

A Case Study of One Confucius Institute:  
A China-U.S. University Synergistic Collaboration

by

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## ABSTRACT

Universities have been increasingly engaged in international collaborations with peer institutions overseas. In recent years, Confucius Institutes have emerged as a new model of collaboration between American universities and Chinese universities. In an attempt to identify factors contributing to successful international university collaborations, this study used the case study method and focused on one Confucius Institute between MMU, an American University, and ZZU, a Chinese university, and intended to identify factors leading to the success of the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute collaboration. The study investigated the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute collaboration within the framework of the MMU-ZZU institutional partnership. Based on data collected from the institutional documents, interviews, site visits and news reports, this study examined the experiences and perceptions of the university's stakeholders involved in creating and sustaining this particular Confucius Institute, including stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level both at MMU and ZZU. Using the glonacal agency heuristics framework, the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute collaboration was a result of joint forces of stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level from ZZU and MMU. Stakeholders, no matter what level they are and which institution they are affiliated with, had to navigate through the significant differences between them to develop synergy to be successful. Synergy, including vertical synergy developed among stakeholders within each institution and horizontal synergy developed among stakeholders between institutions, turned out to be critical to the

success of the MMU-ZZU CI. The study concluded that synergy in leadership, organizational contexts, stakeholders' resources, and the synergy in the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute collaboration and the MMU-ZZU institutional partnership, led to the success of the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute collaboration.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Tie Yang and father Wuqin Li, who have sacrificed so much to give me the opportunity to go to college and to pursue graduate study in a foreign country. I can never repay them for what they have taught me – to work hard, to believe in myself, to care for others, to be optimistic, and to be grateful.

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## **Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

The quest for a better understanding of international university collaborations is one of those beguiling challenges in a time characterized by globalization. Even after decades of practices and studies, how to build successful international university collaborations remains a significant challenge. In particular, international university collaborations have grown substantially thanks to the development of information technology, which largely reduces geographic barriers and time constraints. On the other hand, common challenges call for international collaborations between universities, partly because no one single institution is able to provide effective solutions to such issues as climate change, partly because funding agencies, international and domestic, governmental and non-governmental, tend to encourage and allocate increased weight to collaborative proposals.

### **Background**

Higher learning institutions in China and in the United States (U.S.) have followed the trend of international collaboration. Since these two countries assumed normal bilateral relations in 1976, various types of the U.S.-China university collaborative programs have emerged, including branch campus, student and scholar mobility, twinning degree programs, jointly-run academic programs, certificate issuing relationships, and consortia. In the area of student mobility, over 127,000 Chinese studied in American universities in the year 2009-

2010, making China the leading sending country (Institute of International Education, 2010). The number of American students studying in China is increasing, and the goal of the U.S. government is to send 100,000 students to China by 2013 (The White House, 2009). According to the Chinese Ministry of Education (2005b), jointly run programs between Chinese and American universities have grown considerably too, representing 154 programs out of the 712 China-foreign programs, making the U.S. the leading foreign partner.

A new mode of the U.S.-China university collaboration has been carried out by creating the joint Confucius Institute, a recently-emerged, yet fast growing, collaborative program between Chinese and American institutions. The first Confucius Institute was created in 2004 (Chiu, 2010). As of December 2010, 77 Confucius Institutes were created in the U.S. Of them all, 70 are university-to-university partnerships, and the rest are created in partnership with public schools or private organizations (Confucius Institute Online, 2010). This study focuses on a particular joint Confucius Institute between ZZ University (ZZU in short), Chinese university in southwest China, and MM University (MMU in short), an American university in southwest U.S. This particular ZZU-MMU Confucius Institute, referred as ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI, falls into the category of university-to-university partnerships.

### **Problem Statement**

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors influencing the U.S.–China university collaborations through the case of the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI.

Specifically, the study examines the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI in the context of the ZZU-MMU sister institution partnership and attempts to identify factors contributing to the success of the collaboration.

As a major collaborative program, the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI has played an important role in building and advancing the institutional relationship between ZZU and MMU. In April 2006, MMU and ZZU officially signed the sister institution agreement (MMU Insight, 2006). As sister universities, MMU and ZZU “seek to build a comprehensive partnership that engage units across each university. The goal of the sister university structure is to build long-term co-branded programs and partnerships” (MMU-ZZU Sister Institution Partnership Agreement, 2006). MMU has identified five institutions in the world for this type of strategic partnerships, with ZZU as the only one in China.

With the partnership, MMU and ZZU have made significant efforts to identify and create a myriad of collaborative projects. The Confucius Institute appeared as the first and a major opportunity. Immediately after the sister institution agreement was signed, MMU and ZZU started working on the application to establish the Confucius Institute. In March 2007, they completed the proposal and submitted the application. In May 2007, the MMU-ZZU CI was awarded (Hughes, 2007). As the first and major joint academic initiative, the MMU-ZZU CI was perceived as a gateway to the MMU-ZZU collaborative programs related to the Chinese language and culture, including the study abroad

program, student exchange program and visiting scholar program (MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute Supplementary Agreement, 2007).

The MMU-ZZU CI is one of the many collaborative initiatives between MMU and ZZU. Other MMU-ZZU collaborative projects include the English creative writing program, the Sino-U.S. University Design Consortium, the training program designed by the MMU American English and Cultural Program for ZZU faculty, the MMU-ZZU 3+2 bachelor/master program, the joint eco-tourism research project, the MMU-ZZU library collaboration, and the recently launched ZZU-MMU Center for American Culture (MMU Global, 2009).

### **Research Questions**

Embedded within the framework of the sister institution partnership, the MMU-ZZU CI is a collaborative initiative at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level. At the program level, the academic units, faculty and staff involved in the two universities have worked with each other closely to run its operation and design programs and services. At the college level, the academic administrators at the involved colleges in the two universities have helped design, create and support the MMU-ZZU CI. At the institutional level, the central executive offices of the two universities have interacted regularly to advance the MMU-ZZU CI and the comprehensive institutional partnership in general. Within each university, the MMU-ZZU CI represents a synergy between the involved central executive offices, the academic colleges, and the academic programs. The interaction at the program level, at the college level, and at the

institutional level between MMU and ZZU, together with the interconnectedness between academic units and the executive offices within each of them, has jointly shaped the course of the MMU-ZZU CI.

Compared with other MMU-ZZU collaborative initiatives, the MMU-ZZU CI has been growing significantly, both in the number of faculty and students and in the scope of activities and services. Actually, it turns out to be the only MMU-ZZU collaborative program that has expanded and has been funded externally.

Therefore, the study of the MMU-ZZU CI has significant implications to address the overarching question: What is the nature of the U.S.-China university collaboration and what factors contribute to its success? The following research questions are posed to guide this study.

1. How did the key stakeholders experience the entire process of creating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI? What were the challenges and factors during the process?
2. What were the conditions, challenges and success factors that had characterized the MMU-ZZU CI while accounting for the context at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level?
3. How did the key stakeholders work with the partner university? How did they initiate and advance their collaboration?

The study describes the experiences of the key stakeholders involved in the MMU-ZZU CI, both those from MMU and those from ZZU. They include academic managers, faculty and staff working under the MMU-ZZU CI, and

academic administrators and executive leaders highly involved in the MMU-ZZU CI. In addition to learning the perceptions and experiences of these key stakeholders, the study also situates the MMU-ZZU CI in the sister institution partnership and investigates the advantages and disadvantages of the institutional partnership for the MMU-ZZU CI. This is particularly important given the fact that the MMU-ZZU CI represents an integral part of the MMU-ZZU collaborative network. Institutional characteristics, both differences and commonalities, are examined together with contexts at the program and college levels to identify the factors influencing the MMU-ZZU CI.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study draws attention to an international university collaborative program between a developing nation and a developed nation and contributes to knowledge about this type of collaboration. In the case of the MMU-ZZU CI, MMU is a comprehensive research institution at the state of MM in the southwest region of the U.S. ZZU is a premier research university at ZZ province in southwest China. The MMU-ZZU CI represents a collaborative initiative between the U.S. and China, the former a developed country and the latter a developing country. Such collaboration can easily lend itself to the typical collaborative model during which the developed country acts as the knowledge generator and the developing country as the knowledge receiver (Altbach, 2004). Not only does English remain as the language of scholarship, knowledge from developing countries becomes further marginalized, and very often has to be



examined and legitimized by the Western criteria. Similar concerns are shared by Martinez-Vela (2001) in the core-periphery model. The core is composed of industrialized countries with the U.S. taking the lead, and the periphery is represented by developing nations, including China. Interaction between the core and the periphery is frequently characterized by knowledge diffusion from the west to the east. Collaboration tends to reinforce the status quo, widening the gap between the periphery and the core (Beerrens, 2003).

However, the MMU-ZZU CI seems to challenge the stereotype of the west-east university collaboration by diffusing Chinese language and culture from China to the U.S. Under the collaboration, ZZU becomes the knowledge provider and generator. It sends faculty to MMU every year to teach Chinese to American students in Chinese pedagogy. ZZU also donates Chinese books and some instruction materials to the MMU Library and brings Chinese culture and art to the American public through outreach events. As a research university in a developed nation, MMU seems to become the receiver of knowledge under this collaboration. It is interesting to examine the genuine nature of the collaboration and to find out what exactly is happening to the MMU-ZZU CI. Does it really overturn the stereotype of the international collaboration between developed country and developing country? How do MMU and ZZU negotiate the relationship and operate the MMU-ZZU CI?

Secondly, the MMU-ZZU CI is examined as a collaborative program under the framework of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership. More than

collaboration at the program level, the MMU-ZZU CI is also part of the institutional partnership. It is part of the myriad collaborative activities between the two institutions. Situated in such framework, the MMU-ZZU CI serves as a unique collaborative program between the two universities.

Thirdly, the MMU-ZZU CI represents a highly culture-loaded collaborative program and contributes to knowledge about international collaboration in the social sciences. This has significant implications as many studies on international collaboration focus on natural sciences areas or management sciences (Brolley, 2009; Cichocki, 2005; Liu, 2006; Oviedo, 2005.). Given that the mission of Confucius Institutes is to promote the Chinese language and culture, many scholars raise the issue that Confucius Institutes might become excessively associated with the Chinese government's agenda to promote national soft power (Duan, 2008; Starr, 2009; Zhang, 2007; Zong, 2007), a concern hardly present in collaborative programs in natural sciences.

Moreover, the study adds to the existing higher education literature by providing practical knowledge of the operational issues encountered in international university collaborations. The collaborative activities of the Confucius Institute provide a picture of the interaction at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level, as well as the dynamics between academic units and the central executive office within each university. With a focus on China and the U.S., the study has the potential to demonstrate the effectiveness of this model as a means of facilitating internationalization on

university campuses and as an alternative source of funding for internationalization initiatives.

### **Overview of the Methodology**

Given that the focus of the study is to discover the nature of the U.S.-China university collaboration and the factors contributing to its success, the case study method suits the purpose very well. It allows researchers to examine insiders' stories and obtain different perspectives of university administrators, faculty members and staff working at the MMU-ZZU CI, including those affiliated with MMU and those with ZZU. This method positions researchers as “the primary instrument to collect and analyze data” (Merriam, 1998. p. 7), and acknowledges the important role of researchers in data collection, coding and analysis. In addition, as the MMU-ZZU CI was examined in the context of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnerships, the case study method has the advantage to take into account of the context and to address the research questions (Yin, 2002).

Data was collected through multiple avenues, including open ended interviews, participant observations, institutional documents and sites visits. The multiple sources data allows for different approaches to address the complexities of international collaboration building, and provides a range of perspectives from different constituents at MMU and ZZU (Yin, 2002).

Data was analyzed using the glonacal agency heuristic, a framework proposed by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) that captures the changing contexts

to higher education at the local, national and global level. With an emphasis on the interaction between different stakeholders, the framework examines the two-way interaction between the academic units and the executive offices within each individual university, as well as the interaction between MMU and ZZU, both at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level.

### **Delimitations**

Several important limitations exist within the design of this study. While the research included interviews with the MMU-ZZU CI personnel, academic administrators, and institutional administrators involved in the MMU-ZZU CI, it did not include all the integral components to the program, for instance, Hanban, the MM Weekend Chinese School (MMWCS), and the MMU-ZZU CI students. Hanban serves as the funding agency and provides guidelines for the management of the MMU-ZZU CI. MMWCS is the local partner and research site of the MMU-ZZU CI. The MMU-ZZU CI students are the end users of the program. All are closely associated with the MMU-ZZU CI yet are not covered in this study.

Despite the various advantages of the case study methods, it introduces the influence of the researcher into the study. The choice of the case, design of the method, collection and analysis of data are all affected by the experience and perspective of the researcher (Merriam, 1998, p. 20). The interpretation of data and the meanings discovered in the project have to be understood in the particular context in which the study is embedded. First as a student and later as a full time employee of MMU to manage the China initiative, the researcher has lived the

changes of the MMU-ZZU strategic partnerships and has interacted with key players in the process. Such level of involvement in the case has found their impact throughout the entire research project, and has gone beyond the normal research biases.

As a single case study between American and Chinese universities, the nature of this type of study limits the ability to generalize the findings (Yin, 2002). In this case, the focus is the Confucius Institute jointly created by ZZU, a major public research university in China, and MMU, a comprehensive research university in the U.S. The specific characteristics of these two institutions may lead to particular conditions not applicable to other situations. For instance, ZZU has three Confucius Institutes in the U.S., one partnered with MMU, one with another American university, and one with a northwest American university and a local public school district. ZZU may act very differently with each of the three American partners in dealing with issues related to Confucius Institutes, depending on the particular relationship, institutional characteristics and so forth. Therefore, it is not the purpose of this study to give a complete picture of the U.S-China university collaboration, nor is it to present a comprehensive representation of the international university collaboration.

### **Definitions of Terminology**

Several key terms are highly relevant and are frequently used in the study. In order to present a clear and consistent understanding, the following terms are defined.

**Hanban.** The National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, *Hanban* in short, was created in 1987 by the Chinese central government as a non-government and non-profit organization affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education. *Hanban* aims to “make the Chinese language and culture teaching resources and services available to the world, to meeting the demands of overseas Chinese learners to the utmost, and to contributing to the formation of a world of cultural diversity and harmony” (Hanban, 2008).

**The Chinese Bridge Project.** Launched in 2004 by the Chinese central government, *the Chinese Bridge Project* is the major policy initiative administered by Hanban that outlines the strategic plan of promoting the Chinese language and culture throughout the world (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2005).

**The Confucius Institute Project.** The term refers to one of Hanban’s nine strategic initiatives launched in 2004 to promote the Chinese language and culture around the world (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2005).

**Confucius Institutes.** *Confucius Institutes* refer to the collaborative program between Hanban, Chinese partner universities and foreign partners and are located worldwide providing support and resources for learning of the Chinese language and culture (Hanban, 2008b).

**The MMU-ZZU CI.** *The MMU-ZZU CI* is the individual Confucius Institute jointly established in 2007 by Hanban, MM University (MMU in short) and ZZ University (ZZU in short). MMU is a research university at the state of MM in southwest U.S, and ZZU is a research comprehensive university at the ZZ

province in Southwest China. The MMU-ZZU CI is physically located at the MMU historical campus and aims to promote the Chinese language and culture studies in schools as well as throughout the general public in the state of MM (MMU Confucius Institute, n.d.).

**The MM Weekend Chinese School.** The *MM Weekend Chinese School*, MMWCS in short, is the largest weekend Chinese heritage school that offers K-12 Chinese classes for over 500 students from the metropolitan region of the capital of MM (Li, 2005). It is the local partner and research site of the MMU-ZZU CI.

**Internationalization.** The term refers to “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p. 2.)

**International university collaborations.** *International university collaborations* are part of the internationalization efforts of universities and refer to programs or process that requires joint efforts from the partner universities (Chan, 2004). The term international university collaborations is used interchangeably with international university relationships or international university cooperation.

**The glonacal agency heuristic.** The phrase refers to the framework proposed by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) that highlights the simultaneous, two-way interaction of global, national and local forces and acknowledges the

self-determining role of individual agencies or organizations in their path of internationalization.

**Strategic partnerships.** *Strategic partnerships* represent “comprehensive alliances that provide vital linkages to universities, organizations, and communities in a few selected parts of the world. Such alliances provide platforms for deep, cumulative learning, research, and engagement, such that new projects build on previous ones, students encounter these partners in a variety of courses and co-curricular activities, and a broad spectrum of faculty collaborate across national boundaries” (Sutton, 2010). *Strategic partnerships* are one type of international university collaborations.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

The dissertation was developed in five chapters. Chapter one introduced the research questions and set the stage for the discussion of U.S.-China university collaborations. Chapter two presented the global agency heuristic theory that highlighted the two-way interaction between multiple stakeholders and the changing contexts of higher education in China and the U.S. Because the literature on bi-national university collaborations between the U.S. and China was very limited, Chapter two reviewed the existing literature on international university collaborations in general and detailed the background of this study. Chapter three presented the scope of this research project and provided the research design and methodology. Chapter four analyzed the institutional contexts and internationalization strategies at MMU and ZZU. Chapter five responded to



the research questions, presented the findings of the study, and discussed the implications of the study to the bi-national university cooperation between China and the U.S.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

Universities are increasingly acting as global agents and at the same time as local actors. In addition to serving the local community, they have been accommodating the needs of a larger community at the national and the global levels. The local and international dimensions co-exist and jointly leverage the conditions at local, national, and global level to advance institutional development. Universities are indeed global as well as local, though the magnitude of internationalization varies significantly from institution to institution and from department to department within an institution.

This chapter begins by presenting the glonacal agency heuristic, a theory addressing the co-existence of global, national and local dimensions. More importantly, the glonacal agency heuristic highlights the simultaneous two-way interaction between these dimensions that jointly define the course of internationalization of an organization. Using this framework, the chapter examines the internationalization of higher education in the global, national, and local contexts in China and the U.S. with a focus on the institutional level. The last part of the chapter reviews the literature on international university collaborations that provides guidelines for data collection and analysis.

### **The Glonacal Agency Heuristic**

Higher learning institutions have become increasingly international throughout research, teaching and learning, and community services. With regard

to research, funding is no longer confined to national boundary. Overseas outposts of traditional national funding agencies, such as the United States National Science Foundation office at Beijing, have expanded funding sources across borders; Trans-regional agencies, such as the Asian Development Bank, have emerged as new funding sources. Research itself has become increasingly international. The nature of grand challenges, including climate change or public health, calls for collaborative efforts across disciplines and national boundaries. Research achievements are circulated worldwide through international journals and conferences. For teaching and learning, the demand for educating global citizens has fostered integration of international curriculum and international experiential learning, including study abroad programs, distance learning, and mobility of international students and scholars. For community services, the traditional definition of community is largely modified, expanding community from local to national and global level. Under such contexts, higher learning institutions not only accommodate the needs of local community, but also incorporate the national and global demands.

The interwoven forces of global, national and local dimensions have jointly shaped the course of internationalization at individual institutions. The two-way impact between the global, national and local forces is illustrated by the glonacal agency heuristic theory in the next section, which details the definition, stakeholders, rationales, success factors and challenges of the framework. (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

**Definition.** To address the synergy of global, national and institutional forces, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) propose the glonacal agency heuristic theory. The term glonacal is coined by three words including “global, national and local, with the purpose to point to the co-existing of their presence” (p. 289). The framework emphasizes the simultaneous significance of global, national and local forces and acknowledges the self-determining power of individual universities. The interaction between globalization and localization is a two-way process. Globalization changes local cultures and meanwhile it is reshaped and defined by them (Currie, DeAngelis, De Boer, Huisman, and Lacotte, 2003).

More importantly, the term glonacal shall not be taken literally and does not necessarily refer to global, national and local. Rather, it emphasizes stakeholders at the multiple layers and can be used to look at different systems, institutions, or programs. The number of layers can change depending on the issue and settings in question, which range from individual departments to multinational organizations. For instance, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) not only discussed using the glonacal agency heuristic to study individual higher learning intuitions, but also demonstrated its application to study programs and discipline areas.

Jones (2008) went further and noted that studies on higher education primarily focused on the institution as the unit of analysis. However, a university is rather a complex organization with multiple colleges, schools, and programs. How each academic college or program engages globally differs from another.

“the independence of discipline-based departments in the context of increasingly large comprehensive universities was creating a situation where component parts of the institution could function without interacting with other component parts” (Kerr, as cited in Jones, 2008, p. 462 ). It is of great significance to look into sub-units of universities, including individual colleges, programs, and offices.

This study focused on the MMU-ZZU CI, a collaborative program between MMU and ZZU that involves stakeholders at all levels. Here *glonacal* was interpreted as the program level, the college level, and at the institutional level. The stakeholders at these three levels interacted with one another and jointly shaped the course of the MMU-ZZU CI.

The term *agency* refers to “an entity or organization that could exist at the global, national, or local level” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 289), be it an international organization like the World Bank or a department unit in a university. More importantly, the term *agency* “refers to the ability of people individually and collectively to take action at global, national or local levels” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 289). Agencies fundamentally refer to stakeholders at each level that take action proactively rather than simply respond. They constantly conduct analysis and consciously make informed decisions. In this study, agencies referred to administrative and academic units involved in creating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI, no matter whether they were from MMU or ZZU, or whether they were units at the program level, at the college

level, or at the institutional level. Each had choices and made decisions how and to what degree they would like to be engaged in the MMU-ZZU CI.

The heuristic “fosters exploration and analysis of types and patterns of influence and activity, reconceptualizes social relations and actions globally, nationally and locally ..... encourages a focus on specific organizations and collective action rather than overgeneralized conceptions of polities and states, economics and markets, or higher education systems and institutions” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 290). Therefore, the glonacal agency heuristic conceptualizes multiple levels and multiple agencies and attaches importance to the interaction between multiple agencies at the same levels and interaction between the different levels. When applied to this study on the MMU-ZZU CI, the use of the heuristic allowed the analysis of the activities and influences of the stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level.

To illustrate the glonacal agency heuristic, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) proposes four dimensions for the framework, including reciprocity, strength, layers and conditions, and sphere. The next section describes each of the four dimensions in more details and examines how they are applied in international university collaborations.

***Reciprocity.*** The first dimension is *reciprocity*, which refers to the interconnections between the different stakeholders and layers (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). They highlight reciprocity in two ways. One focuses on the

influence between global, national and local levels; the other connection is through lines of influence between agencies within one single level. Thus, the framework dismisses the defining power of any one single force or single agency. Those who globalize, while exercising their influence on those who are globalised, simultaneously are defined by the other during the process.

For international university collaborations, the reciprocity is seen in two ways. One way is vertical along departmental, institutional and national levels within one country; the other way is horizontal between the partner universities at institutional, college and departmental levels. At the institutional level, the universities involved in the collaboration are interacting with each other. The agencies at this level mostly refer to the executive offices at the central administration, such as the office of the president, the provost office, or the international office. At the college level, the stakeholders usually are represented by the dean's office of individual academic colleges or schools. At the program level, the departments involved in a specific collaboration program work closely with each other to operate and sustain the collaboration. Agencies at this level include the director's office or the department unit.

***Strength.*** Despite the reciprocity, the influence and connections do not necessarily demonstrate the same magnitude along every direction. Links between levels may be stronger or weaker, more direct or indirect. Hence, the dimension *strength* is introduced to refer to the “magnitude and directness of the activity and influences as well as the resources available to agencies and agents” (Marginson

& Rhoades, 2002, p. 292). The scale of influence varies and goes uneven along the different directions. In cases where internationalization is driven by bottom-up initiatives at the university, local forces such as faculty and departments at the university are playing a larger role in the institutional decision making. In cases where internationalization is dominated by top-down initiatives at the university, central executive offices largely determine the agenda of internationalization (Oleksiyenko, 2008).

In the realm of international university collaborations, the strength of partner universities differs. At the institutional level the amount of resources and the strategy to allocate the resources impact the strength substantially. For a university with large number of international collaborators, the resources might be spread thin among its institutional network of international activities; whereas for a university committed to comprehensive collaboration with very few selective strategic partners, its resources can be focused and strong, creating collaborative programs with good quality and quantity. A university that perceives internationalization as a critical institutional strategy tends to group the resources to support international activities, but a university who undervalues internationalization is unlikely to do so.

The strength of stakeholders varies from one to another. For instance, the stakeholders at the institutional level, mostly the central administrative offices on campus, can be powerful. However, they do not enjoy the strong academic resources as the stakeholders do at the college level or at the program level. In



addition, while stakeholders interact with each other, one stakeholder might exercise more influence on the other. It is critical to determine the basis of strength in terms of the financial, academic, and staff resources of a stakeholder (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 292).

***Layers and conditions.*** The third dimension *layers and conditions* focuses on the historical heritage and current circumstance of a particular university (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 292). The historical legacy and current assets have been deeply embedded in the culture and structure of the university. Universities “have long histories shaped through centuries of sedimentation of ideas, structures, resources and practices..... their influences and activity is layered on top of powerful and resilient structures and commitments. It is also contingent upon and shaped by a range of current structural conditions” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 293). Hence, the historical legacy and current assets of a university play a critical role in determining institutional internationalization strategies and programs.

For international university collaborations, the layers and conditions of partner institutions largely define the nature of the relationship. What is the internationalization agenda of the institution and where does it come from? What heritage or resources are supporting or hindering international activities? What are the dynamics between academic programs and the central administrative offices within one institution? These characteristics of a partner university determine its internationalization strategy. Partners have to understand themselves profoundly,

both strengths and weaknesses, to design an appropriate path of internationalization. For instance, research intensive universities lend themselves to internationalization compared with other non-profit higher learning institutions (Marginson & Sawire, 2006). The same mechanism is applicable to colleges and departments involved in the collaborations.

*Spheres.* Each agency has its *sphere*, a defined domain where “geographic and functional scope of activity and influence” takes place (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 293). For instance, the major activities of the Asian Development Bank focus on the region of Asia and have much less influence in America or Europe. In comparison, the North American Free Trade Agreement refers to a trilateral trade block involving Canada, Mexico and the United States (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). In terms of the functional scope of activity, each agent demonstrates considerable difference from another. The World Bank exercises its influence mostly through the economic means, including loans and other financial assistance to development countries (Torres & Rhoads, 2006); the Chinese Ministry of Education mostly employs policies, together with special project funding, to influence individual universities (Lu & Chen, 2004).

For international university collaborations, partners’ spheres can demonstrate substantial difference regarding the scope of functions. In developing countries, internationalization of universities tends to be inward-looking and focuses activities that occur on campus, such as internationalizing the curriculum and creating English-speaking environment in non-English speaking countries

(Chan & Dimmock, 2008). The geographic scope varies considerably too. When studying the internationalization of U.S. universities, Whitaker (2004) indicates that Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, London and Melbourne emerge as the top five locations for U.S. study abroad activities.

**Stakeholders.** *Stakeholders*, referred to as agencies by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) in the glonacal agency heuristic, depend on the focus and level of analysis. The term glonacal doesn't have to refer to only global, national and local literally. Rather, the levels can go further and the number of levels can change; so do the stakeholders.

The focus of a study determines who are the most appropriate and relevant stakeholders. In the domain of international university collaboration, the main level could be the partners at the institutional dimension; the next level could be the academic colleges within each of the partner institutions, and the levels can go further to individual faculty. The glonacal agency heuristic emphasizes the interactions of these levels and the mutual defining power of agencies, but leaves it to the researcher to define and decide the levels under study. In studying internationalization of the University of Toronto, Jones (2008) strongly argues that the institutional level analysis is too generic in studying the internationalization of universities, research universities in particular, because the colleges and degree programs within one single university present a diverse rather than consistent picture of internationalization.

**Rationales.** Due to the multiple levels and agencies involved in the glonacal agency heuristic, rationales have to be examined in the context of each individual agency at each level. It is not uncommon that different agencies may decide to take the same action for completely different reasons. For instance, in order to improve quality and education access, the Chinese government encourages jointly run programs between Australian universities and Chinese universities. Australian universities are happy to do so, but for a different reason. They are motivated primarily because the financial returns in recruiting and enrolling Chinese students. Actually, education services in Australia rank as the third largest export category earner for the year 2007-2008 (Access Economics Pty Limited, 2009). On the other hand, different universities can be attracted to each other for the same reasons. In Jie's (2010) study on a collaborative joint Executive Master of Business Administration program between an American university and a Chinese university, the two universities, despite the numerous discrepancies between these them, are both driven by the branding, revenue generation and faculty development.

**Success factors.** Success has to be defined along the goals of the agency, as each agency has different goals and priority levels among these goals vary. A well-defined goal provides direction with which the agency can align its resources, thus maximizing its negotiation power (de wit, 2002). When multiple agencies come into interaction, how to navigate through the complicated interconnectedness poses a significant challenge. Collaborations turn out to be

effective strategies when the involved agencies identify a shared goal and leverage the strength of each other. Synergy thus is achieved when different agencies work towards shared interests over their self-interests, a critical factor to successful international university collaboration (Jie, 2010). In addition, success is interpreted differently. A particular collaborative program may be a great success for one partner yet a disaster to the other.

**Challenges.** Challenges are always to be found on the other side of success factors. When multiple agencies interplay with each other, it is difficult enough to identify a shared goal (Holly, 2010). Even if a shared goal is identified, how to reach the goal is an overwhelming task. Numerous issues can arise in the process of implementation (Bozeman, 2009). For international university collaborations, partners differ from each other considerably regarding organization structures, campus cultures, institutional goals, historical heritages and often language barriers. There are explicit as well as subtle differences between their interpretations regarding expectations and success.

The glonacal agency heuristic provides an effective framework to analyze international university collaborations. With a focus on the “dimensions and mechanisms of global influence and activity by local agents such as universities, programs and faculty” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 303), the glonacal agency heuristic argues that universities and their subunits departments shall be perceived as international agents, thus sharpening the significance of the local and regional.

**Summary.** The four dimensions - reciprocity, strength, layers and conditions, and sphere - define the glonacal agency heuristic. They are also employed to analyze the MMU-ZZU CI, a joint program that involves significant interaction at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level. At MMU, the central administration offices involved are the Office of the President and the Vice President Office of Global Engagement. At the college level, the School of International Studies is the major player, with some supplementary support of the MMU College of Education. At the program level, the Chinese Department is the key stakeholder with support from the Center for Asian Research. At ZZU, the central administration offices involved are represented by the Office of the President, the Vice President Office for International Affairs and the International Office. The School of Overseas Education is the main player at the college level. The Center for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language is the primary stakeholder at the program level.

In order to provide a context for the discussion on international university collaborations, the next section delineates the glonacal contexts of higher education and the internationalization trends in China and the U.S. Although the glonacal agency heuristic emphasizes the two-way influence between the three levels, this section intends to present the forces at each level rather than examines the interaction. Particular attention is given to the institutional level as the subject of this study is the MMU-ZZU CI.

## **A Glonacal Agency Heuristic Perspective: Higher Education in China and the U.S.**

**The Global Level.** Neoliberalism became the dominant paradigm of globalization since the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Yang, 2003). As an economic theory, neoliberalism strongly advocates deregulation and privatization and maximizes the role of the market in determining social, economic and political discourse. The increased popularity of neoliberalism has impacted higher education in multiple ways. First of all, it has expanded a global higher education market where universities are benchmarking themselves on a global scale (Huang, 2003). The increased role of the market proposes cost-benefit analysis and shifts knowledge from a public good to private good (Rhoades, & Slaughter, 2006). Such changes have introduced market mechanisms in institutional activities, encouraging institutions to compete for research funding and international students. In addition, new management and governance structure are emerging at universities. The former finds its practice in strengthened executive power at the cost of reduced collegiate power; the latter drives academic capitalism by creating new organizational units engaging in market or market like activities, such as the technology transfer office, university foundations (Clark, 1998).

The dominance of neoliberalism and the resulting changing contexts to higher education are partially attributed to the efforts of regional and cross-national agencies, for instance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank, and the European Union. These agencies strongly

advocate neoliberalism and play a critical role in introducing and implementing neoliberal economies in developing countries, through funding mechanisms, economic power or political power respectively (Torres & Rhoads, 2006).

**The National Level.** At the national level, a country or government tends to be very responsive to globalization trends and the neoliberal agenda embedded within (Yonexawa, 2009). It is the government ministries and offices of higher education that mediate the global trends to fit their national agenda. These ministries and offices serve as agencies that interact upward with transnational agencies at the global level and downwards with individual universities at institutional level. Both in China and in the U.S., the national governments strongly advocate academic capitalism (Pan, 2009). They employ national legislatures and policies as a tool to push universities to integrate into the new economy underpinned by neoliberalism. In particular, the Chinese government, in order to become internationally competitive, has initiated key projects to drive reform processes, and established priorities to focus investment on a few selected universities (Yang, 2003).

Under such contexts, significant changes have taken place to higher education in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the U.S. these changes are demonstrated in the federal and institutional policies. Interconnections between state, higher education, and market organizations have changed to allow bigger role of the market. The practices of faculty, managerial professionals and students become more market-like as well (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2006; Currie,



1998.). In China, the central government has launched a series of reforms to higher education. In 1992, the Ministry of Education launched the policy “Key points on increasing university autonomy”; in 1993, universities were required to diversify funding sources by generating revenues from university enterprises, society endowment, and tuition income. Tuition was not collected until 1994 by the first pilot 37 universities and expanded to all universities in five years (Lu & Chen, 2004).

**The Institutional Level.** The changes to higher education are captured by the academic capitalism theory, which explains the shift from public good regime to private good regime and illustrates the national policies as well as institutions’ initiative to help universities’ integration into the new economy (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). Acknowledging the push by state legislators and funding patterns, academic capitalism highlights individual universities’ consciousness to respond to the economy. As places to generate, distribute and apply knowledge, universities now perceive knowledge as their core product. They use this core product to leverage academic capitalism as a strategy to develop capacity and to negotiate with markets and governments, in hope of obtaining an advantageous position in the new economy. University stakeholders, including academic managers, faculty, and presidents, are initiating and actively pursuing academic capitalism rather than being forced to do so (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Academic capitalism represents a positive attitude towards universities’ increased engagement in market or market-oriented activities. However, academic

capitalism is fundamentally a means to an end (Pan, 2009). The ultimate purpose is to improve universities' position in the new economy and to increase the institutional autonomy. For instance, academic capitalism brings in additional revenues and is expected to give universities more flexibility to defend and advance teaching and research as a public good. In addition, academic capitalism is not presented as the only means to integrate into the new economy. Alternative processes are available, be it the community service university in South Africa or the socially committed university in Latin American that focuses on social inequality (Rhoades and Slaughter, 2006).

Academic capitalism is echoed by enterprising universities that examine university governance transformations in response to the vast expansion of market or market-like activities on campus. Clark (1998) positions his study in the context of the imbalance between increasing demands on universities and their limited capacity to respond, and proposes enterprising university as a solution to the mismatch. According to Clark (1998), entrepreneurial is perceived as “a characteristic of social systems; that is, of entire universities and their internal departments, research centers, faculties, and schools” (p. 4) and the enterprising university “seeks to work out a substantial shift in organizational character so as to arrive at a more promising posture” (p. 4). With a focus on governance and organization, he conducted a case study on five individual enterprising universities in Europe and identified five common elements of successful institutional transformation, including:

- a strengthened steering core
- an expanded developmental periphery
- a diversified funding base
- a stimulated academic heartland
- an integrated entrepreneurial culture

Marginson and Considine (2000), through the lens of governance and institutional culture, examined emerging enterprising universities in Australia. Based on interviews with senior leadership from 17 Australian universities, they concluded that all Australia universities were enterprising, demonstrated by varying degree of institutional reinvention, adoption of practices common in business enterprise, and declining power of the traditional academic disciplines. Although their main focus was to describe the major transformation of Australian universities, they indeed noticed the problem of enterprising universities. They caution that the leadership becomes primarily outward-looking, responding to external demands at the expense of neglecting internal needs. In addition, academic cultures are in the danger of being corrupted with reduced voice of academic disciplines and increased focus on the applied knowledge (Marginson & Considine, 2000). The elements that constitute a university, including academic freedom and knowledge generation and discovery, are on decline, posing threat to identity of universities (Pan, 2009).

This section provides a general description of the changing contexts to higher education in China and the U.S. at the global, national and institutional

level, and introduces the setting for internationalization activities of universities. The next section will look into universities and examine internationalization at the institutional level, with a focus on international university collaborations.

### **Internationalization**

The term *internationalization* has been used very frequently yet inconsistently. Chan and Dimmock (2008) highlight its amorphous nature. According to them, internationalization of higher education can be defined along multiple approaches depending on the national and institutional contexts. The activity approach refers to the scope and types of activities; the competency approach focuses on capacity building; the purpose approach describes the objectives of the institution; the process approach defines internationalization as an ongoing process rather than activities within a timeframe.

De Wit (1999) criticizes the activity approach and indicates that it reduces internationalization to activities with beginning and end and dismisses the strategic value of internationalization. He defines internationalization as a process that integrates “an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution” (p. 1).

Knight (2004) reviews the evolving definition of internationalization, ranging from the activity approach in 1980s, the process approach in 1990s, and the organization approach at the beginning of this century. She defines internationalization as the “process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary

education” (p. 2). This definition has become commonly used because it is generic enough to be applicable to diverse education providers and to be meaningful for individual institutions as well as higher education systems. It is also adopted by this study when referring to internationalization.

By this definition, Knight (2004) highlights internationalization as a process, not an activity. Internationalization doesn't have a beginning or an end. Rather, it is ongoing and continuing effort. Also, internationalization includes local and international elements and connotes a two-way interaction between the two (Altbach & Knight, 2007). It is a process that mixes various cultures and introduces diversification in cultural and educational spheres (Yang, 2003). Moreover, it addresses internationalization as an institutional strategy and acknowledges the role of human agency in universities to proactively design various activities within the larger picture of internationalization. Diverse stakeholder groups, including university executives, academic managers, faculty and students, have to be taken into account (De Wit, 1999).

In her study on the rationale of internationalization, Knight (2004) argues that rationales have to be discussed at the national and the institutional level separately, although the rationales at the national level and at the institutional level can overlap. According to her, internationalization at the national level and the institutional level are driven by the existing four rationales, including the social and cultural rationale, the political rationale, the economic rationale and the academic rationale. More importantly, new rationales are playing a more

important role. At the national level, five emerging rationales are identified, including human resources development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, nation building and social and culture development. At the institutional level, she highlights five emerging rationales that bear greater consequence. They are international profile and reputation, student and staff development, income generation, research and knowledge production, and strategic alliances.

Hence, internationalization is a process, but it can refer to the various activities initiated or supported by different stakeholder groups for particular purposes. The types of activities depend on the national and institutional contexts and key stakeholders. Traditionally student and staff mobility programs have dominated activities of internationalization, but new forms of activities, including international university collaborations, international branch campuses, and development of transnational university networks are gaining increased popularity (Damme, 2001). International university collaborations, the focus of this study, will be discussed in details in the next section.

### **International University Collaborations**

As the focus of this study, the MMU-ZZU CI serves as part of the internationalization efforts at MMU and ZZU and represents an international collaboration between Chinese and American universities. This section examines the literature on international university collaborations, which helps understand the MMU-ZZU CI and provides guidance to interview questions for the data collection and analysis.

Although MMU-ZZU CI involves a Chinese university and an American university, this section discusses international university collaborations in general, in part because the literature on the U.S.-China university collaborations is rather limited, in part because international university collaborations share common characteristics regardless which countries are involved. In addition, international university collaborations are part of the internationalization efforts on campus and benefit from studies on the general topic of internationalization. The type of universities under the review focuses on the non-profit four-year institutions. Those for-profit programs or international collaborative programs between corporations are not included.

Reflecting back to the research question to identify the conditions, challenges and success factors that characterize the MMU-ZZU CI, the issue of international university collaborations has been examined through the following themes: definitions, rationales, stakeholders, success factors and challenges. The review will also serve as a guide to design interview questions for the data collection and analysis.

**Definitions.** While international collaborations have become a critical part of internationalization for universities, the degree and scope of collaborative activities vary significantly. Each individual university usually has multiple international partners and the magnitude of collaboration differs from one partner to another. It ranges from the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding

(MOU) to comprehensive collaborative activities between students, faculty and administrators.

Chan (2004) acknowledges the difficulty in defining international university collaborations. To provide a working definition, she approaches the issue by concentrating on the most common activities of international university collaborations, including student and staff mobility, academic exchange, curriculum development, research collaboration, joint programs and centers and branch campus. According to her, international university collaborations refer to programs and process that requires joint efforts from the partner universities. Her definition of international university collaborations will be used in this study, and international university collaborations will be used in exchangeable with international university cooperation.

Strategic partnerships have emerged recently as highly dynamic, if not the most dynamic, international university collaborations, which is the kind of relationship MMU and ZZU have been pursuing. Under a strategic partnership, the partner universities are committed to comprehensive collaboration at all levels across campuses. According to Sutton (2010), strategic partnership represents “comprehensive alliances that provide vital linkages to universities, organizations, and communities in a few selected parts of the world. Such alliances provide platforms for deep, cumulative learning, research, and engagement, such that new projects build on previous ones, students encounter these partners in a variety of courses and co-curricular activities, and a broad spectrum of faculty collaborate



across national boundaries”. Hence, strategic partnerships demonstrate multiple in-depth collaborative programs across disciplines between students, faculty and administrators. Under such frameworks, partnerships move to the core of campus internationalization. Teaching, research and services are all framed in dynamic and interactive network of exchange, engagement and discovery with the strategic partner.

Strategic partnerships have to be mutually driven, goal-oriented and resource-sharing. Partnerships are endorsed by executive leaders of the partner universities and gain support from the academic heartland, faculty and academic leaders. Strategic partnerships frequently require a specific organization unit devoted to coordinating collaborative initiatives and receive financial support from diverse resources, including partner institutions, governmental or private funding agencies (Oleksiyenko, 2008). Strategic partnerships can be considerably resilient, yet extremely demanding. Partnerships require continued commitment from partners regarding time, resources and staff. Once established, they enable the partner institutions to create a critical mass of collaborative projects and a critical mass of linkage personnel. The myriad of projects feed on each other and breed new opportunities. The ever-increasing connections between faculty and academic managers help identify new opportunities and keep advancing the collaboration (Sutton, 2010).

**Stakeholders.** Cichocki (2005) examined the key stakeholders of the American education overseas from a historical perspective. Her findings show

that international collaborations in the U.S. were primarily advanced by missionary activities in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, followed by philanthropists between the two world wars. The U.S. government took over the major responsibility during the post-war era. Until the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the responsibilities largely shifted to individual universities.

In contrast, the Chinese government has always been and will continue to be the major driver for higher education internationalization. The key ministerial office involved is the Chinese Ministry of Education, which has launched a series of major higher education reforms in the past two decades to encourage internationalization of higher education. Some are academic-focused and are designed to advance the Chinese higher education portfolio in the world, such as the Project 211 and Project 985. Both intend to infuse generous funding to a selected number of Chinese universities with the purpose of upgrading them into world class universities (Yang, 2003). Some reforms are driven by economic rationale and aim to develop professionals and staff for national human capital and national economic development (Zhang, 2003). Recently the Chinese government has started to pay tremendous attention to social and cultural development, which is represented by the various projects launched by Hanban.

Chinese universities are extremely responsive to take the advantage of the government incentives. In addition, they have made significant efforts at the institutional level to proactively pursue international university collaborations. Most Chinese universities, if not all, have an international office devoted to

nurturing and coordinating international initiatives. The joint efforts by the Chinese government and by Chinese universities have pushed internationalization to an unprecedented level.

However, international university collaborations are often inflicted with the dichotomy of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach at the institutional level. The top-down approach is primarily driven by executive administrators, who allocate resources for a focused and proactive international strategy of the entire institution. Instead of specific disciplines, the top-down approach attempts to advance the overall portfolio of the entire university in terms of prestige, branding and institutional ranking (Amey, 2010). It often comes with strong financial resources to incentivize faculty and students and is coordinated through a central organization unit to advocate and push internationalization on campus. The top-down approach works effectively in universities with centralized governance, but encounters tremendous resistance in decentralized universities and frequently ends up with failure (Oleksiyenko, 2008).

It is too early to applaud the success of the bottom-up approach, which is driven by faculty at the discipline level. With expertise in their academic area, faculty has advantage in identifying appropriate partners throughout their network and initial collaborations development frequently occur on the faculty level. However, sustainable collaborations require the support of the administrative infrastructures (Holly, 2010). From the institutional point of view, this kind of individual-initiated collaboration is largely opportunistic and ad-hoc and lack of

resources is always a significant concern. Many of such collaborations are initiated by faculty champions and are primarily associated with these key individual. Broadening participation and ownership of the collaboration requires moving beyond the individual level to organizational partnerships (Amey, 2010).

The top-down and bottom-up synergy is the ideal approach to follow and combines the advantages of both to create successful international collaborations (Oleksiyenko, 2008). It is at this point that agency has a critical role to play. For executive administrators, identification of institutional collaborations may build on existing faculty initiatives; for faculty, it always benefits to utilize the administrative structure and resources to serve disciplined-based international collaborations and to maximize the outcome. It is not surprising that successful collaborations may not be at the individual faculty level, but rather at the programmatic level where individual researches act as key drivers in synergy with institutional priorities.

**Rationales.** The rationales to enter international collaboration vary. Some universities collaborate for solutions. As universities suffer from reduced government funding, they seek international collaboration for alternative revenue; for instance, tuition dollar from international student enrollment and joint research funding from international agencies (Clark, 1998).

Others collaborate for excellence (Biddle, 2002; Chan, 2004; Denman, 2002; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002.). Universities start to create international collaborations to expand their market share, to consolidate costs by sharing

resources, to seek financial benefits, and to improve institutional status in the global arena. Essentially, international university collaborations are perceived as a strategy to build capacity and to strengthen competitiveness.

This is particularly true for second-tier universities that are eager to move up in the higher education hierarchy. For them, banding together turns out to be an effective strategy to bypass the stratification system at home (Chan, 2004). In comparison, first-tier universities are long established, and the massive research capacity and political networks protect them from populist incursions and the designation of prestige attached to them. They are, as a result, conservative and cautious in taking international entrepreneurial initiatives (Oleksiyenko, 2008). The second-tier universities have solid yet inadequate capacity to challenge the top ones; they are hesitant to follow the established path of the first-tier institutions, realizing imitation is never going to help them win the race. Rather, they choose to be flexible, innovative and adventurous. International collaborations turn out to be a shortcut, a promising strategy to bring them ahead of their peers and to distinguish themselves among the crowd.

For the rest of the universities, they collaborate to collaborate, which is rather a passive response to globalization. They engage in collaboration with overseas universities, partly because common challenges and complex research questions call for collaborative efforts (De wit, 2002), and partly because the global economy requires workforce with global competencies. Alone or together,

these three rationales have made international university collaboration increasingly popular.

**Success factors.** The commonly identified success factors to international university collaborations include shared goals underpinned by mutual values and trust among key people. These elements together create the term *social glue* that holds organizations and individuals together for sustainable relationships (Dhillon, 2005). Bozeman (2009) points to a similar term *facilitative condition* that refers to the holistic scenario critical to success, including equality and mutuality, partner characteristics, partner relationships, finance, strategies and staffing.

Anderson (1999) presents effective leadership, adequate resources and sound collaborations as critical factors to successful international cooperation. At the leadership level, the executive administrators shall clearly articulate a support message throughout campus. It not only helps put the collaboration into the agenda of academic and administrative units, but also helps market the opportunities brought by international collaboration to students, the customers and beneficiaries of the collaboration. In addition, resources are critical, particularly financial resources to establish and operate the relationship. Finally, quality of the collaborations is essential, and partners have to be prepared to terminate poor quality programs when necessary.

Beerkens and Derwender (2007) focus on the conditions of the partners and indicate that partners have to demonstrate sufficient complementarity and

sufficient compatibility to be successful. Complementarity means that the partners bring new resources that can be accessed and utilized by the other. The resources can be physical, such as research facilities or instructional materials, as well as symbolic, such as market entry and co-branding. Compatibility means that partners shall find good match with each other. They shall identify common grounds regarding the objectives of the collaboration and values.

Chan (2004) agrees that complementarity is as important as commonality for successful collaboration. She also emphasizes the importance of realistic objectives, key linkage personnel, projects addressing interests of the institutions and the subunits, commitment on time and resources and good communications. In terms of organization strategies, she agrees with Van Ginkel (1998) that international collaborations have to be accommodated by organization unit with “coordinating capacity to link the outside network with the inside matrix, the environment with the invironment (p. 40).

In the study on the collaborations between Australian universities and their offshore partners, Heffernan and Poole (2005) attach significant importance to the selection of partners, indicating that partners shall share similar goals and academic structure. They also acknowledge the importance of trust, adequate resource, well-established working protocols, explicit quality assurance mechanism and appropriate decision-making models.

**Challenges.** The literature does not present a substantial discussion of challenges separate from the success factors. Absence of success factors are

marked as the challenges. For instance, adequate resources help to make international university collaborations successful while lack of resources poses significant challenges.

Anderson (2002) specifically examines the importance of evaluating collaborative opportunities in the first place. In some cases universities jump on collaborations simply because the availability of funding. Not surprising, this kind of collaboration collapses as soon as funds are gone (Chan, 2004).

Heffernan and Poole (2004) highlight the life-cycle of collaborations. According to them, the absence of trust, commitment, and effective communication leads to decline of relationships, particularly at the early stage of collaboration building.

In a similar way, Brolley (2009) approaches the issue from the perspective of collaboration life-cycle. As collaborations are dynamic and changing, adherence to originally designed objectives and programs may lead to the decline of the relationship. In his study on the joint engineering program between a Canadian university and a Malaysian university, he states that the partner universities have to revisit their relationships regularly to confirm and renew interest and commitment. Otherwise, partners become unaware of the changes, thus unable to make adjustment.

Oviedo (2005) specifically elaborates the importance of supportive mechanism for international collaborations. Acknowledging the critical role of linkage personnel, she points out that excessive reliance on individuals makes



collaborations vulnerable, and a mechanism with established structure is instead preferred. More importantly, the international collaboration structure has to be compatible with the internal administrative and academic structure of the partner intuitions.

### **Hanban and the MMU-ZZU CI**

The literature review has identified various factors contributing to the success of international university collaborations and provides guidelines of the interview questions for data collection and analysis. To present a clear picture of the MMU-ZZU CI, the next section provides an overview of the key organizations related to Confucius Institutes and the MMU-ZZU CI. Among them, Hanban is the funding agency. The Confucius Institute Project refers to one of Hanban's nine strategic initiatives to promote the Chinese language and culture. Confucius Institutes refer to the collaborative program between Hanban, Chinese partner universities and foreign partners are located worldwide. The MMU-ZZU CI, also known as the MMU-ZZU CI due to its physical presence at the MMU campus, is part of a global network of Confucius Institutes dedicated to the understanding of the Chinese language and culture around the world.

**Hanban.** As early as 1987, the Chinese government established the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, Hanban in short, as a non-governmental and non-profit organization affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education. Hanban is “committed to making the Chinese language and culture teaching resources and services available to the world, to meeting the

demands of overseas Chinese learners to the utmost, to contributing to the formation of a world of cultural diversity and harmony” (Hanban, 2008). It is the only non-government agency that receives profound support from the Chinese government. As a foundation with intimate relationships with the Chinese government, it acts as the highest authority to plan, manage, and sponsor various initiatives to promote the Chinese language and culture worldwide.

**The Confucius Institute Project.** The Confucius Institute Project is one of the nine strategic initiatives under Hanban. In 2002, the Chinese government, by referring to the experiences of other nations in spreading their language and culture, such as the British Council, the Goethe Institute and the France Franchise, began to plan the establishment of overseas institutions to promote the Chinese language and culture (Guo, 2007). After several rounds of discussion, the State Council agreed to adopt the proposal of the State Councilor Zhili Chen to name it “the Confucius Institute” after Confucius, the 5<sup>th</sup> century Chinese thinker, educator, and philosopher whose teaching and philosophy has deeply influenced the shaped the East Asian, and China in particular (Ma, 2007).

The Confucius Institute Project serves as a significant avenue of promoting Chinese language learning and teaching overseas. It fulfills its objectives by working together with the other strategic initiatives of Hanban. They include the U.S.-China E-language Learning Program, the Chinese language instructional materials development and publication, the Chinese language teaching workforce development, Centers for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign

languages in Chinese universities, the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK), the world Chinese conference, the Aid Program for Chinese library overseas, and the development of teaching Chinese as a foreign language as an independent intellectual discipline (The Chinese Ministry of Education, 2005a).

*Confucius Institutes.* While the Confucius Institute Project refers to a strategic initiative of Hanban to promote the Chinese language and culture, Confucius Institutes refer to individual Confucius Institutes worldwide. They are non-profit educational programs providing support and resource for learning of the Chinese language and culture through five avenues. First of all, Confucius Institutes offer Chinese language training for the general public in a wide array of areas, including business, tourism, Chinese medicine, etc. Secondly, Confucius Institutes cultivate and produce Chinese language teachers and provide Chinese learning resources. Thirdly, Confucius Institutes develop Chinese language exams and assessment, and create Chinese teachers certification system. In addition, Confucius Institutes provide consulting services, including library support and orientation services to study in China. Finally, Confucius Institutes engage in research on contemporary China and organize lectures and academic sessions (Hanban, 2008b).

*Application.* Theoretically, there are three ways to establish Confucius Institutes. First, Hanban funds and creates a physical Confucius Institute overseas. Secondly, Hanban licenses its intellectual property and operation model to create

a Confucius institute overseas. The third and most popular way is to create the Confucius Institute through partnerships (Hanban, 2008b).

The majority of Confucius Institutes are created through partnerships, which involves Hanban, a Chinese university, and an overseas organization to jointly create a Confucius Institute (Hanban, 2008). The overseas organization can be a local university, a public school district, a private company, or a local educational organization. Under such circumstance, the Chinese partner and the overseas partner jointly submit an application to Hanban. When awarded, Hanban provides initial funding, matched up by the other two partners.

The partnership model has demonstrated great advantages. First of all, it requires financial contribution from the Chinese partner and the overseas partner, which assures a certain level of commitment from local partners. Secondly, it relieves Hanban from managing daily operation of individual Confucius Institute, and enables Hanban to focus on macro-level strategic planning and management. More importantly, this model takes advantage of the existing resources of the Chinese partner and the overseas partner. These partners often house strong Chinese language programs, offer Chinese degrees, and are closely connected with the local public. Hence, Confucius Institutes under this model build on the existing strength of the local partners and leverages each partner's strength to the full extent. Under this model, responsibilities are well defined and the capacity of each partner is fully utilized. Hanban reviews application, provides initiative funding, and outlines guidelines at macro-level. The Chinese partner provides the

resources by donating instruction materials, and sending instructors to teach in the individual Confucius Institute. The overseas partner provides office space support and overhead to run daily operation and maintenance. Confucius Institutes created through partnership will be the focus of this study, particularly those established through university-university partnerships.

*Supervision.* Originally Hanban was the exclusive agency supervising Confucius Institutes worldwide until 2007 when it created and entrusted the Confucius Institute Headquarters to take over (The Confucius Institute Headquarters, 2008). However, the responsibility is very vaguely articulated between Hanban and the Confucius Institute Headquarters, and they are frequently used interchangeably in official statements. This study thus does not differentiate the two terms either, and uses them interchangeably too.

Basically, Hanban owns the intellectual property of the title Confucius Institute, the Confucius Institute logo, and the brand. It is governed by the Council consisting of a chair, vice chairs, executive council members, and council members. The chair, vice chairs and executive council members are recommended and appointed by the Chinese central government. Among the council members, ten are directors of individual Confucius Institutes from overseas partner universities; The rest five come from the Chinese partner universities, and appointed directly by Hanban (Hanban, 2008b).

*Operation.* Hanban provides start-up funding to help establish individual Confucius Institutes. The amount of the initial funding ranges from \$50,000 to

\$100,000 and is transferred to the overseas partner directly. Hanban also provides material support, including instructional materials, multimedia courseware, book donation, and online course licenses. In addition, Hanban sponsors two instructors annually to teach at each individual Confucius Institute and covers their international travel expenses, salary, and local accommodation during their teaching. The overseas partner is responsible for daily operation, and provides office space, maintenance, and staff supports (Hanban, 2008b).

In addition to the initial funding from the Hanban, both the Chinese partner and overseas partner have to commit an approximately same amount of internal funding as the match funding for Confucius Institutes (Hanban, 2008b). The fundamental principal is equally shared funding. The annual budget of a Confucius institute is equally shared by the Chinese partner and its overseas partner. Ultimately the individual Confucius Institute is expected to sustain itself by providing fee-based courses and programs.

Each Confucius Institute is governed by the Board of Members consisting of members from both the Chinese partner and the overseas partner, who also decide on the number of members on the board and the ratio of Chinese members and overseas members. The Board of Members is responsible for the strategic planning, budget planning, and appointment of directors. Each Confucius Institute has two co-directors. One is from the overseas partner, and the other is from the Chinese partner. The co-directors are responsible for daily operation and management and report to the Board of Members (Hanban, 2008b).

*Teaching and services.* Confucius Institutes provide a variety of programs. In addition to in-class learning and teaching, they offer outreach events and teacher training services (Hanban, 2008b). The mode of in-class teaching demonstrates significant flexibility and is designed to address the very needs of the local public. The classes offered cover Chinese conversations sessions, and classes of Chinese for special purpose such as tourism, medicine, and business. The learning and teaching are primarily conducted in-person. In May 2006, Michigan State University launched the first Confucius Institute that focuses on on-line Chinese learning, making Chinese learning accessible through distance education. Hanban has also created the Confucius Institute Online website to provide electronic resources for the general public (Confucius Institutes Online, 2010).

As non-government apparatuses for their national government to promote the nation's language and culture, Confucius Institutes are not alone. Some cultural organizations of the similar nature have existed for several decades. For instance, the British Council of the Britain, Goethe Institute of Germany, Alliance Francaise of France, Dante Alighieri Society of Italy, Institute Cervantes of Spain, and Instituto Camões of Portugal. New organizations of similar nature are in planning. For instance, the South Korea government has decided to establish King Sejong Institute by integrating the current Korean language education schools, and it will be supported by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism to promote the Korean language and culture (Ro, 2009). The Indian scholars and

media have started re-examining India's policy to promote its languages and cultures and to explore the possibility of creating Gandhi Institute to fulfill the goal (Ma, 2007).

*Status.* The first Confucius Institute in the world was opened in November 2004 at Seoul, Korea (Ji, 2009). A significant number of Confucius Institutes followed after. As of December 2010, 322 Confucius Institutes were established in 96 countries and regions around the world (Confucius Institutes Online, 2010). In the U.S., the first Confucius Institute was established in November 2004 at the University of Maryland jointly with Nankai University, China (Chiu, 2010). As of December 2010, 77 Confucius Institutes were created in the United States. Among them, 70 are university-to-university partnerships between China and the U.S. The rest six involve non-university partners such as public schools and companies (Confucius Institute Online, 2010).

In addition to physical presence of Confucius Institutes, Hanban has reached out to a wider audience by creating the Radio Confucius Institute and Confucius Institute online (Hanban, 2008c). Both are dedicated to providing resources through podcast, video clips, and audio courseware and online broadcasting to make Chinese language learning more accessible. Hanban has also organized the annual Confucius Institute Conference at Beijing since 2006.

**The MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute.** MMU and ZZU did not submit the application until 2007. By that time 30 Confucius Institutes had been created in the U.S. and over 200 in the world. MMU professor Stephen, then the Director



of the Center for Asian Research and faculty of Chinese in the College of Liberal Arts and Science, took the initiative to prepare the proposal in collaboration with the ZZU International Office. Specialized in ancient Chinese history and fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Professor Stephen submitted a bilingual application package in March 2007. In May 2007 the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute (CI) was awarded as a joint project partnered by Hanban, MMU and ZZU (Hughes, 2007). The official signing of the collaborative agreement took place in May 2007 at Beijing, immediately followed by the launch ceremony at ZZU campus. MMU officially launched the MMU-ZZU CI in October 2007 at ZZU campus (Kullman, 2007).

Based at the MMU campus, the MMU-ZZU CI is a collaborative effort of several offices and academic units at both institutions. At ZZU, offices involved at the institutional level include the President Office, the Vice President Office for International Affairs, and the International Office. The School for Overseas Education is the only academic unit involved at the college level, and the Center for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language is the major stakeholder at the program level (ZZ University, n.d.). At MMU, offices involved at the institutional level include the President Office and the Vice President Office for Global Engagement. The academic units involved are represented by the School of International Studies, then the MMU College of Education, and the MMU Center for Asian Research (Hughes, 2007). As stated by the MMU-ZZU CI website (2010), the MMU-ZZU CI is “MMU’s direct response to the need for creating a

sustainable, in-depth source of knowledge about China for citizens in ZZ. It is the first of its kind in the state. The institute is committed to promoting Chinese language and culture studies in schools as well as throughout the general public of ZZ.”

To reach the public, the MMU-ZZU CI has partnered with the MM Weekend Chinese School (MMWCS, the largest weekend Chinese heritage school that offers K-12 Chinese classes for over 500 students from the metropolitan region of the capital of MM (Li, 2005). In 2010, the MMU-ZZU CI was awarded by Hanban to partner with K-12 schools and created six Confucius Classrooms in the state of MM.

The MMU-ZZU CI is governed by the Board of Directors consisting of five members from MMU and from MWCS. It is directed by Professor Marilyn, who concurrently heads MMU Chinese Language Flagship Program, a U.S. government-funded undergraduate program for advanced Mandarin language learners (The MMU Chinese Language Flagship Program, n.d.). Housed in the School of International Studies, the MMU-ZZU CI and MMU Chinese Flagship program have leveraged their strength to provide resources for Chinese language learners and teachers from diverse background.

The MMU-ZZU CI obtained funding from multiple sources. In addition to the \$100,000 initial funding from Hanban, the MMU President Office and the ZZU President Office each contributed a similar amount of matched funding as required by the application. The portion of ZZU contribution stayed with ZZU to

support CI related activities, provide assistance and services for visiting students and scholars from MMU, and foster collaboration between these two institutions. The match funding from the MMU President Office was infused to the MMU-ZZU CI account as start-up funding for launch and operation. In addition, the MMU-ZZU CI has competed successfully for grants and awards nationally and internationally to increase its capacity in offering courses, workshops, and sessions related to Chinese language and culture. For instance, the MMU-ZZU CI has been awarded more than once the STARTALK language program, a grant established by President Bush in 2006 to expand national capacity in critical languages and run by the U.S. National Security Agency and the U.S. Central Security Services (STALTALK Language Program, n.d.).

Currently, the MMU-ZZU CI has seven employees, including the director, the assistant director, a program coordinator, three visiting faculty from ZZU, and one research assistant (MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute, n.d.). As part of the collaboration, ZZU provides instructional materials and faculty support by sending two or three faculty each year. These visiting faculty offer classes for MMU students at the MMU-ZZU CI, but receive their salaries and living stipend from Hanban via ZZU. MMU provides office space and staff support to maintain daily operation and to offer resources for the local community in Chinese language and culture learning. Located at the MMU campus, the MMU-ZZU CI offers a sustained resource of knowledge about China through the following programs (MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute, 2010).

- Faculty exchanges between MMU and ZZ University
- Public, socially embedded Chinese language and culture programs
- Symposia and lectures related to China
- K-16 Chinese language programs
- Professional training programs for teachers of Chinese in the state of MM
- Support for overseas study for graduate students
- An intensive Chinese language summer program in the capital city of ZZ province

## **Conclusions**

This chapter presents the glonacal agency heuristic to analyze the changes to higher education in the U.S. and China. Particular focus is given to changes at the institutional level, where academic capitalism and enterprising university are used to explain the new activities and governance of American and Chinese universities. The second part reviews internationalization and examines the definition, rationales and stakeholders, and success factors as well as challenges for international university collaborations. The review helps to provide guidelines for interview questions for data collection and analysis. The last part of the chapter presents the background information of the study by investigating the MMU-ZZU CI and the related organizations such as Hanban. The next chapter will detail the methodology to conduct the project.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

To adequately address the nature and the success factors of the China-U.S. university collaborations requires a methodology that can both explain and explore the evolution of relationship development. The process of creating and sustaining the relationships has to be examined from the perspective of several constituencies under particular contexts. As such, qualitative methods were adopted, and the case study method was used to conduct the study.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of the study is to address the overarching question “What is the nature of the U.S.-China university collaboration and what factors contribute to its success?” Specifically, the following three research questions were posed to reach the purpose.

1. How did the key stakeholders experience the entire process of creating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI? What were the challenges and factors during the process?
2. What were the conditions, challenges and success factors that have characterized the MMU-ZZU CI while accounting for the context at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level?
3. How did the key stakeholders work with the partner university? How did they initiate and advance their collaboration?

## **Qualitative Research Method Rationales**

The choice between the qualitative research method and the quantitative research method is determined by multiple factors. This section delineates the advantages of adopting the qualitative research method in this study and explains why it was chosen in this particular study on the MMU-ZZU CI.

**Focus on meaning and understanding.** Qualitative research is primarily concerned with “understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspective, not the researcher’s” (Merriam, 2009, p. 14). Since this study seeks to understand the experiences of those closely associated with the MMU-ZZU CI, the qualitative method suits the purpose well. It has the capacity to examine the story of participants and empower the voices of participants who’ve lived through the creation and advancement of the MMU-ZZU CI. Therefore, the qualitative method is chosen to obtain the various perspectives of those involved in the MMU-ZZU CI, including directors, faculty members, university administrators, and staff members from MMU and ZZU. Focus on the perspectives of participants enables them to express their version of the MMU-ZZU CI, thus producing diverse understanding of the mission and activities of the MMU-ZZU CI.

**Role of the researcher.** The meaning of the MMU-ZZU CI is not only associated with the insiders’ experience; it is also influenced by the researcher (Merriam, 2009). The choice of the case, design of the method, collection and analysis of data are all affected by the experience and perspective of the

researcher. Hence, the researcher becomes “the primary instrument for data collection and analysis” (Merriam, 2009, p. 52). For instance, another researcher might have chosen a different case and approached the research questions from a different perspective. The participants help define this study as well. Their experience and perspectives influence how they answer the interview questions. Hence, multiple meanings are expected to emerge, depending on who are the informants, who is the investigator, and how the study is designed and conducted.

**Inductive strategy.** Another strong argument to use the qualitative research method lies in the fact that the process of conducting qualitative study is inductive (Merriam, 2009). Rather than testing an established theory, qualitative research is interested in creating meanings out of the study to better understand the phenomenon. In this study, although the existing literature shed light on the interview questions, this study also identifies emerging themes and categories from interviews, observations, and intuitive understanding gained in the process. For instance, the researcher, due to her familiarity with the case, was able to identify some stakeholders of the study. However, it was far from enough. Additional stakeholders emerged from the data at the program level, at the college level, and at the institution level. The themes and categories could also come from institutional documents or interviews with participants.

### **Case Study Research Rationales**

There are multiple qualitative research methods, including ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative analysis, critical qualitative research,

and case study (Merriam, 2009). The case study research turns out to be the most appropriate for this study for multiple reasons.

**Definition of case study research.** Qualitative case study research is defined through different approaches. Yin (2008) adopts the process approach and defines the case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Stake (1994) uses the object approach and highlights case study as a choice of object to be studied rather than “a methodological choice” (p. 236). Merriam (2009, p. 40) adopts the outcome approach and defines case study as “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system”.

According to Merriam (1998), the case study can be divided into three categories in terms of the overall intent of the study. Descriptive case studies aim to present a detailed account of the case under study. Interpretive case studies intend to “develop conceptual categories or to illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to the data gathering” (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). Evaluative case studies go beyond descriptions and present judgment. This study, in addition to depicting the process of creating and maintaining the MMU-ZZU CI, was interested in learning the nature of the relationship and the success factors. Therefore, this study was a descriptive case study.

Stake (1994) proposes three types of study depending on the purposes of researchers. Intrinsic case study intends to present the case “because the case itself is of particular interest” (p. 236). In an instrumental case study, the



researcher investigates particular cases “to provide insight of an issue or refinement of theory” (p. 236). In a collective case study, multiple cases are examined to understand the phenomenon or general condition. The MMU-ZZU CI was selected as the case under this study because the researcher was interested in obtaining a better understanding of it. As a unique international collaborative program within the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, how the MMU-ZZU CI has come to where it is now is intriguing. Therefore, this study was an intrinsic case study.

No matter how qualitative case studies are classified, all share three common characteristics: particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic (Merriam, 2009). First of all, qualitative case studies have to focus on a single program or a particular phenomenon. Secondly, qualitative case studies produce thick description at the end of the study. The detailed rich description helps to capture and present the specifics of the case and the many variables involved, and to portray interaction among the stakeholders and variables (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative case studies are heuristic by discovering new meanings of the case and “extend reader’s experience, or confirm what is known” (Merriam, 2009, p. 44)

**Bounded system.** What distinguishes the case study from other qualitative studies lies in the fact that the case has to “be a bounded system, and that meaning has to be made within a particular situation, program or phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29). A bounded system could be an individual person, or a single program, or a particular locale. The MMU-ZZU CI fits this definition. As a major

collaborative program between MMU and ZZU, the MMU-ZZU CI conducts teaching, mentoring, training activities and cultural events related to the Chinese language and culture. Situated within the context of the MMU-ZZU sister intuition partnerships, the MMU-ZZU CI serves as a platform for various collaborative programs, including visiting students and scholars, summer camps, academic programs, and local Chinese community outreach (MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute Supplementary Agreement, 2007).

In addition, the MMU-ZZU CI is a bounded system because it has “a limit to the number of people involved who could be interviewed” (Merriam, 2009, p. 41). In terms of the organization structure, the MMU-ZZU CI is an organization unit housed under the MMU School of International Studies (SIS) and is closely associated with the Chinese Department and the Center for Asian Research under SIS. At ZZU, the MMU-ZZU CI serves as a unit housed under the School of Overseas Education. The number of people engaged in the MMU-ZZU CI is limited, so is the number of participants who were interviewed. These participants had to be those highly involved in the creation and maintenance of the MMU-ZZU CI.

According to Merriam (2009), “the unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation, characterizes a case study” (p. 41). A single unit, a particular program, or a particular entity has to be identified to make the research a case study. In this study, the unit of analysis is a collaboration between an American university and a Chinese university. What makes it a case study lies in the fact

that the MMU-ZZU CI is a particular collaborative program between MMU and ZZU.

**Context.** The case study research finds its best use when the research addresses a particular situation and acknowledges the role of contextual condition to the study (Yin, 2002). The contextual condition can refer to the physical, cultural and economic aspects of the study as well as the timeframe the study focuses on. The MMU-ZZU CI, embedded within the broad context of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, highlights the relationship that began in 2005 between MMU and ZZU to the point when the study was conducted, a six-year duration that witnessed the creation and growth of the MMU-ZZU CI.

As indicated by Holstein and Gubrium (1994), “Objects and events have equivocal or indeterminate meanings without a visible context. It is only through their situated use in talk and interaction that objects and events become concretely meaningful” (p. 265). Under the framework of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, the MMU-ZZU CI is not only a program-level collaboration but also collaboration at the college level and at the institutional level. The institutional culture, tradition, values, and mission as well as the physical settings all serve as crucial contextual variables to design interview questions and to make sense out of the data. So do the specific characteristics of the colleges involved in the MMU-ZZU CI.

The contextual knowledge goes beyond institutional levels when the MMU-ZZU CI is examined in consideration of the national contexts. National

agencies and policies play a significant role too. In China, the Confucius Institute Project is largely perceived as the central government's initiative to promote the soft power of a rising China (Duan, 2008; Starr, 2009; Zhang, 2007; Zong, 2007). Confucius Institutes represent the Chinese government's incentives to encourage Chinese universities to internationalize their faculty, curriculum and students (Bi & Huang, 2010). In the U.S., the federal government perceives the Chinese language as one of the nine critical languages to serve the needs of U.S. national security and national competitiveness and provides funding to encourage Americans to learn the Chinese language at K-16 educational institutions (Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, 2006).

**Multiple sources of data.** Another reason to choose the case study research lies in its advantage to use many different sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). Merriam (2009) also highlights the advantage of the case study research to accommodate multiple avenues of data, including interviews, observations and documents. The multiple sources are helpful to present a holistic picture of the case under study. For instance, institutional documents of MMU and ZZU provide the history of these two universities and the historical events that impact the relationships between MMU and ZZU, including the institutional agreements and development of the MMU-ZZU CI.

This study collected data from interviews with participants from MMU and ZZU. It also looked into the historical documents of MMU and ZZU, university news archives, and media coverage by the press. Additional data came

from site visits during which the researcher gained direct observation opportunities. The multiple data sources enabled the researcher to triangulate the data and enhance the analysis (Yin, 2002). On the other hand, the diversity of data helped gain in-depths understanding of the MMU-ZZU CI.

**First-hand understanding.** The case study research is particularly appropriate if the research intends to gain a firsthand understanding of the case (Yin, 2002). Rather than obtain data from other databases or derived sources, the case study research helps the investigator to interact with the participants directly to collect data in natural settings, be it interviewing or participant observations. In this study, the researcher interviewed participants to learn their stories to find out the nature of the collaboration and the success factors contributing to the MMU-ZZU CI. The particularistic nature of the MMU-ZZU CI determined its focus on the personnel involved, and their perspectives on the factors leading to its success under the MMU-ZZU comprehensive partnership.

**Appropriateness for how and why questions.** The case study research is preferred when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events” (Yin, 2002, p. 7). When investigating the MMU-ZZU CI in this study, the researcher was interested in asking the following questions to obtain an in-depth understanding of the MMU-ZZU CI. For instance, why MMU was interested in working with ZZU to start the Confucius Institute? How did the two universities work together to bring the MMU-ZZU CI to where it is now? The creation and maintenance of the MMU-

ZZU CI was influenced by many variables. To understand the MMU-ZZU CI would require thick and holistic account of the interactions between the two institutions and between the academic programs involved in creating and maintaining the MMU-ZZU CI. Such a daunting task can be best accomplished by the case study research (Merriam, 2009).

### **Design**

This section presents the design of the study, including subject of the study, data collection and management, and data analysis. It provides an overview of how the researcher approached the MMU-SUC CI and explains the process of conducting the study.

**Subject of the study.** The MMU-ZZU CI was chosen as the case under study to understand the nature of the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration and its success factors. The two institutions under examinations were ZZU and MMU. Established in 1896 as the Oriental-West College, ZZU is now a research comprehensive university located in southwest China. MMU was founded in 1885 as a local Normal School and has developed into a comprehensive research university in southwest U.S. The MMU-ZZU CI is a collaborative program between MMU and ZZU, with initial funding for the first five years provided by Hanban.

**Data collection.** The gathering of data came from four avenues: institutional documents, interviews, sites visits, and news reports on the MMU-ZZU CI. The multiple sources of data provide a diverse perspective of relevant

groups, participants and the interaction between them (Yin, 2002). In addition, multiple sources of evidence allow triangulation of data from different avenues, thus improving accuracy of the study (Yin, 2002)

*Institutional documents.* The researcher reviewed institutional documents as part of the data collection. Here *institutional documents* referred to “a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (Merriam, 2009, p. 139). The documents included those at the institutional level, for instance, mission and vision of MMU and ZZU, history and current status, academic calendars, course catalogs, annual reports, university newspapers, speeches and brochures. The institutional-level documents also included those related to the central offices involved in the MMU-ZZU CI, such as the President’s Office and the International Office. The documents at the college levels were examined too, including the history and status of these colleges within their respective university, students and faculty as well as programs offering.

These documents were used to provide the context of the relationships. For instance, what were the internationalization strategies at MMU and ZZU? How were the strategies different from or similar to each other? What were the goals of creating the MMU-ZZU CI? Data for this portion of the study were obtained primarily from the institutional web pages, university archives, and agreements.

As documents exist independent of the research agenda, they are telling the real world and are not influenced by the research process (Merriam, 2009). They are critical partly because they represent the official viewpoints of the institutions and colleges, partly because they delineate the conditions and characteristics of the institutors and colleges involved in the study. From these sources, a general idea was obtained regarding the policy initiatives on campus, particularly those related to international collaborations.

*Interviews.* The second and key source of data was the interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, because they had the advantage of organizing ideas around a particular interest and allowed considerable flexibility for participants to express their ideas and feelings (Patton, 2002). Hence, interviews stayed to the point yet elicited in-depth narratives from participants. In addition, the researcher was able to “try out ideas and themes on participants” (Merriam, 2009, p. 171). These tentatively identified ideas and patterns from previous interviews were used as probing cues to solicit thoughts of participants, particularly key participants who were able to help advance the collection of data (as cited in Merriam, 2009).

The language used in the interview was completely decided by the participants. In this study, some participants were monolingual, either in English or in Chinese; some were bilingual. The researcher is bilingual in English and Chinese; so it was up to the participants to choose whichever language they were comfortable with during the interview. As indicated by Bozeman (2009),



conducting interviews in the native language of participants allows richer responses from participants and may yield more authentic descriptions.

The participants of the interviews included employees of MMU and ZZU. The MMU and ZZU employees for the interviews were composed of faculty, administrators of the MMU-ZZU CI, academic managers and administrators at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level. The diverse background of the participants helped garner multiple perspectives.

The interview questions were slightly different between MMU employees and ZZU employees to accommodate the different situation of the two universities. For instance, MMU hosted only one Confucius Institute, the MMU-ZZU CI. In contrast, ZZU had four Confucius Institutes, one in Korea and the rest three in the U.S. MMU was one of them. Most of the questions were the same, though a particular participant might have a lot more to say for some questions not the others. For instance, administrators from the central offices responded to questions related to the sister institution partnership in more details than faculty did. This was done intentionally because each interview offered opportunities for individuals to detail additional information or describe unique experiences.

Interviews were conducted during May -September 2011. Each interview session lasted for approximately 45 minutes, was tape recorded, and was held in places of the participants' preference. The interviews with ZZU employees took

place either at MMU campus or at ZZU campus. For ZZU faculty who were teaching at MMU campus, interviews were conducted in the U.S. either on campus or off campus depending on the participant. For ZZU participants based in China, interviews were either scheduled during their visits to MMU or by phone, though person-to-person interview was always preferred. The interviews with MMU employees took place either at MMU campus or somewhere else as indicated by the participants. During all the interviews, specific questions were asked to encourage participants to reflect on their experience related to the MMU-ZZU CI.

It was the researcher's hope to tape all the interviews upon approval of the participants. In cases where participants chose not to be taped, the researcher took notes as agreed upon by the participants. All the tapes and notes were held confidential for the duration of this study and were destroyed upon completion of this study.

Purposeful sampling was adopted since the purpose of this study was to understand the nature of the MMU-ZZU CI and its success factors. Interviews began with key participants who "are considered knowledgeable by others" (Merriam, 2009, p. 105). Some of them might have been closely involved at the application for establishment of the MMU-ZZU CI; others might have been highly engaged in operating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI. They can include directors of the MMU-ZZU CI and administrators from the central offices responsible for international university collaborations. The directors were

knowledgeable about the history, current status and operation of the MMU-ZZU CI. In addition, both directors were faculty of the colleges with which the MMU-ZZU CI was affiliated, and thus had broad perspectives of the colleges regarding the creation and maintenance of the MMU-ZZU CI. In addition, the directors had been involved in the collaboration so profoundly that they had gained insight of the partner institutions and colleges.

The researcher, due to her familiarity with the MMU-ZZU CI, identified preliminary informants from her own personal contacts and communities (Merriam, 2009). For instance, the researcher perceived the administrators from the international offices as key informants because they had been highly involved in the international policies and initiatives on campus, thus being able to provide a holistic picture of the sister institution partnership of MMU and ZZU. Furthermore, they had been closely associated with the various stages of the MMU-ZZU CI and had played a certain role in initiating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI.

Additional participants were selected when the key informants were asked for referrals. Other participants were identified from institutional documents (Merriam, 2009).

*Site visits.* As part of the sources for data collection, site visits provided additional information. The researcher visited the two institutions a few times in the past five years. By making a field visit to the MMU and ZZU, the researcher had the opportunity for direct observations (Yin, 2002). The visits

included tours to all the three campuses of ZZU and the four campuses of MMU. On each campus, the visits included libraries, students dining halls and cafeterias, and classrooms. The campus visits provided a general understanding of the physical environment of these two institutions. For instance, the condition of the MMU-ZZU CI office might indicate its status in the affiliated college or university. The information gathered during the visits was added to the data to assist in answering the research questions.

*News reports.* The fourth part of the data included news reports by the media other than that of MMU and ZZU. As an internationally collaborative program, the MMU-ZZU CI had impact not only on the two universities and the programs within, but also on the larger communities. In particular, the MMU-ZZU CI helped advance the relationships of the two cities where MMU and ZZU were located and had been publicized by the local and national media.

Together the institutional documents, interviews, site visits and news reports provided a thorough investigation of the MMU-ZZU CI and how the stakeholders worked with each other to make it successful. The multiple sources of data produced a more reliable and valid presentation of the MMU-ZZU CI and the success factors.

**Data management.** With the bulk of data collection, how to manage data in qualitative research is a significant task. Merriam (2009) suggests coding as an effective strategy to address this issue. Here coding refers to the process of

organizing information by “designating shorthand to various aspects of the data” for the purposes of sorting, storing and retrieving the data (p. 173).

In this study, an excel spreadsheet was developed at the very beginning to track when and where and how long each interview was conducted. The spreadsheet also included the basic information of the interview participant. For instance, whether the participant was a faculty, or staff, or administrator, each participant was assigned a pseudonym. In addition, separate columns were added to track the participant’s gender, affiliation, and years of working at the MMU-ZZU CI.

In addition, the researcher kept a log book to track her thoughts and speculations during the study in preparation for data analysis. Some of the thoughts could occur just for one moment and would be gone forever without written notes. This kind of information, though coming in pieces and arising before, after or in the middle of interviews, served as rudimentary analysis and was quite helpful when the research “moves between the emerging analysis and the raw data of interviews, filed notes and documents” (Merriam, 2009, p. 174). Each log began with date and place and was kept in Word document.

All the data collected were organized into four folders labeled respectively as institutional documents, interviews, site visits, and news reports. Under each folder, two sub-folders were organized, one labeled as the MMU folder, the other as the ZZU folder. Documents within each of the eight sub-

folders were sorted by chronological order for the convenience of retrieval and analysis.

**Data analysis.** Data analysis is an ongoing process throughout the study because “collection and analysis should be a simultaneous process in qualitative research” (Merriam, 2009, p.169). The inductive nature of qualitative research determines the fact that the researcher, no matter how well the study is designed in advance, begins the study without knowing “what will be discovered, what or whom to concentrate on, or what the final analysis will be like” (Merriam, 2009, P. 171). Therefore, the researcher had to be open to and prepared for new and unexpected outcome emerging from the data.

Overall, data analysis will follow the three levels: “moving from concrete description of observable data to more abstract levels”, “classifying data into categories or themes”, and making inference, to “move data to a more conceptual overview” (Merriam, 2009, p. 189). At the basic level, data analysis began by identifying segments of data directed by the research questions, followed by comparing one segment of data with the next “in looking for recurring regularities in the data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 177). The researcher shall listen closely and break the data set into small pieces. After repeatedly reading the data, the researcher will identify categories to classify various segments of data. When categories are identified and constructed, the researcher needs to make inference and develop models (Merriam, 2009). Each step of data analysis

involves repeated revisions, either expanding categories or merging data segments. Thus, data analysis is a changing and interactive process.

Data analysis in this study was presented in four subsections as guided by the glonacal agency heuristic framework. Within each subsection and between the subsections, the three levels of analysis were practiced. The four subsections included identifying the stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI; a close examination of each stakeholder's portfolio in terms of reciprocity, layers and conditions, strength, and spheres; rationales of stakeholders as guided by the literature reviews; in-depth analysis of the interactions between and among the stakeholders and success factors. Directed by the glonacal agency heuristic framework, the data analysis considered the horizontal interaction at the program level, at the college level, as well as at the institutional level, and the vertical interaction between the involved colleges and the institutional central offices within each partner university.

*Identification of stakeholders.* Identification of the stakeholders accommodated inductive and deductive approaches using multiple sources of data. Given that the researcher was closely associated with the MMU-ZZU CI, some key stakeholders were identified at the beginning of the study. At the program level, the ZZU academic program involved was the Center for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language within the School of Overseas Education. The main MMU academic program was the Chinese Department. At the college level, the major player was the School of Overseas Education at ZZU, and

School of International Studies at MMU. At the institutional level, the involved MMU central administration offices included the Office of the President and the Vice President Office of Global Engagement. The involved ZZU central offices were represented by the Office of the President, the Vice President Office for International Affairs and the International Office. These stakeholders were simply good to start with; yet the study was open to the addition of new stakeholders emerging from the data.

Institutional documents presented overview of the two universities and also assisted in identifying stakeholders. For instance, a close look at the organization structure of each partner university helped the researcher understand the main offices related to international outreach on campus. Interviews solicited the perceptions of the participants, who introduced stakeholders in creating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI. News reports, because they were published by third parties, assisted in understanding the key players from the perspective of the communities.

*Profiles of stakeholders.* When stakeholders were identified, the study examined each stakeholder closely following the four dimensions proposed by Marginson and Rhoades (2002), including reciprocity, layers and conditions, strength and spheres. Meanwhile, the study was open to introduction of newly emergent dimensions identified from the data. These dimensions together defined the profile of each of the stakeholders and influenced the stakeholders' actions.



*Rationales of stakeholders.* As shown in the literature review in Chapter Two, stakeholders entered international university collaborations for a variety of reasons. Even within one single university, it was not uncommon to find different internationalization agendas between departments and colleges. Rationales thus had to be examined for each stakeholder. Interviews with those from the involved colleges as well as those from the central administration office served as the primary source to identify rationales, both at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level respectively. Institutional documents were complementary sources, including the strategic development plan of the university, annual report, budgetary documents, and so forth.

*Success factors.* No matter how much each stakeholder differed from another, how they came to the decision to work together to create and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI was the key to the study. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) highlighted the reciprocal interaction between and among stakeholders and drew attention to the fact that stakeholders interacted with each other and the influence was two-directional. Therefore, it was the researcher's fundamental interest to identify the process and strategies how different stakeholders worked together to bring the MMU-ZZU CI to where it is now.

### **Validity, Reliability, and Ethics**

The issues of validity and reliability can be approached in qualitative research studies through the design of the study, data collection, data analysis, and data presentation (Merriam, 2009). In data collection, the use of multiple data

sources helps capture the reality constructed by participants. “Purposefully seeking variation in sample selection” allows for diverse voices from the participants and improves validity of the study as well (Merriam, 2009, p. 229).

In order to minimize the researcher’s effects, the researcher shall attempt to assume a neutral attitude towards participants and remain unobtrusive in the natural setting (Yin, 2002). In studying the MMU-ZZU CI, the researcher made it clear that she would not favor either Chinese participants or American participants despite the researcher’s Chinese background. Given the researcher’s involvement in the MMU-ZZU partnership, she constantly examined herself to eliminate interference of her personal relationship to the study (Merriam, 2009).

In analyzing the data, the researcher focused on listening to voices of participants and identifying the themes and categories that emerged from the data. The researcher had to detail the specific steps in collecting and analyzing data, so that readers “will be able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context” (Merriam, 2009, p. 229). To do so, the researcher spent a decent period of time in collecting data from multiple avenues. In the study of the MMU-ZZU CI, the researcher had been collecting institutional documents and news reports since the establishment of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership in 2006 and had continued collecting data from interviews and site visits in order to secure saturated data (Merriam, 2009). The findings would not be trustworthy unless the study provided cohesiveness, comprehensiveness, and

genuine depiction of how each stakeholder explained the success factors in consideration of the specific institutional and program contexts.

In addition, peer review provided a third-party perspective on the study (Merriam, 2009). In this study, the researcher worked with another doctoral student for peer examination, including discussing the process of study and the consistency between data and findings.

The issue of ethics is critical because qualitative research studies essentially depend on the dynamics of researcher-participants relationships (Merriam, 2009). Risks can arise from data collection, analysis and presentation. Will the research be able to establish rapport with participants? What about confidentiality issues related to the participants or private documents? In this study, the research offered participants the opportunity to review the data analysis to make sure they were comfortable with what was going to become public-accessible information.

Given the critical role of the researcher in qualitative research studies, the researcher's credibility largely determines the vigor of qualitative research studies. Credibility not only refers to "the training, experience, track record, status and presentation of self", but also refers to intellectual competence and professional integrity of the researcher (as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 228). Apart from following the guidelines of the institutional review board, the researcher tried her best to be sensitive and honest when conducting the study.

## **Limitations**

Despite the strengths of the case study method, this study is disadvantaged by the exclusion of several components, including students of the MMU-ZZU CI, Hanban and the MM Weekend Chinese School. Exclusion of participants from these organizations prevents this study from obtaining their perspectives about the creation and operation of the MMU-ZZU CI.

Study of one single particular case has obvious limitations. With a focus on a particular international collaborative program between a Chinese research university and an American research university, this study has to confine its findings to this particular case. It would not be reliable to extend the findings of this study to other types of international university collaborations (Yin, 2002). The unique characteristics of the MMU-ZZU CI make generalizations impossible, including the specific history and contexts of these two universities as well as the academic colleges involved. For instance, MMU highly values global engagement and includes it as one of the eight aspirations of the Innovative US University (Campbell, 2005), while other American universities might have different priority to global engagement.

Additionally, the researcher, as an employee at MMU, introduced her viewpoints into this study. Her acquaintance with the structure and culture of MMU might lead to some personal viewpoints to the MMU-ZZU CI. The researcher's bias came into play when the researcher's personal experience shaped her understanding of the universities in China and the U.S. With higher

education experience from Chinese universities and American universities, the researcher might have approached this study with some taken-for-granted assumptions.

## **CHAPTER IV: The CASE – MMU-ZZU CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE**

### **Introduction**

The MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute (CI) has to be analyzed in the larger context of the rise of Chinese as a commonly spoken language and the increased university collaborations between China and the U.S. This chapter begins by examining the top-down and bottom-up efforts within China and the U.S. that fuel the increased popularity of the Chinese language, followed by a brief review on internationalization at Chinese universities and American universities. In addition, this chapter provides a general overview of MMU and ZZU, the American university and the Chinese university involved in the case of this study.

More importantly, this chapter identifies the stakeholders involved in the MMU-ZZU CI at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level. Using the glonacal agency heuristic, it analyzes all the stakeholders, and their rationales to create and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI, Each stakeholder is examined along the four dimensions of reciprocity, layer and conditions, strength, and spheres as delineated by the glonacal agency heuristic. With a focus on the two-way interaction among and between stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level, the analysis highlights vertical interaction within MMU or ZZU and horizontal interaction between ZZU and MMU.

## **Rise of Chinese as a Commonly Spoken Language**

The Mandarin Chinese<sup>1</sup> is known as the language with largest number of speakers in the world, while in recent years it has enjoyed increased popularity as a foreign language. According to Xinhua News (Hao, 2005), over 30 million people overseas are learning Chinese as a foreign language, and more than 2500 higher learning institutions offer Chinese language courses in over 100 countries. Some nations have started to offer Chinese language courses at k-12 level as well, including U.S. South Korea, Britain and Japan.

The rise of Chinese as a more commonly spoken language overseas has been impressive in recent years. The Scottish government (2008) refreshed its efforts to increase Chinese language learning in Scottish schools. The Chinese language is also booming in British schools with 27 percent increase in the number of beginners in 2007 over the previous year, and some independent schools, including Wellington College and Brighton College, decided to make Chinese a compulsory subject for new students (McCormack, 2007).

**China: Top-down and bottom-up efforts:** The Chinese language learning movement is driven both by top-down and bottom-up initiatives within China. The top-down initiatives include the establishment of Hanban by the Chinese central government in 1987, generous government funding, national policy incentives, and the Chinese Ministry of Education's official accreditation of teaching Chinese for speakers of others languages (TCSOL) as an independent

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the Chinese language refers to Mandarin Chinese, the official language of China.

discipline of intellectual strength. The bottom-up efforts are demonstrated by the public's increased interest in learning Chinese as a foreign language, rapid growth of international students in China, and the Chinese academia's continued work to legitimize and expand TCSOL as an intellectual discipline.

*Top-down efforts.* The top-down initiatives are demonstrated through multiple avenues. First of all, as early as 1987, the Chinese government created a supreme agency solely devoted to promoting Chinese worldwide, the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, Hanban in short. Hanban is a non-governmental and non-profit organization affiliated with the Ministry of Education of China. It is “committed to making the Chinese language and culture teaching resources and services available to the world, to meeting the demands of overseas Chinese learners to the utmost, to contributing to the formation of a world of cultural diversity and harmony” (Hanban, 2008a).

Secondly, the Chinese government has allocated generous funding to promote the Chinese language and culture in recent years. In 2008 alone, the Confucius Institute headquarters invested approximately \$29 million (USD) (Hanban, 2008e). In 2010, the total funding increased to \$59 million (USD) (Confucius Institute Headquarters working plan of 2010, 2009).

Thirdly, the Chinese government has launched a series of policy incentives to promote the Chinese language and culture. The State Council, the chief administrative authority of China, announced the vision in 2004 and outlined the strategic plan “Chinese Bridge Project”, to promote the Chinese



language and culture overseas. The Chinese government has been highly engaged in policies and activities to promote the Chinese language and culture as well. For instance, it aggressively advocated the offering of Chinese courses in U.S. high and actually contributed half of the cost to launch the Advanced Placement Chinese Language and Culture with the College Board (Lewin, 2003).

With significant support from the Chinese government, Hanban has been able to launch multiple large scale projects of various types to promote the Chinese language and culture overseas. For instance, it organized the first World Chinese Language Conference in 2005 that invited university presidents from all over the world. Other projects include the overseas k-12 principal summer camps in China, teacher training programs, volunteer teachers for overseas, curriculum development and pedagogy research, the international Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students, Chinese bridge foundation, Confucius Institutes scholarships, Chinese proficiency tests, and online Chinese teaching (Cui, 2010).

Last but not least, the Chinese Ministry of Education, as the supreme accreditation and governance body of k-16 education in China, played a key role to establish teaching Chinese for speakers of others languages (TCSOL) as an independent intellectual discipline. Although the practice of teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages began right after the founding of the People's Republic of China, it was not proposed as an independent intellectual discipline until 1978 and later the Chinese academia agreed to name this new discipline as "teaching

Chinese to speakers of other languages” (Hou, 2007). However, it did not get recognized until 1993 when it was officially entered into the catalogue of academic disciplines approved by the Chinese Education Commission, the predecessor of the Ministry of Education that supervises and accredits academic disciplines in China (Yuan & Sun, 2008).

*Bottom-up efforts.* The bottom-up initiatives are demonstrated by the increasing number of applicants interested in learning Chinese as a foreign language and taking the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) worldwide. In recent years, the number of applicants for HSK has increased by 40% annually. The total number of applicants reached approximately 90,000 in 2004 (Zhang, 2005), and jumped to 130,000 in 2007 (Xinhua News, 2008).

Not only has the number of applicants for HSK increased sharply in recent years, more and more international students have come to China for degree or non-degree study. During 2001-2008, the number of international students learning Chinese in China has grown by 20% annually, reaching 223,500 in 2008 (Cui, 2010). The demographics of the international student population has shifted and become much more diverse. Before 1990, they were mostly students from East Europe and Africa with government scholarships, but has been dominated by self-paid students from over 180 countries all over the world since then. In 2008, of the total 223,500 international students learning Chinese in China, only approximately 6% were funded by government scholarship, and the rest were self-financed. No longer being confined to a selective group of Chinese universities,

they had a wide choice and were distributed among about 600 Chinese universities. They also represented non-degree and degree-seeking students at various levels from undergraduate studies to doctoral studies (Cui, 2010).

The Chinese academia, particularly those in TCSOL, have made continued efforts to legitimize and expand TCSOL as an independent discipline of intellectual strength. Long before TCSOL was officially approved as a discipline in higher learning institutions in the 1980s, the Chinese academia had done considerable work to define TCSOL in terms of who can teach what to whom and where. There was substantial research on how to differentiate teaching Chinese to foreigners from teaching Chinese to ethnic minorities in China, essentially, the difference between teaching Chinese as a foreign language and teaching Chinese as a second language. Arguments arose on who shall be legitimate teachers: both native and non-native speakers of Chinese or native speakers only. There was also confusion whether it shall include those learning Chinese in non-Chinese speaking countries (Cui, 2010). Eventually, it was named as “teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages” with the target audience including foreigners and Chinese heritage language speakers from anywhere outside of China. The learning can take place in China or in a foreign country (Hou, 2007). The discipline enrolls Chinese students and intends to develop qualified instructors to teach Chinese to foreigners and Chinese heritage language learners. In terms of curriculum, it has gone beyond the traditionally defined language learning to

include courses in education and pedagogy, psychology, foreign language, linguistics, literature, and culture (Yuan & Sun, 2008).

**U.S.: Top-down and Bottom-up Efforts.** The boom of Chinese in the U.S. is attributed to top-down and bottom-up efforts as well. The infusion of federal funding indicates the importance of the Chinese language from the perspective of the governments and fuels the interest in learning Chinese. The grassroots initiatives, including professional language organizations, take the opportunity and leverage government funding to increase resources and programs for the learning of Chinese.

*Top-down efforts.* The U.S. government's efforts to encourage Chinese language learning are demonstrated by the National Security Language Initiative launched in January 2006, a joint initiative of the Departments of Education, State, and Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, to increase the number of Americans learning critical-need foreign languages, including Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Hindi, and Farsi (Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, 2006). In 2005, the bill, which was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was introduced to spend \$1.3 billion over five years on Chinese language programs in schools and on cultural exchanges to improve ties between the U.S. and China (Ruethling, 2005). According to the Asia Society and College Board (2008), the U.S. Department of Education, through its foreign language assistance program, funded 70 Chinese language programs in 2006 and 2007, with a total amount of approximately \$13 million.

Many state governments have made plans and efforts to promote the Chinese language and culture. Kansas, Ohio, Oklahoma, Minnesota, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Utah all gave preference to Chinese teaching in their world language programs (Asia Society & College Board, 2008).

*Bottom-up efforts.* The U.S. grassroots initiatives are reflected by the efforts of the College Board and the Asia Society. In 2006, the College Board announced official partnership with Hanban to develop the Advanced Placement (A.P.) Chinese Language and Culture test in the U.S. When the A.P. Chinese examination was offered the first time in 2007, over 3,000 students took it, and the number has been increasing. Actually, the number of students taking the A.P. Chinese has grown so fast that it is likely to pass German as the third most-tested A.P. language, after Spanish and French (Dillon, 2010). The College Board has also worked with Hanban to implement the Chinese Guest Teacher Program that brought more than 11,000 teachers from China to help teach Chinese in American schools (Asian Society & College Board, 2008).

The Asia Society has been constantly offering resource for those learning or teaching Chinese as a foreign language. A case in point is the launch of the Asia Society Confucius Classrooms Project. Partnered with Hanban, the Asia Society aims to build Chinese language teaching at the k-12 level in the U.S. by providing models of success and strategies for growth (Asia Society, 2011). As one of the only two avenues for the application of the Confucius Classrooms, the Asia Society selected 100 American schools and districts with exemplary Chinese

language programs. Once selected, the school receives an annual seed grant of \$10,000 for the first three years, student scholarships for summer camps, funding for teachers and school administrators to participate in professional development workshops, guest teachers from China sponsored by Hanban, and other support (Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning, 2009).

In addition, many organizations, particularly professional language organizations, have done significant work to support the learning of Chinese language and culture; for instance, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has developed a series of Chinese proficiency assessment tools for target audiences. Some focus on speaking for Grades 5-8 students like the CAL Oral Proficiency Exam; some focus on listening and reading skills like the Chinese Proficiency Test. (Center for Applied Linguistics).

More and more educational institutions have started to offer Chinese languages. The percentage of schools offering Chinese increased at both the elementary and secondary levels, representing 3% in elementary schools and 4% in secondary schools (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2008). On the other hand, more and more Americans are learning Chinese. Chinese enrollment in colleges and universities increased sharply by 51% from 2002 to 2006, and enjoyed an additional increase of 18.2% from 2006 to 2009 (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2010). Furthermore, more Americans are heading to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to study Chinese.

**Various perspectives towards the rise of the Chinese language.** There are several factors fueling the surge in Chinese. Crystal (2003) argues that

language dominance is closely associated with economic, technological and culture power. The emergence of China as a world economic powerhouse definitely has significant impact on the rise of Chinese as a more commonly spoken language. As indicated by Cui (2010), international students in China have shown considerable interest in studying finance and economics, where the number of international students has increased from 930 in 2000 to 11,335 in 2008. In addition, China has become the second largest trade partner of America, behind Canada and ahead of Mexico (U.S Census Bureau, 2011).

The rising economic strength and overall prominence of China partially contributes to the Chinese enrollment increase in the U.S. (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin. 2010). Students, parents and educators recognize China as an important country and believe that fluency in its language can open opportunities (Dillon, 2010). Some perceive the learning of Chinese language and culture as a strategy to improve economic competitiveness and to develop global competence of their future workforce (Asian Society & College Board, 2008). In the U.S., it is interesting to find out that the push for Chinese has not only come from Chinese heritage families, but also come from non-Chinese families who want their kids to learn a world language, a language that leads to more career opportunities (Weise, 2007).

Political expediency plays a role as well, particularly tremendous investment of the Chinese government to promote the Chinese language and culture worldwide. Today's world has become increasingly characterized by

multi-polarization and economic globalization, where China has a much more significant role to play than it used to. Rather than being confined to the ideological polarization of capitalism and socialism, China has created a new pathway with one party rule, with “an eclectic approach to free markets and a big role of state enterprise being among its commonly identified ingredients” (Beijing consensus is to keep quiet, 2010). This new model receives enormous attention and has aroused the desire of the rest of the world to learn China and to learn the Chinese language and culture (Cui, 2010).

It has to be noted that the efforts to promote the Chinese language are not always welcome. Actually, the Chinese’s governmental efforts, particularly the Confucius Institute project, have prompted resistance and criticism. Many have perceived Confucius Institutes as part of the Chinese government’s agenda to promote the soft power of the country China (Jain, P. & Groot, G., 2006; Duan, 2008; Starr, 2009; Zhang, 2007; Zong, 2007). While a significant number of American universities actively applied for the Hanban funding to establish Confucius Institutes, some spoke up for fear that the proliferation of the institutes would jeopardize academic freedom and shared governance such as the University of Pennsylvania and University of Chicago (Schmidt, 2010).

### **Comparison of Confucius Institutes and Cultural Organizations of Other Countries**

China is not alone in actively promoting culture diplomacy by establishing cultural organizations like Confucius Institutes. Many countries have done



something; For instance, Goethe Institute by Germany, Alliance Francaise by France, British Council by Britain, Dante Alighieri Society by Italy, and Cervantes Institute by Spain. Actually Hanban borrowed heavily from these long-established culture organizations when developing and creating Confucius Institutes. Confucius Institutes, as a result, have a lot in common with these organizations; yet demonstrate a number of differences at the same time. This section will examine the similarities and differences between Confucius Institutes and the other culture organizations mentioned above.

*Similarities.* All these culture organizations have four aspects in common. Firstly, each of them establishes domestically located headquarters that interfaces with its government and outlines guideline policies for its branches. The headquarters manages funding, including governmental and from non-governmental funding such as donations and endowment, develops programs and instruction materials, approves and allocates funding to individual branches and programs (Baidu Baike, 2008; British Council, 2008; Dante Alighieri Society, Canberra, 2008; Goethe Institute Headquarters, 2008; Institute Cervantes, 2008). All of them are strongly committed to establishing branches worldwide and to serving as many people as possible. Each of the five cultural institutions has one headquarters except the Institute Cervantes that has two headquarters in Madrid and in Alcala De Henares respectively (Institute Cervantes, 2008). Regarding the target audience, they are primarily targeting second language learners and

heritage language learners, though the Dante Alighieri Society traditionally has been more attached to heritage language learners and the Italian expatriate.

Secondly, all of them are non-government and non-profit cultural institutions with the mission to promote their nation's language and culture. They provide very similar services. Regarding language services, they offer various levels of language classes, develop instructional materials, and provide teacher-training support. In addition, they focus on non-degree courses rather than degree courses that are offered traditionally by higher learning institutions. Regarding cultural services, they are very active and creative in offering courses with unique cultural characteristics, represented by paper-cutting workshops at some Confucius Institutes, operas by Dante Alighieri Society, and Beaujolais Nouveau by the Alliance Francaise.

Furthermore, headquarters of these cultural institutions are highly involved in organizing cultural, educational, science and technology exchange programs at national levels. For instance, the British Council China Headquarters, jointly with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office in China and the Chinese government, held the 2005 China-Britain Science and Technology Exchange Year, during which the British Council launched the zero-carbon city project (China Environment Daily, 2005). The Alliance Francaise actively participated in the China-France Cultural Year, a two-year long event that offered over 700 cultural, educational and science and technology events respectively in China and in France (L'Annee De La France En Chine, 2009).

Thirdly, as independent non-government institutions, they all serve as the bridge to connect their national governments with local public needs and respond to the interests of top-down initiatives and grassroots movements. They are closely attached to their national governments and largely align themselves to the governmental agenda ((Baidu Baike, 2008; British Council, 2008; Dante Alighieri Society, Canberra, 2008; Goethe Institute Headquarters, 2008; Institute Cervantes, 2008). On the other hand, they become well connected with the local public and answer to bottom-up initiatives. For example, the British Council is an active player as indicated by the Sino-UK Strategic Collaboration in Higher Education Memorandum of Understanding 2007-2009 (British Council, 2007). More than language and cultural institutions, each of them has been called on to support exchange and collaboration programs between its home nation and other nations in the world.

Attachment to government is also demonstrated from their reliance on government funding, the major revenue for each of the five cultural institutions. For instance, the Goethe Institute headquarters received € 159,760,000 (equivalent to approximately USD 201,249,000) in 2006, representing 76.8% of its total income of the year (Goethe Institute Headquarters, 2008). The Confucius Institute headquarters at Beijing spent 200 million RMB (equivalent to 29,228 million USD) in its branches in 2008 alone (Confucius Institute Headquarters, 2008). Given the difference in each nation's government structure, government funding comes to these cultural institutions through different offices. The

Confucius Institute headquarters receives all its government funding from the Chinese Ministry of Education, while the Goethe Institute from the German Foreign Office and the German Press Office, the Alliance Francaise from the French Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, the British Council from the Britain Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Dante Alighieri Society from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Baidu Baike, 2008; British Council, 2008; Dante Alighieri Society, Canberra, 2008; Goethe Institute Headquarters, 2008).

Finally, all of them grant considerable autonomy and flexibility to individual branches. As long as an individual chapter follows the constitution of the headquarters, it is flexible in designing its own programs and scope of activities, which are largely defined by the demand of the local community and strength of its host institution. The Confucius Institute for Traditional Chinese Medicine (Jiefang Daily, 2008), jointly applied for by the London South Bank University, and the Heilongjiang University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), China and the Harbin Normal University, combines Chinese language and culture learning with traditional Chinese medicine studies. The Confucius Institute at Group T-International University College Leuven (2008) integrates Chinese language learning with engineering education. The British Council in China launched the Climate Cool Media to address the climate change agenda by providing resources for media professionals and journalism students to understand and report on climate change more effectively (British Council China, 2009). The

Dante Alighieri Society at Boston offers Italian cooking class (Dante Alighieri Society of Massachusetts, 2009).

*Differences.* On the other hand, Confucius Institutes demonstrate a number of differences. Compared with the above mentioned culture organizations, the Confucius Institute Project, rather than a standing alone project, has been integrated into a larger initiative, “the Chinese Bridge”, the strategic plan of the Chinese government to promote the Chinese language and culture overseas (Ministry of Education, China, 2005). As one of the nine strategic projects under the Chinese Bridge Initiative, the Confucius Institute project supplements the rest and together provides comprehensive services and resources reaching a wider audience worldwide. For example, Confucius Institutes primarily provide non-credit courses and services to the local community. Another project under the Chinese Bridge, “Center for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Languages in Chinese Universities” focuses completely on teacher training (Ministry of Education, China, 2005). The Confucius Classroom Project solely focuses on teaching of the Chinese language in k-12 schools overseas (Confucius Classroom Application and Management Guidelines, 2009).

In addition, Confucius Institutes allow much more flexibilities and diversity in the operation of individual branches. Hanban highly encourages applicants to be creative and innovative to cater to the very need of the local public. In general, Hanban offers three options in the establishment of a Confucius Institute, either by creating one Hanban itself, or by licensing the

Confucius Institute intellectual property to a third party, or by granting Confucius Institute to joint applicants of a Chinese university partnered with an overseas higher learning institutions, k-12 school districts, or private corporations.

Hanban allows individual branches more flexibility in personnel and self-governance as well, particularly those established jointly by a Chinese higher learning institution and an overseas higher learning institution. While the Confucius Institute constitution requires that each Confucius Institute has to select two directors, one from the overseas partner and the other from the Chinese partner, it is up to the individual branch to decide on the appointments of directors. However, branches of the British Council have to be appointed by Britain Foreign and Commonwealth Office. More interestingly, the British Council in China actually serve as the cultural and education division of the Britain Embassies in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing (British Council in China, 2008).

It has to be noted that British Council, Alliance Française, and Goethe-Institute also play an important role to bring in international students to higher learning institutions in their country. Currently it is not the case yet for Confucius Institute, but Confucius Institute is very likely to follow this path in the future. Given that all these cultural institutions supervises language tests, a requirement of international students, it is reasonable for them to assist in international student recruitment, including language training and tests, orientation programs, and education exhibits.

The most ambitious characteristic of Confucius Institute branches lies in their ultimate goal to become financially independent and support themselves through fee-based courses and services, donations, and so forth. As clearly articulated in the Confucius Institute agreement template, “The Individual Confucius Institute branch should finally assume the sole responsibility for its profits or losses by charging language course fees and other programs” (Hanban, 2008d). When examining the other culture organizations discussed above, they all largely rely on governmental funding to maintain and advance their services and courses regardless the length of their history. They are not expected to pursue financial independence, nor do they attempt to do so. Given that Confucius Institutes did not start until seven years ago and most of them are currently running with the initial five-year funding, it remains uncertain whether and how each individual Confucius Institute branch is going to fulfill the challenge.

Confucius Institutes are also distinct when they are created through university partnerships, the focus of this study. By doing so, the branches become integrated into their host societies via institutional link-ups (Jain & Groot, 2006). Instead, the others usually set up their branches in community hubs or centers, some of which happen to be universities or colleges. Confucius Institutes thus build on the existing strength of their hosting universities and leverage the strength of the hosting universities to reach out the local public. For instance, the Confucius Institute at MMU, the case under this study, was supported and granted by Hanban but was actually managed by MMU.

*Summary.* This section examines the similarities and differences between Confucius Institutes and similar culture organizations of other countries. Most notably, Confucius Institutes are primarily established through university-university partnerships between China and foreign countries. It is the same case for Confucius Institutes created between U.S. and China. The next section provides specific contexts that have characterized Chinese universities and American universities before going into in-depth analysis of the ZZU-MMU CI.

### **Internationalization at Chinese universities and American universities**

The ZZU-MMU CI collaboration is not only influenced by the rise of Chinese language as a commonly spoken language in China and the U.S, but also is shaped by the strong desire of Chinese universities and American universities to internationalize themselves. This section briefly examines the governance, attitudes towards internationalization, and typical internationalization activities for Chinese universities and American universities, in preparation for the detailed analysis of the ZZU-MMU CI.

**Internationalization at Chinese universities.** Modern Chinese universities were not created until the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the aim to modernize China by introducing advanced western sciences and technologies. During the Republican era (1912-1949) the Chinese universities were redesigned by incorporating international curriculum, creating joint programs and joint schools with diverse partners from around the world (Yang, 2004). After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese universities



were largely modeled on the former Soviet model by grouping similar disciplines from multiple universities to establish specialized colleges, resulting in normal universities, polytechnic colleges, medical universities, transportation colleges, and athletic schools (Xue, 2006). Many of them were organized under production ministries. In addition, they were focused on teaching and learning, while research primarily fell under the responsibilities of Chinese academies of sciences and social sciences. They remained largely the same until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century when profound reforms were launched by the Chinese Ministry of Education to release control over individual universities, force and encourage the merging of specialized colleges into comprehensive universities, expand enrollment, and incentivize internationalization (Chen, 2002).

***Governance.*** Currently, individual universities have become increasingly self-independent in internationalization. However, government still plays a critical role in guiding and determining the course of internationalization on campus. One avenue is through funding incentives. For instance, the Chinese Ministry of Education, in addition to special funding projects for selective group of Chinese universities such as the 211 Project and the 985 Project, also fund projects through its Department of International Cooperation and Exchanges. The Ministry of Science and Technology and the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs also serve as additional funding agencies. The former has focused on areas of science and technology, and the later has focused on funding incoming foreign scholars and outgoing Chinese scholars. Given that the Chinese higher education

system is still considerably centralized and supervised by the Chinese Ministry of Education at macro-level, government remains as a key player. Top-down initiatives from government remain effective in influencing universities strategy in global engagement.

The top-down initiatives prove effective within an individual university as well. Administrators both at the institutional level and at college level play a much bigger role in determining academic affairs and student affairs. Faculty are taking an increased role nowadays, yet not even close to the same level as administrators.

*Attitude towards internationalization.* The desire for internationalization is extremely strong in Chinese universities, partly in response to the call of the Chinese government to become world class universities, partly in hope to build capacity and prestige through internationalization. Competition against peer institutions intensifies the race of internationalization. Internationalization has become part of the core function of the Chinese universities together with teaching, learning and research (Chen, 1995).

*Typical internationalization activities on campus.* The organizational structure of universities clearly legitimizes internationalization and acknowledges its strategic function for the entire institution. Most universities in China have a long-established Office of International Affairs (sometimes called the International Office), a centralized administrative unit overseeing institutional wide internationalization. Reporting directly to the vice president or president of

the university, the Office of International Affairs is responsible for international student recruitment and management, hiring outstanding foreign scholars, applying for and managing international research funding and projects, organizing international training and conferences, and supporting incoming and outgoing delegations (Liu, 2010).

In addition to the types of internationalization activities supervised by the Office of International Affairs, Chinese universities persistently promote English not only as a core subject for all students, but also as the language of instruction. Both are perceived essential in internationalizing the curriculum and instruction. Furthermore, more and more faculty and academic units take the initiative to engage in global research, teaching and training.

**Internationalization at American universities.** Compared with Chinese universities, American universities have been characterized by a combination of decentralization and independent governance. Although there is a U.S. Department of Education, it is “not a central ministry for education that oversees all related national and local services” (Crow & Silver, 2008, p. 281). With the lack of higher education planning on a national scale, each state plays a key role in supervising and governing its universities, which have been developed largely in response to local concerns. Although federal funding agencies, such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, do impact universities through open funding competitions, their influence on universities is

much less powerful than that of the Chinese Ministry of Education on Chinese universities.

*Governance.* Within an individual university, decentralization is a distinct characteristic of American universities, though many argue that the central administration has become stronger and stronger and faculty has been playing a less role in governance (Clark, 1998; Marginson & Considine, 2000). The mechanism of academic freedom assures that faculty pursue research and discovery of their choice, and not subject to the imposed agenda from administrators. As a result, top-down initiatives within American universities do not necessarily work well, and internationalization has to be achieved with willing and meaningful collaboration of academic departments (Hudzik, 2011).

*Attitude towards internationalization.* Overall American universities show much less desire for internationalization as Chinese universities do. For decades, American universities have always dominated the scholarship and academia in the world. They have been constantly referred to as the model of greatest universities. They are much less motivated to reach out to their peers abroad. Many do not see internationalization as integral to their identity or strategy. According to American Council on Education 2008 report (Green, Luu, & Burris, 2008), less than 40% of institutions made reference to international or global education in their mission statement, and internationalization simply is not perceived as core function in most American universities.

Moreover, internationalization differs from one American university to another considerably. Each state has its own higher education system with its own agenda, so there is significant diversity between states and between universities. For instance, a small number of large research institutions tend to be on the top of the list in attracting international students, including University of Southern California and New York University (Institute of International Education, 2011).

*Typical internationalization activities on campus.* The organizational structure of American universities does not have a centralized administrative unit equivalent to the Office of International Affairs in Chinese universities. Indeed the major administrative offices involved in internationalization typically include the Study Abroad and Student Exchange Office, the International Student and Scholar Office, and the Immigration and Passport Office, though a university has to assign a high priority and designate a senior individual at the level of vice president or vice provost to effectively manage the full range of internationalization activities, with sufficient staff and resources support for the implementation (Dumont & Rastor, 2010). More importantly, internationalization is mostly initiated by individual faculty or academic units rather than organized efforts of administrative units. Most American universities leaders did not perceive the importance of internationalization until a decade ago (Institute of International Education, 2011). In recent years some have become very entrepreneurial and have created administrative unit similar to the Office of International Affairs in Chinese universities. Some examples are the Vice Provost

Office for International Affairs at Ohio State University and the Vice Chancellor Office for Global Affairs at the State University of New York system.

**Summary.** This section briefly introduced the context for internationalization at Chinese universities and American universities, and reviewed the governance, attitude towards internationalization, and typical internationalization activities for universities in China and the U.S. It outlined the macro-climate under which the ZZU-MMU CI is discussed.

### **The Case: ZZU-MMU Confucius Institute**

In spite of the difference and similarities, Chinese universities and American universities have become increasingly collaborative with each other in various ways. The forms of franchises, articulation, twinning, and study abroad are most popular in China, but institutional partnership has emerged as a new and rapidly developing type of collaboration (Huang, 2003). Rather than collaboration in a single project or program, the institutional partnership aims to produce various types of collaborations at multiple levels and eventually fulfill the goal of comprehensive partnership. In 2005, the Chinese Ministry of Education launched the 10+10 collaboration between ten leading Chinese universities and the ten campuses of the University of California System (Zhang, 2005)

A new mode of the U.S.-China university collaboration has been carried out by creating the Confucius Institute. As of December 2010, 70 Confucius Institutes were established based on university-to-university partnerships between China and the U.S. (Confucius Institute Online, 2010). They were established

with the synergy between the rise of the Chinese language and the increased collaboration between Chinese universities and American universities. ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI, the case of this study, is one of them. By the time ZZU and MMU applied for the establishment of Confucius Institute, 30 Confucius Institute had been established in the U.S. and over 200 in the world.

As a major collaborative program between ZZU and MMU, the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI is established under the sister institution partnership between ZZU and MMU, a comprehensive partnership launched approximately a year before the creation of the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI. The institutional characteristics of ZZU and MMU play a critical role in defining the relationship and contribute significantly to the understanding of challenges and success factors of the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI. Therefore, the next section takes a close look at these two institutions, and examines their history, mission and vision, global engagement policy, organization chart and the development of the partnership.

### **The Institutional Contexts: MMU**

This part provides a general overview of the two institutions involved in the case under study: the American University MMU and the Chinese university ZZU. It examines the mission, ranking, historical and geographic characteristics of MMU and ZZU, as well as their global engagement strategy and objectives. Such information will provide a general overview of MMU and ZZU and presents the general contexts in which the MMU-ZZU CI is discussed and analyzed.

**Introduction.** MMU is a comprehensive public research university in the southwest region of the United States. Currently, MMU offers over 250 undergraduate degree programs and more than 100 graduate degree programs for over 70,000 students through its 14 colleges across four campuses. In 2010, research awards increased by 33 percent over the previous year to a record \$347.4 million, and research expenditures also set a record at \$332.1 million (MMU Annual Report, 2010).

**Mission.** The mission of MMU is to become a model of the Innovative US University that “can be simultaneously excellent and broadly inclusive; that it should engage in use-inspired, as well as curiosity-driven, research; and that it can take significant responsibility for the economic, cultural and environmental health of the communities it serves” (MMU Annual Report, 2010).

**Ranking and status.** As a first-tier research university, MMU has been named among the best universities by various rankings released by multiple organizations, both national and international. For three years in a row, MMU was among the top 100 universities in the world according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Jiaotong University, 2010). It was ranked #132 among national universities by the U.S. News and World Report (2011). *Forbes* placed MMU in top 30 on its list of 100 America’s Best Colleges, according to students’ satisfaction with their overall college experiences (MMU Annual Report, 2010). According to the Institute of International Education,



MMU ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the nation among all colleges and universities chosen by international students (MMU Annual Report, 2010).

**History.** MMU was founded in 1885 as a normal school that began with a class of 33 students in a single room. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was advanced to university status. During the 1960s, MMU began to create new colleges and academic programs and to award doctoral degrees (Finding MMU's history, 2011). By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, MMU had become a research university with three campuses. Its commitment to diversity, quality in undergraduate education, research and economic development led MMU to become a comprehensive research university with significant impact on the state of MM (*Finding MMU's history*, 2011).

In 2002 the current president came into office and started to transform MMU into an Innovative US University that is characterized by access, excellence and impact. Under his leadership the fourth campus, the MMU downtown campus was created. It was also during his tenure that the university has taken major initiatives to promote global engagement, entrepreneurship, sustainability and interdisciplinary research. (*MMU Vision and university goals 2002-2012*, n.d.).

**Campuses.** As one of the three major universities in the state of MM, MMU offers programs throughout its four campuses, including the historical campus, the west campus, the east campus, and the MMC downtown campus. Despite the multiple campuses, MMU is committed to “one university in many

places” that highlights one single identity (*Comprehensive development plan for an Innovative US University final report*, 2006).

The historical campus is an urban campus that hosts more than 50,000 students throughout various programs in arts and design, law, business, liberal arts and sciences, engineering, sustainability, and education. The historical campus is also home to MMU’s athletic facilities (MMU website, n.d.).

The West campus was established in 1984 in a suburban area of MMC. It offers professional and liberal arts degree programs to nearly 9,000 students in business, interdisciplinary arts and sciences and education (MMU website, n.d.).

The East campus was built in 1996 and is home to more than 9,700 students pursuing study in professional and technological programs in business, technology and innovation, arts and sciences, and education (MMU website, n.d.).

The MMU downtown campus is the newest campus and was established in 2006 in the city of MMC. It serves more than 5,000 students in journalism, public affairs, nursing and health, and arts and sciences.

**Strategic development plan: The Innovative US University model.**

The current MMU has been primarily defined and designed by the Innovative US University envisioned by President Brooks when he took office in the fall of 2002. Rather than pursuing the old gold standard of greatest universities such as Harvard, Stanford or the University of Michigan, MMU chose to embark on a different path for the new gold standard– the Innovative US University that is

characterized by eight design imperatives (An Innovative US University: the New Gold Standard, 2002)

- Leveraging our place
- Transform society
- Value entrepreneurship
- Conduct use-inspired research
- Enable student success
- Fuse intellectual disciplines
- Be socially embedded
- Engage globally

**Partnership with ZZU.** Under the imperative of global engagement, ZZU was identified as one of the four core partners, together with the Monterrey Institute of Technology, Dublin City University in Europe, and Nanyang Technical University in Singapore. Each of the four core partners “has the ability to embrace new paradigms unlike more established schools whose organization and institutional culture render them less adaptable” (Brooks, 2006, p. 4).

The relationship between MMU and ZZU grew out of a series of leadership visits. In 2005, the MMU President Dr. Brooks visited ZZU to attend the University President Forum hosted by the Chinese Ministry of Education, and co-hosted by ZZU and MMU (University design forum, n.d.). In 2006, President Li of ZZU led a delegation of approximately twenty deans and vice presidents to MMU, during which the ZZU-MMU sister institution partnership agreement was

signed (MM University-ZZ University partnership designing future of higher education, 2008).

The ZZU-MMU institutional partnership kept expanding with the addition of new projects and programs. At MMU, several colleges and schools became highly involved in energizing the partnership, including the College of Arts and Sciences, School of International Studies, School of Public Programs, College of Fine Arts, and American intensive English Center (MMU Global to host ZZ University showcase, 2009; Smith, 2007).

### **The Institutional Contexts: ZZU**

**Introduction.** ZZU is a comprehensive public research university in the southwest region of China. Currently, ZZU offers 136 undergraduate degree programs, 361 master's degree programs, and 274 doctoral degree programs across its three campuses. It enrolls over 60,000 students, including approximately 40,000 undergraduate students, 20,000 graduate students, and 1,000 international students and students from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao. In 2010, the research investment totaled approximately \$214 million (USD) (ZZU website, n.d.).

**Mission.** ZZU, like other Chinese universities, does not have an explicit mission statement. However, to become a world class university has been permeated into every fabric of ZZU, which serves as the overarching design imperative for ZZU's strategic plan and goal. To provide individual-based education and seek academic excellence, ZZU aims to cultivate talents with solid

liberal arts background, strong academic skills, innovation spirit, and global awareness (ZZU website, n.d.).

**Ranking and status.** As a new rising star, ZZU has been favorably reviewed as one of the best universities in China. It has been ranked among the top 10 for three consecutive years since 2009, according to the China University Review (Wu, 2011). It was ranked No. 16<sup>th</sup> among the best colleges 2011 (Netbig. Inc. 2011). The Shanghai Jiaotong University (2010) placed ZZU in the top 41 among universities in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and ranked ZZU as 378<sup>th</sup> among universities worldwide, the only international ranking that ZZU has entered so far.

**History.** ZZU was founded at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the Chinese-Western School. During the 1920s, the school assumed college functions, offering programs in law and politics, agriculture, foreign languages, engineering, and studies of Chinese ancient civilization, and was named National ZZ University in 1927 (ZZU website, n.d.). In the 1950s when the central government restructured the higher education system, ZZU was transformed into a liberal arts and science college. The current ZZU is a comprehensive research university as a result of merging with the ZZC College of Science and Technology in 1994, and the Southwestern Medical University in 2000.

In 2003, President Li came into office and started to transform ZZU into a first-tier research university in China. It was under his leadership that the current ZZU managed to leverage the strength of the merger and made significant efforts

to promote global engagement (Xie, 2007). During his tenure, the ZZU south campus was created in 2003 as the third campus together with the historical campus and the medical campus.

**Campuses.** ZZU currently has three campuses: the historical campus, the medical campus, and the new ZZU south campus. Each campus is characterized by its unique historical heritage and function.

The historical campus is an urban campus that covers two square kilometers. It mainly hosts third year and fourth year undergraduate students as well as graduate students. It was the original location of the former ZZU before the merge and is still perceived as the main campus of the current ZZU.

The medical campus, originally the campus of the Southwestern Medical University, is located in the downtown area of ZZC. It mainly hosts the programs and students related to medical studies.

The new south campus was created in 2003 in the suburb of ZZC. It mainly hosts first year and second year undergraduate students. The south campus enjoys the best facilities and equipment yet receives the lowest reviews from students for its lack of history and university culture (ZZU south campus overview, 2011).

**Strategic development plan.** ZZU does not have an explicit mission statement. However, as early as in 2004, ZZU outlined its three-step development plan. The first step was to become the best university in West China by 2010. The second step was to establish itself as a top research comprehensive university in

China by 2010. The third step was to become a world class university by the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Featured interview with President Li at the ZZU 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, 2006). To achieve these goals, ZZU highlights several strategic areas including global engagement, intellectual infusion, quality assurance, and individual-based education (Xie, 2005).

**Partnership with MMU.** MMU has been perceived as one of its few U.S. strategic partners since the signing of the sister-institutional agreement in 2006. Over the past several years, ZZU has launched various collaborative programs with MMU in student mobility, scholar exchange, collaborative research, and training programs.

### **The Glonacal Agency Heuristics**

**Identification of stakeholders.** The glonacal agency heuristics highlights the two-way interaction between and among stakeholders at different levels (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Before making any analysis of the interaction, stakeholders have to be identified. This section intends to identify the stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level for the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI collaboration. To improve the validity of the study, the various stakeholders were identified through multiple avenues, including the intuitional documents, the researcher's perspective, and interviews. The multiple sources provide triangulation that helps to reduce the bias of the researcher (Merriam, 2009).

*The institutional documents.* The first part of this chapter provides a brief overview of internationalization at Chinese universities and American universities. The difference in governance, attitude towards internationalization, and typical international activities on campus between American universities and Chinese universities shed light on the stakeholders involved in internationalization on campus. The general overview alone is far from adequate. Each individual university is uniquely defined by its own mission and vision, heritage and strategy. Thus, the stakeholders of internationalization might differ from one campus to another. A close examination at the institutional documents becomes critical to identify the stakeholders of internationalization.

Institutional documents are independent of the research agenda, and they provide an official avenue to tell the real world story (Merriam, 2009). For MMU, the study examined the MMU website; *the MMU Insight*, the MMU official newspaper published daily by the MMU Office of the Vice President for Public Affairs; the *MMU State Press*, the student-operated newspaper at MMU published free every weekday (*The State Press*, n.d.), and the MMU archives at the library. These documents help to identify a preliminary list of the stakeholders at both institutions, particularly at the institutional level and at the college level. However, the institutional documents offer little help to identify specific programs or departments. As a result, the following administrative units and colleges stand out for their significant efforts in global engagement, particularly with ZZU and China.



*MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.* The first one is the MMU President Office, which launched the Innovative US University model that officially recognized global engagement as one of the eight design imperatives at MMU. Global engagement has been initiated top-down by the President Office. It is listed as one of the six themes on the President Office websites for the President's publications, presentations and podcasts (MMU President Office, n.d.).

The second one is the MMU Vice Provost Office for Global Education, which provides visa immigration advice and support for visiting students and scholars, study abroad programs and services, student exchange programs, and U.S. passport application services. It serves inbound international students and scholars and outbound MMU students and scholars (New center to better address global issues, 2009).

The third one is the MMU Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs (VPOREA), which includes the MMU Global Office and MMU Innovation Park. The former identifies international opportunities for researchers and advances institutional partnerships around the world (MMU Global, n.d. ). The latter, in addition to entrepreneurship and venture acceleration services, provides services for global businesses to enter into the U.S. market (Chinese solar panel company visits MMU, n.d.)

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* In addition to the above mentioned three central administrative offices, some academic colleges and schools on

campus have been actively engaged in global engagement. One of them is the College of Arts and Sciences (CLS), particularly its School of International Studies (SIS) that offers foreign languages, literature and cultures. The second one is the International School of Sustainability, which clearly articulates its commitment to tackle global challenges in sustainability and has been advancing a global dimension in its research, education and business practices. The third one is the School of Journalism that launched its global initiative to foster connection with international counterparts (Cronkite Global Initiatives, n.d.). In addition, the College of Engineering promotes global engagement through its office of global outreach and extended education, and has engaged in various executive education programs, international research and funding (Keeler, 2011). The College of Business has two international MBA programs, one in Mexico and the other in China (Kussalanant, 2007).

The College of Public Affairs demonstrates strong international interests in scholarship as well as practice through research and education (College of Public Affairs international directory, 2009). Through its Institute of University Design (n.d.), the College of Public Affairs integrates internationalization into its mission by challenging public universities worldwide to address complex issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The MMU Library has highly supported the global engagement through exhibits, international agreements, and scholar exchange (A Librarian exchange Lin Hu of ZZU, n.d.)

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* To identify stakeholders of internationalization at ZZU, the study reviewed the ZZU website, the ZZU newspaper, and ZZU archives and policy documents. As a result, the following administrative units and academic colleges stand out for their significant efforts in internationalization, particularly with MMU.

The ZZU President Office promotes global engagement aggressively. Among President Li's forty nine strategic presentations during 2004-2011 (ZZU President Office, n.d.), global engagement was frequently highlighted as a critical strategy for ZZU's development. It is perceived as a key indicator of academic capacity and university performance (Xie, 2007).

The ZZU International Office absolutely plays a key role in global engagement at ZZU. It is responsible for the institutional strategic planning, international student recruitment and management, international scholars hiring, international funding application and management, international conferences and training, and making arrangements for incoming and outgoing international delegations (ZZU International Office, n.d.). Essentially the ZZU International Office provides all types of resources and services for global engagement of the institution, faculty and students.

The Provost Office is involved in global international to a moderate level in that it works closely with the International Office to select and manage students for overseas programs such as twinning programs, internships, short-term and long-term study abroad, and student exchange programs.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* In addition to the administrative units, global engagement has permeated into every academic college and school at ZZU. Each has established at least one joint program with foreign universities (Xie, 2007), not including individual-initiated global activities or projects. Actually, global engagement tends to be fulfilled by newly established interdisciplinary institutes or centers that involve multiple colleges. For instance, the International Center for Ecology, Environment and Sustainability was launched in partnership with University of California, University of Washington, Monash University, Yosemite National Park, and the ZZ Park Management Bureau. The Sino-German Joint Center for Energy Research was launched in partnership with Technische Universität Clausthal, and the Sino-US Institute for University Design was launched in partnership with MMU (Xie, 2007).

Although every college has been activity pursuing global engagement, the School of Overseas Education stands out for its exceptional internationalization portfolio. It offers general curriculum for all international students and provides degree and non-degree programs for international students interested in learning Chinese. The other component of the school is to offer pathway programs that train pre-college Chinese students for degree study in overseas universities (ZZU School of Overseas Education). Hence, the school serves as the unit receiving international students and sending Chinese students for overseas studies.

**Summary.** As shown in Table 1, the MMU institutional documents have identified three central administrative units and seven academic colleges with

distinct global engagement portfolios. The three central administrative units include the President Office, the Vice Provost Office for Global Education and the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs. The seven academic units are College of Arts and Sciences, International School of Sustainability, School of Journalism, College of Engineering, College of Business, College of Public Affairs, and the MMU Library.

Table 1

*Stakeholders identified by the institutional documents*

Institution	Level of stakeholders	Stakeholders
MMU	Institutional level	The President Office The Vice Provost Office for Global Education The MMU Global at the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs (VPOREA)
	College level	College of Arts and Sciences (CLS) and its School of International Studies (SIS) The International School of Sustainability School of Journalism College of Engineering College of Business College of Public Affairs the MMU Library
ZZU	Institutional level	The President Office The International Office The Provost Office
	College level	The School of Overseas Education (SOE)

The ZZU institutional documents have identified three central administrative units and one academic college highly engaged in

internationalization, including the President Office, the International Office, and the Provost Office. The School of Overseas Education is identified as the academic unit with outstanding international portfolio, although other academic colleges are globally engaged at varying degrees as well.

*The Researcher's Perspective.* The researcher's personal experience of studying and working at MMU also provided a preliminary understanding of stakeholders of internationalization at MMU. In particular, the researcher has kept memos, field notes and observation notes when she was involved in the ZZU-MMU collaborations, which served as supporting documents to identify the appropriate stakeholders.

Based on the stakeholders identified through the institutional documents, the researcher's personal involvement in the ZZU-MMU relationship enabled her to narrow down the list and focused on the key players specifically in the ZZU-MMU CI collaboration.

*MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.* At the institutional level, the president office at both ZZU and MMU obviously had a critical role. These two offices designed and launched the framework of the ZZU-MMU sister institution collaboration. In 2006, the two presidents signed the sister institution agreement that outlined the partnership between ZZU and MMU.

For MMU at the institutional level, the MMU Global Office under the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs is a main player, given its historical and current connection with ZZU. The Vice Provost Office for

Global Education Services interfaces with ZZU primarily through the student exchange program, which started one year after the ZZU-MMU sister institution agreement was signed.

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* For MMU at the college level, the College of Arts and Sciences (CLS), the largest college at MMU, became engaged in the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI particularly through its School of International Studies (SIS) and its Department of English. The SIS houses all the foreign language programs, including the Chinese language program, which largely determines its fundamental connection with ZZU and with China in general. The Department of English's collaboration with ZZU focused on three areas: American literatures and cultures, the teaching of English to non-native English speakers, and writing for the professions (MMU English forges global connections in China and beyond, 2007).

The College of Public Affairs remained as a key player only because its Institute of University Design, founded jointly by ZZU and MMU, has worked closely with ZZU over the years. The College of Engineering was involved in the student exchange program and has recently expanded its connection with ZZU through the 3+2 bachelor/master acceleration program (ZZU Provost Office, n.d.). The rest, including the International School of Sustainability, the School of Journalism, the College of Business, and the MMU Library, although involved highly in global engagement, were not particularly connected with ZZU.

It has to be noted that the College of Education has made contribution to the ZZU-MMU CI collaboration, not only because its faculty in applied linguistics introduced the SIS to the MM Weekend Chinese School, a big advantage to the Confucius Institute application, but also because it contributed a research assistantship for the MMU-ZZU CI at the beginning, and had one faculty sitting on the advisory board of the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute (MMU Confucius Institute, n.d.).

*MMU stakeholders at the program level.* For MMU at the program level, the Chinese Department houses the ZZU-MMU CI and has been a key stakeholder throughout the collaboration. Furthermore, the Center for Asian Research at CLS contributed to the application for the establishment of the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* The key stakeholders, in addition to the President Office, include its International Office. Given its strategic role in the ZZU global engagement, the ZZU International Office has been constantly interfacing with MMU since the beginning of the ZZU CI. The ZZU Provost Office was involved largely through its work in selecting and managing ZZU students internally for the ZZU-MMU student exchange program. Hence, the Provost Office turned out not involved in the MMU Confucius Institute, thus not a main stakeholder.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* The School of Overseas Education represents the main stakeholder. It is the academic partner of ZZU's four overseas



Confucius Institutes, and it is the college that sends faculty to teach at the MMU CI.

*ZZU stakeholders at the program level.* The Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL) at the School of Overseas Education is the key stakeholder without question. It is the academic home of the faculty teaching Chinese at ZZU’s overseas Confucius Institutes, including the MMU-ZZU CI.

Table 2

*Stakeholders identified by the researcher*

Institution	Level of stakeholders	Stakeholders
MMU	Institutional level	The President Office The MMU Global Office
	College level	The School of International Studies (SIS) The College of Education (COE)
	Program level	The Chinese Department
ZZU	Institutional level	The President Office The International Office
	College level	The School of Overseas Education (SOE)
	Program level	The Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL)

*Summary.* The researcher, thanks to her involvement in the MMU-ZZU collaboration, has narrowed down the list of stakeholders identified by the institutional documents. As a result, the MMU stakeholders include the President Office and the MMU Global Office at the institutional level, the School of

International Studies and the College of Education at the college level, and the Chinese Department at the program level. The ZZU stakeholders include the President Office and the International Office at the institutional level, the School of Overseas Education at the college level, and the Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages at the program level.

*The interviews.* Interviews provide unique information from the insiders involved in the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration. Participants have been personally engaged in the collaboration and have their own unique experience and insights. Interviews are also the core source of data in this study. Therefore, this section examines the interviews to find out who the interview participants would identify as key stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI through two ways. One way is to test whether the stakeholders identified above are confirmed by the interview data. The other way is to disregard the findings of the institutional documents and the researcher's experience, and to completely rely on interview data to look for stakeholders.

*MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.* For MMU stakeholders identified by the institutional documents and the researcher, in-depth reading of the interviews confirmed the President Office and the MMU Global Office as key stakeholders at the institutional level.

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* At the college level, the College of Arts and Sciences (CLS), its School of International Studies (SIS), and the College of Education (COE) were examined closely. After reading the interview s

repeatedly, the researcher found that the College of Education was mentioned four times mainly for the personal contribution of a COE professor, not for the COE contribution as a college. In summary, the individual contribution of the COE professor, a renowned scholar in heritage language and applied linguistics, was fully acknowledged, but the COE was not perceived as a key player of the MMU-ZZU CI.

One participant who was responsible for the MMU China Initiative commented this way:

I think knowing that there were people in the College of Education the MMU Confucius Institute could work with was important, but they were not that much involved, or they were not that engaged in the beginning.

Another participant added:

Dr. Wilson (from COE) sits on the MMU Confucius Institute advisory board. We also worked together on the Chinese heritage language conference.

Another MMU interviewee highly appreciated Dr. Wilson's help by attributing a teaching assistantship position to the MMU-ZZU CI right after its launch, and for the professor's personal support along the way.

Another MMU interviewee mentioned that they (School of International Studies) worked with Dr. Wilson in many ways, including the MMU-ZZU CI project.

Between the College of Arts and Sciences (CLS) and its School of International Studies (SIS), the later turned out to be the key stakeholder at the college level. The MMU College of Arts and Sciences (n.d.) has 12 schools, 7 departments, and three programs. SIS is one of them. Regarding the involvement level with the MMU-ZZU CI, one MMU interviewee commented:

They (the CLS dean's office) talked to us about how to shape the budget to make the maximum use of funds, to create the fewest problems administratively. There was just a general level of help from them....

Another added:

I think the Dean's office was always fairly supportive, but obviously they had to measure in investment on that against investments and many other things..... there was a budgetary challenge. Even hiring the CI director was a budgetary challenge, but I think if we hadn't had the dean's support on that, I think we would have just had a much more challenging situation.

Although both acknowledged the support of the CLS Dean's Office, CLS has been involved in the MMU-ZZU CI mainly through SIS. In another word, CLS was mentioned primarily because it was the parent office of SIS.

At the personal level, the director of SIS has been the one interfacing with MMU-ZZU CI internally and with ZZU externally. He has been working with MMU-ZZU CI not only as an academic manager supervising the Chinese

Department, but also as a faculty of Chinese himself. In his words “my research focuses on the three kingdoms period of China, and personally and professionally I like to work with ZZU”. As a result, SIS, instead of its parent organization CLS, is confirmed as the key stakeholder at the college level.

*MMU stakeholders at the program level.* At the program level, the interviews did not support the Center for Asian Research as a key stakeholder, but confirmed the Chinese Department. The former was disqualified, partly because it was specifically involved in the MMU-ZZU CI only at the time of the application, partly because it was primarily involved through the personal contribution of its director, also a faculty of Chinese affiliated with the Chinese Department.

In addition to the stakeholders discussed above, the interviews added new players at MMU. They included the College of Fine Arts, the Institute of University Design, and the MMU Innovation Park for co-hosting the performance of the ZZU student Art Troupe. All of them were disqualified given that their involvement in the MMU-ZZU CI was simply one-time happenstance and such occasional working relationship does not justify them as key stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* Given the centralized structure of internationalization at ZZU, the interviews completely complied with findings from the institutional documents and the researcher, and confirmed the President Office and the International Office as the two key stakeholders at the institutional level. In addition, the ZZU interviews repeatedly referred to the Vice President for

Global Engagement, who oversees global engagement at ZZU and reports directly to the President. However, the Vice President for Global Engagement does not have a separate office or staff team. Instead, the International Office serves as his staff team. According to the findings of the interviews, the International Office, which is supposed to report to the President directly, actually communicates with the President mainly through the Vice President for Global Engagement on a regular basis. In practice, the Vice President for Global Engagement leads the International Office to design and implement the internationalization on campus. Therefore, the Vice President for Global Engagement and the International Office shares one identity and are perceived as one stakeholder at the institutional level.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* It is self-explanatory that the School of Overseas Education (SOE) is identified as the one and only one key stakeholder at the college level, supported by the institutional documents, the researcher, and the interviewees from MMU and from ZZU. Five MMU participants referred to the SOE faculty and administrators as the ZZU people they have been closely working with. All the ZZU stakeholders frequently referred to SOE when talking about the ZZU-MMU CI. Actually, they were more or less confused why this had to be asked. In their eyes, the SOE was of course the key stakeholder and there was no question about that at all.

The interviews also referred to the College of Literature (COL) in multiple ways. One ZZU participant referred to the COL as the resource for the SOE back-up faculty and prospective faculty, and as the research platform of the SOE.

We have only 31 full time faculty. Because every year we have some faculty teaching at our overseas Confucius Institutes and our student enrollment has increased sharply in recent years, we often face the challenge of shortage of full time faculty. Whenever it happens, the College of Literature is the place for us to hire adjunct faculty to share our teaching load, because some of the faculty have the expertise and skills we need for our teaching ..... You know, the COL offers master's and doctoral degree programs in teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages. We are interested in recruiting their best graduates to our faculty team. Of course it is open competition with candidates from elsewhere. .... SOE currently offer undergraduate degrees only and all our students are international students. But our faculty are required to do research, and they often collaborate with faculty from COL for research projects. On the other hand, we are sort of like the research site for some of the COL faculty. So our faculty work closely anyway, personally and professionally.

Two other ZZU participants were very positive of the COL's contribution to the MMU-ZZU CI. Both mentioned a project that a renowned COL faculty was invited to teach graduate courses for a semester at MMU, which was very well received. Also, three MMU interviewees spoke of this COL faculty and expressed interest in having him longer at MMU.

Although the ZZU COL was mentioned fairly often in the interviews, it was not identified as a key stakeholder of the MMU-ZZU CI. One reason lies in the fact that the MMU-ZZU CI primarily focuses on Chinese undergraduate teaching. Graduate level teaching and scholar exchange does not fall into this core function. Furthermore, the ZZU COL became involved in the MMU-ZZU CI primarily upon request from the ZZU International Office, and the involvement so far has stayed at the individual level, not college level.

The ZZU College of Fine Arts was also mentioned in the interviews. However, it became involved in the MMU-ZZU CI when it responded to the request of the ZZU International Office to send its student art troupe to MMU to perform for the local public, sponsored by the Hanban and the ZZU International Office. Therefore, the ZZU College of Fine Arts was not a key stakeholder either.

*ZZU stakeholders at the program level.* The SOE has two departments. One is the Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL) and enrolls international students only. The other is the pathway programs that trains pre-college Chinese students for degree study in overseas universities. The interface with ZZU's Confucius Institute takes place only at CTCSOL, making CTCSOL the only key stakeholder at the program level at ZZU.

*Summary.* The interviews further narrowed down the list of stakeholders identified by the institutional documents and the researcher. In the end, the MMU stakeholders include the President Office and the MMU Global Office at the



institutional level, the School of International Studies (SIS) at the college level, and the Chinese Department at the program level. For ZZU, the three resources have confirmed the President Office and the International Office as key stakeholders at the institutional level, the School of Overseas Education at the college level, and the Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages at the program level.

Table 3

*Stakeholders identified by interviews*

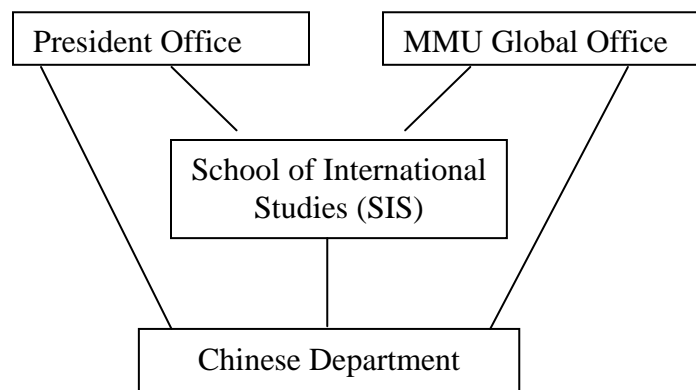
Institution	Level of stakeholders	Stakeholders
MMU	Institutional level	The President Office The MMU Global Office
	College level	The School of International Studies (SIS)
	Program level	The Chinese Department
ZZU	Institutional level	The President Office The International Office
	College level	The School of Overseas Education (SOE)
	Program level	The Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL)

**Profiles of Stakeholders.** The previous section identified the main stakeholders at MMU and ZZU through the institutional documents, the researcher, and the interviews. This section, following the framework of the glonacal agency heuristics, examines the profile of each stakeholder along the four dimensions: reciprocity, layer and conditions, strength, and spheres.

**Reciprocity.** Reciprocity refers to the interconnections between the different stakeholders and layers (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). In the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration, reciprocity is highlighted in three ways. One focuses on the reciprocity between stakeholders at different levels within one university, namely the vertical interaction within the institution. The second refers to reciprocity between stakeholders at the same level between MMU and ZZU, namely the horizontal connection across ZZU and MMU; the third specifies the horizontal connection within MMU or ZZU.

*Vertical interaction within MMU.* The MMU stakeholders include the President Office and the MMU Global Office at the institutional level, SIS at the college level, and the Chinese Department at the program level. Between the three levels, stakeholders interact with each other to jointly define the course of the MMU-ZZU CI. The vertical interaction includes that of the President Office-SIS, MMU Global Office-SIS, SIS-Chinese Department, the President Office-Chinese Department, and the MMU Global Office-Chinese Department.

*Figure 1.* Vertical interaction among stakeholders within MMU



As one of the two institutional stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI, the MMU President Office conceptualized the development strategy of MMU, which highlighted global engagement as one of the eight design imperatives (An Innovative US University: the New Gold Standard. 2002). It is also the MMU President Office that launched the China initiative and selected ZZU as one of the four strategic partners of MMU (Kullman & Engle, 2007). In response to the China Initiative, the SIS became actively connected with ZZU to explore collaborative opportunities. The Director of the SIS traveled to ZZU many times, either with the President or with other SIS faculty. The SIS also received incoming ZZU delegations (The 2006 China Trip Report, n.d.). Immediately when Hanban was identified as a potential funder for the establishment of Confucius Institutes, SIS proactively worked with ZZU to put together the application.

It has to be noted that the interaction is not unidirectional. SIS, particularly two champion faculty specialized in Chinese studies, provided advice for the President in shaping the MMU China Initiative and the MMU-ZZU collaboration in general. They both sat on the President China Council that guided MMU's engagement strategy for China across the university (China Council, 2007).

The other vertical interaction between the institutional level stakeholders and the college level stakeholder occurs between the MMU Global Office and SIS. On the one hand, the MMU Global Office works closely with the President Office to implement the global initiatives; on the other hand, it coordinates the

specific MMU-ZZU projects, including those involved the SIS. It interconnects with SIS, but at a modest level.

As part of SIS, the Chinese Department offers the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in Chinese. It also offers the Chinese language flagship program for American students with higher levels of Chinese competency. SIS and the Chinese Department have worked closely with each other to advance the Chinese program. As recalled by two MMU interviewees, it was not until after 2006 that the Chinese Department started offering the doctoral program and the four-year B.A. instead of the three-year B.A. program offered previously. Student enrollment has increased drastically ever since to the current 60 students majoring in Chinese.

Given the organizational structure, the President Office does not interact with the Chinese Department very often. One way was through the President Office's matched funding for the application of establishing the MMU-ZZU CI. The other was the President's personal participation in some of the MMU-ZZU CI's landmark events. For instance, the MMU President attended the MMU-ZZU CI launch ceremonies at the MMU campus and at the ZZU campus. Overall, there is hardly any direct connection between the President Office and the Chinese Department, and the SIS serves as the mediator connecting them all together.

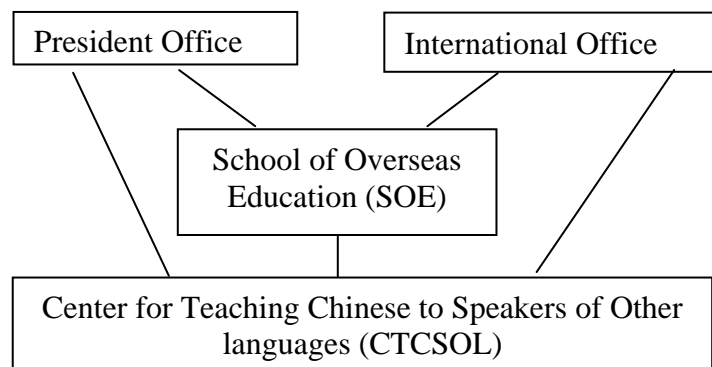
The MMU Global Office, at that time a subunit called the China Initiative team under the President Office, worked closely with faculty of the Chinese Department to develop the application for the establishment of the MMU-ZZU CI. Immediately after the MMU-ZZU CI was launched and the China Initiative

was transferred to the MMU Global Office, the MMU Global Office interacted with the MMU-ZZU CI by sitting on the MMU-ZZU CI advisory board, co-sponsoring some of the MMU-ZZU CI activities, and assisting in coordinating the ZZU delegation visits. In summary, the MMU Global Office worked very closely with the Chinese Department before the MMU-ZZU CI launch, but has been connected with the Chinese Department at minimal level thereafter.

Overall, strong interconnection is likely to be seen at the levels immediately above or below, for instance, the interaction of the MMU Global Office-SIS, SIS-Chinese Department; however, the President Office rarely interfaces with SIS. Even if it happens, the connection has been primarily through the MMU Global Office. There doesn't seem to be frequent interaction between the institutional level stakeholders and the program level stakeholders.

*Vertical interaction within ZZU.* The ZZU stakeholders include the President Office and the International Office at the institutional level, the School of Overseas Education (SOE) at the college level, and the Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL) at the program level.

Figure 2. Vertical interaction among stakeholders within ZZU



The stakeholders at the three levels work with each other to shape the design and development of the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration. The between-level interaction includes that of the President Office-SOE, the International Office-SOE, SOE-CTCSOL, the President Office-CTCSOL, and the International Office-CTCSOL.

Similar to the landscape of the MMU, the ZZU President Office is the policy maker for global engagement on campus. ZZU's strategic plan has followed a series of five-year plans as does the Chinese Ministry of Education. Therefore, the President office's 11<sup>th</sup> five-year plan (2006-2010) outlined the development strategy of ZZU, followed by the recently launched 12<sup>th</sup> five-year plan (2010-2015).

The President Office does not directly interface with SOE very often, unless in some SOE events that have implication for the entire university, for instance, the launch of the MMU-ZZU CI. Indeed, the President Office primarily interacts with the International Office, with the latter closely working with the SOE in shaping and implementing projects and programs related to the MMU-ZZU CI.

The President Office tends not to interact with specific academic colleges directly. Yet, the International Office appears as the mediating agency that interfaces upwards with the President Office and downwards with SOE. The International Office is very closely connected with the SOE. As put forward by SOE interviewees:

We have a special set-up here. The head of our International Office also serves as our dean. That helps extremely. We follow the direction of the International Office. They set up the plan and strategy, and we execute them. They are like the commander, and we are like the general.

When we need support from other colleges for our Confucius Institute activities, we always go to the International Office for their help. They are in a better position and are much more powerful to request staff support from other colleges. We don't.

The International Office represents us to communicate with the President Office. For instance, when the ZZU delegation visited MMU for the MMU-ZZU CI launch, the International Office made sure the President was on board, organized the delegation members, paid for the travel, and lined up the agenda.

The SOE is closely connected with the CTCSOL. In the interviews, all ZZU participants actually referred to SOE as CTCSOL, unless the researcher particularly asked for the Pathway Program. In a word, SOE shares the same identity as CTCSOL and they are frequently used interchangeably. For instance, the SOE website only places a link to the Pathway Program site, but the link leads to a completely separate website from SOE with totally different background design. On the SOE website (n.d.), the SOE overview solely focuses on the CTCSOL faculty, program, and students except for one sentence mentioning

“ZZU decided to merge the Pathway Program into SOE for consolidating pre-college education.” As a result, SOE, to a large extent, has become interchangeable with CTCSOL.

Not surprising, there is rare direct connection between the President Office and the CTCSOL. Rather, the interactions between the two are indirect and often fulfilled via the International Office and SOE.

The International Office interacts with CTCSOL indirectly and mostly via the SOE. As said by an interviewee from the International Office, the International Office interfaced primarily with academic managers at SOE, including the dean and associate deans of SOE. In addition, during the period when the SOE faculty are teaching at the ZZU’s overseas Confucius Institute, the faculty actually have more opportunities to interface and communicate with the International Office staff, who visit MMU three or four times a year on average.

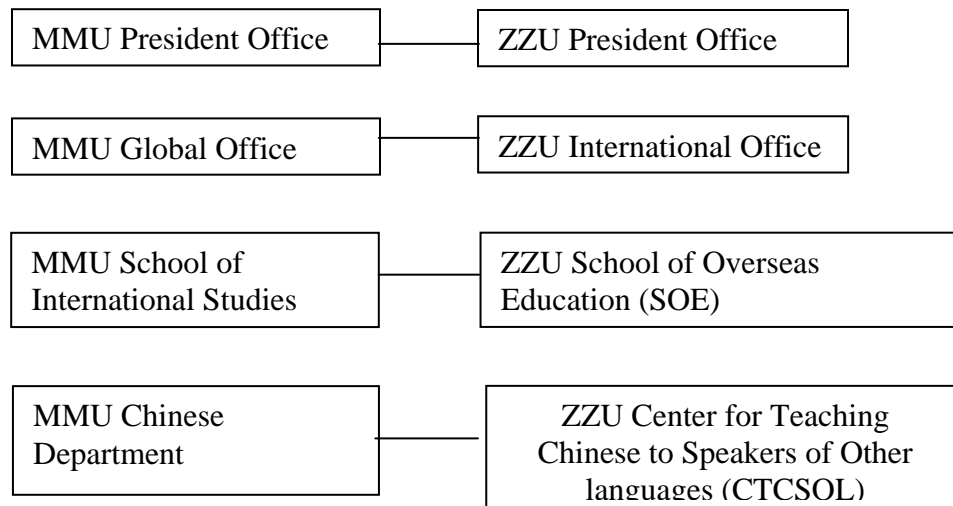
The vertical interconnection within ZZU follows the same pattern as that within MMU. The President Office rarely interacts with other stakeholders except the Global Office of the International Office. For the other stakeholders, strong interconnection tends to occur at the levels immediately above or below; for instance, the International Office and SOE, SOE and the CTCSOL. Indirect interconnection takes place to stakeholders at the levels apart from each other, but on a very infrequent basis, including that of the International Office and CTCSOL.



*Horizontal interaction between institutions.* The first type of horizontal interconnection occurs between MMU stakeholders and the ZZU stakeholders at the same horizontal level, be it the program level, the college level, or the institutional level.

Given each MMU and ZZU has two institutional level stakeholders, the horizontal interaction at the institutional level include that of the MMU President Office-ZZU President Office, MMU Global Office-ZZU International Office, MMU President Office-ZZU International Office, and MMU Global Office-ZZU President Office.

*Figure 3.* Horizontal interactions among stakeholders between MMU and ZZU



The MMU President Office and ZZU President Office have demonstrated significant interconnection with each other. As the policy makers of their campus internationalization strategy and the main drivers for the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, the two President Offices and the two presidents created a

very close relationship with each other. Five interviewees attached significant attention to the relationship between the two presidents and between the two President Offices.

One MMU interviewee said:

The primary reason for partnering with ZZU was that the Chinese Ministry of Education suggested that the two presidents would get along and that they had some similar ideas.... The idea that they would get along, and also the idea that both universities are in the west, and are relatively young, and need to be entrepreneurial ... .President Brooks visited ZZU and met President Li. It worked out well...

One ZZU interviewee expressed the same idea after being asked how the ZZU-MMU sister institution relationship got started.

Of course it had a lot to do with our two presidents. Also, both ZZU and MMU are growing very fast, and they share a lot in common in terms of size, academic strength, and development strategy, plus the match-making of the Chinese Ministry of Education..... Our president truly values the relationship with MMU. We have other partner universities in the U.S., but our President always put MMU as the top priority.

The MMU Global Office and the ZZU International Office, both serving as advisors to their President Office as well as the action agencies to implement the President Office's global engagement strategy, have worked closely with each

other. These two offices share a similar mission and agenda, and are both responsible for maintaining and advancing the ZZU-MMU collaboration. They work closely to identify specific collaborative opportunities, outline the collaborative plans and working mechanisms to advance the sister institution partnership. They each serve as the catalysts as well as internal coordinators within their university to move forward the collaborative projects and programs. In the interviews, they each identified the other as the stakeholder they most frequently interacted with and as the office-to-go-to whenever something comes up.

At the college level, the MMU SIS and the ZZU SOE interacted fairly frequently. These two stakeholders designed the vision, strategy, and budget of the MMU-ZZU CI and developed the working protocols in implementing the ZZU CI project. They both agreed that the MMU-ZZU CI, in addition to the typical culture outreach programs, should build into the MMU Chinese program and promote scholarly work as well, a creative approach that was highly spoken of by stakeholders at both MMU and ZZU.

One MMU interviewees said:

I think that the heart of what we're doing is the Chinese language program. And one way that the Confucius Institute can help our programs, that it has to be considered as helpful to the ASU programs. It's not the other way around. So the way that it has helped to build the

MMU Chinese program is that they make more possibilities, more encouragement for students, for teachers.

Another MMU interview thought it would be a major problem to separate the Confucius Institute from the Chinese program

For many Confucius Institutes in American universities, they're not well integrated with the Chinese programs, and I think that's the single difference here at MMU, because in some places, the Confucius Institute is offering Chinese using Confucius Institute materials with absolutely no training for the teachers at the same place where regular Chinese programs are being offered, and it creates a real problem

The ZZU interviews agreed completely, and they commented:

Our CI is designed to meet the demands of MMU, including curriculum, selection of guest teachers, and teaching methodologies. Basically, CI is by no means to replace the Chinese program at ZZU or to create something completely separate from their Chinese program. It is going to be extremely difficulty to operate that way. For us, we follow the vision and design of ZZU and we ask for what they need and how we can be helpful.

At the program level, the MMU Chinese Department and the ZZU Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL) interfaced with each other on a daily basis. They worked together to design the Chinese curriculum, teaching methods, summer study program at ZZU, and students

advising. As indicated by the interviews, the MMU Chinese faculty shared the syllabus of each course with the guest faculty from ZZU, communicated with them about the lesson plans and teaching methods, as well as characteristics of the MMU Chinese program students.

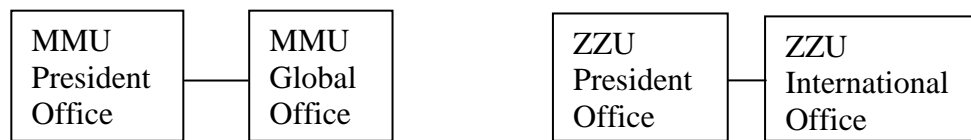
In summary, the horizontal interaction is very strong between counterpart offices of ZZU and MMU at the same level, such as the above discussed MMU President Office-ZZU President Office, and the MMU Global Office-ZZU International office, the MMU SIS - the ZZU SOE, the MMU Chinese Department-the ZZU CTCSOL. Otherwise, the interaction goes down significantly across institutions at different levels. When examining the connection between the MMU President Office and the ZZU International Office, or between the MMU Global Office and the ZZU President Office, there is hardly any direct interconnection.

*Horizontal interaction within institutions.* Only one stakeholder has been identified at each level at both MMU and ZZU except the institutional level stakeholders. At MMU, the two institutional stakeholders include the President Office and the MMU Global Office. At ZZU, the two institutional stakeholders are represented by the President Office and the International Office. The horizontal interconnection between the two stakeholders within one institution is worth studying.

The relationship between the MMU President Office and the MMU Global Office is very similar to that between the ZZU President Office and the ZZU

International Office. In both cases, the President Office makes policy and develops university-wide global engagement strategy, and the Global Office or the International Office serve as the action agency to design, identify, and implement specific international programs and projects while providing advice and bottom-up feedback back to the President Office.

*Figure 4.* Horizontal interaction between stakeholders within institution

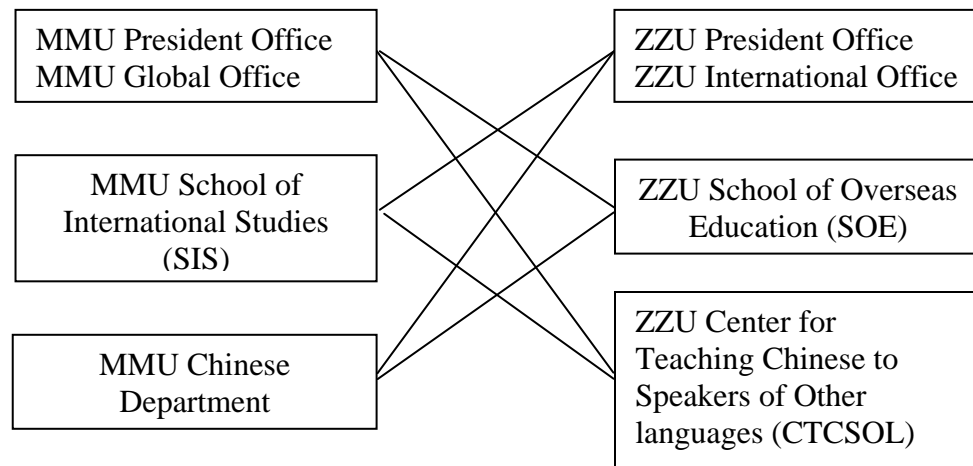


The International Office at MMU and the Global Office at ZZU share similar mission, which determines their close interconnection with their President Office respectively. However, compared with the ZZU International Office being an independent, long-established, central global engagement office on campus, the MMU Global Office has experienced quite a complicated journey and it has never been advanced to the power equivalent to that of the ZZU International Office. Nor has the MMU Global Office ever achieved the same level of authority and importance within MMU as that of the ZZU International Office at ZZU. The detailed history of the MMU Global Office will be examined in analyzing the layers and conditions of stakeholders.

*Cross-level interaction between institutions.* Compared with vertical and horizontal interaction as discussed above, the cross-level interaction between institutions overall is less strong. First of all, cross-institution interaction between institutional level stakeholders and program level stakeholders turn out to be the

weakest. Secondly, cross-institution interaction between intuitional level stakeholders and college level stakeholders are modest. Regarding cross-institution interaction between college level stakeholders and program level stakeholders, SIS has been working very closely with CTC SOL on selecting qualified teachers to teach at the MMU-ZZU CI. SOE has been working with the MMU Chinese Department closely to offer the summer intensive Chinese program at ZZU campus for MMU students.

Figure 5. Cross-level interaction among stakeholders between institutions



**Strength.** The glonacal agency heuristic proposes strength as the second dimension of the framework, which refers to “the magnitude and directness of the activity and influences as well as the resources available to agencies and agents” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 292). Despite the two-way influence between stakeholders, the magnitude of influence varies and goes uneven along the different directions. More importantly, each stakeholder demonstrates varying degree of resources, be it economic, cultural or academic resources (Marginson &

Rhoades, 2002). While the previous section on reciprocity has touched upon the scale of influence, this section will closely examine the resources of each stakeholder involved, and take a further look at the magnitude and directness of the influences.

*MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.* The President Office enjoys good economic resources and organizational. At the launch of the MMU-ZZU CI, the President Office provided matching funding for the first five years of the MMU-ZZU CI. Actually, the major global initiatives at the beginning, including the MMU China Initiative and the MMU Pan-American Initiative, were both launched and funded by the President Office, until they were merged into the MMU Vice President Office for Global Engagement (An Innovative US University: the New Gold Standard, 2002 November).

The President Office has a special fund called the President Office Strategic Fund, which can be applied to any project the MMU President selects. Different from other sources of funding such as federal or state funding, donation or endowment that are restricted to specific uses, the President Office Strategic Fund gives him abundant flexibility and can be used as seed funding, building partnerships and alliances (Frequently asked questions about President Club, n.d.).

The President Office also has plenty of organizational resources due to its power and authority. For instance, a message from the President Office is highly likely to receive more attention. The President Office's commitment for the



MMU-ZZU CI and for the MMU-ZZU partnership conveys a clear message to the MMU community of the importance of the relationship.

The President Office has large staff support capacity as well. It hired directors, who also had their staff team, to specifically develop the China Initiative and the Pan-American Initiative. The latter, before it was eventually merged into the Vice President Office for Global Engagement, developed into an independent office with 11 full time staff, research associate and student workers at its peak.

However, the President Office does not have much academic resources as an administrative unit. It partially explains why the President Office is good at launching new initiatives, yet the academic units have to be motivated to sustain those new initiatives. One MMU interviewee put it this way:

Leadership has to be the driver at the beginning, but eventually leadership has to step away and faculty have to become the driver. At the creating stage, the leadership plays a bigger role, but in the sustaining stage, faculty have a bigger role.

The status and resources of the President Office largely determines its position in interacting with other administrative offices. It has a considerable impact on the MMU Global Office, and the impact is much stronger from the President office to the MMU Global Office than vice versa. When interfacing with SIS, the President Office again demonstrates stronger influence on SIS or on the Chinese Department than the other way around.

The MMU Global Office, formerly called the Strategic Partnership Office, has never enjoyed sufficient financial resources. Originally, the MMU Global Office was created in 2006 as part of the Vice President Office for Global Engagement, a central administrative office to oversee the institutional-wide international projects and programs. As originally planned, the Global Office took over the China Initiative and the Pan-American Initiative soon after, the two major and earliest initiatives launched and funded by the President Office. By the time of the transfer, the Global Office was expected to maintain and sustain both initiatives, particularly the strategic partnership with ZZU and with a major Mexican university. Yet, the transfer did not come with same level of financial support as the President Office had done to both initiatives. The level of financial support as well as staff support decreased considerably. Indeed, the President Office intended to seed these initiatives with the “intent of attracting additional financial support, bridging the project from conceptualization to self-sufficiency” (Frequently asked questions about President Club, n.d.). The Global Office was entrusted with the responsibility to seek additional resources to sustain these initiatives. These China Initiative and the Pan-America initiative were both spin-offs from the President Office, and required the Global Office to generate tremendous resources to sustain them. On the one hand, the Global Office had to demonstrate its value to justify its budget, and on the other hand, it had to generate revenue to keep running its programs and projects. Funding has always remained as a significant challenge of the Global Office, even after it was

remerged into the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs in 2009, as indicated by an MMU interviewee.

Many of the projects that we had envisioned were simply were not feasible without a real clear funding and business model, which we sort of lacked in the initial strategic partnership model..... It's very difficult for U.S. universities and Chinese universities to partner, come up with innovative programs, and then find the funding to actually implement those programs..... I'm sure that there's places that are funding these kinds of things. Getting that together, it's hard to do. And so that's not exclusively Chinese universities. I think that's the reality of internationally-based universities in one place.

The Global Office has not been able to create much cultural resources either. Before 2009 when it was called the Strategic Partnership Office, it had to struggle to create its identity among faculty and students, a difficult task never accomplished when its parent office, the new Vice President Office for Global Engagement (VOPGE), suffered from identity problem. Then came the reorganization in late 2009 when the OVPGE was de-established and the Global Office became part of the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs, thus had to redefine its mission to comply with the research agenda of its new home. In addition, all the staff at the Global Office were newly hired after global engagement became a design imperative in 2002, and had a maximum of six years of working experience with ZZU. Essentially, it was a new team in a

new office promoting the new global engagement initiative. The Global Office suffered from its vague identity and failed to accumulate adequate cultural resources on campus.

The Global Office suffered from lack of staff support as well. It had five full time staff, one half-time research associate, and three student workers at its peak, but was reduced to a small office of two full time staff at the time of transfer to the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs in late 2009.

When interfacing with other stakeholders, the Global Office largely follows the President Office, and sometimes proposes strategic plan back to the President Office. When interacting with SIS, the Global Office helps coordinates the SIS projects related to ZZU or other global partners, and the influence is two-way directional and the magnitude of influence is small on both directions. The interconnection between the Global Office and the Chinese Department is minimal with little influence on each other.

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* The SIS enjoys plenty academic resources as an academic unit, but has to measure its investment among multiple projects and initiatives within the school. Firstly, it attempts to leverage the institutional support to serve its mission. For instance, it worked together with the President Office to negotiate with the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Sciences, the parent office of SIS, and the Provost Office on the quick hiring of a champion faculty for the MMU-ZZU CI. Secondly, it has been able to take advantage of institutional initiatives to increase its resources and capacity. The

China Initiative is a case in point, which brought in new faculty and new funding to support the Chinese language, culture and scholarship.

The SIS influenced the President Office by helping define the China Strategy, but the influence is very modest. It works with the MMU Global Office to move forward the global projects and programs interesting to both SIS and the university. SIS does impact the Chinese Department considerably. For instance, the MMU-ZZU CI, as a project under the Chinese Department, boosted the interest of learning Chinese in the public and assisted in creating Chinese programs at k-12 schools, which eventually helped to build up the student pipeline at the Chinese Department and the SIS in general.

*MMU stakeholders at the program level.* The Chinese Department has suffered from shortage of teachers. Currently it has only two full time lectures for over 200 students. The MMU-ZZU CI, by bringing in ZZU faculty to teach Chinese at MMU, largely relieves the stress.

When interacting with other stakeholders, the Chinese Department has much weaker influence on the President Office, or the MMU Global Office than the other way around. It impacts SIS to a modest level, but the SIS obviously has much more influence on the Chinese Department.

It has to be noted that the nationwide economic downturn hit MMU particularly hard, and the MMU global engagement activities was drastically reduced. From 2008-2011, the state budget cut amounted to a reduction in MMU's state appropriation of \$110 million, representing a 22% reduction in

absolute funding (Budget actions summary for FY08 to FY11, 2011). To deal with the budget cut, MMU had to lay off staff, adopt a furlough program, and go through a series of reorganizations, including the dis-establishment of the Vice President Office for Global Engagement in 2009, after three years of its creation.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* Given the centralized structure of Chinese universities, the ZZU President Office is very resourceful and powerful. In particular, as one of the leading universities in China, ZZU has received special funding from the national 211 Project and the 985 Project, and a large portion of those funding was channeled to support internationalization on campus. During the 2001-2005 alone, ZZU received \$34 million USD to expand its academic capacity and faculty strength (The 10<sup>th</sup> five year plan of ZZU). More importantly, ZZU has put global engagement as a top priority of the university, and the President Office aggressively advances internationalization through its International Office.

The President Office does not have a staff team specifically for global engagement. Instead, the International Office serves as the staff team and the action agency of the President Office to design and implement the internationalization strategies and projects.

The President Office enjoys long-established organizational resources due to its power and authority. Its focus on internationalization and on the MMU partnership has been clearly articulated among the ZZU faculty, administrators and students. A ZZU interviewee commented:

We have some other US partners. However, regardless of the kind of projects or program we do with them, the relationship has never reached such high strategic level as with MMU. In another word, from the eyes of our president, MMU is always number one, always the top priority.

The President Office has considerably more impact on any other offices it has interfaced with, including all the rest stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI.

Compared with the MMU Global Office, the ZZU International Office, first of all, is entrusted with much broader responsibility, power and financial resources. Essentially, it serves as the centralized office for international students, international research, international partnership and strategy, and student mobility programs and international student housing. Although the International Office is an equivalent office to academic colleges in terms of organization structure, it acts as a mega-office above academic colleges. Hence, the International Office has the capacity to initiate and implement a variety of programs and projects, including the overseas training program for all its middle level administrators, overseas training for junior faculty, overseas summer and winter camps for students, twinning programs with overseas universities, Confucius Institutes, and so forth.

ZZU has a particular stronger International Office. One reason lies in the fact that the academic faculty in Chinese universities have been traditionally underpowered compared with their peers in the U.S. The administrative units in Chinese universities have been traditionally empowered to a more privileged

position. The other reason is explained by the supreme high value attached to global engagement at ZZU. The importance of global engagement as a campus wide strategy has been supported by the interviews.

One ZZU Interviewee at the institutional level said:

We indeed value global engagement very highly, and we focus on and invest on global engagement probably more than most of our peer institutions in China. Due the geographic location, foreign universities and students won't come to us. We are not as lucky as those universities in Beijing or Shanghai who simply would be connected. We have to be aggressive and proactive to create our partnerships. As our president said in our strategic plan, global engagement is our short-cut to become a world class university. We don't want to follow or imitate the best universities in China. We want to skip them and interconnect with the best universities in the world.

The other interviewee at the college level put it this way:

You will get it immediately why ZZU is so focused on global engagement if you take a look at China's map. We are located in the inner land, not the coast areas. In the agriculture era, it was completely fine, but not any more in such a globalized world. It is self-evident to us all that our university, and our region, will lag far behind without global engagement. We particularly have a pressing need to do so, perhaps not for Beijing or Shanghai, but we definitely have to. We



have to be proactive. See, if a foreign student is interested in coming to China, Shanghai, Beijing, or Guangzhou are always the first choice in their mind. They don't really know us. We have to be very aggressive and proactive to get us known. Actually, we have no choice. Also, we are not as good as the Tsinghua University of Beijing University in China; however, foreigners overall do not really know much about Chinese universities. To some extent, we are pretty much at the same place as any other Chinese universities. Therefore, global engagement is pretty much a leap-frog strategy for us. We are partnering with very good foreign universities. In this way we can improve our branding, capacity, etc., so we can catch up with and even surpass Beijing University or Tsinghua University.

The third interviewee at the program level further verified how global engagement has been highly valued at ZZU as follows:

Collaborations such as the MMU Confucius Institute absolutely help publicize ZZU in the U.S. For instance, we teach Chinese here at MMU, and MMU students have learned from us not only the Chinese language, but also the Chinese culture, and about ZZU and ZZ province.

Secondly, the International Office has enjoyed adequate cultural resources. As an office with over thirty years of history on campus, it has been widely recognized both by the executive leadership and by the faculty and students.

Identity has never been an issue as was with the MMU Global Office. In addition, both the director and the deputy director have been working in this office for over twenty years, enabling them to become connected with the rest of the university very well. Also, the Vice Executive Dean of the SOE used to work at the International Office for 12 years and was personally well connected with the director and the deputy director of the International Office.

Thirdly, the International Office has a strong staff team, including 38 full time staff and several other student workers. The Office is divided into eight divisions: Director's Office; Division of International Scholars responsible for incoming international scholars; Division of Overseas Training responsible for outgoing ZZU employees; Division of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Affairs; Division of International Strategic Projects; Division of International Students; Division of Medical Projects; Division of International Academic Exchange (ZZU International Office, n.d.).

Given the status and resources of the ZZU International Office, it has much more power than the MMU Global Office on campus. The International Office managed to build itself as a centralized and consolidated administrative unit with considerable flexibility in leveraging resources of different projects and programs to maximize the global engagement activities (Wang, 2009). The strong connection accrued over the years with the ZZU academic side allows the International Office to build trust and rapport with faculty and to be able to identify faculty's interest as well. When interacting with the other ZZU

stakeholders, the ZZU International Office tends to influence others more than the other way around, except for the ZZU President Office.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* The SOE, a new and small school established in 2001, has benefited from the ZZU global engagement strategy and developed very fast in the past ten years. It has received generous support from the International Office in staff resource, financial resources, and project resources. Due to the student enrollment expansion and the increased number of faculty being sent abroad to teach in ZZU's overseas Confucius Institutes, the SOE, through the help of the International Office, has been granted privilege in faculty promotion and new faculty recruitment than other academic schools. In terms of financial resource, the SOE has been heavily subsidized by the International Office to cover its faculty's international travel. The International Office also provides project support to the SOE. For instance, the International Office connected the SOE to the four overseas partners to apply for the establishment of the ZZU's Confucius Institutes, and coordinated the connection with Hanban, the funding agency for Confucius Institutes.

The SOE rarely interfaces with the ZZU President Office. Rather, it works extremely closely with the International Office. Actually, the head of the International Office also serves as the Dean of the SOE. An independent academic college as it is, the SOE, to some extent, is like an academic unit affiliated with the International Office, a pleasant relationship the SOE has enjoyed as expressed by the ZZU interviewees at the college level:

We have a special set-up here. The head of our International office also serves as our dean. That helps extremely. We follow the direction of the International Office. They set up the plan and strategy, and we execute them. They are like the commander, and we are like the general.

SOE is like an interdisciplinary unit, both academic and administrative. As you may notice, the ZZU website lists administrative units separately from the academic units, as most universities do. However, on the webpage of the administrative units, it has a subcategory called “special academic units”, which is where SOE falls into. Basically, we are kind of an interdisciplinary unit between the administrative and the academic.

You know. It would be really difficult to do our work without support from the International Office. I would say the SOE and the International Office are so much interwoven with each other and we are not separable. Before the SOE became an independent school, it was actually affiliated with the International Office for a while, a critical period that led to the expansion and establishment of the SOE. In addition, their head is our head too, and it is impossible to separate the two. In my opinion, it is not that who supports whom between the International Office and the SOE. We are so integrated that we are kind of like one family.

Such working relationship determines that the SOE influences the International Office much less than the other way around, though the SOE does impact the CTCSOL significantly.

*ZZU stakeholders at the program level.* The CTCSOL, although functioning as an academic department in practice, hasn't grown strong enough to be titled as a department yet. As one of the two components of the SOE, the CTCSOL is often used interchangeably with SOE.

The CTCSOL is subject to more influence from the SOE directly, and some influence from the International Office indirectly. It is absolutely impacted by the President Office more than the other way around, though very remotely.

*Summary.* The top-down influence is very strong along the vertical structure of the stakeholders at the program level, the college level, and the institutional level. The ZZU President Office rarely interconnects with other ZZU stakeholders except the International Office, with the latter serving as mediating agency interfacing with SOE directly and indirectly with the CTCSOL. Similar to that of MMU, strong interconnection is likely to be seen at the levels immediately above or below on the organization chart, and little direct interaction has been found between the institutional stakeholders and the program level stakeholder.

*Layers and Conditions.* As the third dimension of the glonacal agency heuristic framework, layers and conditions refer to the historical heritage and current circumstance of a particular stakeholder (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). This section focuses on the legacy and current status of each of the six

stakeholders, which largely defines their global engagement strategies and programs. Given that the MMU-ZZU partnership did not begin until 2005, the section will focus on the period of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to examine the history of each stakeholder.

*MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.* The current MMU president came into office in 2002 and launched the global engagement initiative (An Innovative US University: the New Gold Standard, 2002). In 2011, his appointment was extended through June 2017 (Lewis, 2011). It was during his tenure that MMU has been transformed into an education model dedicated to access, excellence and impact.

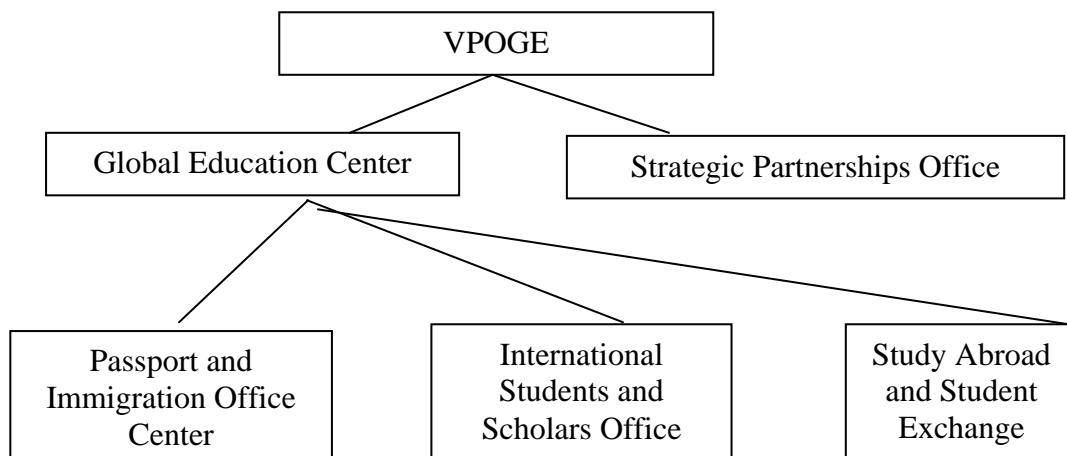
In 2002, MMU was a strong regional university with focused strength yet uneven academic reputation. By 2010, MMU has developed into one of the nation's premier public research universities and became widely recognized for achievements in academic excellence. Research expenditures grew sharply from \$132.9 million in 2002 to \$223.1 million in 2010 (MMU accomplishments FY2003 to date, p.7). Since 2001, MMU has developed strong partnership with the four strategic global partners, including ZZU in China.

The MMU Global Office experienced an unstable journey in the organization structure. Originally a part of the newly established VPOGE in 2006, it was merged into the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs in late 2009 with the de-establishment of VPOGE.

MMU did not have a centralized administrative office to oversee the entire institution's global engagement activities till 2006 when the new Vice President Office for Global Engagement (VPOGE) was created. The new VPOGE focused on three themes, including knowledge acquisition highlighting global curriculum and global community engagement opportunities for students and faculty, international research, and strategic partnerships abroad (Keeler, 2006).

As a completely new central administrative office, the VPOGE hired a former federal government official to lead the office, one of the two hired from outside of MMU at its time of establishment. The rest the staff either came from the China initiative and the Pan-American Initiative started by the President Office, or joined VPOGE when their offices were merged into the VPOGE.

*Figure 6.* Organization of the Office of the Vice President for Global Engagement, 2007.



In 2007, the new VPOGE took over the former International Program Office from the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the

International Students Office from the Vice President Office for Student Affairs. In addition, it created a small Strategic Partnerships Office, which merged the Pan-American Initiative and the China Initiative, the two major global initiatives launched and funded by the President Office. The VPOGE reorganized these inherited offices and new offices, and became the single central office administering global engagement on campus with organization structure shown as above (Kullman & Engle, 2007).

Ambitious as VPOGE was, it encountered enormous difficulty in fulfilling its responsibilities. The majority of the offices, primarily the traditional components of global activities under the Global Education Center, demonstrated clearly defined activities and responsibilities and was supervised by the Associate Vice President of OVPGE. However, the VPOGE and its newly created Strategic Partnerships Office (SPO) had been constantly struggling to establish their identity and to build revenue generation mechanism in the global programs and projects.

The Strategic Partnerships Office (SPO), when taking over the China Initiative and the Pan-American Initiative, inherited their staff team from the President Office. In an attempt to integrate business planning to cope with the funding issue, an associate director for business planning was hired in 2008. However, major resources and staff time were devoted to logistics of diplomatic relations, such as incoming and outgoing leadership delegations. It turned out that the Strategic Partnerships Office was constantly called upon to serve the requests



of the leadership. When it came to working with academic units or serving faculty and students, too often the SPO was perceived as a source of additional funding for international travel. The strategic planning function, as envisioned by VPOGE at the very beginning of its establishment, was reduced significantly.

The new VPOGE, first of all, received considerable resistance from academic units. The identity crisis of SPO and OVPGE in general was often interpreted as inability to assist or support academic programs, students or faculty in globally relevant activities. For instance, one participant complained:

No one really had a clue what VPOGE could do for us. We do global research, study abroad, student exchange anyway. I had a hard time figuring out what the new VPOGE could bring to us.

Secondly, the two major global initiatives, the Pan-American Initiative and the China Initiative, were launched and generously funded by the President Office as start-ups. Both grew considerably and had established important relationships with Mexico and China (Keeler, 2006). At the time they were transferred to VPOGE, the two initiatives were expected to take off and funding level went down significantly. Unfortunately, the absence of a business model in both initiatives at the very beginning began to see the immediate negative impact. VPOGE faced a challenge how to sustain both initiatives and launch new initiatives.

Unfortunately, the VPOGE's effort to create business model for global activities encountered the worst budget cut in MMU's history. Starting in late

2008, the nationwide economic downturn has seriously hurt MMU. The impact began as early as late 2008. By the beginning of the fiscal year 2009, MMU's state funding had been cut by more than \$37 million. The fiscal year 2009 saw a reduction of \$88 million in state funding, and reduced MMU's per-student funding from the state general fund to what it was 10 years ago (Renzulli, 2009).

The timeframe did not allow the business model concept to develop to its full capacity before multiple rounds of reorganizations took place at MMU in response to the budget pressure. In late 2009, the head of the VPOGE left MMU, and there was no replacement. Soon after the VPOGE was de-established, returning the entire Center for Global Education Services to the Provost Office, and turning over MMU Global Office to the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs (VPOREA). The three-year lifespan of the VPOGE was quite short, and it never became full-fledged. Nor was it able to reach the original goal to oversee the institutional wide global engagement activities.

With the merge of the MMU Global Office into, the MMU Global Office had to align itself to its new parent office. Research was highlighted and became a predominant focus. Meanwhile, it carried some of its previous functions to serve the leadership, ranging from organization leadership visits to hosting international visitors. Therefore, the MMU Global Office, upon its transfer, no longer served as the central administrative office for the institutional global engagement as indicated in the interviews:

(with the reorganization) the focus shifted from the strategic partnerships as sort of the end to the strategic partnerships as more of a means and part of the toolbox for identifying, going after large global fund, internationally relevant or connected sponsored research opportunities... So today we're much more focused on looking for those opportunities and seeing ways that we can link strategic partners into those opportunities and strengthen our ability to go after those opportunities, and less on the strategic partnerships as kind of the core of the global engagement strategy for the university..... So currently, we don't actually have a central global engagement mechanism at the university.

As a result, currently the Global Office focuses on global research. It still interacts with ZZU at a modest level, though not as close as they used to be. The interaction primarily occurs when joint research opportunities arise or when executive leaders visit MMU or ZZU. However, the interconnection with ZZU has dropped substantially.

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* The period during 2004-2010 witnessed a growth period of SIS. Officially launched in 2008, SIS built on the former Department of Languages and Literatures and was the first transformative school at MMU in the humanities (Hughes, 2008). As an interdisciplinary unit, the SIS integrates the teaching of language, culture, and literature, an innovative multiplicity approach of literary studies (MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, 2007).

The creation of SIS was carefully designed and complied with the MMU's institutional emphasis on global engagement. Currently SIS is organized into five divisions—Classics and Middle Eastern; Asian; French and Italian; German, Romanian and Slavic; and Spanish and Portuguese (SIS Website, n.d.). It offers degree programs at undergraduate and graduate levels.

*MMU stakeholders at the program level.* As one program offered under SIS, the Chinese Department has expanded considerably since 2004. Encouraged and supported by the MMU President Office, the Chinese Department aggressively recruited renowned scholars to join the faculty team. For instance, the two champion faculty, who prepared the application package for the establishment of the MMU-ZZU CI, were attracted to ASU respectively in 2004 and 2005. Another two renowned scholars joined the Chinese Department in 2007.

The Chinese Department has expanded its capacity substantially. It has graduated a group of 25 students, including its first five PhD graduates since 2006. Student enrollment in the Chinese major increased considerably from seven in 2005 to approximately 60 in 2010.

The development of the Chinese Department coincided with and benefited from the development of the MMU-ZZU CI. For the undergraduate Chinese program, the two ZZU teachers share half of the teaching load with the rest MMU faculty. In addition, the Chinese Department has been able to leverage and

consolidate the strength of the MMU-ZZU CI and the MMU Chinese Flagship Program to support faculty exchange and scholarly workshops.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* The current ZZU president came into office in 2003. It was under his tenure that the current ZZU started to transform itself into a first-tier research university in China.

In 2003, ZZU was a flagship university in the southwest region of China. By 2010, it had accomplished its first-step objective to become a top research university in China. The research expenditures reached \$172 million USD. In terms of global engagement, it has received 45 international research grants from North America and the Europe Union, representing a total funding of \$18 million USD (Xie, 2007). It has created collaborations with selected universities worldwide, including its comprehensive partnerships with MMU.

As a long established office on campus, the ZZU International office can be tracked back three decades ago, though the past ten years have witnessed its significant growth. The current International Office is a consolidated office after merging the global engagement offices of the former ZZC College of Science and Technology and of the Southwestern Medical University.

Since 2000, the ZZU International Office has expanded its activities considerably. It has established connections with over 150 universities, international development agencies and foundations from 42 countries. It has created twinning programs with over a dozen world class universities such as 2+2 or 3+1 for the bachelor degree program and the 3+2 for accelerated bachelor and

master program. In addition to hosting and co-hosting more than 100 international conferences, it has largely expanded international research projects. The number of international students also went up quickly to over 1000 (ZZU International Office, n.d.).

In the next five to eight years, the ZZU International Office aims to create study abroad experience for all students, short-term overseas training opportunities for all middle level administrator, and overseas professional development opportunities for all junior faculty (Xie, 2007).

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* The SOE developed out of the former ZZU Center for Teaching Chinese to Foreigners and did not become an independent school until 2001. Currently, the SOE has two components, including the Pathway Program for Overseas Degree Study and the Center for Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL). The two components, although under the same school, rarely interact with each other, given their separate responsibilities and separate student body

Currently SOE has over 800 students, with half of them being international students under the CTCSOL and the other half being pre-college domestic students under the Pathway program. In addition, SOE works closely with the International Office to manage and operate ZZU's four overseas Confucius Institutes, a highly favored project of the SOE and the International Office.

*ZZU stakeholders at the program level.* The CTCSOL originated from the former ZZU Center for Teaching Chinese to Foreigners and dated back to middle 1980s. Back then, the Center for Teaching Chinese to Foreigners was a tiny unit affiliated with the ZZU Chinese Department. There was no full time faculty because the student enrollment was fairly low and no degree program was available. Later on, it grew modestly and was transferred to the training center at the School of Foreign Languages for a few years, during which the Center was primarily perceived as a training program. In the middle 1990s the Center was taken over by the International Office, and it was under this period that the Center became recognized as an academic program. In 2001, the Center became part of the newly established SOE and was renamed the CTCSOL. One ZZU described the CTCSOL as follows:

The 1980s was pretty much the beginning of teaching Chinese to foreigners and it was not seen as an independent discipline with intellectual value. It was really undervalued, and many thought it was like teaching Chinese words and vocabulary to kids, and one did not have to have any training to be qualified to do so. Teachers in this program were underpaid. There weren't many teachers anyway. It was the case everywhere in China.

Since 2001, the CTCSOL has expanded steadily. The years after 2005 have witnessed substantial growth, probably the most rapid growing period in its history. It was not until 2006 that the four ZZU overseas Confucius Institutes

were launched, a major initiative that relied largely on CTC SOL to supply teachers to teach in the overseas Confucius Institutes. Furthermore, the number of international students at the CTC SOL increased drastically to over 400.

*Summary.* This section analyzed the historical legacy and current assets of each stakeholder. At the institutional level, the MMU President Office and the ZZU President Office both were characterized by very strong leadership. The strong leadership was able to drive other stakeholders to pursue global activities and establish and sustain the MMU CI. Unfortunately, the MMU Global Office doesn't enjoy the resources and strength as that of the ZZU International Office. Hence, the MMU Global Office had much less impact on SIS or the Chinese Department at MMU than the impact of the ZZU International Office on the ZZU SOE and the CTC SOL. At the college level, both SIS and SOE were small and newly established academic units, yet they took the advantage of the institutional global engagement initiatives, and aligned themselves to the Confucius Institute projects to improve their capacity significantly. At the program level, the MMU Chinese Department and the ZZU CTC SOL followed the agenda of their parent colleges, the MMU SIS and the ZZU SOE, respectively, to support the MMU-ZZU CI. Meanwhile they benefited from the partnership and enhanced their capacity as well.

*Spheres.* The last dimension of the glonacal agency heuristic framework is spheres, a defined domain where “geographic and functional scope of activity and influence” takes place (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 293). In this section the



sphere of each stakeholder is examined to find out where geographically their global engagement activities tend to focus and what type of activities they tend to engage.

*MMU Stakeholders at the institutional level.* The MMU President Office and the MMU Global Office, the two stakeholders at the institutional level, share the same geographic focus in global engagement. Beside the China Initiative and the Pan-American initiative, MMU have also developed connection and projects in southwest Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. It has to be noted that the majority of global engagement activities still tend to focus on the Latin America region and Asia.

The MMU President Office usually encourages global engagement through policy and funding incentives, such as seed funding directly to faculty or via the MMU Global Office. The MMU Global Office supports global engagement through coordinating leadership visits and international projects, and identifying and pursuing international funding opportunities. Although it no longer focuses on maintaining relationships with strategic partners like ZZU, the MMU Global office, as part of the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs, still carries the relationship by plugging strategic partners into international research.

*MMU Stakeholders at the college level.* The SIS's global activities spread all over the world through its faculty's professional interest and international scholarship. Beside research, SIS also works with the MMU Global Education

Center on scholar exchanges and student mobility programs such as study abroad or the 3+2 programs. More importantly, SIS keeps recruiting international faculty and international students to its programs.

*MMU Stakeholders at the program level.* The Chinese Department really focuses on research, teaching and learning of the Chinese language and literature. In addition, with the establishment of the MMU Confucius Institute, the Chinese Department has expanded community engagement substantially. Over the past five years, it has started Chinese programs in six k-12 schools, and co-sponsored almost all the major events in the local Chinese community. It has also offered high-quality scholarly workshops and lecture series on campus.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* ZZU has been mostly interested in partnering with universities from the developed countries. In international research and projects, ZZU received its major international from governments and foundations in North America, Europe and Japan. In student mobility, it has created programs in partnership with universities from the U.S. Japan, France, Germany, Australia and Korea. When sending its faculty, administrators and students abroad for study, training and professional development, ZZU always chose U.S. and Australia as the top two destinations (ZZU International Office, n.d.).

The ZZU International Office implements global engagement in a much broader range of activities than the MMU Global Office does. Actually, the ZZU International Office operates the functions and services more than the widest

ambition of the MMU VPOGE was envisioned to do yet never accomplished, including strategic planning of institutional global engagement, international student recruitment and management, international scholars hiring, international funding application and management, international conferences and training, international business partnerships, international alumni network, and coordinating incoming and outgoing international delegations (ZZU International Office, n.d.). In another word, the ZZU International office covers the responsibilities of the MMU Global Office, MMU Global Education Center, MMU Innovation Park, the international alumni portion of the MMU Alumni Office, and the Vice Provost of Enrollment Management. Therefore, the ZZU International Office is the single office in charge of anything international at ZZU.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college level.* The SOE follows the international landscape outlined by the ZZU International Office and mostly engages in international outreach through three channels. One is interacting and supporting ZZU's four overseas Confucius Institutes by sending faculty and organizing cultural performances and workshops. Secondly, it recruits and enrolls international students for its Chinese degree programs. Thirdly, it partners with foreign colleges and universities to create pathway programs that prepare pre-college Chinese students for degree study in those institutions.

Regarding the geographic scope of activities, SOE's work related to Confucius Institutes focuses on the U.S and Korea; its international students

mostly come from Korea and Japan. It has increased the number of English speaking students for its short-term program like the summer sessions or non-degree study. For its pathway programs, most of its partners are located in Australia, Britain, New Zealand, Japan, Korea and Singapore (ZZU School of Overseas Education, n.d.).

*ZZU stakeholders at the program level.* The CTC SOL's global engagement completely follows the pattern of the SOE. It sends faculty to ZZU's four overseas Confucius Institute to teach Chinese and teaches ZZU's international students on campus.

*Summary.* It is interesting to find out that geographically, MMU and ZZU fall into the top priority of each other at the institutional level, though the scope of activities differ from each other. While the ZZU International Office is involved in everything global on campus, the MMU Global Office tends to focus on global research and delegation visits. At the college level, the MMU SIS, in addition to responding to the institutional global engagement, has developed its own geographic focus based on the interests of its faculty and students, which is not necessarily consistent with the institutional priority. At ZZU, the SOE almost completely follows its International office in the scope of activities as well as in the geographic priority. At the program level, the MMU Chinese Department concentrates on China and primarily engages in study abroad programs and international visiting scholar programs. The ZZU CTC SOL focuses on supporting

the ZZU's Confucius Institutes in America and Korea, and recruiting and teaching international students.

**Rationales of stakeholders.** Based on the profiles of the eight stakeholders at MMU and ZZU, this section investigates the rationales that drive each of them to pursue and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI. As discussed in Chapter two, the glonacal agency heuristic framework involves different stakeholders at multiple levels. Each stakeholder, given her or his reciprocity, strength, layers and conditions, and spheres, demonstrates a unique rationale that leads her or him to pursue the MMU-ZZU CI. Their rationales might be different or similar between levels across institutions.

Both MMU and ZZU aim to become a world class university, and they perceive comprehensive strategic partnerships as a pathway to achieve this objective. Taking each other as the strategic partner, different MMU and ZZU stakeholders support or pursue the collaboration out of their own interest. The rationales from the literature include international profile and reputation, student and staff development, revenue generation, research and knowledge production, capacity building, and competitiveness enhancement (Knight, 2004; Chan, 2004; De wit, 2002). But all the rationales are discussed at the national level or institutional level. In this section, the metrics of rationale were discussed at the college level and the program level.

***MMU stakeholders at the institutional level.*** The MMU President explicitly articulated the objective of transforming MMU into a world class

university, and he perceives strategic partnerships as a pathway to achieve it. Specifically, he expects the strategic partnerships to improve the international branding and reputation. The interviewee from the MMU President Office put it this way:

They (ZZU) help us to be globally aware and globally connected. And if you can solve a problem in China, maybe you can solve the same problems here as we learn from China.

The strategic partnership is also driven by the desire to improve student competitiveness in the global market, including education abroad, student exchanges, and language immersion programs. Regardless of what MMU does, the ultimate goal is to serve students and benefit students.

The third driving force is knowledge production and dissemination. Universities worldwide are faced with common challenges that require collaboration across the border. For instance, one interviewee indicated that challenges such as child malnutrition are often located elsewhere while research and resources at MMU could be of help. So universities, as the hub of human knowledge, are in the position to improve people's global awareness and match resources with challenges to find out solutions. Another MMU interviewee gave an example that the Innovative US University design could have significant implications to the Chinese higher education system.

Given the challenges of the Chinese university system parallel some of the challenges that we have in MMU or address the design of MMU,

the idea that you would have a big university that could provide high quality education to large numbers of students from different backgrounds. That is a piece that we would like to gain.

The MMU Global Office, following the President Office's vision, is in the position to find specific pathways to achieve those abstract and lofty goals. As the action agency of the President Office in global engagement, international branding drives the agenda of the MMU Global Office, including coordinating international visits, advancing relationships with strategic partners, and looking for joint research opportunities.

In addition, as the office to sustain the partnerships, the MMU Global Office has to identify revenue sources to sustain itself as an independent office and to implement global engagement activities. Unlike the President Office that invested seed funding in new global initiatives, the MMU Global Office had to justify its budget in the university. Income generation, as a result, has always been a driving force, to validate the legitimacy of the MMU Global Office and to fulfill its responsibilities.

Since the transfer of the MMU Global Office to the Vice President Office for Research and Economic Affairs in late 2009, international research has received top priority in alignment with the new organization. Hence, to enhance international research capacity is a key rationale as well.

*MMU stakeholders at the college level.* SIS supported the MMU-ZZU CI primarily for capacity building. Under the collaboration, ZZU provides two to

three faculty members every year to teach full time at SIS. These guest teachers are completely sponsored by Hanban and ZZU, including their salary, living expenses and other stipends.

More than increase the teaching capacity of SIS, the ZZU-MMU-ZZU CI has brought in additional funding to support scholar exchanges and a lecturer series. As indicated in the interviews, the MMU-ZZU CI has “made more possibilities”. For instance, the SIS has been able to invite renowned scholars for lectures on a regular basis, which won’t happen to the MMU or SIS alone. Due to the strong commitment for community engagement, the MMU-ZZU CI has connected and integrated the Chinese scholars and the Chinese community very well.

In addition, SIS’s support to the MMU-ZZU CI has been partially attributed to the idea to create more opportunities for SIS students, which has been achieved by the establishment of the summer language immersion program at ZZU and student exchange programs with ZZU. These program largely improve students competitiveness.

Branding also drives SIS to support and advance the MMU-ZZU CI. Domestically, SIS has become known as a hub for Chinese language learning in the southwest region of the U.S. over the past five years. With the establishment of the six Confucius Classrooms at the local k-12 schools, the MMU-ZZU CI has built the student pipeline and has been working on articulation to strengthen the pipeline.



*MMU stakeholders at the program level.* The Chinese Department supported the MMU-ZZU CI to build teaching capacity to accommodate the increasing number of students. Currently the Chinese Department has only two full-time lecturers for its undergraduate program, far from enough to serve its increased student population. The guest teachers from ZZU have largely improved the situation.

Again, the Chinese Department students have the opportunity to improve their competitiveness through various programs with ZZU because of the MMU-ZZU CI. Scholarships are available for them to participate the 12-week summer intensive Chinese program at ZZU; the MMU-ZZU Sister Institutional partnership has created student exchange programs as well. Besides, there are various opportunities for them to become connected with the local Chinese community through the MMU-ZZU CI.

Resource enhancement is another driving force for the Chinese Department to work with ZZU. Given that the Chinese government has recently launched national incentives through Chinese universities to recruit American students, the MMU-ZZU CI has enabled the Chinese Department to work closely with ZZU to take advantage of such emerging funding opportunities. Currently ZZU offers full scholarships and tuition waiver to attract MMU students to apply for degree studies in ZZU, and offers varying degree of scholarships for non-degree studies.

Due to the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration, faculty from the MMU Chinese Department have opportunities to work with guest faculty from ZZU, which itself serves as learning opportunities for both sides and benefits the curriculum.

*ZZU stakeholders at the institutional level.* With the mission to become a world class university, ZZU has persistently pursued global engagement. International branding and reputation serve as the major driving force to advance the MMU-ZZU CI.

Although a leading university in China, ZZU stills has a long way to go to become a world class university. The partnership with MMU and other overseas universities are perceived as a leapfrog strategy to bypass its domestic competitors and upgrade itself in the international higher education arena (Xie, 2004). All the ZZU interviewee confirmed that the MMU-ZZU CI absolutely improved ZZU's visibility in the southwest region of the U.S.

International branding and reputation are the major rationales for the ZZU International Office as well. While guided by the world class university objective, the ZZU International Office has also been driven by some other rationales.

One is faculty internationalization. Different from MMU who has traditionally hired international scholars, ZZU is still at the beginning of doing so. In addition to attract international faculty, ZZU has made significant effort to send its current faculty abroad for professional development. Since 2007, ZZU has sent over 200 junior faculty to MMU for training in teaching methodologies and in

English language and culture. the ultimate goal has been to enable all its faculty to teach in English on campus, to enhance the bilingual teaching initiative at ZZU.

The ZZU International Office has always been motivated to improve its students' competitiveness through global programs. This includes creating opportunities for students to participate in education abroad programs, students exchange programs, and summer and winter camps at MMU. It also includes recruiting international students, a new yet rapidly growing strategy in ZZU and China in general. These opportunities prepare ZZU students to become global citizen ready for the global market.

In addition to faculty and students, ZZU has partnered with MMU to train its staff and administrators with the idea to improve global awareness and to expose them to the management of universities in the U.S. To date, more than forty of its deans and directors have completed the training at MMU.

*ZZU stakeholders at the college and program levels.* The rationales of SOE are discussed together with the CTC SOL as these two are used interchangeably. As a small and new college at ZZU, the SOE has fully supported the MMU-ZZU CI to enhance its status and capacity within ZZU. Despite its long presence on campus, the SOE did not become a college till 2001, and its substantial growth did not come till after 2005. Currently, the SOE only has the capacity to offer bachelor degree programs. The MMU-ZZU CI provides a major pathway for the SOE to engage in institutional global engagement and to improve its capacity. With the strong desire to establish itself as a college with greater

impact on the university, it closely follows the agenda of the ZZU International Office and actively participates in the institutional global engagement.

On the other hand, the SOE is fully aware that teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL) is a very young discipline. There are controversies over the intellectual strength of this discipline as well as suspicions how far TCSOL can sustain itself as an independent discipline if not for the Chinese government's tremendous support to promote Chinese. The MMU-ZZU CI is perceived as a critical strategy to legitimize the status of the SOE and to strengthen TCSOL at ZZU.

Last but not least, the MMU-ZZU CI helps to train the SOE faculty. All the SOE faculty teaching at MMU are required to take a graduate level course about methodologies of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. They also have the opportunity to sit in other graduate courses, attend professional conferences sponsored by the MMU-ZZU CI, and participate in the teachers' workshops organized by the MMU SIS. All these opportunities have been highly spoken of, as described in the interviews:

Our (SOE) faculty come from diverse backgrounds. Some of us were professionally trained to teach Chinese as a foreign language in our education. Some were trained in English, and some were trained in Chinese literature. You know, this is a very young discipline, and there hasn't been a stable supply of professionally trained faculty in the past.

But there is such a big gap between demand and supply, we have to compromise and to recruit teachers from related backgrounds.

*Summary.* This section examines the rationales of the stakeholders to support the MMU-ZZU CI. At the institutional level, both MMU and ZZU have been largely driven by international branding and reputation, and also by the goal of strengthening student competitiveness. However, MMU differs from ZZU in that MMU has also been motivated by knowledge production and dissemination. The other difference lies in the fact that MMU is not motivated by faculty or staff internationalization because this has been happening for a long time anyway. At the college level and the program level, the MMU SIS, MMU Chinese Department and the ZZU SOE share the rationale to increase capacity, be it the teaching capacity, funding capacity or intellectual capacity.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the MMU-ZZU CI. It introduces the larger contexts of the rise of the Chinese language and the increased connection between American universities and Chinese universities, which have nurtured the creation and spreading of the Confucius Institutes. With a focus on the MMU-ZZU CI, this second part of the chapter identifies the eight stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI at the program level, at the college level, and at the intuitional level based on the institutional documents, the researcher's perspective and the interviews. Each stakeholder is closely examined for her or his profiles and rationales. The analysis has provided a comprehensive picture of

the MMU-ZZU CI, and has laid a strong basis to introduce the success factors of the MMU-ZZU CI in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER V: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Introduction**

This chapter revisits the problem statement, followed by summarized findings of the study. The second part of the chapter discusses the implications of the study and includes recommendations for future research.

### **Review of the Problem Statement**

The objective of this study was to explore the factors influencing international university collaborations between China and the U.S. Using a specific case of the MMU-ZZU Confucius Institute, this study investigated the university stakeholders involved in the case, including administrative units and academic units at ZZU and MMU.

Using the glonacal agency heuristics framework, the study examined stakeholders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level. The interwoven forces of the stakeholders at these three levels have jointly shaped the course of the MMU-ZZU CI. They interact and impact each other, though at varying degree. At the same time, each stakeholder evaluated the various forces from the other stakeholders and made its decisions. Therefore, the MMU-ZZU CI is a result of interaction between and among multiple stakeholders at various levels at MMU and ZZU. This study went further to analyze the profiles of each stakeholder along the four dimensions of the glonacal agency heuristics, including reciprocity, strength, layers and conditions, and spheres (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

The eight stakeholders identified chose to engage in the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration out of their own interest, regardless whether it was a stakeholder at the program level, at the college level, or at the institutional level. On the one hand, each stakeholder served as an independent agency that had the ability to take action proactively and chose to become involved in the MMU-ZZU CI in a particular way. Each evaluated the unique context in which it was situated and interacted with the other stakeholders to make informed decisions. The study made further investigation on the rationales of the stakeholders to become involved in the MMU-ZZU CI, and identified factors contributing to its success.

### **Definition of Success**

Success factors of international university collaborations have been researched substantially. Most of the studies focus on the inter-institutional interaction and have identified shared goals, trust, linkage personnel, adequate resources, effective leadership, and good communications as success factors (Dhillon, 2005; Anderson, 2009; Beerkens and Derwender, 2007). Chan (2004) also addressed the interaction of stakeholders within one institution, and pointed out that collaborative projects have to accommodate the interests of the institutions and the subunits highly involved. In many cases, the subunits are the stakeholders responsible for implementing and driving the collaborative projects, and they play a critical role in determining the success of the projects.

It has to be noted that metrics of success can vary significantly. Some aspects of the success may be quantified and measured; for instance, the amount



of international funding, the number of international students, and the number of study abroad programs. Other aspects of the success are intangible and hard to measure, such as international branding and reputation. Depending on the specific stakeholder's rationale, a collaborative project may seem to be successful to one stakeholder, yet a failure to another. In addition, success can be defined in a holistic approach where international research, student mobility, and curriculum internationalization are all integrated. Likewise, success can refer to one specific aspect such as student mobility.

When talking about the ZZU-MMU sister institution partnership, one interviewee commented:

It is on a successful trajectory. How can I say that? It is still alive, that means still moving.... We are moving along. We have new projects launched, and we are going to do more things, to make things happen.

Another interviewee added:

International university collaboration is a new area in a new era. I've been in this field for many years, and it has kept evolving and changing. For us, success means someday there is no need for the International Office, because everyone, faculty or students or administrators, has been so highly internationalized on their own that there is no need for an office like us to push and promote it.

The challenge to define success was expressed in another interview:

The broad idea of learning from each other over a number of years has been really important ..... the ability to sort of have those years of being able to experiment and figure things out itself is a success ... Again, not necessarily at the scale that was originally envisioned, but clearly, there's been a lot there. So it's that. You know, it ranges from projects which are successful by any metric to projects where we probably have—they're a success, but we haven't figured out necessarily what the metrics are for measuring them....

Another interviewee questioned the definition of success as follows:

And if they want to measure success, did we measure success in terms of continued existence? Do we measure success with how it affected other parts of the university? Do we measure success in terms of the partnership with the partner university?

Obviously, success has to be defined along the goals of a specific stakeholder. Each stakeholder has different goals and priority levels among these goals vary. When multiple stakeholders are involved, it is even more complicated to define success. Shall success have to be defined along a particular stakeholder? And in what aspect has success been discussed? It is critical to identify a shared goal among the stakeholders so that each of them can leverage its strength to maximize the collective capacity to fulfill the particular goal. Stakeholders may have overlapped goals, yet at varying degrees. Some goals are straight forward and others have to be carefully detected. In some cases, the goals of stakeholders

share one piece with one another. No matter how much stakeholders' goals overlap, as long as such a shared goal is identified, synergy can be achieved among stakeholders when they work towards shared interests over their self-interests, a key factor to successful international university collaboration (Jie, 2010). Not surprisingly, the more stakeholders' goals overlap with one another, the easier it is to develop synergy.

### **Findings on Success Factors: Synergy**

This section examines the interaction between and among the stakeholders of the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration and how synergy has been developed during the process. Synergy here is interpreted in the two aspects: complementarity and compatibility. Complementarity means that stakeholders bring new resources that can be accessed and utilized by the other. The resources can be physical as well as symbolic. Compatibility means that stakeholders find a good match with each other, and identify common grounds to work together (Beerkens & der wender, 2007).

In addition to the three major success factors identified in the literature, namely leadership, organizational culture and partners resources, this section adds an additional factor of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership that emerged from the interviews. Under each of the four success factors, in-depth analysis was conducted to identify the synergy among the ZZU and MMU stakeholders.

**Leadership.** Leadership is a critical ingredient for successful collaboration. As highlighted by Anderson (2009), there must be support from the

leaders, including the executive leaders at the institutional level and the academic leaders at the college level and at the program level. It helps enormously to have “leaders with international experience, expertise, perspective, knowledge of the specific countries involved” (p. 104).

*Synergy between the MMU stakeholders.* At MMU, the leaders at the program level, at the college level, and at the institutional level, have been very cooperative in creating and sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI. They all highly value internationalization and perceive the MMU-ZZU CI a project to help achieve their goals. For leaders at the institutional level, the MMU-ZZU CI helps improve the institutional branding and global awareness. For leaders at the college level, the MMU-ZZU CI has expanded capacity substantially, not only in teaching capacity and financial resources, but also in creating more opportunities for students. For leaders at the program level, the MMU-ZZU CI helped build the Chinese Department and allowed more possibilities.

Secondly, leaders at the three levels have demonstrated extensive experience working with Chinese universities. In particular, the two leaders at the college and program levels are themselves renowned scholars specialized in classic Chinese and Chinese language teaching, respectively. They both speak and write the Chinese language very well and have experience living in China. Thus, they have the expertise, both professionally and personally, to understand the Chinese people and Chinese culture at a profound level, which was acknowledged by both as a significant advantage in collaborating and communicating with ZZU.

At the institutional level, although the leaders did not speak Chinese, they fully recognize the value of collaborating with ZZU. In addition, there have always been staff members with Chinese background at the institutional offices.

*Synergy between the ZZU stakeholders.* At ZZU, leaders at the three levels have found win-win collaboration in supporting the MMU-ZZU CI. Driven by the goal to become a world class university, the ZZU International Office outlined the strategies of developing the MMU-ZZU CI and leverages the strength of ZZU social sciences and humanities program to support it. At the college level and the program level, SOE and CTC SOL took advantage of the MMU-ZZU to expand capacity, upgrade the status of SOE within ZZU, and improve the intellectual status of teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages. Although the goals do not completely coincide with each other at the three levels, leaders at each level have managed to find common ground to work together to support the MMU-ZZU CI.

Regarding their experience working with American partners, the ZZU Vice President for Global Engagement received his doctoral degree from a prestigious American university. The two leaders at the International office speak English very well, and one of them has been working in the area of international affairs for over three decades. Not only have they developed a good understanding of American culture, they have sound experience in working with American universities. The college level leaders, despite less experience working with American universities, have fully supported the institutional agenda and

prioritized the MMU-ZZU CI project among various initiatives at SOE. So does the CTC SOL. Therefore, the leaders at the three levels have aligned their efforts together to create and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI.

*Synergy between the MMU stakeholders and the ZZU stakeholders.*

Between MMU and ZZU, leaders have been able to find synergy with each other and make concerted efforts to support the MMU-ZZU CI. The MMU President was fully aware that ZZU did not have resources that could be invested outside China and that ZZU wasn't research intensive as MMU yet. However, he still prioritized ZZU as one of the four strategic partners in the world. ZZU, as one of the leading universities in China with a top medical school, gave first priority to the relationship with MMU, in spite of the fact that MMU does not have a medical school and is not among the top twenty universities in the U.S. Leaders at both sides were able to put aside the difference and look for common grounds to collaborate. The two presidents have developed a good friendship and they shared a similar vision for the sister institution partnership. Leaders of SIS and SOE, the college level stakeholders, also developed a very close relationship with each other when developing the application and implementing the MMU-ZZU CI.

*Summary.* Given the different rationales of stakeholders, synergy between leadership proved critical to drive the relationship. It included the concerted efforts of leaders at different levels within one institution, and synergic efforts of leaders between the two institutions at different levels. Such synergy has largely contributed to the success of the ZZU-MMU CI.

**Organizational context.** Bozeman (2009) emphasizes that the organizational contexts of the partner institutions have a greater impact on the success of collaborative projects. This is particularly true to collaborations between Chinese universities and American universities given the enormous difference in governance, organization structure, and working mechanisms. Oviedo (2005) specifically indicates the importance of developing a collaborative structure compatible with the internal administrative and academic structure of partner institutions. In the case of the MMU-ZZU CI, the relationship between the MMU administrative units and the MMU academic units differs considerably from that in ZZU. At MMU, the academic stakeholders took the lead in designing and sustaining the ZZU-MMU CI. At ZZU, the academic stakeholder played a supporting role and always followed the administrative stakeholders, the main drivers in creating and sustaining the ZZU-MMU CI. However, the academic stakeholders and the administrative stakeholder within each institution were able to develop synergy and identified common ground to work with each other to bring MMU-ZZU CI to success.

*Synergy between the MMU academic stakeholders and the MMU administrative stakeholders.* Given the decentralized organization structure of American universities, top-down initiatives do not work so effectively at MMU as in ZZU. The MMU academic stakeholders, including SIS and the Chinese Department, are very independent from the administrative stakeholders, namely the MMU President Office and the MMU Global Office. When creating and

sustaining the MMU-ZZU CI, the administrative stakeholders have to fully respect the academic stakeholders. Although the creation of the MMU-ZZU CI was largely driven by the President Office at the beginning, the SIS and the Chinese Department had complete autonomy in designing the MMU-ZZU CI. As indicated by a champion faculty at SIS:

We (SIS) decided to do it (apply to Hanban for the establishment of the MMU-ZZU CI). .... I talked with a guy running a Confucius Institute in another American University, and they had a disaster and still have a disaster with their program, and that was partly because it was done without consultation of the Chinese faculty.....The faculty hasn't been involved. There's always been a contentious relationship between Confucius Institute and the primary faculty on campus. So we (SIS) thought it would be a good idea to circumvent this problem by actually doing it as part of our program. So we were able to present a proposal that had opportunities for teaching that were involved in our own language program, partly, but also a portion of it was devoted to scholarly work..... From our side, the pressure was simply to do it. There were no guidelines involved. There was no interference with the academic nature of the program..... the major things are that it was developed from the Chinese faculty.

The same working mechanism has been followed by the administrative stakeholders, as indicated by an interviewee:



Of course we also had the SIS champion faculty, who had an interest and by chance had some ties to ZZU. So I think that we got them in was very important. .... The bigger role (for the President Office) was at the front end in supporting the hiring and the pursuit of the project.. But in the end, faculty still has to be the ones to show the value. Leadership has to be the driver, but eventually leadership has to step away and faculty has to become the driver. So we now have more faculty interested that they did, in my view.

With a clearly understood working mechanism between the MMU administrative stakeholders and the MMU academic stakeholders, the MMU-ZZU CI has garnered the synergy between them and thus can be successful.

*Synergy between the ZZU academic stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders.* The working mechanism between the ZZU academic stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders differs considerably from that at MMU, yet has proven equally effective in developing concerted efforts to make the MMU-ZZU CI successful.

The ZZU academic stakeholders, namely SOE and its subunit CTCSOL, do not enjoy the same level academic autonomy as the MMU academic stakeholders do. However, they enjoy a much closer relationship with the ZZU International Office, partly because the SOE, before becoming an independent college, used to be housed under the International Office for several years, partly because the director of the International Office also serves as dean of SOE. Led

by one individual, SOE and the International Office have frequently found each other on the same agenda with clearly articulated roles. In the case of the MMU-ZZU CI, the International Office interfaces with Hanban, makes the strategic plan, designs the overall structure, and leverages the strength of ZZU humanity and social science programs to support the MMU-ZZU CI.

SOE largely follows the agenda of the International Office, and supplies academic resources as needed. As expressed by the interviewee from SOE:

We (SOE) are responsible for sending our teachers to the MMU-ZZU CI. We work closely with MMU in selecting teachers, and provide some of the administrative support. ... as our dean is also the director of the International Office. He sets up the working plan and strategy, and we implement the specific projects.

The same working mechanism is expressed by the interviewee from the International Office:

The International Office comes up with the strategy, coordinates the dialogue with MMU, negotiates and signs the agreement, and coordinates with Hanban. The SOE is responsible for sending teachers and making sure the quality of teaching for the MMU summer programs. Also, the International Office reaches out to other humanity and social programs at ZZU, when needed, to support the activities of MMU-ZZU CI. For instance, we recruited and organized the Art Troupe of the College of Arts to travel to MMU to perform for the

local public. We worked with the College of Literature to set up the master's program in teaching Chinese for speakers of other languages.

The interviews indicated that the International Office has been taking the lead in the MMU-ZZU CI project since its creation, and the SOE responds to the needs of the International Office to provide academic support, including selecting and sending teachers and assuring curriculum and teaching quality. Both are content with this working mechanism and believe it an effective way to sustain the MMU-ZZU CI.

*Synergy between the MMU administrative stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders.* Different as the internal working mechanisms are between MMU and ZZU, the MMU administrative stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders have developed an appropriate working mechanism that helps create and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI.

At the beginning stages of applying for the establishment of the MMU-ZZU CI, administrative stakeholders from both universities were very highly involved. They served as the central unit coordinating the entire application, including the proposal, budget planning, and matching funding. At MMU, the President Office agreed to match initial funding, and more importantly, managed to bring SIS faculty on board to design the mission and domain of activities of the MMU-ZZU CI. Similar work was primarily done by the International Office at ZZU.

Immediately after the MMU-ZZU CI was launched, the MMU administrative stakeholders reduced their role significantly and left the MMU-ZZU CI completely to SIS and the Chinese Department. Other than respond to the requests of the MMU academic stakeholders, the President Office stayed away from the daily operation and management of the MMU-ZZU CI. As expressed by the interview:

At the application stage, our support (the President Office) included seed funding, recruitment of the leaders of the MMU-ZZU CI, willingness to do it, driving meetings, meeting with the group, meeting with the community, all that. .... we helped sustain the MMU-ZZU CI too. Whatever is helpful, and whatever they need. We responded to them. Yes. .... leadership has to be the driver, but eventually leadership has to step away and faculty have to become the driver.

At ZZU, the International Office remained as the lead of the MMU-ZZU CI, with the support from SOE in sending and selecting teachers and offering summer programs for students from the MMU Chinese Department. Such internal working mechanism has proven very successful. One ZZU interviewee commented:

What we do here at ZZU is very different from many other Chinese universities. We have two teams, one team at the International Office, the other at the SOE. However, both teams are headed by one individual. The SOE Dean also serves as the International Office

director. We chose this way in order to do a better job in the Confucius Institutes. In other Chinese universities where SOE is separately run from the International Office, they frequently run into bureaucracy problems and the two teams kick balls back and forth and jobs won't get done effectively. It is like a business with the International Office as upper stream and the SOE as the lower stream. Sometimes the SOE really wants to do Confucius Institute, but is unable to do so when the International Office has different ideas. Coordinating becomes a big challenge. At ZZU, we chose to do the way we are currently doing to avoid such bureaucracy. So far this has been working very well.

Despite the different role between the MMU administrative stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders, both, first of all, have developed an effective internal working mechanism compatible with their institutional structure. Secondly, they have been able to communicate with each other clearly to develop an appropriate working mechanism between MMU and ZZU.

At the application stage of the MMU-ZZU CI, the MMU administrative stakeholders and the ZZU administrative stakeholders worked very closely to coordinate the initiative, which was straight forward, given their similar position in their universities. After the launch of the MMU-ZZU CI, it was made clear to all the stakeholders that SIS and the Chinese Department became the main drivers of the project at MMU, who took a leading role in interacting with ZZU stakeholders directly, including the International Office, SOE, and CTC SOL. At

ZZU, the International Office redefined the working mechanism with MMU swiftly, and started to interface directly with the MMU academic stakeholders to sustain the MMU-ZZU CI.

*Synergy between the MMU academic stakeholders and the ZZU academic stakeholders.* The MMU academic stakeholders and the ZZU academic stakeholders entered the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration with different yet compatible objectives. During the process of collaboration, all have been able to achieve what they expect, meanwhile have been able to understand and to meet the expectation of the other. By doing so, they were able to create mutually beneficial relationship and brought the MMU-ZZU CI to success.

Given the internal working mechanism at MMU, the MMU academic stakeholders had much more intellectual strength and autonomy, and they decided to pursue the MMU-ZZU CI with clearly designed strategies, which was to increase teaching capacity, bring in additional funding to support scholarly exchange and a lecture series, and ultimately improve student competitiveness. It was asserted at the beginning that the MMU-ZZU CI was to help the Chinese program, but not to replace it or add something completely separate from the existing Chinese program. Throughout the collaboration, the MMU academic stakeholders have followed this philosophy consistently. One interviewee said:

In some places, the Chinese language program and the Confucius Institute overlap. In some places they are completely different, so it is important to keep that in mind. I think that the heart of what we are

doing is the Chinese language program, and one way that the Confucius Institute can help our program is that they have to be considered as helpful to our Chinese program. It's not the other way around.

This philosophy has been well understood and supported by the ZZU administrative stakeholders and academic stakeholders, who commented as below:

In the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration, we always respond to the demands of MMU. Actually, it is Hanban's idea that the Confucius Institute has to follow the lead of the foreign partner university, the same case here at MMU-ZZU CI. A Confucius Institute has to rely on the foreign university partner for its success. The fundamental issue here is that the foreign partner university has to be motivated to do Confucius Institute, and has outlined a clear strategy how to make it successful. Our principle is to listen to what exactly they (SIS and the MMU Chinese Department) needs and try out best to meet their needs. We work with them closely in selecting the kind of teachers they want. It is not that our teachers are not good enough. Mostly it is the mismatch of our teachers' expertise with what is needed at MMU. For instance, we may have one teacher who is really good at teaching classic Chinese, but the MMU-ZZU CI is looking for someone to teach

Chinese 101. So we listen to MMU carefully and make sure we've got the right teachers for them.

The ZZU SOE and its CTCSOL were eager to enhance their academic power, improve their intellectual capacity, and upgrade their status within ZZU. The MMU-ZZU served as a perfect opportunity to achieve the goal. As indicated the SOE interviewees:

It (MMU-ZZU CI) proves a good opportunity to train our teachers. When our teachers have the experience teaching at the MMU-ZZU CI, they will obtain an in-depth understanding of how to teach at a different scenario in a foreign country. It also provides opportunity for our teachers to do research, because teaching abroad is an eye opening experience and exposes our teachers to different types of teaching Chinese to foreigners. This is really very good, indeed, very good. Also, every time during the visit of the MMU Chinese scholars, we invite them to give some workshops or sessions to our teachers, and those workshops are always popular here. From our point of view, we really have benefited a lot from the program.

The SOE's intention to use the MMU-ZZU CI as a professional development opportunity for their teachers was well understood and supported by SIS and the Chinese Department. One SIS faculty commented:

We've had great success in getting teachers (from ZZU). I think their teachers learn a lot. They usually take a graduate level method class



(no tuition). They interact with the other teachers..... I think at first everybody was a little unsure. You know, the kind of thoughts “we send our teachers to you and what we get out of it?” ..... But now they see it’s not like that at all. Their teachers get great opportunities. We send them to conferences. We give them so much professional development.

As a result, neither the MMU academic stakeholders nor the ZZU stakeholders think they’ve given too much. Under the MMU-ZZU CI collaboration, each side has accomplished their respective goals, and at the same time has been able to meet the other’s expectations, thus producing a mutually beneficial collaboration.

It has to be noted that the MMU stakeholders, both administrative and academic, hoped to see increased interaction with the ZZU academic stakeholders. They also expected a bigger role of the ZZU academic stakeholders in the MMU-ZZU CI. Interestingly, neither the ZZU academic stakeholders nor the ZZU administrative stakeholders expressed similar ideas.

**Stakeholders’ resources.** The stakeholders involved in the MMU-ZZU CI vary in terms of resources, including financial resources, academic resources, and staff resources. It is critical for the multiple stakeholders to bring whatever they can contribute to the MMU-ZZU CI and leverage each other’s strength to maximize the outcome.

*Synergy between the MMU stakeholders.* The MMU President Office contributed seed funding to the MMU-ZZU CI and helped with hiring of new faculty for the MMU-ZZU CI. In addition, the President Office's focus on the ZZU-MMU partnership helped the MMU-ZZU CI project rise above other SIS projects. SIS provided office space and staff for the MMU-ZZU CI, and the Chinese Department is responsible for daily operations. With each stakeholder making appropriate contributions based on its strength, the MMU-ZZU CI has been able to leverage the resources of each other to improve resource efficiency.

In particular, it is much easier to develop synergy when the Chinese Department, the Chinese Language Flagship Program, and the ZZU-MMU CI have been headed by one individual, who is a renowned scholar in Chinese language teaching. In spite of the differences in the three programs, this organizational structure has enabled her to leverage the strength of the MMU-ZZU CI and the Chinese Language Flagship Program to help the MMU Chinese program. As expressed in her interview:

They (the MMU-ZZU CI, the Chinese Flagship Program, the Chinese program) do feed on each other. And the idea is that they should support each other. It should be mutually supportive, and especially now with budget problems..... Another way is in terms of the scholarship. For instance, we have established a lecture series where notable scholars are invited to give talks, and we also open up these scholarly talks and lectures to the local community and the academic

community. That's been very exciting to see. I think that interaction really didn't take place beforehand on both sides. Also, we paid our teachers and ZZU teachers to attend professional conferences ..... we really try to support what everyone is doing..

***Synergy between the ZZU stakeholders.*** The ZZU President Office and the International Office provide funding and administrative support for the MMU-ZZU CI. SOE and its CTC SOL provide academic support. Again, each stakeholder understands and shares its unique responsibility based on its strengths, thus being able to make concerted efforts to create and sustain the MMU-ZZU CI.

The specific position of the International Office at ZZU has helped tremendously to develop synergy among the various stakeholders. More than a central administrative office on campus, it has been closely connected with SOE because the Director also serves as the dean of SOE. This set-up grants the International Office considerable administrative resources and academic resources, allowing more flexibility in leveraging the strength of the ZZU humanity and social sciences programs to help the MMU-ZZU CI succeed.

***Synergy between MMU and ZZU.*** The synergy between MMU and ZZU provides a favorable context for the creation and growth of the MMU-ZZU CI. Located in the southwest region of their country, both are entrepreneurial, fast-developing research intensive institutions aiming to become world class universities.

One MMU interviewee put it this way:

We had lots of similarities. We had mutually similar mission....open willingness to partnerships,,, we are comprehensive, large scale, multi-campus, urban research universities.... Another factor is partly geographical. We think so much emphasis on the eastern universities in China, we think there are more opportunities in the west universities than the eastern universities. Number two is like-mindedness.

One ZZU interviewee said:

Our two institutions are very similar in terms of the scale, academic strength, and development. We both develop very fast. Such equivalent position of our two institutions has laid a good foundation for our partnership.

In addition, both ZZU and MMU perceive international collaborations as a critical strategy to advance themselves to world class universities and assign a high priority to the MMU-ZZU partnership. More importantly, they were able to identify an external funding agency, Hanban, when both were looking for opportunities to expand the capacity of Chinese language teaching. The third party funding was repeatedly referred to in interviews as one key factor for the success of the MMU-ZZU CI.

**The MMU-ZZU CI and the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership.**

The MMU-ZZU CI has been embedded within the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, and is one of the multiple collaborative projects between MMU and

ZZU. On the one hand, the institutional partnership has laid out the contexts that breed and nurture specific collaborative projects and programs. On the other hand, an individual project, such as the MMU-ZZU CI, has contributed to and reinforced the institutional partnership. They feed on each other. When multiple collaborative projects and programs have been created between MMU and ZZU, a network of collaborations involving a critical mass of key linkage personnel will eventually produce the strategic partnerships as envisioned by MMU and ZZU.

The MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership has been particularly helpful in several ways. First of all, this institutional relationship has provided the overarching framework under which the MMU-ZZU CI was developed, and also guaranteed the support of the leadership at both universities, a key to identify and drive joint projects, particularly at the beginning stage.

Secondly, the institutional relationship has provided opportunities for the two universities to obtain a preliminary understanding of each other, including the basic characteristics of the university, the global engagement strategy, the key personnel, working mechanisms, and vision and mission. Such preliminary understanding helped to establish trust and appropriate communication between each other. Whenever an opportunity is identified by one institution, it can be shared with the other, which is the case of the MMU-ZZU CI. Soon after MMU and ZZU launched the sister institution partnership, ZZU noticed the Confucius Institute project from Hanban and passed on the message to MMU. As the ZZU interviews described:

As soon as we became aware of the Confucius Institute project opportunity, we shared it with MMU, because MMU is our strategic partner. You probably would ask why we also built another Confucius Institute with another American university almost at the same time. For that one, it was that university that approached us and proposed the idea. For us, we initiated the idea to MMU because this was really something good and we wanted to share it with MMU. Like the old saying, you share good things with friends.

Thirdly, international collaborative projects often involve multiple stakeholders, who have to be able to navigate through the differences between partner institutions to make collaborations successful. The institutional partnership can help stakeholders to do so. In the case of the MMU-ZZU CI, although MMU and ZZU have demonstrated significant differences in the internal working mechanism and organization structure, stakeholders managed to understand and respect the differences, and to develop a working mechanism that works best under the circumstance. In return, the success in the MMU-ZZU CI has advanced the institutional partnership.

### **Implications of the Study**

The study highlighted the interwoven forces of the MMU and ZZU stakeholders at multiple levels that jointly defined the course of the MMU-ZZU CI, including the two-way interaction between stakeholders within MMU or ZZU and the two-way interaction between MMU and ZZU.

When it comes to the between-institution interaction, this study provides a collaboration model characterized by mutual respect and mutual equality. The MMU-ZZU CI collaboration does not follow the typical center-periphery perception where the Chinese partner would be the knowledge receiver and American partner the knowledge generator. Nor does it completely reverse the center-periphery dynamics to make the Chinese partner the knowledge generator and the American partner the knowledge receiver. In the case of the MMU-ZZU CI, ZZU sends faculty to MMU to teach Chinese courses yet following the MMU curriculum and teaching methodologies. It was an interactive learning experience for both ZZU teachers and MMU teachers when they teamed up to teach MMU students. Both acknowledged the difference, yet learned to work with each other.

Secondly, the study has demonstrated that the institutional partnership and program collaboration do feed on each other. As one of the many projects under the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, the MMU-ZZU CI has advanced the institutional collaboration by adding new personal and professional connections; the institutional partnership has benefited the MMU-ZZU CI by leveraging institutional resources, including financial resources, staffing resources, and administrative resources.

Thirdly, the MMU-ZZU CI has confirmed the concern over culture-loaded collaborative programs for fear of conflict between academic freedom and national propaganda and public diplomacy, particularly on the American side. University administrators have to respect and value faculty's perspective.

Meanwhile, administrators shall coordinate such collaborative programs in a way to circumvent the problem and avoid causing contentious relationships with faculty.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The focus of the study determines that the recommendations are primarily for those working at university settings who are interested in international university collaborations. With the in-depth analysis of the MMU-ZZU CI, this study presents a picture of a collaborative project between an American university and a Chinese university. The success factors identified from this study shed light on other international university collaborations.

However, this study investigates only the perspectives of MMU and ZZU stakeholders highly involved in the MMU-ZZU CI. Perspectives of students under the MMU-ZZU CI are completely missing. It would be extremely helpful to learn from students their experience with the MMU-ZZU CI. Ultimately, students are the clients of the international university collaborations, and their feedback is of significant value.

Furthermore, the MMU-ZZU CI is examined within the framework of the MMU-ZZU sister institution partnership, under which multiple collaborative projects and programs have been launched over the past five years. It would be interesting to compare the MMU-ZZU CI with the other projects and discuss the differences and success factors.



Thirdly, Hanban, the funding agency for the MMU-ZZU CI, is not included in this study because the researcher focused on what has been happening at the partner universities that brought the MMU-ZZU CI to where it is now. By no means does this intend to downplay the importance of the funding agency. Actually, the third party funding agency has always been critical in nurturing and sustaining international university collaborations (Oviedo, 2005). Future research on funding agencies, such as Hanban in this case, would be of significant value to international university collaborations.

### **Conclusion**

This study suggests that international university collaborations have become a strategy for universities to move up in the hierarchy of higher learning institutions worldwide and to distinguish themselves out of the crowd. Universities, when partnering with peers overseas, have to expect differences in goals, institutional culture, and organization structure. However, differences are not necessarily barriers and they are not insurmountable. As long as partners respect the difference and identify common interests, synergy can be developed to create successful collaboration.

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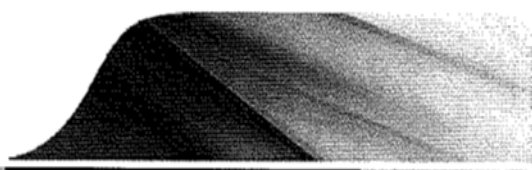
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APPENDIX A  
IRB APPROVAL NOTICE



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Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

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**To:** Alfredo De Los Santos  
ADMIN A 20

**From:** Mark Roosa, Chair *SM*  
Soc Beh IRB

**Date:** 04/22/2011

**Committee Action:** Exemption Granted

**IRB Action Date:** 04/22/2011

**IRB Protocol #:** 1104006297

**Study Title:** International University Partnerships

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1)(2).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.