process? If so, what was that like?
2. Could non-program fellows access the building? If so, how often did they come and interact with program fellows? If no, do you know why?
3. Could students take class outside of the program? Why?
4. How was the housing arrangement like for program students?
5. Did program organize social events for fellows? If so, what were some events? Who were invited?
6. How did you think of the program buildings comparing to the rest of the campus?
7. What was the mission of the program, and what were some major efforts for accomplishing it?
8. Would you please share some of your own thoughts about the program?