

From: [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)
To: [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)
Subject: New submission from Campus Climate Proposals
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2016 12:03:21 PM

First name:

Laurie

Last name:

Dennis

Email address:

[REDACTED]

Phone number:

[REDACTED]

Group name (if applicable):

Wisconsin China Initiative

What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Academic Staff

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

As the main staff person for the Wisconsin China Initiative, I would like to propose a new effort to encourage integration of our largest international student group, our population from China. This program would connect with student organizations to create an informal but regular session for international students to drop in to talk in a safe environment about their experience on campus and any concerns or cultural confusion they may be experiencing.

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

Our campus benefits greatly from the large international presence on this campus, which is dominated by our 2,800 students from China. This is a wonderful and talented group of Badgers who hail from across China and bring a multitude of backgrounds and experiences to our classrooms. However, language barriers and cultural differences too often get in the way of integration into the life of the campus for our students from China. Our climate conversations would benefit from the perspective of international students, and our non-international students would have a better campus experience if we could create more integration. We are seeing heightened sensitivities to stereotypes about Asians, expressed through Chinese-language social media both among our students and among our alumni in China. If the campus is going to continue to admit large numbers of students from China, then we need to offer more programs to help them succeed.

For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?

The Wisconsin China Initiative proposes working with two student organizations, Project Pengyou and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, to set up a regular monthly forum that would include a speaker on a cultural topic (what is Homecoming/Thanksgiving/March Madness? etc., why is it so important to raise your hand and speak up during class? what are the barriers to fostering friendships between international and local students? what are the Native American and Asian American connections to the UW? etc. though the topics would be intentionally guided by the students themselves). Each session would also have time specifically set aside to foster dialog about acceptance and tolerance. Key to success would be to have both Chinese and non-Chinese students and speakers

and group leaders involved. Naturally, there would need to be food served! After a semester of monthly programs, the concept could be revisited, looking at attendance and comments to understand whether the forum is worth expanding or altering.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

This program would require funding for pizza and sodas at monthly events, plus printing costs to prepare posters, and the cost for hiring at least one undergraduate on an hourly basis to manage the forums. For a semester, this would amount to an estimated cost of \$1,200 for catering, \$100 for printing, and \$1,000 for a student hourly position (or, ideally, \$2,000 for two student hourly positions).

If this proposal was developed in partnership with any other organizations, please list them below.

The idea for this project came through conversations with both Project Pengyou and CSSA student leaders. Other student groups could also be approached, including the Chinese Languages & Culture Club, and the Taiwan and Hong Kong student associations.