

**TECHNO-NATIONALISM IN CHINA-US  
RELATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR  
UNIVERSITIES**

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## **Executive Summary**

1. COVID-19 is reinforcing the enmity between the United States and China rather than fostering trust and cooperation in dealing with a global challenge.
2. A principal force in the US-China conflict is techno-nationalism, a competition to dominate transformative technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in fields ranging from Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing and Big Data through to Information and Communications Technology and bio-medicine.
3. Techno-nationalism blurs the distinctions between economic advantage, military capability, and technological and scientific capacity, all defined as matters of national security. It has both a Chinese and an American variant.
4. The Trump administration's approach to China as a strategic competitor and adversary has led it to construct a regulatory and legislative framework with bicameral and bipartisan support for protecting national security in areas related to science and technology.
5. It includes a battery of export and import restrictions, bans on specific Chinese telecommunication companies, encouragement for American companies to move production out of China, pressuring other countries to limit their high-tech interactions with China, and opposing Chinese actions in international standards organisations. Huawei is a principal target.
6. Western universities are affected by techno-nationalist conflict in a variety of ways, particularly the two way-flow of students and professors and collaborative research. Nowhere have these issues sparked more controversy than in Australia.
7. In the United States, actions by the White House, Congress, federal departments and national funding agencies have centred on espionage, intellectual property theft, cyber intrusions, disclosure of partnership and other funding sources. Of particular concern has been the connection with Thousand Talent programmes.

8. Universities in Canada and Singapore have continued to build connections with Chinese universities at multiple levels. They now face major spillover from the US-China conflict in areas related to an expanded definition of export controls, extraterritorial implications of American bans on specific companies including Huawei, transparency and due diligence about partners and end-use of research, and new restrictions in China.
9. There is an opportunity and a need for closer cooperation between Canada and Singapore, and involving other countries, in managing these issues. Both countries wish to continue extensive interactions with Chinese universities. They do so in the context of deepening US-China tensions which, post-pandemic and with new pressures for technological decoupling, makes this doubly difficult.
10. The 17 April Declaration on Maintaining Essential Global Links' identification of scientific collaboration is one starting point.

# TECHNO-NATIONALISM IN CHINA-US RELATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITIES

Paul EVANS\*

## The Competition Deepens

- 1.1 Hopes that the COVID-19 pandemic will bring something positive to the US-China relationship have evaporated. Despite tactical cooperation on medical supply chains and conciliatory words on the implementation of the Phase One trade agreement, the level of enmity continues to rise.
- 1.2 What might have been an opportunity for rapprochement and building trust in managing a common challenge has instead become another avenue for competition.
- 1.3 With economies and global value chains severely disrupted worldwide, there are disturbing suggestions in China that its early recovery will position it to be the leader in a decoupled world. In Washington, China hawks are on the offensive hardening their case for decoupling in manufacturing and technology, imposing new restrictions on US investment in Chinese companies, and applying new restrictions on US and foreign companies selling technologically advanced goods and services to China. The White House National Economic Council Director has advocated recently that the United States pay for the moving costs of every American company that wants to depart from China.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Rapoza, “Kudlow: ‘Pay the Moving Costs’ of American Companies Leaving China”, *Forbes*, 10 April 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2020/04/10/kudlow-pay-the-moving-costs-of-american-companies-leaving-china/#3ebb382013c6>, accessed 17 April 2020.

## **Techno-Nationalism**

- 2.1 The current strategic rivalry between China and the United States has military, diplomatic, ideological, trade and commercial dimensions. One of the most important is in the area of emerging and transformative technologies.
- 2.2 Nation states have long been in the business of strengthening the economic advantages of their commercial enterprises and protecting themselves from efforts by others to develop military and technological capacities.
- 2.3 Techno-nationalism in the 21st century is something different. It is, as Robert Manning argues, “a set of industrial policies aimed at self-sufficiency, cultivating ‘national champions’ in tech sectors while curbing foreign competition just as a new era of advanced technology is unfolding”. On the cusp of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is a domain at the intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Big Data, robotics, biotech and biomedicine, new materials, the Internet of Things and nano-engineering that “merge the digital with the physical economy”.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.4 Techno-nationalism focuses on not just military or dual-use applications, but also a wider-gauged method of maximising national power. It blurs the distinctions between economic advantage, military capability, and technological and scientific capacity, all defined as matters of national security.
- 2.5 This has parallels to the Cold War era but differs on the nature of the technologies and their ubiquitous applications and economic interdependence of the prime contenders connected by deeply integrated supply chains.
- 2.6 The Chinese version of techno-nationalism is well understood. It has its historical roots in the calculation that China’s century of humiliation was based on technological inferiority to the West and the more recent calculation in the Hu and

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Manning, “Techno-Nationalism vs. the Fourth Industrial Revolution”, *Global Asia*, March 2019, [https://www.globalasia.org/v14no1/cover/techno-nationalism-vs-the-fourth-industrial-revolution\\_robert-a-manning](https://www.globalasia.org/v14no1/cover/techno-nationalism-vs-the-fourth-industrial-revolution_robert-a-manning), accessed 22 April 2020.

Xi eras that science and technology are essential to China transcending its current place in the international division of labour and escaping a middle income trap.

- 2.7 Its main ingredients include centralised strategic planning through programmes like Made in China 2025; a civil-military fusion across a wide spectrum of enterprises; enormous state and private investment in research and development that roughly equals that of the United States and the OECD average; the incubation and encouragement of state-owned and private companies; and integration in global supply chains while fencing off entire sectors from foreign involvement. Research is increasingly being pushed into areas of high value-added production and indigenous development of products and technologies which China no longer can source externally (e.g. some kinds of computer chips) or wishes to dominate for commercial advantage (e.g. rare earths). They are integral parts of the Chinese state-led developmental system.
- 2.8 The United States has its own variants of peacetime techno-nationalism. American industry, small businesses, universities and government departments are deeply connected through organisations like the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency embedded in the Department of Defence. By official estimates defence-related R&D in 2017 exceeded \$55 billion, four times greater than the rest of OECD countries combined.<sup>3</sup> In 2019 US investment in weapons procurement and R&D alone were larger than China's total defence budget.<sup>4</sup> There are occasional grand projects like the Apollo space programme that fuse grand strategic thinking and governmental and private sector resources around a single objective. There is also private investment in R&D in sectors related to the non-military dimensions of emerging technologies.
- 2.9 The American arsenal for techno-nationalist competition is formidable and based on the underlying belief in free markets. What is changing is the diminution of self-

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<sup>3</sup> Congressional Research Service, 28 January 2020, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R45441.pdf>, accessed 23 April 2020

<sup>4</sup> Lucie Bearaud-Sudreau, "Global Defense Spending: The United States Widens the Gap", Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Military Balance Blog, 14 February 2020, <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2020/02/global-defence-spending>, accessed 15 April 2020.

confidence about its abilities to outcompete other nations on technological frontiers. China in particular poses a new kind of challenge.

- 2.10 The Trump administration has embraced a strident approach to framing and managing both relations with China and technology. The National Security Review of 2017 and the National Defence Review of 2018 defined China as a strategic competitor and adversary. This approach is based on the belief that China's rise is coming at the expense of the United States and that it presents a whole-of-society and existential threat to the United States as a peer competitor.
- 2.11 On the surface there has been widespread anger in Congress and think tanks about a China that did not play fair in areas including intellectual property, trade balances and subsidies. Beneath it was a fear not about a weak China that could only imitate, steal, or subsidise its way to success, but a China that could innovate, compete and lead in a variety of high-value added sectors. This has gone beyond the concern that Western technology can be used by China for military purposes and spilled over into a desire to contain China's technological rise more generally.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.12 The Trump administration's policies focus more on limiting China's capabilities than boosting America's competitive advantages. The administration tends to be defensive, nationalist and averse to global supply chains in favour of self-sufficiency, something now evident in its response to COVID-19.
- 2.13 With active Congressional support on a bicameral and bipartisan foundation, it has built a whole-of-government legal and regulatory architecture for protecting national security in areas related to science and technology. This embraces:
- limiting Chinese investment in tech companies in the United States via tighter restrictions enforced by the Committee of Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS);
  - banning or restricting Chinese companies from participating in the US telecommunications industry;

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<sup>5</sup> Noah Barkin, "Export Controls and the US-China Tech War", *MERICs China Monitor*, 18 March 2020, <https://www.merics.org/en/china-monitor/export-controls-and-the-us-china-tech-war>, accessed 25 April 2020.

- strengthening export control restrictions unilaterally especially through the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security and multilateral coordinating agencies, chiefly the Wassenaar arrangement that includes 42 countries (Singapore is not a member) and focuses on "states of concern";
- laying down new restrictions on the sale of products based on American technology (e.g. chip producing equipment) to China by foreign companies without the approval of the home government of the company as well as the US government;
- imposing trade tariffs on Chinese products to encourage US companies to shift production out of China;
- threatening the use of the *International Emergency Economic Powers Act* to force American companies out of China, including recent statements by administration officials that Washington should pay for the moving expenses;
- reinforcing White House threats and pending legislation to limit or put new conditions on Chinese firms accessing US capital markets;
- pressuring other countries to restrict their high-tech interactions with China; and
- mobilising concerted opposition to Chinese influence in international organisations that set global technology standards including the International Organisation for Standardisation and the International Electrotechnical Commission.

2.14 While not all of these actions are aimed exclusively at China, China is clearly the main target.

2.15 The poster child of all that is considered threatening about China's rise is Huawei, which bears the full weight of American actions. However, the aforementioned provisions apply to multiple Chinese companies and in multiple sectors well beyond Information and Communications Technology. For example, in emerging technologies that require export licences, the current discussion of those that pose "national security risks" includes bio-technology, Artificial Intelligence, position, navigation and timing technology, microprocessor technology, advance computing, data visualisation, quantum information and sensing, logistics, additive manufacturing, robotics, brain-computer interfaces, hypersonics and advanced



materials. A second category includes “foundational” technologies, mainly related to semi-conductors.<sup>6</sup>

- 2.16 It remains to be seen if China will make sufficient changes to the structure of its economy and its own brand of techno-nationalism to satisfy the Trump administration, or whether it will double down on its own forms of indigenous innovation and efforts to connect with Asian and other partners in sustaining technological supply chains that do not include the United States.
- 2.17 It also remains to be seen if this phase of American techno-nationalism and decoupling, along with the approach to China that informs it, as well as the current Washington consensus beneath it, will continue into the next administration.
- 2.18 There is a real possibility that the preferred instrument of strategic competition will shift from restricting and containing China to self-strengthening America’s own technological and industrial innovation base along the lines that have been advocated in a number of recent think tank reports.<sup>7</sup> As is evident even in the Huawei case, Washington cannot count on continued support from its own corporations or friends and allies in a move towards deeper decoupling.

### **Universities**

- 3.1 From a techno-nationalist perspective, whatever their other functions, universities are integral parts of the eco-systems for technological innovation and major contributors to national power. From a decoupling perspective, they are key players in the intellectual supply chains of ideas, research and talent. They are an asset but also a vulnerability in areas including intellectual property leakage, cyber intrusions and technology transfer, especially but not exclusively in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/11/19/2018-25221/review-of-controls-for-certain-emerging-technologies>, accessed 23 April 2020.

<sup>7</sup> For example: James Manyika, William McRaven and Adam Segal, *Innovation and National Security: Keeping Our Edge* (Independent Task Force Report No. 77, Council on Foreign Relations, October 2019); [https://www.cfr.org/report/keeping-our-edge/pdf/TFR\\_Innovation\\_Strategy.pdf](https://www.cfr.org/report/keeping-our-edge/pdf/TFR_Innovation_Strategy.pdf), accessed 23 April 2020.

- 3.2 Western universities long have been active connectors with China in professorial exchanges, collaborative activities, student flows and joint research. For four decades since China's opening these have been pursued on both sides with enthusiasm and optimism despite major structural and philosophical differences on matters such as academic freedom, censorship and relationship to the state.
- 3.3 In the past five years, Western institutions have faced new obstacles and risks in their work on, in and with China. Some of these have been generated at home by increased media, public and alumni scrutiny of Chinese connections. Some members of faculty, including those with previously close involvement with China, are also voicing concerns.
- 3.4 The two countries that have gone furthest down the path of readjusting academic connections are Australia and the United States.
- 3.5 In Australia, media, public and governmental attention has focused on perceived Chinese influence and interference activities on campus, overreliance on revenue from Chinese international students (at the top eight research universities they make up 60% of all foreign student enrolments and nationally they are worth about \$8 billion to the Australian economy; about a quarter of post-graduate researchers in the STEM fields are Chinese citizens) and Chinese funding sources (the Torch Innovation Precinct at the University of New South Wales valued at more than \$100 million), cyber hacking and IP leakage. These have been framed as assaults on academic atmosphere, academic integrity and academic freedom with consequences for the quality of Australian higher education and national security.
- 3.6 The Australian government responded with legislation intended to combat foreign interference in general and the creation of a special taskforce to focus on the university sector. The November 2019 report of the taskforce was instructive. It was led by the federal government and negotiated with university leaders. The universities themselves were delegated to devise their own mechanisms for cybersecurity and IP protection to safeguard academic principles, researchers and their data in consultation with security and intelligence officials. They also agreed

to set up a new reporting system and information network intended to increase awareness of risks and vigilance in identifying and responding to them.<sup>8</sup>

- 3.7 Actions in the United States, led by the White House, Congress, federal agencies and national science funding organisations have been far more intrusive. The general approach has been top-down, directive and with threat of immediate consequences for delinquent individuals and institutions, usually through cancellation of federal funding. The Office of Security Technology Policy in the White House is working on new guidelines for federal agencies and universities to manage foreign influence activities. The Department of Justice has been active in investigations under the broad rubric of counter-espionage, leading to numerous charges against individuals associated with research institutes and universities. Several have resulted in convictions for fraud and misrepresentation.
- 3.8 Various Congressional hearings focused on threats from China. Examples in 2019 include the Senate Finance Committee's review of "Foreign Threats to Tax-Payer Funded Research" in June 2019, and the Senate Armed Services Committee's call for a list of Chinese institutions and companies with links to the Chinese military to be used in screening visa applications for students and researchers. The agendas of both the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and most fulsomely the hearings and roundtables sponsored by the Congressional Executive Commission on China have included China and technology research issues. Senator Rob Portman has recently proposed a new bill intended to protect American research and IP from global competitors against what he described as efforts by the Chinese government to strategically and systematically acquire IP and cutting edge research from US-based scientists, experts and research institutions.
- 3.9 A full slate of federal departments and agencies including Defence, Energy, Education and State and Commerce (including its Bureau of Industry and Security) have established regulations and requirements that, *inter alia*, affect American universities and colleges. The Department of Education completed in January 2020

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<sup>8</sup> For *Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector*. University Foreign Interference Taskforce, November 2019, see the guidelines link on the Australian government, department of education, skills and employment website at <https://www.education.gov.au/ufit>, accessed 26 April 2020.

an investigation into the connection of six universities with Huawei, contracts with the Central Committee of the CCP and involvement with “Talents programmes” hosted by China. The “Thousand Talents” programme established in 2008 to draw accomplished ethnic Chinese academics and others back to China via special incentives has emerged as a red flag in government scrutiny. The resulting report to Homeland Security was severely critical and called for greater scrutiny in preventing foreign money from securing access to sensitive American research.

3.10 Key instruments for disseminating and enforcing new compliance regulations have been major funding agencies, including the National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health (NIH). NIH has been especially active, issuing a letter in August 2018 to applicants raising concerns about foreign influences on research integrity, instituting what universities perceive as a variety of new disclosure and diligence requirements for projects, and conducting direct investigations of more than 60 institutions about breaches in disclosure of funding sources, diversion of IP and sharing of confidential information. In several instances these led to termination of scientists.

3.11 Specific examples of impacts on universities and academics include:

- public criticism of institutions by political authorities in Washington, for example a White House statement of disapproval centred on the University of California at Berkeley’s connections with Huawei and NIH’s singling out for censure the failings of dozens of other universities;
- requirements mandated under the *National Defence Authorisation Act* for individual institutions to remove equipment provided by Huawei or risk loss of federal research grants and other government funding;
- reduction of the length of visas for Chinese masters and doctoral level students in several sectors (including robotics, aviation and high-end manufacturing), rolling back the existing five-year multiple entry visa to one year;
- cancellation of multi-year visas for Chinese academics who refuse to answer questions at the border or provide detailed information including their travel history over the last 15 years;
- stricter controls over issuance of visas for Chinese scientists and engineers;

- requests from the Government Accountability Office to an initial list of 11 universities to discuss the response of granting agencies to foreign interference activities and to provide documentation of the universities' internal processes;
- FBI questioning of American academics and in some instances students working on China, working with Chinese partners, or returning from visits to China;
- comments by the director of the FBI referring to China's whole-of-society effort to steal technology from the United States and labelling students across disciplines as "non-traditional intelligence gatherers";
- active investigations into the behaviour of ethnically Chinese scientists working in US universities and companies. Of special concern are connections to the Thousand Talents programme and United Front associated activities;
- major administrative burdens tied to large increase in obligations for due diligence, reporting and other compliance measures. These relate to current and proposed projects which in some instances are retroactive;
- heightened media coverage and scrutiny of China-related activities, research contracts and funding, and philanthropic donations producing a chill on joint projects and new initiatives;
- new reporting requirements for individual professors who may be on the front line of research and teaching, and joint projects that are deemed to be illegal, unethical or involve technology transfer and leakage of IP;
- looming implications for foreign-affiliated off-shore campuses or joint ventures with American universities and R&D centres in China already subject to tightening restrictions;
- steering researchers away from subjects related to restricted technologies because of administrative and reporting burdens and a feeling that they are unable to pursue open research; and
- suspicions about Confucius Institutes (CIs) and new policies from government officials and agencies as well as media and public commentaries have led to the closing of CIs on more than 35 campuses in the past three years.

3.12 The issues extend beyond the STEM and bio-medical fields. The Social Science Research Council in New York is initiating a new project to monitor the current state of American academic research connections with China in the social sciences and humanities. A special area of concern is limitations of collaborations on Big Data.

- 3.13 Responses by individual universities have been varied. Most have or are moving to undertake measures to insure the integrity of peer review processes, ensure full disclosure about partners and funding, secure compliance with regulatory requirements, protect IP and strengthen cybersecurity.
- 3.14 Responses by associations including the Association of American Universities and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities have included push back, especially regarding excessive restrictions on research collaborations, diversion of talent away from the United States, and dangers of racial profiling and xenophobia. The talent issue has been particularly important considering that until recently more than 90% of Chinese students who earned a doctoral degree in the United States remained in the United States after graduation.
- 3.15 A key argument emphasised by academics and business leaders is that the US innovation system depends greatly on foreign researchers and partnerships with foreign research institutions, China central among them. MIT President Rafael Reif said, “If all we do in response to China’s ambition is to try to double-lock all our doors, I believe we will lock ourselves into mediocrity”. He and others have warned about the “toxic atmosphere” in research labs and the chilling effect on international collaborations including but not restricted to China.<sup>9</sup> Labs which not long ago were functioning as hotspots for international collaboration have now turned into battlegrounds.

### **Canada and Singapore**

- 4.1 Neither the Canadian nor Singaporean governments have as yet followed the United States in defining China as a strategic competitor or adversary or in accepting the logic of decoupling as the best way to respond. However, what is happening in the United States and in the US-China dynamic can be expected to have significant spill-over effects on both countries.

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<sup>9</sup> As quoted in Stephanie Segal and Dylan Gerstel, *Research Collaboration in an Era of Strategic Competition* (Centre for International and Strategic Studies, September 2019), [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190925\\_Segal%26Gerstel\\_ResearchCollaboration.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190925_Segal%26Gerstel_ResearchCollaboration.pdf), accessed 22 April 2020.

- 4.2 Nature magazine had provided some statistics in 2018 that measured the international research collaborations by universities around the world in the physical sciences, life science, environment and chemistry. China was the top collaborator with both the United States and Singapore and ranked second for Canada (after the United States).<sup>10</sup>
- 4.3 In Canada, concern is rising about Chinese influence and interference activities. A sign of this is the Special Parliamentary Committee on Canada-China Relations' recent request for further study on the role of universities. In addition, interactions between security and intelligence agencies and the universities are beginning to produce guidelines that, like Australia's, focus on risk awareness and vigilance, though a consensus has yet to be arrived at in the government or the universities on exactly what constitutes a sensitive sector or technology beyond those with directly military application.
- 4.4 For the most part, no major changes have been made: The major granting councils have yet to adopt American-style requirements for extensive disclosure and independent monitoring of institutional agreements. Major research universities continue to accept funding from Chinese companies including Huawei, though this funding remains a small part of research budgets and is subject to careful institutional scrutiny and transparency provisions. Almost all Canadian universities continue to recruit large numbers of Chinese students without any government proscriptions on their fields of study.
- 4.5 In Singapore, there are extensive interactions between universities and Chinese partners, funders and collaborators. With the notable exception of the 2017 expulsion of a prominent academic based at the Lee Kuan Yew School related to Chinese connections, there is no public evidence of special scrutiny of individuals or institutions for their collaborations with Chinese institutions. No special screening mechanisms are in place for dealing with Chinese partners that go beyond normal university review processes.

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<sup>10</sup> Nature Index: Connected World, 1 December 2018 to 29 November 2019, <https://www.natureindex.com/country-outputs/collaboration-graph>, accessed 23 April 2020.

4.6 There are six areas for further consideration in both countries.

- (1) American definitions of emerging and foundational technologies, sensitive sectors, designation of companies on the Commerce Department's entity list (e.g. Huawei) are all critical to multi-national agreements on export controls and university-based research. This will have significant implications for countries that do not share American positions at a time that the United States is shifting from defensive to offensive tools for restricting Chinese capabilities.<sup>11</sup>
- (2) The extra-territorial impact of regulations from American funding agencies stemming from new requirements that apply to all applicants regardless of nationality or location. In the Canadian case, Canadian universities risk losing funding from American agencies such as the NIH and NSF if they have collaborations with Chinese institutions and researchers that do not comply with American regulations and laws.
- (3) Increasing pressure domestically in both countries and from the United States to increase the level of awareness of risks in working with Chinese counterparts and doing more extensive due diligence on partner institutions and individuals including research collaborators, visitors and post-doctoral fellows and graduate students. Screening capabilities in Singapore may currently be more advanced than in Canada but immediate issues arise about who should do the more detailed screening, who should pay for it, and what level of information sharing across organisations and with like-minded countries is acceptable. China's Talent programmes and connections to institutions associated with the Party and military will need careful analysis as will new American concerns about the end use of university-based research that go well beyond military or dual-use applications. The range of unacceptable partners is being expanded to include Chinese institutions and individuals who might be complicit in human rights violations in situations like surveillance technology used in Xinjiang. American and Canadian academics are already heatedly debating the matter.
- (4) Deeper and wider discussion about how to balance national security considerations with the commitment to open research and knowledge exchange. Very few academic leaders or professors in either country are as yet seized of the issue in the way they are in the United States.
- (5) Adopting and developing codes of best practice for research hygiene related to safeguarding intellectual property, protecting against cyber incursions and strengthening the peer review system.
- (6) Assessing the implications of recent restrictions in China that academic papers on COVID-19 will have to be sent for review and vetting before being

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<sup>11</sup> Noah Barkin, "Export Controls and the US-China Tech War: Policy Choices for Europe", MERICS China Monitor, 18 March 2020. [https://www.merics.org/en/china-monitor/export-controls-and-the-us-china-tech-war?utm\\_source=Newsletter&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=Export%20Controls%20and%20the%20US-China%20tech%20war](https://www.merics.org/en/china-monitor/export-controls-and-the-us-china-tech-war?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Export%20Controls%20and%20the%20US-China%20tech%20war), accessed 23 April 2020.



submitted to academic journals for publication thus affecting the free flow of data and research and collaborations with foreign universities.

### **Hard Choices Ahead**

- 5.1 Strategic rivalry between the United States and China is unlikely to diminish during or after the COVID-19 pandemic. Techno-nationalism and the push for decoupling may strengthen as countries attempt to rebuild their economies with a preference for domestic industries. The international system may become more autarchic and global value chains may splinter.
- 5.2 For the moment most interactions with Chinese universities and students are frozen because of restrictions on travel, lockdowns and other uncertainties. Post-pandemic, universities are likely to face even more obstacles in remaining one of the most important institutions in building mutual understanding, addressing global issues and advancing scientific research.
- 5.3 For universities to keep their doors to China open they will need to close some windows and install some new screens. To do this in the most effective way, expanded discussion between Canadian and Singaporean institutional leaders and professors can play a constructive role.
- 5.4 The 17 April Declaration on Maintaining Essential Global Links issued by the Ministerial Coordination Group on COVID-19 convened by Canada and with active support from Singapore and 12 other countries focuses on air, sea and land commerce. The explicit mention of scientific collaboration is a building block for further international collaboration that Canada and Singapore can help lead.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mfa.gov.sg/Newsroom/Press-Statements-Transcripts-and-Photos/2020/04/18042020-Ministerial-Coordination-Group-on-COVID-19>, accessed 23 April 2020.