



**Smog in Chengdu
or
Deceit of academics in
the Sichuan
University of Pittsburgh
Institute**

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Deceit of academics in the
Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute.

by 柯立夫 (pronounced kēlìfū)

Cover photography "Smog in Chengdu" by the author.

Air in Chengdu: <http://aqicn.org/city/chengdu/>, Figures 13, 14.

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The book is free, or, if obtained from a commercial site, costs very little. However, it took the author considerable amount of time and effort to write the book; so if you find the book useful, please make a voluntary contribution of whatever amount you believe to be appropriate to PayPal account m2718281k@gmail.com.

1 Preface.

Every year thousands of people travel overseas in search for a job. For some it is a necessity; unable to find work at home, they look for employment abroad. For others, it is an adventure, an opportunity to see the world, to experience different cultures. Sometimes their search succeeds, sometimes it ends up on a sour note, sometimes it ends in a tragedy, e. g. <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/09/16/human.trafficking.claudia/>, <https://www.rnw.org/stories/promised-job-lured-sex-trade>. Stories of misled and deceived people abound, yet most victims prefer to keep silent out of fear that bad publicity may prevent them from getting employment in the future, after all what employer wants to hire a "trouble-maker" who dares to complain about deceit and harassment by an employer? Very few stories, like the ones at <http://www.vice.com/read/the-chinese-esl-industrial-complex-shady-working-conditions-abound-for-foreign-english-teachers-in-china-127>, <http://chinadailymail.com/2013/09/30/chinese-school-recruiters-scam-expat-teachers/>, make it to the media; most blame individual 'recruiters' or small organizations. However, the exploitation and deception of foreigners have become big business around the world, it involves 'respectable' organizations and high-ranking figures. The author of the book fell for one such 'job offer'; this book is written as a study into how such offers work and why people fall for them. The 'too-good-to-be-true' offer did perplex the author, yet it came with a backing by none other than the University of Pittsburgh, a supposedly respectable US school, the birth place of the polio vaccine, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polio_vaccine. I relied on the name and reputation of the school, which turned out to be worthless. I should have trusted the school no more than I would trust a guy in New York offering to sell the Brooklyn Bridge, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_C._Parker¹

The recruiter was Minking Chyu, Leighton and Mary Orr Chair Professor in the Swanson

¹The University of Pittsburgh has been associated with quite a few cases of fraud, here are some: 1) <http://www.law360.com/articles/120488/pittsburgh-univ-scientist-accused-of-cancer-fraud>, 2) <http://www.post-gazette.com/frontpage/2009/02/26/Pitt-CMU-money-managers-arrested-in-fraud/stories/200902260282>, 3) <http://www.ripoffreport.com/r/university-of-pittsburgh-medical-center/pittsburgh-Pennsylvania-15222-university-of-pittsburgh-medical-center-upmc-university-of-pittsburgh-medical-center-has-845621>, 4) <http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/criminal-fraud/legacy/2010/04/11/heatlhcare.pdf>, 5) http://www.cjr.org/the_observatory/local_science_fraud_misses_nat.php, 6) <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2006/04/25/newspaper-u-pittsburgh-enabled-hwang-stem-cell-fraud.html>, 7) http://articles.latimes.com/1988-09-20/news/mn-2318_1_research-fraud, 8) <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-6th-circuit/1422492.html>, 9) http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/31/content_21462013.htm, 10) <http://retractionwatch.com/2011/10/04/scott-weber-draws-penalties-from-ori-in-plagiarism-fraud-scandal/>, 11) <http://www.fiercehealthpayer.com/story/highmark-sues-upmc-300m-pricing-manipulation/2014-09-05>, 12) <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2006/january25/med-kennedy-012506.html>, I doubt the list is exhaustive.

School of Engineering of the University of Pittsburgh with a long list of credentials, <http://www.engineeringx.pitt.edu/ProfessionalProfile.aspx?id=2147485501>, who acted on behalf of the University of Pittsburgh, recruiting employees for SCUPI, a newly established collaborative project between the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University.

Although the details are specific to the author's case of employment in academia, the overall story is not much different from the stories of other victims of deceit: first lured to work by false promises, then coerced into submission and acceptance of what the employer was willing to spare rather than what was promised; it is known as 'hiring fraud' <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=igxTBAAQBAJ&pg=PT86&lpg=PT86&dq=lured+too+good+to+be+true+job&source=bl&ots=614KcS95YI&sig=CNOWOFqkeEIt2EwsRxtEf5eFaL4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj67Nzv26XJAhVFnpQKHbtNAFkQ6Av=onepage&q=lured%20too%20good%20to%20be%20true%20job&f=false> but rarely prosecuted. With a small but comfortable pension, the author could leave; others, who do not have that option, are forced to toil and are afraid to say a word out of fear of losing their jobs.

The deception mostly came from Minking Chyu, yet someone like Minking Chyu would not have engaged in the deception, had he not been assured the support of the powers that be both in the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University. Unfortunately, as is often the case, the true powers behind SCUPI hide behind frontmen, of which Minking Chyu is the most visible one. So every time you see "Minking Chyu" in the book, please read it as "Minking Chyu, on behalf of the University of Pittsburgh, Sichuan University and all the people he represents,".

The book is based on and quotes numerous email exchanges, to keep the book as short as possible, parts of the emails deemed to be irrelevant are omitted and replaced with "...". Any references to third parties or references potentially involving third parties, are also replaced with "...". The comments are reduced to a minimum. All underlined words were underlined by the author of the book.

2 The job offer.

The deeper problems of advertising come less from the unscrupulousness of our deceivers, than from our pleasure in being deceived ... Daniel J Boorstein, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America, 1962

Having spent 23 years as a tenured professor in a large North American university I was

happy to take early retirement. I was looking forward to seeing the world with my family, and what could be a better way to do so than a contract job in the country I wanted to explore? And so in the fall of 2014 I emailed my CV to about a dozen places.

The first reply came from Minking Chyu, the dean of SCUPI, a newly established collaborative project between the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University. His 3/25/15 email read "Based on the agreement between two partnering universities and a mandate by the Ministry of Education in China, the education program offered by SCUPI will largely follow Pitt's model. At Pitt, we have been successful in developing integrate curriculum for our freshmen for the past decade and promoting active learning, class flipping (Minking Chyu eagerly promoted this strategy described in <https://learningsciences.utexas.edu/teaching/flipping-a-class>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flipped_classroom), design innovation, and novel instructional facilities. These approaches, along with new initiatives to be developed by our own, will likely be implemented in SCUPI. With strong support from the leadership of both universities, we are determined to make SCUPI known for its high quality and innovative education, ... I must say that I am deeply impressed by your qualifications and experience. Though I understand that there might be issues, related to compensation level, taxation, so forth, I would definitely like to start a dialog with you and see if this can lead to a fruitful outcome. " After a few emails and a Skype interview I received a 4/5/15 email with a job offer "... I am planning on offering you a position as a non-tenure track Full Professor (in line with your most recent rank) in Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute (SCUPI). The compensation level is 325,000 CNY for a nine-month academic year, or 36,111 CNY per month for 9 academic months. SCUPI will purchase a medical plan for you in compliance with Sichuan University and government regulation. SCUPI will have some new housing units available for rent near our new campus (Jiang-An campus). Each housing unit has about 130 sq. meters ... 3 bed room, and 2 baths. The monthly rent has not been set yet, but it should be around 2000 CNY. You are, of course, free to make your own lodging choice. ... you will lead an effort to develop a math curriculum, which include calculus, differential equation, linear algebra, etc., that fosters active learning (a description of active learning may be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_learning)... The Institute will provide you with necessary resources to develop these courses. ... Though your primary job function is teaching, you are encouraged to interact with colleagues in our insti-

tute or other units of Sichuan University for scholastic activities, such as research and publishing ..." A quite low salary of CNY 325,000 was more than compensated by an offer of a low-priced new 3-bedroom housing unit. To my 4/16/5 email inquiry "... You mentioned a three-bedroom housing unit, so I assume you expect me to come with my family. It certainly would be a great opportunity for kids to learn the language. Will that be possible? I understand the local dialect is quite different from standard Chinese/Mandarin ... " Minking Chyu replied on 4/21/15 " ... as Dean, I would certainly like to push for more compensation for my colleagues ... Yes, the three-bed room is ideal for family. There will be plenty of places to learn 'standard' mandarin in Chengdu. In fact, historically, Sichuan folks were migrated from Beijing area, so actually their dialects are fairly similar; but with different tones." The last words were quite opposite to "Sichuanese ... is highly divergent in phonology, vocabulary, and even grammar from the standard language" from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sichuanese_Mandarin, and it should have served as a red flag, yet I chose to trust Minking Chyu rather than Wikipedia, mainly because of his credentials and association with the University of Pittsburgh. An opportunity to participate in the building of a brand new American-style school in the 'Wild West' of China and an opportunity for my kids to learn the Chinese language and culture were too much to miss out on; and so my family made the decision - we were going to China. The whole family was both excited and anxious. Somewhat ironically, I discovered a video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWe7U8hxY14> advertising Jiang'an campus of Sichuan University, where SCUPI was located, accompanied by a song about death; watching it, especially the scenes accompanied by the words " it is time to die" gave me a gruesome and macabre feeling. I asked Minking Chyu about it, his 4/21/15 email reply was "I have no idea about the youtube video. When I try to see it, it has nothing to do with Sichuan University. Did you get it right?" Was that an omen of things to come?

Although most of my training and research had been in Mathematics, I recently developed an interest in large waves and seismic activity, and even managed to predict a few earthquakes ahead of time. Minking Chyu knew about it. On 5/2/15 he emailed me " ... I didn't forget to look for more compensation for you. One way I am thinking of is to get you involved in a disaster management research institute here. This is an institute jointly developed by HK Polytechnic University, using some of the HK Jockey Club money, and established right after the first major earthquake in Sichuan. I think your earthquake background can be in use here. Their building is

right next to us, so physical connection wouldn't be a serious inconvenience to you. My thought is that you can do some research with them and, of course, more involvement could transcend to more compensation... " On 5/8/15 Minking Chyu sent me a Skype message " ... about your involvement with the disaster management center here, the initial response is very positive. We need to talk more on this ... " followed by a 5/14/15 Skype message " ... For the disaster part, it really depends on what and how much you want to do. It is going to be largely research. The organization, even though it is a cooperative program with Hong Kong Poly U, is very much a Chinese run entity. I think somewhat a mix between our institute and theirs will be ideal. Let's set up a time to talk. ..." I was somewhat perplexed that the message was sent by Skype rather than regular email, Skype messages only stay on the receiving and sending computers while emails stay on servers, in my case it was gmail servers; Skype messages are harder to preserve while emails stay until deleted. But I wrote off my concerns, why be so paranoid? The total deal sounded just too good to be true: \approx \$ 50,000 from SCUPI, a new 3-bedroom housing unit for only about CNY 2,000 (\approx US \$300) and additional money for research on earthquakes. The employment contract was emailed to me on 6/12/15, I signed it and sent it back. On 7/7/15 I received an email from one of the SCUPI's secretaires Vivi "... To facilitate SCUPI's the HR processing and to make our organization as effective and nimble as possible, SCU has set up a personnel management protocol with SCUPI that SCUPI are having the full rights and obligations to hire our employees, SCU's Human Resources Department advised us to sign the contract with our prospective faculty directly, instead of through them. As you know, the traditional Chinese university system has tremendous amount of bureaucratic procedures that may impede the process of visa application and the relevant matters, so the full personnel autonomy really excites us and we'd love to relay this great news to you. Since all the content regarding your rights and obligations will stay the same, and the original employer's rights and obligations (both SCU's and SCUPI's) will be combined and designated to SCUPI, to facilitate the visa application process, you don't need to re-sign the contract. The updated version of the e-signed contract will be used for the Z visa application only. The contract will take effect only upon your arriving in Chengdu and signing the hardcopy in person. ...". I quickly compared both contracts and found only three red marks indicating changes, none of them seemed to be of any significance. With my attention distracted by significant personal matters, I did not read the new contract carefully, I wish I did

as the point of the changes was that Sichuan University transferred all rights and obligations to SCUPI. Just like any other big school, Sichuan University has a system of checks and balances; as imperfect and biased as it might be, it still provides at least an appearance of fairness, justice and conflict resolution. With Sichuan University out of the picture there was no venue of arbitration should a problem occur in SCUPI. Since SCUPI was a joint project of Sichuan University and the University of Pittsburgh, I assumed it was still under the jurisdiction of the two schools. The Sichuan University was an unknown entity but the University of Pittsburgh was a, supposedly respectable, US school and I trusted it. When I arrived at SCUPI I was given the new contract to sign, yet I have never received a copy of it.

3 Calculus and Linear Algebra prior to the first day of classes: wishful thinking instead of common sense.

Critical thinking can be defined as the careful and deliberate determination of whether to accept, reject or suspend judgment about a claim.

Moore, B., Parker, R., "Critical Thinking" Mayfield Publishing, 1986

I was hired to teach college Math and to develop a Math curriculum, I made it my first priority. Even though my Contract started on 9/1/15, my work began in May, 2015. In a 4/23/15 email Minking Chyu wrote "... You will be teaching Calculus 2 for all three majors, which will be our first math we start in our joint institute, considering Chinese students are better math-prepared than general American freshmen..." The attached curricula for the three specialties showed Math 0230: Analytical Geometry and Calculus 2 in the first semester, Math 0240: Analytical Geometry and Calculus 3 in the second semester and Math 280: Matrices and Linear Algebra in the 5th semester. Typically Engineering Calculus consists of three parts: Calculus 1, Calculus 2, Calculus 3, each covering about one third of the standard Calculus material; starting the Calculus sequence with Calculus 2 was very ambitious, the assumption was that the students were so good they had already mastered 33% of Calculus. North American colleges typically start the Calculus sequence with Calculus 1, even though Calculus 1 is usually covered in high school. Were Chinese students so much better that Calculus 1 could be skipped? I informed Minking Chyu of my concerns in 5/2/15 email, he replied on 5/2/15, "... One thing is assured that the scholastic quality and math caliber of our students will be better than most of the students in the U.S. and Canada

... " Having taught Calculus for about three decades, I knew that was a very strong statement; and so I decided to quietly check it out by contacting some of my friends, colleagues and former students who had been exposed to education in China. Their reply was quite the opposite to what Minking Chyu was telling me, so I asked one of SCUPI's secretaries, Vivi, to provide me with the description of Sichuan University freshman Calculus curriculum and the last topics of high school math. Her 6/4/15 reply "... After consulting the Chair of the Math Department in SCU, the last topics for the 12th-grader in China are: Functions, limits, and continuity. ... the course description of SCU that means Sichuan University for your reference: 1. Functions and limits 2. Derivatives ... " confirmed my suspicions: Calculus 1 is not covered in most Chinese high schools, it is only covered at the college level. Minking Chyu's desire to skip Calculus 1 was wishful thinking and so I set out to gently convince him to change his mind with my 6/04/15 email. In the same email I also suggested moving Linear Algebra from the fifth semester to the second; according to <http://www.mathematics.pitt.edu/undergraduate/courses> the course is taught in the University of Pittsburgh in the first two years, most likely the first year. There was no reply from Minking Chyu, so I sent another email on 6/14/15. Minking Chyu's reply on 6/15/15 was short "We will look into this issue more and get back to you", he did not elaborate who were the "We". If I was the one to develop the Math curriculum for SCUPI, shouldn't I have been part of the "We"? It did not seem to be so, something did not add up.

A 6/21/15 email from Vivi informed me of the beginning of the recruitment process in June 22 - 28. The decision to skip Calculus 1 was made at the latest in May, way before students were even recruited and their background was evaluated; in other words, the desire to start with Calculus 2 and the assurances that the students were very well-prepared were not based on any kind of evaluation and were just wishful thinking on part of the SCUPI leadership. A 6/30/15 email from Vivi seemed to indicate that Calculus sequence would start with Calculus 1, however an 8/17/15 email from Minking Chyu still showed his doubts with the words "... gave some thoughts about Calculus. If we start out with Cal 1, we will have three courses, instead of 2. This of course will change our overall 4-year curriculum schedule ... "; the email ended with the words "... For Linear Algebra issue, let's evaluate it when we all arrive in Chengdu and may even after first semester when we have a better idea about the math calibers of our students." The last words were a far cry from Minking Chyu's previous assertions that the scholastic quality and math caliber of

the students would be better than those of most of the students in the U.S. and Canada. If the students were not really ready for Calculus 2, were they even ready for Calculus 1? What was the real "math caliber" of the students? Did they even cover the required prerequisites? I was no longer so sure; to make sure students were aware of what material they were expected to know, I hastily prepared an 80-page set of notes with prerequisites for review.

On 8/18/15 Minking Chyu forwarded me a 6/14/15 email from Shuman, Larry "... Based on our discussions with Michigan JI folks, we assumed they had the equivalent of Calculus 1 - derivatives already and could start with Calc 2. However, if that isn't the case then we need to make changes. Math developed a number of years ago an honors calc (and may still offer it) that includes both Calc 1 (quick review) and Calc 2. I am copying Jill to see if we still offer Honors Math 0225. If so, I'll get the syllabus. If not, we may need to rethink what we offer when. ..."

and 6/15/15 email from Jill G. Harvey, Associate Director and Coordinator of Advising First Year Engineering Program "The Math department still offers MATH 0235 (Honors Calculus). The course is taught by Christopher Lennard and it covers both Calc 1 and Calc 2 content, allowing a student to take MATH 0240 (Calc 3), MATH 0290 (Differential Equations), or MATH 0280 (Linear Algebra) as the next course in the math sequence. The class typically has 50 seats and is only offered in fall terms. The way this course is taught is significantly different from 0220/0230, in that it is taught almost entirely through proofs, which scares off a lot of first-year engineering students. A student is automatically eligible to take the course if their SAT is 1400 or higher and they are in the top 5% of their HS class, making them UHC eligible. Students who don't receive a letter from the UHC telling them that they can take UHC courses would need to seek special permission from the UHC to take this course." Why did it take Minking Chyu two months to forward me the emails? And why were they talking about Honors Calculus, a much more advanced subject usually not taught to Engineering students? For 15 years Minking Chyu was the chairman of a large department in the Swanson School of Engineering in the University of Pittsburgh, how could he not know it? I expressed my concerns in an 8/18/15 email to Minking Chyu his 8/18/15 reply was "... Thank you very much for your insightful message. I will definitely look into ... I have an appointment set up with Associate Deans for Academic Affairs in both engineering and art-and-science at Pitt during the week of 8/24. I will keep you updated. ... " To my question "... Since we are going to start with Calc I now, is it going to be a 2-term course or a 3-term course?

" Vivi replied in an 8/17/15 email "It's a 2 term course (fall and spring, 2015-2016) ... " So the decision had been made for me and I had to follow it, who made the decision I do not know.

Soon I received an email informing me that the students were divided into three classes, each class to cover all subjects separately. In my 8/17/15 email I made a case that the three-class system be changed to the two-class system, which to my great surprise was accepted. So the two-class-system currently in use in SCUPI is based on my suggestion, it is part of my legacy in SCUPI.

4 Getting ready to go to China.

In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is. Yogi Berra

In an 8/1/15 email Vivi informed me that she was about to courier my work permit and visa invitation letter, to which I replied on 8/1/15 "**The best way is to FedEx ... A friend of mine recently forwarded me ... by Canada Express courier (Canada Express is part of EMS) , which simply dropped it by the local post office; the local post office marked it as delivered while it kept the mail in the office!**". Vivi wrote back "We're using the EMS. I'll double confirm with the courier making sure they call you before dropping the mail. " An 8/15/15 email from Vivi informed me that the documents had been sent by EMS, which, according to my previous experience, was unreliable. Only 10 days later, on 8/25/15, the documents left China and arrived to the country of destination. Without any action on my part, most likely the documents would have been delivered to me around 9/10/15. In reply to my inquiry as to when I need to arrive to Chengdu, Vivi wrote in an 8/17/15 email "as long as you can be in Chengdu before 15th and 16th, you should be fine :) ". That left me only 5-6 days to obtain visa, book the flight and fly to Chengdu; the schedule was just too tight. So I pulled some strings and managed to get the documents delivered to me on 8/26/15, just one day after their arrival in the country.

As if the Gods wanted to prevent me from going to China, a few days later I developed a blood clot. I was hospitalized for five days to treat the blood clot but was told the recovery should not take longer than a few days due to my fairly good physical condition. To be on the safe side I wrote to Minking Chyu on 9/2/15 "... Doctors put me to hospital for 5 days to remove the clots with some medicine, and, more importantly, to prevent me from walking. I was told I should be

able to fly to Chengdu in 5-6 days but I think it is a bit too optimistic a forecast. So if all goes well, I should be able to fly to Chengdu around September 15-17 ... " to which he replied on 9/2/15 "... Arriving on 9/15 - 9/17 shouldn't be a problem, as our class could start as late as 9/21 ... " After five days in the hospital, I was discharged and cleared by doctors to travel. I booked our flight to Chengdu, China, where we arrived on 9/16/15.

5 Faculty and staff of the Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute.

Illusions are truths we live by, till we
know better. Nancy Gibbs

Upon my arrival to Chengdu I met my future colleagues, http://www.scu.edu.cn/scupien/faculty/directory/I120402index_1.htm.

The school was headed by Dean Minking Chyu, <http://www.engineeringx.pitt.edu/ProfessionalProfile.aspx?id=2147485501>, the man of many talents and achievements, or so it appeared. According to <http://additivemanufacturing.com/2015/09/14/university-of-pittsburgh-swanson-school-of-engineering-energy-power-and-propulsion-systems-researcher-minking-chyu-awarded-800000-cooperative-agreement-from-department-of-energy/> dated 9/14/15 " Minking Chyu, PhD, Leighton and Mary Orr Chair Professor of Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh, will lead the Pitt researchers, who received a cooperative agreement totaling \$1,015,490, including \$798,594 from the Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) and \$216,896 in matching funds from Pitt." To lead a large research project in Pittsburgh, USA and run a fledgling school in Chengdu, China at the same time, one needs to be a superman. When, during our first conversation, I congratulated him on the grant and mentioned that it must be very hard to handle the two concurrent appointments, he replied that I should refrain from questioning the decisions made by the leadership of Sichuan University and the University of Pittsburgh. I did not question anything, I simply congratulated him and mentioned how hard in my view it would be to handle the two tasks simultaneously; his reply was uncalled-for and offensive, yet I was to hear the same reply over and over again in the next six weeks.

Dean Minking Chyu was assisted by two Associate Deans, one of whom was Jie Wang or Dake Wang, the name and particulars of the person varied depending on the source. According

to http://www.scu.edu.cn/scupien/faculty/directory/I120402index_1.htm, it is Jie Wang, Ph.D., Mechanical Engineering, Sichuan; but according to Minking Chyu's email of 5/5/15, it was Dake Wang, previously an Associate Professor in Physics at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. PhD from Auburn University, undergraduate in Optics from Sichuan University, assigned to teach freshman Physics. It was not even clear whether it was the same person or two different people. In the first term he had no teaching assignment; as far as I could see while in SCUPI, he did nothing at all besides collecting salary. Of course, he might have been doing some important work which I simply was not aware of. Unsure how to address him and unsure of which matters of SCUPI should be addressed to him, if any at all, I consulted Dean Minking Chyu whose reply was that it was essentially none of my business to question the decisions made by the leadership of the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University. Again, I did not question anything, I just tried to find out whom and how I should consult in case I needed help. Chyu's reply did not answer my question, and this time it gave me a feeling of uneasiness. Unaware of Wang's true position in SCUPI and to avoid any potential problems, I stopped by Wang's office once to introduce myself and shake his hand; I stayed out of Wang's way for the rest of the six weeks in SCUPI, that was not too hard as after the first meeting I had no encounters with him. When I ran into him on a couple of occasions, I nodded to him to say hi; he did not reciprocate.

The second Associate Dean was Michael Reed, formerly an Engineering Professor in the University of Virginia, <http://www.ece.virginia.edu/faculty/reed.html>. RateMyProfessor ratings at <http://www.ratemyprofessors.com/ShowRatings.jsp?tid=2819> show his Easiness as 1.9, an indication of a very tough teacher; his Overall Quality score is 3.4, to get 3.4 with Easiness of 1.9. Michael had to be a good teacher as students rarely give good scores to tough profs. Too young to retire, he left a professorial position in the University of Virginia to move to the Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute in Chengdu, China; a seemingly illogical career move, an enigma I could not explain and I may only speculate as to the true causes of such a move.

English language skills were taught by Andrew and Albert, two hardworking people who toiled way more than 8 hours a day. English literature was supposed to be taught by Evan, who had no teaching duties in the first term but collected salary.

The three science instructors were Assistant Professor Kevin, Associate Professor Vesselin, and myself with the rank of Professor.

There were four secretaries: Vivi Tang, Shelly Zhou, Michelle and Qianniz. All four were good-looking and spoke almost impeccable English suggesting that each one of them had spent a considerable time in an English-speaking country. Shelly Zhou was in charge of financial matters, including salaries, reimbursements, medical insurance, and helping foreign faculty with housing problems; yet she was remarkably ignorant in each area of her responsibilities making me wonder why she was hired in the first place.

With one Dean, two Associate Deans, four secretaries, two English language teachers, one English literature teacher with no current teaching duties, one Chemistry instructor with no current teaching duties and only three people teaching Engineering, Physics and Math, the ratio of Engineering/Science teaching faculty to the total number of people was 3:13, reminding me of the episode 'The Compassionate Society' from 'Yes, Prime-Minister', at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52crwnZeDII>.

I would expect a school like the Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute to have a Board of Governors, yet if such existed, the information as to who was on it was never publicized. Nor have I ever learned where the school's funding came from. On the surface it appeared as if the school was a one-man-show run by Minking Chyu, although I doubt that was the case. As I learned in the two months in Chengdu, the powers that be in Sichuan University preferred to stay anonymous, hiding behind low-ranking employees and refraining even from signing emails and documents. In all the schools I have been to, the school's funding sources, the Board of Governors, etc. were a matter of public knowledge and often pride, the faculty were expected to be aware of them and contribute to promoting them. Not in SCUPI, whose power structure was hidden from the faculty.

The school's official name 'Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute' was often shortened to 'Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute' or abbreviated to SCUPI, with many, if not most, Chinese students and some staff and faculty pronouncing it as 'Scoopy' or 'Scooby', most likely due to its famous almost-name-sake Scooby, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scooby-Doo>; it added somewhat comical effect to what was supposed to be a very serious business. The comical effect was further amplified by the Dean's name, often-heard mispronounced as 'Mean King Chew', whether the mispronunciation was intentional or unintentional I do not know.

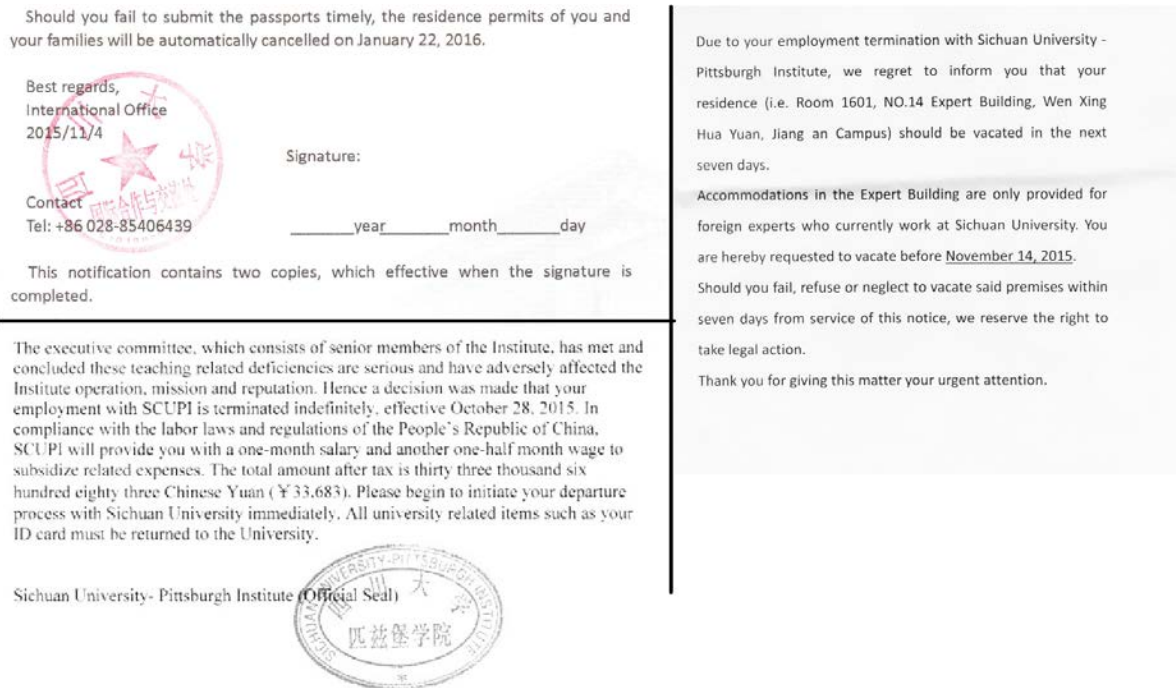


Figure 1: Typical ending of SCUPI documents; while I was required to sign, the other party never revealed its name. No signature(s)/name(s) of the sender(s), not on a single document. I wish I could add a signed/stamped copy of my contract of employment, but I have never received it, despite numerous requests.

6 The housing unit: what was promised and what was delivered.

Examples of unsafe food and unsafe housing by ruthless merchants in collusion with corrupted officials just to get rich are rampant. Eric Kwok-wing Leung, Birth of two Nations: the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China.

Fundamental Canons. Engineers, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public....
5. Avoid deceptive acts.
6. Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the pro-

fession. NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers, <http://www.nspe.org/resources/ethics/code-ethics>.

In his 4/5/15 email Minking Chyu wrote "... SCUPI will have some new housing units available for rent near our new campus (Jiang-An campus). Each housing unit has about 130 sq. meters ... 3 bed room, and 2 baths. The monthly rent has not been set yet, but it should be around 2000 CNY. You are, of course, free to make your own lodging choice. ... " A 130 sq. meter housing unit with 3 bedrooms and 2 baths at about CNY 2,000 was a big attraction and was, in big part, the reason I accepted the offer and turned down other employment opportunities.

A 7/14/15 email from Vivi informed me that the rent for the apartment had been raised to CNY 5,400 plus management fees, that is almost three times the originally promised rent of approximately CNY 2,000. I expressed my disappointment in 7/14/15 email to Minking Chyu and Vivi. In his 7/14/5 reply Minking Chyu wrote "... This is new to me. Just talked to Vivi, she said that she just received the information this afternoon. ... I must admit that this is not what I expected it; but I will try to find out more information and negotiate. An alternative is to find an apartment nearby, there are plenty and I have asked Vivi to explore it, including finding a rent agent to work with us. I can assure you that we will find a good solution for this and make your transition as smooth as possible. In his 7/16/15 email Minking Chyu informed me that he had negotiated a 50% discount and in another 7/16/15 email he confirmed "133 (referring to square meters) is 3 bedrooms". On 7/24/15 I received an email from Vivi "... I just got an update from SCU International Officer, she revised an information regarding the 133 sq. m. apartment: Instead of 3 bedrooms, it's 2 bedrooms + 1 study. She mentioned the study is big enough for placing one bed. Also the living room is very spacious for which you may want to make best use of it ... ", followed by 7/31/15 email "... after dropping by the apartment, I'm confident to say that the study has pretty good ventilation and light. " In a 7/17/15 email I informed Vivi "... **The housing unit, how high up is it? ... kids and wife are afraid to live high up in earthquake prone areas. ...**" to which Vivi replied on 7/17/15 "... We can ask the International Office and try to arrange a lower floor for you. ... " The 7/24/15 email from Vivi was accompanied by 8 photos, yet nowhere in the email was it mentioned that the photos were of two different apartments; only upon my arrival to Chengdu did I learn the truth. Together the 8 photos presented the appearance of a suitable apartment, yet neither one of the two was good on its own. Was it an honest mistake or a deliberate lie?



Figure 2: The building we lived in was located in a semi-ghost town, a subdivision of highrises, half of which were empty. In our building only the top three floors were occupied, the first floor housed guards and two ladies looking after the building. The floors 2-15 were empty, with ghostly appearance fitting a horror movie. The photo on the left shows the building at night; as if to make it more horror movie-like, someone would turn the light on in the hallway on the 7th or 8th floor once in a while. Did anyone actually use the unfinished apartments on the 7th and 8th floors? The photo on the right shows the building in the daytime, the windows above the building's entrance door have glass only in floors 16-18.

And so on 9/16/15 we arrived at our "housing unit". To say it was new would be an understatement, it was in a building still under construction in the middle of a sort of ghost town; full of problems, only some of which are shown in Figures 2 - 8. Only the 1st and 16th - 18th floors were occupied, the rest were empty and ghostly, reminiscent of horror movies.

Of the two elevators only one was operational and even that one was often taken by the construction workers working in the building. Without elevators I had to walk up and down stairs; the stairs were full of junk including lots of sharp objects. In September, 2015 I had a blood clot which healed fast, but to make sure the healing is complete for two months I was put on Pradaxa, a



Figure 3: Of the two elevators, only one was working. It was small, the walls were covered with plywood full of splinters. The building was supposed to be for foreign experts, yet the signs were all in Chinese. Often the single working elevator was used by the construction workers and we had to use stairs.

potent blood anticoagulant, which prevents blood from coagulation at the time of bleeding making even a small wound potentially deadly. Pradaxa is fairly new, approved by U.S. Food and Drug Administration only in 2010; the antidote to reverse bleeding Idarucizumab was only approved in October 2015, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dabigatran>. I was told to avoid bleeding at all costs, so walking up and down the stairs amidst sharp junk was like playing Russian Roulette with my life. Even when the elevator was available, its walls were covered by cheap plywood full of splinters, each splinter capable of causing considerable bleeding. The first floor lobby was no better.

The service balconies were full of mold, and infested with mosquitoes which attacked us in droves, especially at night. There was no door separating the master bedroom and the adjacent



Figure 4: The stairs, which are supposed to also serve as emergency exit, were full of junk and garbage. Lots of things were sharp and dangerous. Walking upstairs or downstairs was sort of a Russian Roulette, wondering each time whether we get hurt or not. The scary thought was of getting a large cut on the 8th or 9th floor, which were 8-9 flights away from people.

bathroom, allowing toilet odors to flow through to the bedroom. The sewage stench from a drainage hole by the toilet was overwhelming. I asked Shelly, the SCUPI secretary in charge of these matters, to help resolve the problem with the stench in 9/22/15 and 9/24/15 emails, her reply on 9/24/15 was "Sorry to hear the problem you had in your apartment. I will call Ms. Lee tomorrow."; but nothing had ever been done to address the sewage stench in the apartment until we left. In my 10/21/15 email I asked the International Office of Sichuan University to fix the problem; they never replied.

When I reminded Vivi of my 7/17/15 email "... [The housing unit, how high up is it? After the earthquake here](#) (I was referring to the 2013 magnitude 7.2 earthquake my family witnessed),



Figure 5: The few flights free of junk were covered with small loose particles making them slippery and dangerous to run on in case of an emergency. The picture of the lobby was taken on October 8, 2015.

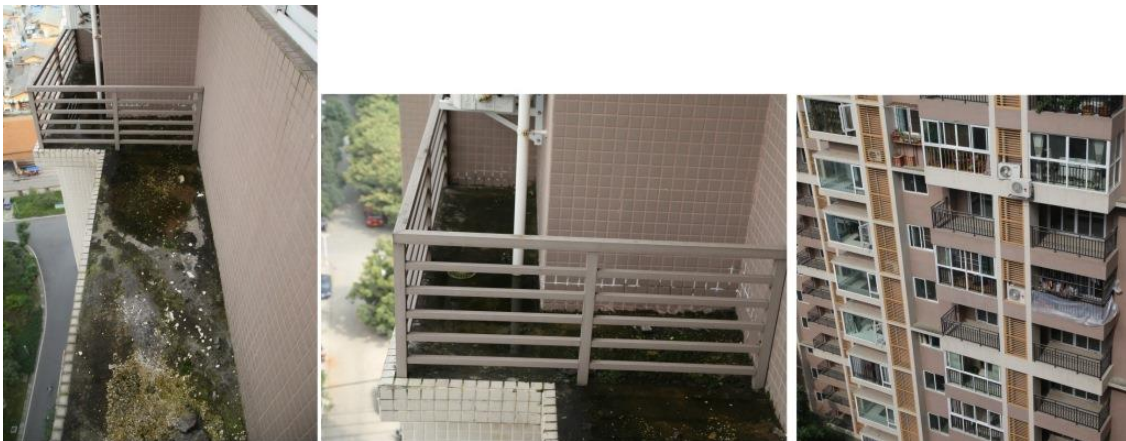


Figure 6: The apartment service balconies were covered with mold harboring mosquitoes, who flew to the apartment in droves, especially at night. The picture on the right shows a building opposite to ours, no mold whatsoever.

kids and wife are afraid to live high up in earthquake prone areas. ..." and her 7/17/15 reply "... We can ask the International Office and try to arrange a lower floor for you. ..." and asked if



Figure 7: The dry wall was not properly sealed and white powdery stuff fell on the floor every day accumulating along the baseboards. The flooring was laminate with the cover coming off. Both the white dust and the laminate cover were chemicals, their exact chemical makeup unknown I could not even guess how harmful they might be, but <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8326621.stm> may give an idea.

it might be possible for us to move to a lower unit, her reply was, "I am sorry, but nothing is available."

On 9/22/15 I emailed Shelly "... We've got a problem in the bathroom in the master bedroom, there is a bad stench there and goes all the way to the bedroom. ... is trying to find someone to fix it but does not seem to work. As far as I understand, the stench there is because the pipe below the drainage lacks a U-tube ... the water in the U-tube prevents odors from going back to the living quarters. They need to install U-tubes below drainage holes. ", followed by a 9/24/15 email "... Re stench in the bathroom. I poured water into the drainage hole, the stench disappeared but then came back. Most likely, there is a crack in the U-tube as the water was gone after a half a day. It needs to be fixed. " She did not reply. On 9/28/15 I sent my third email to Shelly "... Last night the elevator did not work. That can happen. We used stairs but the stairs are dirty, slippery due to dust and full of sharp things making it dangerous to use them. Could you ask the people in the building to make sure stairs are safe to use? Especially in case of emergency. What if there is a fire or an earthquake? Today I was going to go to the reception for international faculty but was told the shuttle bus was no longer running and could not understand directions for the city bus. So I went back home. Upon returning to the apartment I found the elevator locked for the workers' use with no elevator available for residents. When I finally arrived at my apartment I found a bunch of stuff piled up against the apartment door, making it impossible for my wife to open the



Figure 8: On the left is the entrance door to the apartment. One of the biggest problems was the toilets, even their covers were crookedly installed. Notice the drainage hole marked by the arrow. Typically, a U-tube (shown next to the toilet) is installed below such a drainage hole, the water in the U-tube prevents the sewage stench from coming to the apartment. Once the water dries up, there is nothing preventing the sewage stench from entering the living quarters. Usually there is a source of water, e.g. shower, near each drainage hole to replenish the water. There was no source of water near the drainage hole by this toilet and so every few days the sewage stench filled up the bathroom. To make our life more exciting, there was no door between the bathroom and the bedroom so all the stench went right to the bedroom; just imagine how romantic our first nights in Chengdu were. Fortunately, after a few days we figured the source of the stench and started pouring buckets of water to the drainage hole every day; although the stench never completely disappeared, it diminished to the level of being almost tolerable.

door from inside. Again, it is a safety issue. What if there is a fire, gas leak, or simply a medical problem and we are all locked inside unable to open the door. What if I need to go to my lecture and find myself locked inside? I moved the stuff away from the door to open the door. The workers were not very happy, and tried to put the stuff back against the door. I asked them not to do it, and of course, they left the stuff where I put it. They seem to be nice people but with absolutely no understanding of safety. Could you please help us explain to them that we are concerned about safety." She finally replied on 9/29/15 "I am sorry to hear that your day is not going well. I will try what I can to talk to them. ..." She must have called the building management as the stairs got somewhat cleaned, Figure 4 shows the condition of the stairs after the first cleaning. I wish I had taken pictures of what the stairs looked like prior to the first cleaning!

Around mid-October we discovered yet another problem: one of the apartment circuit breakers kept on tripping. It turned out that the washer/drier, apartment heater, fridge and a bunch



Figure 9: On the left is the apartment circuit breaker panel. On the right are the kitchen appliances besides the fridge, all were on the same circuit, together with the washer/drier and the heater.



Figure 10: Front and back cover of the brochure of the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction, run by Sichuan University. The phrase on the back cover is "Everyone with Disaster Awareness, Disaster Education for Everyone". Hypocrisy at its best: while promoting "Disaster Awareness, Disaster Education", the school kept the building, where we lived, in the dire state of 'disaster in waiting'.

of kitchen appliances were all on the same circuit. Overloaded electrical circuits are one of the leading causes of house fires. In my 10/17/15 email I informed Shelly of the problem with cc to all four other residents of the building to warn them of the danger "... We just discovered a big problem with the apartment which needs to be addressed. I cc to all residents and Minking as the problem may not be just in our unit. We noticed that one circuit breaker keeps on tripping. So we called ... and, according to her, the heater, the washer/drier, fridge, burner and all other kitchen appliances are on the same electrical circuit. That sounds a lot more than should be on a single circuit breaker, and a fire just waiting to happen. Please kindly contact the people in charge to check the wiring and fix whatever needs to be fixed. To the rest of the gang living here in the building, please keep an eye on your appliances and meanwhile make sure not too many of them are turned on at the same time. Hopefully, your units are properly wired. "; in my 10/21/15 email I informed the International Office of Sichuan University of the hazard, neither Shelly nor the International Office ever replied nor was the hazardous wiring fixed while we were there.

With so many problems in the building, we began to wonder if the whole building might one day collapse; something that had happened in China before, e. g. <https://www.rt.com/news/312341-sinkhole-china-building-collapse/>, <http://gizmodo.com/5304233/entire-new-13-story-building-tips-over-in-shanghai/>, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/29/wall-peels-off-block-of-flats-in-china/>. With a somewhat macabre sense of humor our kids started playing the famous scene from "Pain and Gain" showcasing the quality of "made in China" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvDAGgZ_Bo0.

Minking Chyu was a Professor in the Swanson School of Engineering, and as such had to follow the first fundamental canon of the National Society of Professional Engineers: Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, <http://www.nspe.org/resources/ethics/code-ethics>; yet to him ' the safety, health, and welfare of the public' are empty words. For 15 years he was also the Chairman of a large Engineering Department in the Swanson School of Engineering, I wonder what kind of education his Department, and for that matter the whole Swanson School of Engineering, provided to their students.

On 10/17/15 I was informed that I needed to pay rent and management fees in the amount of CNY 5,580, I emailed Minking Chyu and Vivi a reminder of the 50% discount promised to us, half an hour later I was told the rent was down to CNY 2, 700. On 10/30/15 I received an email

from Evan informing us of "... a rental discount if you pay for 6 months or a year at once ... ", that is the 50% discount was only applicable if we paid for 6 months or a year in advance. In the two months of staying in the building we were not given the lease or any other documents, the rules were changed at will to benefit Sichuan University, the owner of the building.

7 First days, and first problems, in the Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute.

Academic corruption includes but is not limited to: ... fabrication, deception, cheating, ... the use of institutional authority or name for personal gain in the process of higher education... <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/651248--academic-corruption-is-worst-corruption.html>

And so on 9/16/15 I arrived to Chendu, China to teach in the Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute, also known as SCUPI. My first obligation was to attend the Matriculation Ceremony, also attended by lots of brass from both the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University, <http://www.scu.edu.cn/en/news/webinfo/2015/09/1443489012739083.htm>. At the Matriculation Ceremony on 9/25/15, which must have cost a small fortune, a lot of attention was paid to the Honor Code. I took a quick look at it and noticed a few rather weird items, e. g. the honor code prohibited "... Use of any passage of three words or longer from another source without proper attribution. ..." and instructed "... Use of any phrase of three words or more must be enclosed in quotation marks ..." So, prior to the Matriculation Ceremony, on 9/23/15 I privately emailed to Minking Chyu "... I am a bit concerned about the Honor Code. The part that concerns me is the expression " 1. Use of any passage of three words or longer from another source without proper attribution. Use of any phrase of three words or more must be enclosed in quotation marks ... " "Three words" seems to be too short an expression to be a quote, i.e expressions "The Second World War", "rogue or monster waves" , "second derivative of a function" , "monotonically increasing function", "magnetic field is created by moving electrical charges" are all passages from other texts, yet no one would attribute to or even know the original source of these expressions. May I respectfully suggest amending this part? ... " His 9/23/15 reply "... I think you raised a valid question. I am copying this email with your message attached to the relevant colleagues,

particularly Evan, Kevin, Michelle, and Qianni, who are most related to document development and student affairs. ... " was copied to only six people, leaving Vesselin, Albert and Andrew out. When I privately asked him why, he told me to drop the matter completely. Students are not stupid and a few made comments to me about the Honor Code, but I did not want to have any problems and so I did not discuss the Honor Code any more.

Almost immediately upon my arrival I was informed I was the Chair of the Science Faculty Hiring Committee which also included Vesselin and Kevin. On 10/9/15 I received an email from Minking Chyu "... I would suggest that the committee chairs layout relevant goals and then meet with the members to develop a work plan and time line. However, as a first step, I would be happy to meet with each chair to discuss certain initial and boundary conditions, as well as expectations. ... " So I met with Vesselin and Kevin. Besides the hiring, we discussed Physics and Chemistry labs, resulting in a 10/12/15 email to Minking Chyu "... I met with Vesso and Kevin today and here is a short synopsis of our discussion re hiring and a few other things which came up. 1. Most likely we will need at least one more person in Math, one more in Physics, one more in Chemistry. 2. We all think Chemistry and Physics labs are important and need to be introduced, time and money need to be found for them. ... Physics and Chemistry ... labs are VERY important. One thing is to hear about something, and it is completely different to actually see or do it yourself. We need someone to run them." His reply came on 10/12/15 "... I agree and I am also sure my engineering colleagues at Pitt agree ... that laboratory is important. The reason engineering 'exclude' lab parts of physics and chemistry is not by choice; it is because their curriculum schedules don't have time/capacity to accommodate lab sections. The general engineering accreditation board (ABET) has agreed to such a setting for quite some time - so without lab components has become a norm. If we really want do it, it will be an 'extra,' as we don't have to do it curriculum-wise. Money is not an issue. " There was a lot of unnecessary additional activity piled on students, it took a lot of students' time, yet there was no time for labs! Although Minking Chyu wrote "Money is not an issue", it certainly was. The general engineering accreditation board (ABET) did not require labs in Physics and Chemistry, yet if we wanted to give our students really good education, such labs were a must and so I emailed him on 10/16/15 "... should we have a meeting with the whole committee? Vesso is concerned about a few teaching issues, we may as well discuss them too. Re labs in Chemistry and Physics, I think we should have

them regardless what curriculum requires.". Sichuan University had excellent lab facilities and I hoped Vesselin and Kevin could help me convince Minking Chyu to add Physics and Chemistry labs. Minking Chyu must have realized my intentions and privately told me to drop the matter and stop questioning the decisions made by the SCUPI leadership and so I did. Soon I found a job ad at <http://www.chem.pitt.edu/careers/tenure-track-sichuan-university-pittsburgh-institute> with a reference to a different Hiring Committee and so I asked Minking Chyu on the relationship of the two committees. His, by then standard, reply was that I should refrain from questioning the decisions made by the SCUPI leadership. On 10/22/15 I received this email from Minking Chyu "... Since Dr. Kaneda has accepted our offer, we will no longer need to search any more math and science instructor. Hence no committee is necessary. " The members of the Committee put their time and effort into their assignment, what was the point of wasting our time? Was it a joke? I wonder of how many other people's time and effort was wasted the same way by Minking Chyu in the University of Pittsburgh? Minking Chyu disbanded the committee but did not inform anyone but me, it was left to me to inform them.

8 Salary haircut and more: first signs of SCUPI's true nature.

As one of the longest serving chairs (15 years) for the largest engineering department in Pitt's history, you can easily check me out. I am very goal-oriented, value especially scholarship and quality teaching. I believe I am an experienced administrator and have the trust from both universities to build up this joint institute,... Minking Chyu

On 9/30/15 at 5:16 pm I got an email from Shelly "... There is good news.... the salary has already been successfully transferred to your account ... For September, you have received half month salary since you arrived later on 16th this month. ... ". That was the first time I heard that half of my salary was docked! In reply to my inquiry as to when I needed to arrive to Chengdu, Vivi wrote in an 8/17/15 email "as long as you can be in Chengdu before 15th and 16th, you should be fine :) " reiterated by Minking Chyu's email on 9/2/15 "... Arriving on 9/15 - 9/17 shouldn't be a problem, as our class ... start as late as 9/21 ... ". The first day of classes was 9/21/15. I had to pay the bills and kids' tuition so the salary cut was a shock. What shocked me even more was that I

was informed of the salary cut on the night of 9/30/15, right before the 9/31/15 -10/6/15 national holidays. With all banks closed until October 6 I could not even transfer money from home. So I sent Minking Chyu 9/30/15 email "... I just got an email from Shelly, saying "For September, you have received half month salary since you arrived later on 16th this month. " I am not sure how it works in China but I thought the salary is from the first day of the contract, that is September 1. I recall an email from Vivi or you, that it is OK for me to arrive after September 1 since the classes begin on September 21, and there was no mention of salary reduction. Besides I spent the two weeks September 1 - 15 preparing for lectures. I checked the contract and I could not find anything re this situation. You mentioned that the "One thousand program" deducts money for the days outside China, but nothing as I recall re the same applying to the salary. But then again I might be wrong and it might be somewhere. Could you let me know what the rules are, as I need to know them for the future. ...", his reply on 9/30/15 was "... The half-month salary is an established university regulation that if a new Sichuan-University employee arrives later than 15th, then he or she is entitled to at most half-month pay. We said it is "ok" for you to arrive before September 21 is based strictly on class schedule with a consideration exclusively by your surgery, travel constraints, and experience in teaching the course. The contract at its very beginning did suggest we need to follow existing rules and regulations of the university(What these rules and regulations are I have never been informed) . I am sorry that I couldn't provide you with more encouraging news; but our hands are tight. ..." His email made it appear as if it was Sichuan University who docked my salary. I sent him another email "... Rules are rules and we all have to follow them. I wish though I was told of it ahead of time, I could have booked the ticket for the 14th or 13th. I did not have a surgery, I just had to take some medicine and they put me to hospital to keep me under observation; but the injury healed very fast and the treatment was stopped after 4 days ... Anyways, as you said these are the rules and not much can be done to change them. ..." to which he replied on 9/30/15 "... I must apologize that the pay issue was never in our mind, at least in mine, when we provided you with the latest arrival time. As mentioned, we only thought from the course and class teaching standpoint. Also, this is our first time dealing with this issue and I learned about this rule only when we were preparing for your payroll; i.e. a few days ago ... As one of the longest serving chairs (15 years) for the largest engineering department in Pitt's history, you can easily check me out. I am very goal-oriented, value especially scholarship and quality

teaching. I believe I am an experienced administrator and have the trust from both universities to build up this joint institute, but I will constantly look for and count on help from smart folks like you. Though we don't know each other for long, I view you as one of my closest allies and friends at the institute, largely because of your experience and seniority ... " On 10/2/15 I emailed Minking Chyu "I don't think it was very nice of the University administration to keep us in the dark re school policies. First they quadrupled (should have been 'tripled') the rent, then this thing with my salary. I wonder what else we do not know and what other surprises might await for us. I am going to write a letter to the President, could you please let me know how to properly address him and how to send it to him. " to which he replied on 10/2/15 "I don't think this is a "dark" issue the university is hiding from us. Instead, it is a well established policy, (If it is a well-established policy, how come he was not aware of it himself?) and we simply don't know it before. Your argument is like a German driver who is speeding in the US and arguing that he should not be fined, because he doesn't know speed limit in the U.S. (In US traffic signs informing drivers of speed limits, parking regulations, etc. are required, the absence of warning signs is a cause for appeal and dismissal of the traffic ticket) We are a new institute and we, you included, are all responsible for this outcome. If anyone of us (again, you included) raised a question and asked specifically that if your late arrival has any implication of your pay, then we won't be here arguing this issue. As for housing, I can tell you the reply from the university and I have told you before- i.e. you are free to choose any housing arrangement you wish, on-campus or off-campus. The housing you are living now are the university-own housing which I requested specifically "a favor" from the University to reserve 12 units for our institute. A business unit of the university priced the rent based on whatever the cost analysis they used, then we negotiated; still, if you or we don't like the deal, we don't have to take it. ... you are around long enough and you ought to know that doing something not following the established command chain only makes everyone looks bad, yourself included. On the other hand, if you feel strongly that your direct supervisor is incompetent for resolving your problem or unfairly treating you, then you might bypass him; however, I would assess the odd of success before I do anything like that. Anyway, if you view these two issues is a reflection of my mishandling, then by all means write to him. " On 10/3/15 I wrote to him "I guess you misunderstood me, or maybe, I did not make myself clear. First of all, the letter to the President was not meant to complain about you. ... What I thought of doing was to write

a very polite letter expressing concern in lack of communication between Sichuan University and SCUPI and resulting misunderstanding in issues of housing, salary, etc. After all, even you were not informed of proper rent, or salary deduction rules, etc. What are the other things we do not know? Only god knows. What is the rationale behind such a letter, especially in such an early stage of development of SCUPI? We are going to be hiring more people, hopefully good people. And they will ask questions to which we need to know the answers. If they perceive being misled, we are going to have a problem on our hands. I understand we have a new faculty coming here ... his salary is about twice what Sichuan will pay him here. Yet he wants to leave that school, and his Chairwoman was happy to write a good letter for him, with the hope he would also help her move ... The Chronicles of Higher Education used to have a huge blog of complaints about the school by former and current faculty. Why? The little things like housing units, salary cuts for days off campus, etc. They changed provosts, deans, chairs, other administrators; somehow they even managed to remove most of the complaints from the Internet. But the problems still persist and the faculty do not want to stay there long. Is it really such a bad school? No, not much different from many others but with higher salaries, decent housing, research money and much more. Once the opinion of the school is formed, the newly arrived faculty listen to the negative feedback from the old faculty, form negative opinion and pass it on to the newer faculty next year. ... the Chronicles of Higher Education used to have faculty complaints about several more new schools; they probably still do I just did not bother to look for them now. What I am concerned about is that the same thing does not happen here. Is there a potential for such a negative development? Yes. We were told the housing would be new, instead the housing is unfinished, with work still going on and lots of dust and dirt around. What's more the emergency exit was completely blocked until I asked the girls here, and also Shelly to call them and repeat my request, to clean it up. Just 7 years ago 90,000 perished in an earthquake here (I meant the 2008 Sichuan earthquake) , and now we are in a building with blocked emergency exit? And the rent increase of which even you were not aware until the last moment? I did some work before September 1, it did not even occur to me to ask for any additional money for that or postpone the work until September 1, and yet when I came here I found out the school was counting how many days I was on and off campus. Many westerners would consider it "cheap" and "nickel-and-diming", and some of them might be our future colleagues. While in ... I was involved in handling several complaints by foreign faculty,

sadly they were all due to miscommunication here and there, the local faculty meaning one thing and the foreigners perceiving it differently. My intention with the letter was not in any way to undermine you or to show any disrespect to you or to anyone else. I came here with my family and intend to build a life here, at least for the next few years. The welfare and success of SCUPI are as important to me as they are to you. ... the problems are just due to miscommunication. I still think a very polite and very carefully worded letter could go a long way in explaining to Sichuan brass why communication and proper on-time information are so important to us. My salary cut appears to be a good excuse for me to write such a letter. ... " His reply came on 10/5/15 "My position remains the same - I would suggest you not to write the letter, as it won't do any good to you, as well as to the Institute. On the other hand, if you feel strongly that you need to write that letter, feel free to do so. I was surprised to hear the following: "We were told the housing would be new, instead the housing is unfinished, with work still going on and lots of dust and dirt around." Was the apartment really unfurnished? How about now?" I wrote to him on 10/5/15 "... I do not think any harm will come from my letter, but, who knows. it may save a few lives. I have been studying earthquakes long enough to know that. Incidentally, do you know there was a magnitude 4.7 earthquake near Chengdu on the 22nd of September? Chengdu is at $30^{\circ}39'1''N104^{\circ}03'53''E$, the epicenter was at $32.517^{\circ}N105.384^{\circ}E$, we could feel the building move a bit so I checked the Internet a bit later and there it was. ... " I also sent him a few pictures of the apartment and the building. He replied on 10/5/15 "... No idea about the earthquake in Chengdu. As I grew up in Taiwan, earthquake is part of our daily living, shaking under 5 is not uncommon. I have took a look at your apartment photos and will pass on to the proper authorities, though I don't know how much they will improve. Also, I doubt that they will do anything about the elevators, as Chinese usually have no freight elevator, so as long as there is a construction going on, the elevator will be used for moving construction material, and the elevator inner-wall will be "protected." ... " It looked like we were talking in different languages, I tried to tell him about the hazards of the unsafe conditions in the building and he tried to convince me to accept them. When I met Minking Chyu I reminded him of his 7/14/5 email "... An alternative is to find an apartment nearby, there are plenty and I have asked Vivi to explore it, including finding a rent agent to work with us. I can assure you that we will find a good solution for this and make your transition as smooth as possible.", his reply was that lodging was a personal matter and SCUPI

was an academic institution with the mandate to teach, not to look for apartments for its staff. And so I started looking for a new place to live; a formidable task since we neither knew how it worked nor spoke the language of the country.

On 10/9/15 I sent the following letter to the President of Sichuan University Xie Heping with cc to the Provost of the University of Pittsburgh Mrs. Patricia E. Beeson (material referring to third parties is removed, some parts of the letter repeat already discussed passages, the pictures referred to in the letter are the same or almost the same as the pictures shown earlier)

"... I am a new faculty member in SCUPI (Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute). I am writing to you with a humble request to rectify a few problems. I am sure there are people designated to handle them, unfortunately I am unfamiliar with the school's structure and totally unaware of whom else to contact.

In the winter of 2014-15 I decided to come out of retirement and apply for a job. ... the offer from SCUPI came with by far the lowest salary, it promised an opportunity to participate in one of the most exciting projects an experienced educator can dream of: the building of a new top-level school in the largest country in the world with one of the oldest and most revered cultures. The 4/15/15 email from Dean Chyu stated "SCUPI will have some new housing units available for rent near our new campus (Jiang-An campus). Each housing unit has about 130 sq. meters (\approx 1,200 sq. ft.), 3 bed room, and 2 baths. The monthly rent has not been set yet, but it should be around 2000 CNY. You are, of course, free to make your own lodging choice." and made the low salary more palatable as it was compensated by quite a reasonable offer of a 3-bedroom apartment at a reasonable cost. On 7/14/15 another email informed us that 3-bedrooms were not available and the rent for a 2-bedroom was CNY 5,400, almost three times what a 3-bedroom was expected to be. The increase was as shocking to us as it was to SCUPI staff and Dean Chyu. ...

The housing problem came back when we arrived to Chengdu on 9/16/15, the new housing unit turned out to be "too new" as the work on the building was still very much in progress with all inconveniences associated with it. As unpleasant as living in a building under construction might be, we thought of it only as a temporary inconvenience, ... soon we discovered that some of the problems appear to be permanent, while some are outright hazardous. Some of the permanent problems are 1) the white dust constantly and continuously reappearing in the apartments and worries about its potential health hazards; 2) the lack of doors between the bathroom and master bedroom

causing unpleasant (to say the least) odors and mosquitoes influx; 3) "little swamps" on the service balconies resulting in armies of mosquitoes at night; 4) constant dust in the entrance hall and the elevator. An even more serious issue is the blockage of the stairs which serve as emergency escape route in case of a fire or an earthquake. Until a few days ago the stairwell was full of construction materials and garbage, I asked one of the ladies looking after the building to clean it up, if possible, and asked one of the SCUPI staff to make a phone call to repeat my request. Within a few days the stairwell was cleaned. Somewhat. The stairs are still slippery due to dust and small lose items all around and some trash still left. Below are some pictures AFTER the stairwell had been cleaned. On September 28 I planned to attend the reception for international faculty but something inside me told me to go back home. Upon my return I discovered a lot of construction material piled up against the door of our apartment making any possibility of exit in case of fire/earth-quake/medical emergency impossible. Had an emergency situation occurred my wife and child would have had no exit route and would have burned alive if there was a fire; been buried alive in the rubble if there was an earthquake; or bled to death if one of them had accidentally cut oneself. Only seven years ago about 90,000 people perished in an earthquake here in Sichuan, why is there then so much disregard for the safety of foreign faculty of Sichuan University, the home of the world-renown Institute for Disaster Management? Am I too paranoid about the building safety? Not according to these web sites: http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-11-17-china-fire_N.htm, <http://travel.cnn.com/shanghai/life/building-shanghais-building-codes-984877>, <http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/AJCEB/article/view/1712/1863> , and many more. ... I understand that the work needs to be finished, but could the school kindly ensure that, while the work is being done, the inconveniences, and more importantly hazards and dangers, be, if not completely eliminated, at least reduced to a minimum?

Although my contract started on September 1, 2015 my work at SCUPI started way earlier: 1) when class schedule was emailed to me, I suggested that it be changed and my suggestion was followed; 2) when Dean Chyu suggested we start Calculus with Calculus 2 rather than Calculus 1, I suggested we start with Calculus 1. Starting Calculus with Calculus 2 would have meant skipping about 30% of the material with the assumption that the students have learned it in school, which would have lead to disastrous results. Neither one of these suggestions was made easily, people, both in Sichuan and in Pittsburgh, put their time and effort, suggesting changes

could have been viewed as criticism and could have hurt feelings and given people a sense of distrust to their professionalism. To avoid it and fully aware of the difference in cultures, I had to do considerable research before making each suggestion: talking to my friends and colleagues from other schools who had studied/taught in China, checking numerous web sites, etc. The task of selecting the textbook, although not as time-consuming, still took some time. I did the work before the contract was even signed, on my own time, way before September 1. It did not even occur to me to start counting how much money the school owes me for that, I would have considered such counting as 'too cheap' and embarrassing. What struck me is that when I finally arrived to Chengdu, the school deducted 50% of my salary supposedly for being a few days late. Although the delay was partly due to my staying in hospital for 4 days, the main cause was the late arrival of documents from Sichuan University. The documents were sent by notoriously slow and unreliable EMS even though I did ask that they be sent by FedEx; it took EMS 10 days to take the package just across China to the export point in China. Finally on August 25 the documents arrived to the ... entry port ... With the speed like that the documents were expected to arrive to the city ... where we lived, at best around the 4th of September but most likely around the 10th. Only due to my knowledge of inner workings of the ... postal service and about \$100 in 'tips', did I manage to arrange to receive the documents ... within one day ... on August 26. When I contacted Dean Chyu re a few day delay his reply on 9/2/15 was "Arriving on 9/15 - 9/17 shouldn't be a problem, as our class could start as late as 9/21", he did not inform me of the salary policy. His email of 10/1/15 stated "... the pay issue was never in our mind, at least in mine, when we provided you with the latest arrival time ... Also, this is our first time dealing with this issue and I learned about this rule only when we were preparing for your payroll; i.e. a few days ago." I was out of hospital on 9/6/15 and could have flown to Chengdu on the 8th, but waited until the 16th to minimize the cost and prepare material for the classes I was going to teach. Was my salary cut for all the work I did in the summer without being paid? Or is that a signal to me that all that the school cares about is attendance not actual work done? Or, does the word of the Dean who approved the date of arrival to Chengdu mean nothing?

All of us at SCUPI came here with a sense of hope and anticipation for a new venture. Some, myself in particular, gave up other, financially way more lucrative, opportunities. We came here with a sparkle to make a difference. I came with my family with an intention to build my life

here, at least for a few years; to give my kids a chance to learn the Chinese language and culture. Unfortunately, from the very beginning, we have had a few buckets of ice-cold water thrown at us, more than enough to extinguish not just a sparkle but a full-blown fire. First was the unexpected and sudden rent tripling announcement; then housing in an unfinished building with dust and dirt all around, with blocked emergency exit. It may come as a surprise to some, but we, westerners, also like to live in a clean, healthy and safe environment. So far the last, and I am not sure how many more will follow, bucket of iced water, was the 50% salary cut. We, including Dean Chyu, are not aware of the rules here. Why? I do not think there is any 'evil' behind it all, merely miscommunication with information lost somewhere halfway to its destination, a few bored clerks who forget about building safety, someone forgetting to inform us of the rules, etc. Of course, they don't care, it is the foreign faculty who pay for it. ...

I'd like to respectfully ask the Sichuan University administration to kindly attend to the matters of safety and cleanliness in the Sichuan University-owned residential building and repair defective workmanship; given rather unclean and unsafe living conditions at present, some sort of compensation in the form of rent reduction/elimination for the duration of repairs would go a long way to show the faculty that Sichuan University cares. Could the school also kindly make sure the emergency exit is available in case of emergency? I would greatly appreciate it if Sichuan University would make a full payment of my salary for the month of September. Last but not least, we all would appreciate it if the school could provide the faculty and staff of SCUPI with complete rules and regulations of Sichuan University, medical coverage policies, etc; after all it is very hard for us to build a successful top-notch school working in the dark, without knowing what is right and what is not. How can we function if the Dean's words cannot be trusted? ...

In no way should this letter be construed as any kind of complain against the SCUPI faculty, staff or the Dean, ... "

I believe in decency and despite the writing on the wall that Minking Chyu had been lying to me, I still wanted to believe him. When later on I talked to people from the Sichuan University's Human Resources office, I was reminded of Vivi's 7/7/15 email mentioned earlier "... To facilitate SCUPI's the HR processing and to make our organization as effective and nimble as possible, SCU has set up a personnel management protocol with SCUPI that SCUPI are having the full rights and obligations to hire our employees, SCU's Human Resources Department ad-

vised us to sign the contract with our prospective faculty directly, instead of through them. ... Since all the content regarding your rights and obligations will stay the same, and the original employer's rights and obligations (both SCU's and SCUPI's) will be combined and designated to SCUPI, ...". With SCUPI in full control of its affairs, docking half of my salary could not have been done without Minking Chyu's approval; which makes me wonder whether the sending of the documents to me late in August and by EMS rather than FedEx was on purpose, to make sure I received them late; in that case the 50% salary cut was planned already in August. Must be in gratitude for the work I did in the summer at no pay.

On 10/21/15 I received an email "... Thank you for the letter to the President about your concerns. We already started to dealing with your inquiry: about the house. Firstly, we have collected the details and information from the relevant colleges and departments. Secondly, we suggested the property management company (PMC) of your residence- Wen Xin Hua Yuan, to improve the environment to be more comfortable for the resident there. Then, the PMC accepted our advice. Finally, the PMC cleared the corridor, staircase, etc. (pictures attached show the residence environment now), and will maintain it in the future days. Moreover, you totally have the right of choosing another place to live if you are really unsatisfied about the place you live now. However you should go through the registration formalities with the public security organs in the places of residence in 24 hours after your arrival. (You could check you rights from the website about <The Exit and Entry Administration Law of the People's Republic of China> http://global.scu.edu.cn/?terms/_/1113) Thank you for your trust and support to Sichuan University. Sincerely yours, International office "; as usual - no names, no signatures. Most of the junk from the stairs and lobby was indeed removed. Some of it was still left, as was lots of dust and small chunks of what was, most likely, paint. I replied on 10/21/15 "... Availability of affordable and excellent housing was part of my decision to accept the job in SCUPI and reject other offers. The emails I received at the time indicated a 3-bedroom housing unit at approximately CNY 2000. As it turned out 3-bedrooms are not available and the cost of 2-bedrooms almost tripled. I do not think there was any attempt to mislead new employees, simply miscommunication; all I am asking is in the future to try to provide us all with correct information. ... The purpose of my letter was not so much to complain as to inform you of the problems so they could be fixed. The people working in the building are really nice and trying to help us as much as they can, they are the

bright stars here, their presence alone is sufficient to make us want to stay in the building. Overall I am very impressed with everyone I have met in SCUPI and the International Office, people are very nice, friendly and professional. Occasional mistakes can be made and should not present a big issue. ... Since writing the letter I discovered another problem in the unit: defective and dangerous wiring, We noticed the breaker kept on tripping whenever we did laundry. We asked ..., she read the labels on the circuit breaker and informed us that the heater, washer/drier/fridge and all kitchen appliances are put on the same circuit breaker. That is way too many, such wiring can potentially cause fire. At the moment we manage the situation by turning off the appliances when doing laundry and trying to do laundry with cold water, the breaker trips when any two appliances are on. One of my colleagues informed me of a problem with electricity in his unit but I am not sure of the details. Inconveniences do not bother us so much, what worries us is the potential danger. Please try to fix it. ... There are problems specific to our unit, would that be too much trouble to ask you to fix them? One is the drainage hole in the bathroom, it is an almost constant source of foul odor in the bedroom as there is no door between the bathroom and the bedroom. I hope you understand it is difficult to have good sleep when your bedroom smells of sewage. ", I have never heard back from the International Office. Nor were the problems with electrical wiring and sewage stench fixed while we were there. At the time I genuinely believed it was all just a misunderstanding and miscommunication; I no longer think so. I was deliberately misled and lied to.

9 Medical Insurance: promised but not delivered.

... we are going to run a well managed operation with little tolerance for error and instability ... Minking Chyu, 10/7/15 email

In my contract I was promised a health insurance, yet as of 10/7/15 none was provided. I discussed the matter with Shelly, the SCUPI secretary in charge of medical insurance, several times but with no results, and so on 10/7/15 I emailed to Shelly "... I have not heard re the details of medical insurance for faculty members. Could you kindly let me know 1) whether there is medical insurance in place for the faculty members, 2) whether family members are included or excluded, 3) whether and how additional insurance may be purchased for family members if they are not already included. Is there any dental coverage included in the medical insurance? If there

is already medical insurance in place, could you please email us a copy of the policy or description of coverages and exclusions. Could you please make it high priority as any one of us may get sick at any time or get into an accident (which is not so unexpected with some drivers here), and we certainly need to know what is covered and what is not. Also, in my particular case, I need to know whether I need to purchase medical insurance for my family or not. ", I cc-ed it to all colleagues as several of them were concerned about the health coverage.

The reply came from Minking Chyu on 10/7/15 "... Concerning the insurance, everyone, as an employee of Sichuan University, is fully covered under the university-wide policy. In other words, as a baseline, if any accident or sickness occurs to you, you will be covered under exactly the same policy applicable to the domestic employees. This is in line with Article 2, A2 (c) stated in your Contract of Employment. What the Institute is doing now is to explore possibilities of offering additional/optional insurance plans for our employees. For instance, the new policy might provide more choices of hospitals which have resident English speaking doctors, better facilities, better coverage,... Since the beginning of the semester, we have been evaluating various proposals from several providers and seeking resources to cover at least part of the costs. Since co-payment from participating employee might be necessary, this won't be a mandatory plan. Thus everyone will have a choice of whether to participate or not. While no academic unit at Sichuan university has ever done this before, we hope that we can have something in place in about 2 to 3 weeks. " I sent another email on 10/7/15 "I figured we all are interested in the matter of medical insurance and more people will be asking the same question, so I figured I cc to all faculty so Shelly, or you, would not have to repeat the same answer to all of us. I hope you don't mind if I ask two more things I already asked Shelly: 1) Is there a booklet or a web site describing more or less what is covered ... ; 2) Are the family members covered or we need to purchase additional medical insurance for them? So far this applies only to me and, I think, Michael, but in the future we may have more faculty members with families. Again, things vary from place to place and from country to country, and, as much as I wish that family members were covered, I am not sure that is the case. I think Shelly mentioned to me earlier that we need to purchase additional medical insurance for family members, ... I figured I should do it ASAP. ... " to which Minking Chyu replied on 10/7/15 "I am sure that answers to your questions are available in the university system, (which is, of course, in Chinese, the language none of us could under-

stand)... We ought to appreciate the fact that medical insurance falls in the domain of personnel and benefits administration at a university, hence it can get quite personal and privacy sensitive. Frankly, I do not believe that the way you started out the inquiry by copying everyone in the institute is appropriate. It is also inappropriate to openly speculate how your colleagues might do for their spouse medical insurance. As personnel matters are meant to be personal and confidential, our administration will manage them accordingly, even if this requires repeated efforts. If any information, limited not only to personnel related matters, is deemed to be suitable and/or beneficial for public dissemination, our administration will do so. Though this doesn't mean only institute administrators can do bulk correspondence, I do urge you (and everyone) to use common sense when it comes email distribution. This is utterly important for our operation and collegiality, especially the institute is under a developing stage. If you have any questions in this regards, please do not hesitate to see me or one of the Associate Deans." Here we were, walking daily among sharp junk on stairs and in the lobby, playing Russian Roulette with our lives, that did not bother Minking Chyu a bit; all he was concerned about was to keep things confidential and to prevent us from sharing the information. Knowledge is power, as the saying goes, and he wanted to make sure we do not acquire the forbidden knowledge. To be polite I replied on 10/7/15 with cc to everyone "... Please accept my apologies. The questions were general not special so I thought they might be of interest to all. Actually, the original message was for Shelly and was copied only to the faculty who might be interested in the general nature of the questions. ... As you know I prefer to email any touchy matters to you first, I just did not expect this one be viewed as such. Since most of us neither speak the language nor know the rules, it would be nice to know what is covered and what is not, at least the basics available to everyone. Of course, the confidential items remain confidential and I did not mean to overstep that line. ...".

The 10/7/15 email was followed by another one to Minking Chyu alone "I thought I drop you this email in person without cc-ing to everyone. I know you angry at me for deciding to write a letter to the president, I can assure you there will be nothing there to undermine you in any way. I will send you a copy. However, I can see your anger in the email ... There was absolutely nothing inappropriate in either of my two emails re medical insurance, just general questions about medical coverage. Nor did I expect any answers from you, it was emailed to Shelly with the hope she would answer it to all of us. It was cc-ed to you just to let you know of the questions. ... If

anything, it is your reply that created an impression that Michael is getting some special insurance, which may or may not be the case; I do not care to know the answer. Your getting angry like this just undermines your authority, I am telling you this as your true friend. If you want to yell at me, please come to my apartment around noon, my wife makes good cappuccino and you can yell at me over cappuccino as much as you wish. But please do not show you anger like you just did. I know you are under a lot of pressure and I will do what I can to help you whenever and wherever I can, but you cannot let your anger out like this. ... " His 10/7/15 reply started with by now usual words of self-importance: "Your message made me laugh. If this matter angers me, I wouldn't have survived for being one of the longest serving Chairs (15 years) for one of the largest and difficult departments over Pitt's 200+ years university history.", he went on "Why I was called upon doing this job by both universities? I can only tell you that it is not because I look like Chinese and can speak similar language (of course); in fact, I was born and raised in Taiwan and have no connection in China at all. (What does his ethnicity have to do with the salary haircut or the hazardous living conditions?) So, do I care about your writing the letter to the President Xie? From my own and institute standpoint, absolutely no. As for your side, I have already offered YOU my thoughts; but if you are not listening, that is your problem. By the way, you don't need to send me the letter copy. As for this email incident, you can sense that we are going to run a well managed operation with little tolerance for error and instability. If this is something you are not used to, our institute might not be the right place for you. I would love to take your offer of cappuccino. You know that good coffee is not easy to come by in Chengdu. However, I thought you said that your apartment has not been furnished. " While Minking Chyu found absolutely nothing wrong in having us live in the building under construction, himself he did not want to visit it because he thought it was unfurnished! I figured I close the topic with 10/7/15 email "Time for us to close the topic. I just want to reiterate, I am not your foe, I am your friend. But I will express my opinion, when I feel it is needed, of course to you first if I find it even a bit touchy. I am sure we will disagree on many issues, but after all I do not think you want to surround yourself with yes-men. I also understand that you are a very good and very experienced administrator and your opinion does and will matter to me. The letter to the President is almost finished, see attached if interested. Feel free to ignore it or express your opinion. As far as coffee is concerned, you reply pretty much supports me. If you do not even want to have coffee here, how

do you think we feel living here every day? ... "

On 10/8/15 I got an email from Shelly "... I am back to work in the office today. For the questions you have. First, we have already got quotes from two insurance companies. (Didn't Minking Chyu write in his earlier email "Since the beginning of the semester, we have been evaluating various proposals from several providers..." Minking Chyu claimed they had been evaluating several proposals since the beginning of the semester, but Shelly wrote they have received only two quotes; who's bending the truth?) We could probably cover individual faculty's insurance and please find the attached insurance plans. Meanwhile, we are still contacting other insurance companies. ... " to which I replied on 10/8/15 "... I am not sure how it works in China but it looks like you might be looking at wrong options. Since SCUPI is small the insurance premiums are expected to be high. A better way would be to join one of the large organization's group insurance. I am sure Sichuan University has at least one group insurance, joining the group would be a way better option than establishing our own group or buying individual policies. ... Hopefully nothing happens and none of us gets sick, but what if one of us does? According to Minking, I am covered by faculty insurance; if I need to use it, how do I do it? Do I go to a doctor, pay and apply for reimbursement? Do I give the doctor a special number to charge the insurance company directly? " She emailed me on 10/9/15 "... in Sichuan University, all the domestic and some foreign employees are required to by the national insurance which cost a very unreasonable price. It would cost 10% of your monthly income. Lower price purchase option is only for students since the group is large and also it's a kind of benefit. As national won university, Sichuan University hasn't affiliated with insurance cooperation. The fact is one of the plan is recommended by international office which provides insurance for some foreign faculties before (that seemed to be somewhat contradictory to Minking Chyu's 10/7/15 email re medical insurance "... no academic unit at Sichuan university has ever done this before...") ... I am not sure how the insurance works in hospital. I believe the insurance company will give us a training later when it comes to purchase process. " I wrote another email to Shelly on 10/16/15 "... In case of medical emergency, ... how does one call ambulance or get emergency care? I am sure there is a number to call, and I am sure there is a number for foreigners to call. I recall getting sick in Beijing, I was staying in the guest house of the University of Beijing at the time, and there was a procedure in place already back then as to what to do in case of a medical emergency involving a foreigner. The other day Minking

wrote "Concerning the insurance, everyone, as an employee of Sichuan University, is fully covered under the university-wide policy. In other words, as a baseline, if any accident or sickness occurs to you, you will be covered under exactly the same policy applicable to the domestic employees. This is in line with Article 2, A2 (c) stated in your Contract of Employment. " It may not be the best insurance but how do I use it? Is there a special ID card to show to doctors whom to charge? Or do we pay and get reimbursed for it? In September I had a trauma which resulted in a blot clot. I am supposed to take medicine until November 5 and then change to a weaker medicine for another month. To do so I need to see a cardiovascular specialist, preferably, who can speak English. ... " Her reply on 10/16/15 "... I am not sure about those questions. But I believe we will ask the insurance company to give us a brief training session once after we sign the contracts with . All our faculty insurance plans are for foreign residence in China, so your worries won't be a problem as they have a kind of system to run it." did not answer my questions and so I repeated in my 10/16/5 email "... How about "Concerning the insurance, everyone, as an employee of Sichuan University, is fully covered under the university-wide policy. In other words, as a baseline, if any accident or sickness occurs to you, you will be covered under exactly the same policy applicable to the domestic employees. This is in line with Article 2, A2 (c) stated in your Contract of Employment. " it may not be a good coverage but it is still coverage and may cover the deductible/copayment of the faculty insurance plans for foreign residence in China. Also, how about my other two questions? ... How and whom do we, foreigners or Chinese, contact in case of a medical emergency? ... The insurance company will not answer these questions, and even if they do, I am not sure it is always a good idea to follow their advice as a typical insurance company would often direct you to the cheapest doctor not the best one. Insurance companies are in business of making money and, if my experience in US, Canada, Philippines, India and Korea is of any indication, the health of the insured is secondary. It might be different in China, but I doubt it. May we ask someone from Sichuan University to provide answers to these questions? " Shelly never replied to this email.

When I privately asked Minking Chyu how to reconcile his 10/7/15 email "... co-payment from participating employee might be necessary, ..." and Shelly's 10/9/15 email "... in Sichuan University, all the domestic and some foreign employees are required to buy the national insurance which cost a very unreasonable price. It would cost 10% of your monthly income. ..." with the

Contract's "In line with Sichuan University and governmental regulations and guidelines, Party A shall provide Party B with a health insurance plan" ? and his 4/5/15 email with a job offer "... SCUPI will purchase a medical plan for you in compliance with Sichuan University and government regulation. ...", his reply was that the word 'provide' did not mean 'at no cost to the faculty member', and that his promise in 4/5/15 email "... SCUPI will purchase a medical plan for you in compliance with Sichuan University and government regulation. ..." was not part of the Contract!

On 10/12/15 Shelly wrote to me "... We will receive other two quotes (of insurance premium) today and then I will discuss with individual faculty member to make our final decision. I believe we are going to get into the purchase process pretty soon. ... ". The discussion never happened. Nor were we even shown any other options besides AVIVA-COFCO Life Insurance Co., Ltd, whose policy was emailed to me on 10/8/15. Based on four decades of dealing with insurance companies in many countries, I found the whole thing to be very strange and suspicious. If Minkking Chyu was right and we were already covered by a medical insurance for Sichuan University employees, what was the advantage of buying an additional insurance? Why was it taking so long? Questions were many, answers were none.

At the October Faculty and Staff meeting Minkking Chyu promised SCUPI would pay for the health coverage for the foreign faculty; I doubt SCUPI would have ever provided medical insurance to its members, had I not raised the question. I also doubt the insurance policy provided, if it was ever provided to the faculty, was good. Was it even needed or did it just duplicate the Sichuan University health coverage? I was never provided any information regarding the Sichuan University health coverage.

Of about \$ 250 of medical expenses I incurred in China, none was ever reimbursed.

10 Reimbursement of moving expenses: promised but not delivered.

To mischief trained, e'en from his mother's womb,
Grown old in fraud, tho' yet in manhood's bloom.
Adopting arts, by which gay villains rise,
And reach the heights, which honest men despise ...

Lord Loughborough.

Moving to another country always involves money; and in my case it cost me about CNY 15,500 or approximately \$2,500. On 8/18/15 Minking Chyu emailed me "... In your case, you could utilize the discretionary fund to cover your relocation related expenses, which could be reimbursed rather quickly..." and so upon my arrival to Chengdu I attempted to get my moving expenses reimbursed. The matter was complicated by the additional relocation-related expenses like medical/physical exam, residence registration and permit, foreign expert certificate, notarization of documents, etc. Although it was easy to do the reimbursement in two stages, Shelly insisted I collect all receipts and do the reimbursement once all expenses are paid, which was to be sometime in mid- or late November; I was not given any other options. Short on money due to the 50% salary cut, I informed Minking Chyu in 10/7/15 email "I will submit travel reimbursement claim tomorrow for most of the expenses, as I need money soon, I will submit another claim in a few weeks." followed by 10/8/15 email to Shelly "... I am not sure how it is done here, whether there are any forms or we just submit the description of expenses and receipts. I will bring the receipts today but, since I do not have a printer yet, below is the list of expenses related to moving to Chengdu. I am not sure what the policy is about non-documented expenses, please look into it ... " and another 10/8/15 email to her "... Once you submit papers for travel reimbursement, could you please give them my email address to contact me for questions? If my 30 years of experience with reimbursements is of any indication, the financial office will be quite confused as to what is what and what can or cannot be reimbursed; so having them contact me directly would be the best option.", her 10/8/15 reply was "... for reimbursement, we can only reimburse money with receipts ..." which was OK with me as most of the expenses were receipted. Receipts were submitted and all I could do was to wait. In 10/15/15 email Shelly re-iterated to me "... For your reimbursement, I want to wait a little bit until you got your residence permit because it can be put into the package.", as much as I needed the money I could not argue. On 10/21/15 I received a surprising email from Shelly "... Since we will wait about 3 weeks to get your residence permits receipt. In this case, I am going to process your moving reimbursement tomorrow. ..." followed by 10/23/15 email from her "... I have already submitted your reimbursement documents to school financial department. Please check your account today to see if you receive it. The currency calculation was done in October 14th and it was a little different from your calculation. So please expect check the

amount of money with the following items. Airfare... CNY 8,478.4 ... Departure tax in ... CNY 397.2 Medical exams ... CNY 1,930.6 Visa fees paid to PRC Consulate General ... CNY 3,171.7 Medical check-up in China CNY 871.6 Notary serve at the USA Consulate General ... CNY 634.6 Subtotal: CNY 15,484.1 " The money did not show up in my account on the 23rd, or 24th, or 25th, or 26th. To my 10/26/15 email "... **Hi Shelly, I checked the balance a few hours ago and the reimbursement is not there ...** " Shelly never replied.

I have never received the reimbursement of moving expenses; nor the receipts for the incurred moving expenses have ever been returned back to me. I may only assume that someone used my receipts to get the reimbursement and pocket the money; I just cannot think of another explanation.

11 Research in the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction: promised but not delivered.

Although most of my training and research had been in Mathematics, I recently developed an interest in large waves and seismic activity, and even managed to predict a few earthquakes ahead of time. Minking Chyu knew about it. On 5/2/15 he emailed me " ... I didn't forget to look for more compensation for you. One way I am thinking of is to get you involved in a disaster management research institute here. This is an institute jointly developed by HK Polytechnic University, using some of the HK Jockey Club money, and established right after the first major earthquake in Sichuan. I think your earthquake background can be in use here. Their building is right next to us, so physical connection wouldn't be a serious inconvenience to you. My thought is that you can do some research with them and, of course, more involvement could transcend to more compensation... " On 5/8/15 Minking Chyu sent me a Skype message " ... about your involvement with the disaster management center here, the initial response is very positive. We need to talk more on this ... " followed by a 5/14/15 Skype message " ... For the disaster part, it really depends on what and how much you want to do. It is going to be largely research. The organization, even though it is a cooperative program with Hong Kong Poly U, is very much a Chinese run entity. I think somewhat a mix between our institute and theirs will be ideal. Let's set up a time to talk. ..."

On 10/23/15 I emailed to Professor Gu Linsheng, the Executive Dean of the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction of Sichuan University. I did not hear back from him,

instead on 10/26/15 I received an email from Minking Chyu "... Though for now we don't really enforce the 8-hour daily presence on campus as required by Sichuan University for full-time employees, we expect our colleagues ... to work and be available in the office most of the working hours. While most of our colleagues are complying with this rule, a few of us show up in the office rarely or only part of the lecturing days ... " The last sentence was directed at me, busy with the lecture notes and search for a new apartment I simply could not stay in the office eight hours a day, nor had I ever been told before that there was a requirement for me to be in the office eight hours a day. If "... the 8-hour daily presence on campus ... required by Sichuan University for full-time employees, ... " was true, how could I do research in the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction?

In early November I went to the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction and met with Gu Linsheng. According to him, Minking Chyu had never approached him regarding my employment in the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction. When I told him of Minking Chyu's promises, he did not believe me until I showed him the emails and Skype messages. He repeated that Minking Chyu had never discussed my research and employment in the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction with him. He added that no decision in the Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction is made without him. Somehow Gu Linsheng's words did not surprise me.

12 Teaching: they be blind leaders of the blind (Matthew 15:14).

You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help
him to find it within himself. Galileo Galilei

In §3, I discussed the situation with Calculus prior to the first day of classes. The 8/17/15 email from Vivi "... It's a 2 term course (fall and spring, 2015-2016) ... " defined the pace of the course. Typically Calculus for engineers is covered in three semesters, here I was to teach a three semester-course in two semesters to an audience of kids who did not speak much English, and some did not speak English at all. My first class was on September 21, 2015, it was completely dedicated to review of prerequisites, there were lots of prerequisites and very little time to cover them. To make sure students were aware of the prerequisites and what to expect I prepared an

≈ 80– page manuscript with pictures, tables, etc. to help them. Many students appreciated that, some might have expressed concern. I kept in mind Minking Chyu's suggestions in 3/25/15 email "... promoting active learning, class flipping(described in <https://learningsciences.utexas.edu/teaching/flipping-a-class>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flipped_classroom) ... reiterated in his 4/5/15 email "... you will lead an effort to develop a math curriculum, which include calculus, differential equation, linear algebra, etc., that fosters active learning (a description of active learning may be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_learning)... ; both active learning and class flipping involved having students work at home.

Around the 22-24 of September Kevin informed everyone that he conducted a survey which showed that about 48% of students worried about passing Calculus more than Engineering or Physics, which is not any different from other schools where in the first semester Calculus is the subject of most concern. Only a couple of days after the classes started on 9/21/15, the survey did not make any sense; if anything, it was detrimental to say the least. Calculus is the hardest subject, teaching evaluations in Calculus are known to be lower than in other subjects worldwide. Was there a problem with my teaching? I asked Kevin who visited my class, in his 9/24/15 email he wrote "... I personally felt very good about your lecture. I like the way you illustrate concepts. I like your examples of great scientists. I find your jokes and humors quite amusing! I wish I could have taken your class when I was in college. ... " On 9/23/15 Kevin emailed "... Starting from 4:50 pm today, I will give students a one hour seminar talking about adapting to this new situation. The seminar will be given mainly in Chinese, since the goal is to send the message. My slides contain the following key points. Let me know if you have more information you'd like me to deliver. Sorry for such a late notice. 1. Having understanding problems in class is normal! We faculty and staff know that you have difficulties, and we will help you. You will overcome this eventually. 2. Skills for overcoming language barrier in a short period of time. I'd focus on listening and reading. In the listening part, I'll talk about contractions, incomplete plosion, linking of sound, and staff. 3. Talk about the difference between high school and college, college in China and college in US. " It was followed by a 9/24/15 email from Minking Chyu "... I hope things can improve. Let me know if you need any help. If necessary, I can get help from experts at Pitt's teaching center. " Students understood very little English and some could not understand English at all. As far as I could see, students were actually doing way better than I expected, as

pointed out to Kevin in 9/25/15 email "... if not all, at least many seemed to follow the lecture quite well. They pointed out a few mistakes (actually just typos) in the printed notes and even caught/pointed out a couple of my mistakes in class; and asked a few very reasonable questions; I was fairly impressed with how they worked a couple of questions. I just want to see whether they felt overwhelmed or not. " Kevin replied on 9/25/15 "... I surveyed around ten students yesterday about how much on percentage they were able to understand your speech. I got a 30-40% on average. This is actually a good number! If they went to the US for college, they would have the same situation. The only difference is that in the US, the majority can understand, so those Chinese students who don't understand would naturally think it's their own fault or defect. In SCUPI here, however, the majority don't understand, and this makes them feel that professors may need to make a change. I have told students that being unable to understand is normal, they should work harder. So when you slow down, they should feel happier. ..." With only two semesters allotted to me to cover a three-term course, I could not afford to slow down. I prepared lecture notes ahead of each class and posted them online so that the students could read them and check on unknown terms. Prepared rather hastily, the notes contained typos and a few mistakes; yet the majority of students noticed them and rushed to inform me; that was good, it meant they did their homework, they read the notes and they understood the material.

Minking Chyu's 9/24/15 email "... I hope things can improve. Let me know if you need any help. If necessary, I can get help from experts at Pitt's teaching center. " was sent after each Science/Engineering instructor had given the first lecture, Vesselin and Michael Reed's first lectures were more of an overview of the rules and requirements, mine were a review of what the students were expected to know. The words "I hope things can improve" conveyed a message that things had been going wrong, how can one arrive at such a conclusion after merely the first, introductory, lecture? I have taught Math for over 30 years; I am yet to see a freshman class not worried about doing well in general and doing well in Calculus in particular. It was routine freshman anxiety, with his experience Minking Chyu should have recognized it. Why didn't he? As I already mentioned earlier, Minking Chyu expected to recruit the very top-notch students fitting Caltech and MIT, instead he got regular kids who did not speak much English. The students were not what he wanted and to him it was already a failure, a reason to panic. He wanted to turn them into top-notch students overnight, or, at most, over a few days; but the task could not be

accomplished that fast. Yet to him, it had to be. And so Kevin started his seminar, Albert and Andrew started their revision classes to explain technical terms, Vasselin also joined the 'helping frenzy'. Although the intention of the people was good, their sessions/seminars took precious time the students needed to study, further contributing to the problem. A number of students complained to me that the rehearsals for the Matriculation Ceremony and the 'helping frenzy' left no time for them to study; sadly there was nothing I could do, the tsunami of 'activities' was unstoppable. My weak appeals to common sense, were doomed to fail. As I watched 'helping frenzy' unfold I thought of the quote "We don't measure our success by results, but by activity and the activity is considerable " from the show 'Yes, Prime-Minister', episode 'The Compassionate Society', in the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52crwnZeD1I> between 26 and 27 minute marks.

Active learning, class flipping and other 'fancy stuff' were out, watering down the material to the level of middle school to make students happy was in. On the plane back home from Chengdu, I left Michael Reed's homework assignments on the seat while taking a stroll along the aisle; when I returned I saw an child of about 13-14 years of age reading them. I jokingly asked him if he could do the first question in 11/17/15 Michael Reed's homework assignment "1. (20 points) The current population of the earth is $\approx 7 \times 10^9$ people. The population doubles approximately every 75 years. (a) If this trend continues, when will the land area per person reach 10 m^2 per person?" The kid replied: "We need to find n such that $2^{\frac{n}{75}} = \frac{\text{Area of the land}}{7 \times 10^9 \times 10}$ ". When I told the kid it was college homework, he laughed, I asked him why. The kid pointed to the question in 10/11/15 homework " "... A martini is a type of cocktail (alcoholic drink) made from 4 parts gin and 1 part vermouth (proportions are by volume). ... a standard cylindrical glass ... is used to measure the ingredients. 0.8 cm of vermouth is poured. What is the total depth of liquid after the correct amount of gin is added?" and said, "I learned this in grade 1, how could it be in college? " According to <http://www.ratemyprofessors.com/ShowRatings.jsp?tid=2819>, In Virginia Michael Reed was a tough instructor with the Easiness coefficient of 1.9, that is 0.7 less than the Easiness coefficient of 2.6 for the author of this book, and the author has never been an easy teacher. Then why did Michael Reed change?

Despite all the panic I continued teaching, trying to keep students calm in class; they were asking questions and doing quite well. There were even a few strong students who approached me

asking for help in doing hard questions from the famous Calculus textbook by Demidovich, some even asked for help in handling questions from the International Mathematics Olympiads. Yet the panic was setting in and affecting students, the 'activities' made students feel that something was wrong. Being the only one not participating in the 'activities' was going to backfire. I thought of Kipling's immortal words

"If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too; ...
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise "

I figured I do not "talk too wise" and just do my job.

On 10/21/15 I received an email from Michael Reed "A number of students have approached Michelle and Vivi with concerns about how they're doing in the calculus class ... Many students are unfamiliar with some technical terms. ... Students are struggling with concepts that require understanding terms and ideas not covered in their previous courses. ... From the student feedback, it is apparent that a large fraction is having similar problems. " The email made it look as if I was having problems in my classes. If, indeed, there were problems, I could not understand why students would approach Vivi and Michelle, rather than the Dean or one of the Associate Deans; Vivi and Michelle were secretaries who knew very little Calculus, if any at all. Is "Many students are unfamiliar with some technical terms" a problem? In his 10/23/15 email Kevin wrote "I will have a ... session dealing mainly Engineering problems (although non-exclusively) starting tomorrow afternoon and on the following Saturdays as long as I could make it. After more and more students came to my office hour, I did find some pervasive problems regarding to their language level and general understanding of concepts and principles. ", and in his 10/23/15 email Albert wrote "The students provide the language samples for the revision class. This helps to keep it student-centered. The sample about the air tanks is a good example. I would never have guessed that would trouble them. ... They brought in stuff from engineering without my asking this week". These emails show that the students were having more problems with Engineering terminology than with Calculus terminology. In his 10/23/15 email Albert described his 10/22/15 revision class, it covered 3 sentences from Physics, 1 from Engineering, and one from English class brought in by students, no one asked to review any Calculus sentences. Then why was Michael pointing out to me that my students were having problem with terminology? Is "Students are

struggling with concepts that require understanding terms and ideas not covered in their previous courses" a problem? Can you imagine how much worse it would have been had I followed Minking Chyu's plan to skip Calculus 1 and start with Calculus 2? At the October Faculty and Staff meeting Albert said that the students' level of English was still remarkably low, with very few students showing the level required to comprehend teaching. Yet in my class they were doing well, partly because all lecture notes were given to them ahead of class so that they could read them ahead of time and look up unknown words, partly because the 80-page review manuscript addressed many of their concerns.

To his 10/23/15 email Albert attached a copy of his 10/22/15 review, the first half of it was a 20-slide showing that the following expressions from the Physics class are more-or-less the same:

1) " Once a vector has been resolved into its components along a set of axis, the components themselves can be used in place of the vector."

2) "After a vector has been resolved into its components along a set of axis, the components themselves can be used in place of the vector."

3) "After a vector has been resolved into its components along a set of axis, those components can be used in place of the vector."

4) "After a vector has been resolved into its components along a set of axis, those components can be used instead of the vector."

5) "1.After a vector has been resolved into its components along a set of axis, 2. those components can be used instead of the vector."

6) "First, resolve the vector into its components along a set of axis. 2. Then, you can use those components instead of the vector."

Students who need to be taught this kind of things do not belong in a college-level class taught in English. They need to learn English first, teaching them Calculus, Physics, Engineering was an utter waste of their time.

The already mentioned 10/21/15 email from Michael Reed "A number of students have approached Michelle and Vivi with concerns about how they're doing in the calculus class ... Many students are unfamiliar with some technical terms. ... Students are struggling with concepts that require understanding terms and ideas not covered in their previous courses. ... From the student feedback, it is apparent that a large fraction is having similar problems. " used the word

'feedback', and so I questioned why. I was told Michelle and Vivi were interviewing students about the difficulties in Calculus, without even making me aware of it. I'd assume any kind of interference with the Calculus class should have been coordinated with the instructor, rather than being done behind his back. Kevin's and Albert's emails also indicate that the students had at least as many problems with Engineering and Physics as with Calculus, if not more; than why interview students about Calculus? I was being picked on. But why? The answer seemed to be clear, I was asking for medical insurance, the reimbursement of moving expenses, rules and regulations of the school, Physics and Chemistry labs for students, etc.; that the powers that be could not tolerate.

I offered Michael to look at my notes, his reply came on 10/22/15 "... Your notes look fine to me, well-written with lots of examples. I suspect the students are overwhelmed with the amount of written material (these notes, plus the textbook, plus the readings for other classes) and with their struggling with English, they are not absorbing as much as we want. This is certainly the case in my class ...

Yet Vesselin and myself managed to teach and so, impressed with our teaching, Associate Dean Michael Reed asked us to showcase our teaching in his 10/16/15 email "... The SCU Office of Academic Affairs is sending about 30 people to observe your classes. The visitors are new faculty undergoing teacher training. They want to see our advanced and innovative teaching methodologies, such as Western style faculty/student interactions, classroom management, and team exercises. The visit will be the afternoon of Wednesday, November 18. ... This is a good opportunity for us to showcase our strengths and for SCUPI to get exposure within the larger university community. ..."

On 10/26/15 I gave the Monday class their first test, they did spectacularly well even though the test was not watered down to make it easy. I knew the students in the Thursday class would also do well on their 10/29/15 test. I knew I was on the right track; despite all English-language problems, students were learning. The students also felt they were doing well and that made them feel good. While on an evening walk I met a few students who told me Minking Chyu had asked them how they did on the test; seeing their happy faces and hearing they thought they did well Minking Chyu seemed unhappy, the students said they could not understand why. I knew he would not let me give the test to the Thursday class.

13 The true nature comes out.

On 10/25/15 I received an email from Minking Chyu "Dear Colleagues, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Tsun-Zee (TZ) Mai, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at the University of Alabama (UA), will be joining SCUPI as Visiting Professor, effective immediately. He will be arriving in Chengdu this evening (10/25). Besides being an academic faculty, he was the Director of Mathematics Technology Learning Center at UA. Dr. Mai's expertise and experience will greatly benefit our mathematics instruction and, in the near term, alleviate our existing problems encountered in the Calculus class. Dr. Mai received his Ph.D. from the prestigious computational and numerical mathematics group at the University of Texas, Austin. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Mai. ... " RateMyProfessor at <http://www.ratemyprofessors.com/ShowRatings.jsp?tid=743433> shows Mai's Easiness at 2.9, Helpfulness at 4.0, Clarity at 3.9, Overall Quality 3.9, versus the author's Easiness at 2.6, Helpfulness at 4.0, Clarity at 3.8, Overall Quality at 3.9, not that much different, isn't it? As I already pointed out earlier, Michael Reed and Vesselin were having the same, if not more, problems in their classes than I did; English language teachers were not making as much progress as expected; than why was Minking Chyu talking specifically about Calculus with his words "alleviate our existing problems encountered in the Calculus class"? It was deliberate harassment and bullying, I swallowed it and emailed on 10/25/15 "Dear Colleagues, It is a great surprise to learn that another math faculty will be joining SCUPI and I certainly would like to join Minking in welcoming him and am looking forward to meeting and working with him. Regards, ... ". My email did not sit well with Minking Chyu, who wrote on 10/27/15 "... It's good that you welcome our new colleague and look forward to working with him. However, I would like to point out that it's really not appropriate for you, as a non-tenured stream faculty (Why did he mention that I was a non-tenure stream faculty? How relevant was it? Was it supposed to be a message that 'non-tenured stream faculty' are second class citizens?), to mass-email everyone in the Institute to comment on a personnel decision made by the institute leadership. (I did not make any comments, what was he talking about?) There's been several similar e-mail incidents, and you had been warned before. Recently quite a few colleagues have voiced complaints about receiving this type of email from you, as they feel it is quite random and irrelevant. Some deem it very unprofessional. Please observe the proper email protocol as you have been advised. In the future,

if you intend to send or copy to multiple colleagues at SCUPI, you must receive permission from each individual receiver in advance. (Minking Chyu had no objections to others sending emails to everyone, then why me?) Any violation could lead to work place harassment and will result in disciplinary action." All I did was to join Minking Chyu in welcoming a new colleague, but Minking Chyu could not tolerate it. I could feel him boiling inside, students' good performance on the test must have made him see red. I wrote back to him on 10/27/15 "... Since when is it a harassment to welcome a new faculty member? You mention several inappropriate emails, could you please specify which? None of our colleague has ever asked me not to send any emails. And what comments on a personnel decision by the institute leadership did I make? ... " to which he replied on 10/27/15 "... For those colleagues who don't want to be bothered by your emails, which are either nonsense or irrelevant; but you still send or copy to them, that is work place harassment. From now on when you deal with email or correspondence involving multiple receivers in the institute, you must obtain permission from individual colleagues to avoid complaints and disruption of institute operation.

So my email welcoming of Dr. Mai was "random and irrelevant ... work place harassment and will result in disciplinary action ...disruption of institute operation", to quote Minking Chyu, yet himself he did not hesitate to spam us with this 10/26/15 email exchange with a vice-president "... FYI ... Forwarded message ... From: "guangxianli" <guangxianli@scu.edu.cn> Subject: ... Professor TZ Mai To: "Minking Chyu" <mkchyu@scu.edu.cn>. .. Dear Minking, Great! Congratulations! Warmly welcome Dr Mai! Guangxian ... Executive vice-president of Sichuan University ...E-mail: guangxianli@scu.edu.cn ... Office phone number: +8602885469011 "; with this email Minking Chyu wanted to show us all how close he was to the powerful people, and he did not hesitate to broadcast it! Was he afraid that such an important message from the Executive Vice-President of Sichuan University might be lost among less important messages sent by non-tenure stream members like myself, and some members of SCUPI may not notice his moment of glory? Was it an attempt to silence me out of fear that my emails were raising serious issues arising in SCUPI? Joseph Sobran once said, "The attempt to silence a man is the greatest honor you can bestow on him. It means that you recognize his superiority to yourself.", <http://www.quotes.net/quote/17600>. Did Minking Chyu's attempts to silence me stem from feeling inferior when I was around? We never received any emails from the President of Sichuan

University or any high-ranking official of the University of Pittsburgh, I guess neither one of them believed Mai's arrival was a big deal.

Soon I received another 10/27/15 email "... Below is an excerpt from one of the messages I have received concerning your email misconduct. This should give you a clear message how your behaviors have adversely affected our collegiality and the Institute's operation. As Dean of SCUPI, I would like to be clear that his type of disruption is not acceptable in our institute ... Dear Dean Chyu, I just received a message ... about our apartment. The message was addressed to Shelly, and copied to all of us. I have a few concerns about the way this communication happened. ... If he (meaning the author) was concerned about the results, the speed of the inspection, or felt that he was being ignored or passed off, he could inform someone here at SCUPI to assist him. ... Regarding these emails, I think it would be more appropriate to first send a message to one person. That person can then make inquiries. If he feels he should notify others, he can then send a message to us. In the message, he should say that he has noticed an issue, contacted someone, and they are looking into it. The second message should be CC'd to the first person. I don't even know if the message is being sent to the right person. ... has previously sent a message about health care, and this was done in the same way. This creates a bad impression. It looks like he is deliberately putting the public spotlight on someone in order to get something he wants. It looks like bullying, and appears unprofessional. And I feel it creates unnecessary tension between the faculty and staff. ... It seems he did not take your suggestions about the healthcare email, and may need a one to one, face-to-face conversation. " My email, the anonymous complainer (or Minking Chyu, if he made up the email) was referring to, was the email to Shelly re the problems with electric wiring, the email was cc-ed to other residents of the building to warn them of a potential danger and remind them not to overload the circuits, circuit overload is a leading cause of house fires, e.g. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2291890/Spinster-62-dies-house-overloading-double-socket-12-electrical-items.html>, <http://www.tipmont.org/community/safety/dont-overload-your-homes-outlets> or google "circuit overload house fire". Apparently, a 'true engineer', Minking Chyu and the anonymous complainer (if there was one, as the message most likely was made up by Minking Chyu himself) were worried more that the truth about conditions at SCUPI may come out than about the safety and lives of the faculty members. Minking Chyu was looking for a reason to fire me, and so I sent 10/27/15 email "... Dear Dean

Chyu, With this email I would like to formally request that you provide me with copies of ALL complaints about me. Should any of these complaints be related to any of my emails, please specify which one. I also would like to formally request an explanation to your words "alleviate our existing problems encountered in the Calculus class" Putting such words in mass email is nothing short of outright harassment, according to your own emails. If there are any problems with Calculus I should have been informed first, yet no such information has ever been provided for me either orally or in writing while you continue to publicly humiliate me. I also would like to request an explanation as to why I have not been provided with medical insurance as promised and specified in the Contract of Employment. I would like to request that you provide me with the minutes of the Faculty and Staff meetings, I am sure such minutes are kept as required. Last but not least I would like to request official monthly salary statements with the list of all deductions. Such statements are provided to both Sichuan University and the University of Pittsburgh employees, however, have not been provided to SCUPI employees. If you cannot provide such statements in timely fashion, please provide a letter detailing all salary deductions on SCUPI letterhead signed by you and Dr. Michael Reed. ... " Minking Chyu replied with "... Okay, let's meet tomorrow. Any time between 11AM to 2PM will be good for me. ..." One did not need to be a genius to figure out that Minking Chyu was going to hand me a termination of employment notice and so on 10/28/15, before going to school, I sent all faculty and staff a rather lengthy email describing the history behind Calculus; everything written in the email has already been discussed in the book so I do not repeat it here.

Just after I entered my office on 10/28/15, Michael Reed trudged in looking sideways as if something was wrong with his neck. He handed me a paper with a mumble "Minking asked me to give it to you this morning" and hurriedly trudged out of the office. I did not have to read the paper, I knew what it was. It started with the words "You are a non-tenured stream mathematics instructor ... ", which in Minking Chyu's world must be the words of utmost contempt. It stated that "The executive committee, which consists of senior members of the Institute, has met and concluded ... ", no names of the senior members were given, there was no signature, only a stamp. One of the reasons for the termination of my employment was stated as "Overall teaching was inconsistent with the chosen textbook. Students have started to purchase other supplementary material, such as textbooks in Chinese, to self-study ... ", the first sentence referred to my using

additional questions from other textbooks and covering prerequisites to fill in gaps in students' background. The second sentence is a reflection of my suggestion to students to purchase textbooks in Chinese to read them along with the textbook in English. Math in general and Calculus in particular are learned by studying and thinking it over, that is what students were doing. A teacher is a failure if his students do not study outside of his classroom, and a success if they do. Besides, wasn't it Minking Chyu himself who kept on telling me about class flipping and active learning which require self-study?

Why was I fired? Because 1) I asked for medical insurance promised in the contract; 2) I asked for the reimbursement of moving expenses, promised in the contract; 3) I asked for clean, safe and hazard-free living conditions; 4) I asked for monthly salary statements explaining all deductions; 5) I asked for the University of Sichuan rules and regulations; 6) I asked for labs in Physics and Chemistry; 7) I confidentially pointed out to Minking Chyu his mistakes. I was a retired tenured Professor with lots of experience and knowledge, I was right whenever he was wrong and I knew what was right and what was wrong. With my asking for monthly salary statements, medical insurance, safe and hazard-free living conditions, etc., it was only a matter of time before others would ask for the same and Minking Chyu could not tolerate it. He tried to bully and intimidate me, it did not work so he had to get rid of me before I started talking to colleagues about the problems in SCUPI. Minking Chyu also messed up the teaching program in SCUPI. SCUPI hoped to get Caltech/MIT-type students, instead they got regular kids most of whom spoke very poor English and some did not speak English at all. Some could barely follow instructions in English, some could not follow instructions in English at all. Minking Chyu panicked, he was afraid of what might happen if the students and their parents accused him of making false promises. That is why on 9/24/15, after merely the first lecture, Minking Chyu panicked "... I hope things can improve. Let me know if you need any help. If necessary, I can get help from experts at Pitt's teaching center..." His belief was that his salvation lay with a Chinese-speaking teacher and so he brought Mai in. By firing me he hoped to kill two birds with one stone: get rid of me, and dump the blame for his mistakes on my shoulders.

14 The important things that really matter in Sichuan University of Pittsburgh Institute.

Keep up appearances; there lies the test;
 The world will give thee credit for the rest.
 Outward be fair, however foul within;
 Sin if thou wilt, but then in secret sin.

Charles Churchill

If neither medical insurance nor safety of the faculty nor Physics and Chemistry labs were important to Minking Chyu and SCUPI and then what was? The following emails may shed some light.

A 9/21/15 email from Minking Chyu "... Dear all, You might already know that we will be holding our Institute-wide Matriculation Ceremony on 9/25, this Friday, 3:30-5PM, followed by a reception. ... This event has been designated as one of the major university-wide events this week, as President Xie of SCU and Chancellor Pat Gallagher of Pitt will attend the ceremony and each will deliver a speech welcoming our students ... At the conclusion of the ceremony, university leaders will take group photos with all of us. The dress code is business attire. " It was followed by a 9/25/15 reminder from Vivi "... A kindly reminder, please make sure the dress code for today's matriculation ceremony (3:30 pm) is **business attire**. (the words were boldfaced by Vivi)".

10/27/15 email from Minking Chyu "... Please be advised that the undershirt or T-shirt you wore in the calculus class today (10/26/15) is incompatible with our dress code. You must wear a collar shirt - please see the attached viewgraph I presented in the faculty/staff meeting last week." followed by 10/27/15 email "... Dress code is designed to comply with Chinese societal standards and value the tradition, especially we have quite a few female students and coworkers As if I was walking around naked.. Today was the first time I noticed you violate the dress code, that is why I wrote to you." Whenever I wore a collarless, it was mostly a T-shirt with the word "SCUPI" made by the school for faculty members, staff and students. If we were not allowed to wear it in school, why was it made and distributed to us in the first place?

A 9/30/15 email from Minking Chyu "... It was brought to my attention that, as we are about to update our faculty directory and print business card, you are the only one at SCUPI

without a "Chinese name." Though I respect any individual's decision on this issue, you will still have your Chinese name written or printed as "pinyin", which will sound/look very odd. I think having a real Chinese name will show our respect to our hosting country and its culture. This can also be significant if you want to outreach to other institute, such as disaster management center or apply for a national program/grant. ... I am also very good at doing that as well and will be more than happy to help. " followed by 10/12/15 email "... We are doing this to show respect for the local culture and social sensitivity. We need something of 2 to 4 Chinese characters which can "represent" you. To date everyone has done it, except you. I understand Qianni has talked to you on this for a couple of times. We will appreciate it if you can get this issue resolved by COB today (10/12)." So getting a Chinese name was so urgent it had to be done the same day; but health insurance, salary statements, clean hazard-free living were not that important, they could wait for months or even years.

I understand cultural sensitivity, but on the grand scale of things what is more important: Minking Chyu's demands that I wear a suit to a ceremony, have a Chinese name, and wear a collared shirt rather than a plain T-shirt; or my requests for the medical insurance promised in the contract, the safety of the building we lived in, and financial accountability? Incidentally, I wore a collarless T-shirt due to medical reasons; I did acquire a Chinese name, just not fast enough; and I wore a suit to the Matriculation Ceremony.

On 10/25/15 Minking Chyu informed us of the arrival of Tsun-Zee (TZ) Mai and on 10/26/15 he forwarded his email exchange with a vice-president "... FYI ... Forwarded message ... From: "guangxianli" <guangxianli@scu.edu.cn> Subject: ... Professor TZ Mai To: "Minking Chyu" <mkchyu@scu.edu.cn>. .. Dear Minking, Great! Congratulations! Warmly welcome Dr Mai! Guangxian ... Executive vice-president of Sichuan University ...E-mail: guangxianli@scu.edu.cn ... Office phone number: +8602885469011 ". The Executive Vice-President of Sichuan University Guangxian Li replied to Minking Chyu's email almost immediately, yet he never found time to reply to my correspondence regarding the safety of the building and other problems. I guess in Guangxian Li's world the safety of the faculty was far less important than Tsun-Zee Mai's arrival.

According to an April 1, 2015 article at http://www.timeoutbeijing.com/features/Blogs-News_Blogs/37571/Beijing-worlds-most-liveable-city,-study-finds.html, researchers at Chengdu's Goupi University discovered that Beijing is the world's most liveable city based on such

metrics as public transport costs, number of cycle lanes, quality of breakfast foods and number of pandas per head of population. The head researcher Pian Xin is quoted saying: "... We found that previous studies into city liveability focused too much on things like air and water quality, freedom of information, commuting times and the cost of buying or renting property ... We wanted our study to reflect the things that actually matter to people living in the world's biggest cities." Minking Chyu, Guangxian Li and the administration of the University of Pittsburgh have made clear the things which actually matter to them.

15 After termination.

I stayed in Chengdu for two more weeks. I went to the International Office on 10/30/15 to get our passports, they were still not available. I told folks there of what Minking Chyu had promised me, they did not believe me and so I showed them the emails. They only shook their heads and took pictures with their cell phones. I told them I was going to write a book about SCUPI. As I woke up the next day 10/30/15 I noticed a message from Google "Someone has your password ... Someone just used your password to try to sign in to your Google account ..." I get such messages every time I sign in to my gmail account from a new device so first I ignored the message. Only a couple of minutes later did it occur to me that I had not even attempted to sign in to my gmail account for a few days. Gmail is banned in China, to access a gmail account one needs a VPN, which I did not have at the time. Then who was attempting to sign in to my gmail account? How did the hacker know my password? The only place where my password could have been harvested from was the computer in my (former) SCUPI office, as that was the only computer, besides my own computer, I had used to access my gmail account since the last password change. The only reasonable explanation was that my SCUPI computer was monitored with a key stroke recorder or a similar device. Having learned the password from the key stroke recorder, the hacker must have attempted to access my gmail account to erase the emails I showed in the International Office. Typically, when suspicious activity is detected, Google asks for the answer to the security question, which in my case was the last half of the password. The hacker certainly saw the answer to the security question but must have thought I just retyped the second half of my password. It was only a matter of time before he, or she, could figure out the trick and so I hurriedly purchased a VPN, logged in to my gmail account and changed the password. After six weeks in SCUPI



Figure 11: When I ran the IP address provided in Google's warning through <http://www.ip-tracker.org/locator/ip-lookup.php?ip=118.112.61.3>, I received these maps of where the attempted hack came from.

I thought nothing could surprise me, yet they still managed to. Whether the attempt to hack my account was made by the Sichuan University administration, Minking Chyu, or someone else on their behalf I do not know. All I know is that the hacker attempted to sign in from Wuhou, Chengdu, Sichuan, China. Does it mean all office computers are spied on by SCUPI/Sichuan University administration/Chinese authorities?

And if they do spy on the faculty using key stroke recorders, what else do they do? The extremely illogical placement of the TV set and electrical outlets in the master bedroom suggests that the TV and/or electrical outlets were used for eavesdropping. Minking Chyu himself chose not to live in the building, but why?

What was going to be next? Could we one day be accused of drug trafficking and sentenced to death, http://www.china.org.cn/china/2015-01/08/content_34499215.htm, with drugs conveniently found in our apartment? On 11/7/15 I received a "Seven-day notice to vacate" without a letterhead or any kind of signature or stamp, it said "Due to your employment termination with Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute ... your residence ... should be vacated in the next seven days ... before November 14, 2015. Should you fail, refuse or neglect to vacate ... we reserve the right to take legal actions ... " Our passports had not been returned and as far as I could see the International Office was not planning to return our passports in the foreseeable future. Each time I came to the International Office, one of its employees, Ms. Liao, had a new reason why our passports were unavailable. And so to get our passports back, on 11/7/15 I emailed to Minking Chyu "Dear Minking Chyu, I am so sorry to bother you but I need to leave China within 7 days. My understanding is that you owe me about CNY 48,000 or around US\$ 8,000 and it looks like



Figure 12: The TV in the master bedroom was placed right in the center. It was extremely inconvenient, with us constantly bumping into it. We tried moving it to another place but then we were hitting our feet on the outlets below the TV. I could think of no logical explanation for such a poor design except for one: the TV and outlets on the floor contained eavesdropping and/or recording devices. Are the authorities spying on the foreigners living in the building? There was no door separating the master bedroom from the adjacent bathroom with bathroom odors invading the bedroom. Why would someone create such a design? The only explanation I can think of is to facilitate eavesdropping on the conversations in the bathroom. Author's personal belongings are whitened out.

you do not want to return the money you owe me. When you hired me as a Professor in SCUPI you made a lot of promises, none came true. Well, I cannot really force you to be true to your word, each man decides how much his word is worth by himself. You promised a new housing unit, instead you put us into a building under construction. The building belongs to Sichuan University and so I wrote to the President asking him to make the building safer. I have attached the letter to this email to remind you. You certainly did not like it. Nor did you like it when I asked for the promised medical insurance, as of October 28, when you fired me, none was available. Nor did you like it when I asked for monthly salary statements, again I was told none was available. You made it clear to me that my days in SCUPI were numbered. My attempt to resolve the problem by appealing to the President of Sichuan University and the University of Pittsburgh went unanswered. Instead, you fired me. In your letter of employment termination you wrote that according to the law you would pay me termination money in the amount of approximately CNY 33,000 plus, of course, I have not yet received the relocation allowance in the amount of approximately CNY 15,000, in total of CNY 48,000. I submitted all receipts for the relocation allowance and Shelly emailed me the money should be in my account by October 23, 2015, yet as of today November 7, 2015, the money has not arrived to my account. You have never provided me with monthly salary

statements either. Could you please also provide me with the official statements detailing taxes and other deductions for September, October and the termination payment. Please understand, I need it for IRS. As a US citizen and the former Chair of a large department, you are required to fully document payments to US citizens. I cc this email to your colleague in Pittsburgh with the hope some of them may advise me how to get my money back. It appears I may have no choice but to initiate legal actions and publicize the matter in the media. if you cannot return the money you owe me, could you please explain why; maybe, I misunderstand something. Feel free to make you reply public as the matter is not confidential and the way things are going it will end up in public view anyways. ", the email was cc-ed to 48 people including all members of SCUPI and the Department of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Pittsburgh. It worked and I got our passports back within a few days. I even got some of the money I was owed. The total gross pay due to me, including the severance payment and reimbursement of insured medical expenses, was about CNY 135,611, of which I only received CNY 67,087, what happened to the rest of the money CNY 68,524, or \approx \$10,700 I may only speculate. I am sure a small part of it went to pay taxes and other salary deductions, but how much? I never received monthly salary statements or any other documents, or even emails, explaining how the payments were calculated and what deductions were made. Why? Due to lack of any kind of financial transparency, I surmise the money got channeled to someone's pockets.

16 Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 46, Protection of human subjects.

Rated as one of the most livable cities in China, Chengdu is a land of opportunity with a moderate cost of living and high quality of life. SCUPI job advertisement, [http://sciences.academickeys.com/seeker_job_display.php?dothis=display&job\[IDX\]=77524-SC160219b-6e&oid=1013826](http://sciences.academickeys.com/seeker_job_display.php?dothis=display&job[IDX]=77524-SC160219b-6e&oid=1013826)

Chengdu' air is the most polluted in the world. When I got the job offer, I searched the Internet for information about Chengdu, yet I did not find anything about the quality of air in Chengdu. Only after I arrived in the city did I find out the truth, see Figure 13. Minking Chyu pointed me to <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1532145/chengdu-mainlands-most-liveable-city->

says-asia-development-bank which calls Chengdu 'the most livable city n China'! Web site http://www.gochengdoo.com/en/blog/item/3101/chengdu_most_livable_city_says_asian_development_bank_report states "Chengdu is China's most environmentally 'livable' city, according to a survey of 33 mainland Chinese cities recently released by the Asian Development Bank ... In order to measure environmental livability, researchers identified and weighted eight urban environmental factors ...", first and the most heavily weighted of these factors was "atmospheric environment (emissions, energy consumption, air quality)". The web site further states "On the urban atmospheric environmental livability index, Chengdu was ranked ninth, and identified, along with Chongqing and Xi'an, as having 'relatively poor quality' ... " Ninth out of thirty three cities, did not seem to be too bad.

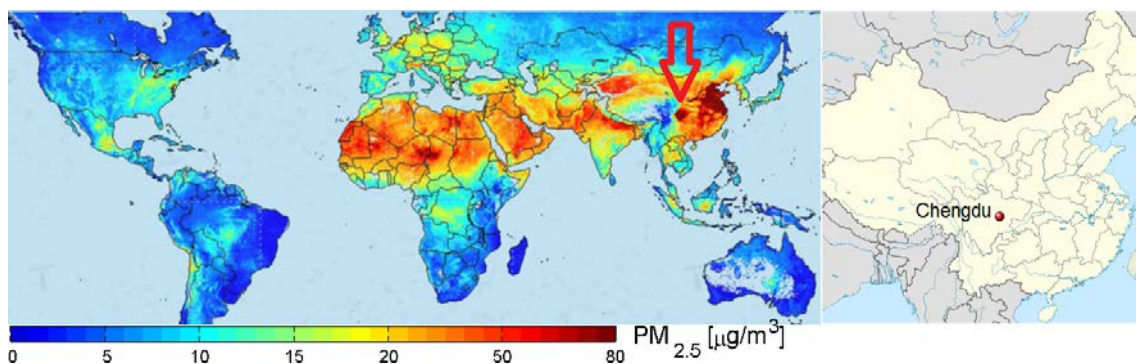


Figure 13: Satellite-derived map of small particulate matter air pollution in the air, from van Donkelaar, A., R.V. Martin, M. Brauer, R. Kahn, R. Levy, C. Verduzco, and P.J. Villeneuve, Global Estimates of Ambient Fine Particulate Matter Concentrations from Satellite-Based Aerosol Optical Depth: Development and Application, *Environ. Health Perspec.*, doi:10.1289/ehp.0901623, 118(6), 2010; also <http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/health-sapping.html>. The map on the right is from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chengdu>. According to <http://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/health/article/1254691/fashion-forward-face-masks-big-hit-china-amid-soaring-air-pollution>, the air pollution has become such a permanent fixture that Chinese have developed a fashion industry of protective masks.

It is interesting to note that the United States government requires that certain rules, known as 45 CFR 46 and described at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html>, be followed while conducting research on human beings. Rule 46.116, General requirements for informed consent, requires that "... no investigator may involve a human being as a subject in research covered by this policy unless the investigator has obtained the legally effective informed consent of the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative..." According to subsec-

tion 46.116a2, " ... in seeking informed consent the following information shall be provided to each subject: ... description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject ..."

Shouldn't the University of Pittsburgh have followed the same rules in its involvement in SCUPI? With the worst-in-the-world air pollution, Chengdu presents great risks to the health of Americans employed there, yet risks to our health were never even hinted at. Aren't the American citizens employed by the University of Pittsburgh, or by the University of Pittsburgh's administrators on behalf of the University, entitled to at least the same rights as research subjects? Web site <http://www.greenpeace.org/eastasia/campaigns/air-pollution/problems/coal-hard-truth-air-pollution/>, describes the damages to humans by small particulate matter in the air known as PM2.5 as follows " Reproductive system: PM2.5 is attached to various types of pollutants such as heavy metal and PAHs, causing placental blood toxicity that leads to direct harm to fetus, intrauterine growth retardation and low birth weight of babies, especially when PM2.5 exposure happens in the first month of pregnancy. Cardiovascular system: PM2.5 causes cardiotoxicity and also causes severe irritation to the autonomic nervous system, which regulates the activity of the heart muscle. Blood system: PM2.5 causes blood toxicity, blood coagulation abnormalities and can trigger heart disease. Respiratory system: The soluble part of PM2.5 directly enters the bloodstream and the insoluble part accumulates at the alveolus of the lungs, causing inflammation."

The U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Technical Information Bulletin TIB 01-12-21 at https://www.osha.gov/dts/tib/tib_data/tib20011221.html specifically recommends that " ... Employers should determine if their workers are at risk of exposure to hazards ... Specific measures should be implemented to: reduce direct skin contact; reduce exposure via inhalation; ... As with all potentially hazardous exposures, protective measures should include: ... personal protective equipment (e.g., respirators ...); and training." There are a number of laws in the United States regulating work place hazards, the University of Pittsburgh and its administrators should have followed them while hiring American citizens to work in SCUPI, yet they completely ignored the laws. Fully aware of the responsibility, the University of Pittsburgh administrator Minking Chyu and Provost Patricia E. Beeson deliberately suppressed any concerns I expressed regarding the safety of the American citizens working in SCUPI. We were not even provided adequate health coverage even though it was promised in my Contract of Employment.



Figure 14: Air pollution in Chengdu, where SCUPI is located, on December 29 and December 30 of 2015, that is on the eve of 2016 New Year, <http://aqicn.org/city/chengdu/>. One may only wonder how the New Year was celebrated by SCUPI employees. According to <http://www.chengduliving.com/chengdu-pollution-tips/>, <http://www.chengduliving.com/forums/topic/strange-pollution-figures-recently/> such numbers are not that unusual.

In many ways the University of Pittsburgh treats SCUPI employees similarly to how Apple and its partners treat employees in China, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2979531/Chinese-worker-26-making-Apple-iPhones-died-enduring-12-hour-shifts-seven-days-week-two-months-bosses-vowed-clean-expose-factory-conditions-family-claim.html>, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foxconn>, <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-30532463>, <http://www.businessinsider.com/labor-rights-group-says-low-pay-and-long-hours-at-chinese-iphone-factory-2016-2?ref=yfp>. In the eyes of the University of Pittsburgh administration we, the SCUPI employees, were less than cattle; we were disposable slaves not worthy of proper health coverage or proper living conditions.

The US citizens working in SCUPI do not get a health coverage adequate for the health hazards they are exposed to. Upon return to the United States they will most likely apply for Medicare and Medicaid to treat the health ailments acquired at SCUPI, how much will that cost the United States taxpayers? The leadership of the University of Pittsburgh are very well-aware of the situation and seem to have no objections to putting additional financial burden on the

shoulders of the United States tax payers.

When I accepted Minking Chyu's job offer I was not aware of the air pollution in Chengdu. I just did not think it could get that bad. So when Minking Chyu started bullying me into submission, I asked myself: "How desperate one must be to work in SCUPI under the current hazardous conditions with the current level of financial compensation?" I did my best teaching students and helping SCUPI, but I certainly was not going to be bullied into submission, blind obedience and slave mentality.

17 A few thoughts.

Dost thou love life? Then do not squander Time: for that's the stuff Life is made of. Benjamin Franklin.

SCUPI may have just started but it has already failed. A good school is, first and foremost, good teachers, can SCUPI attract them? Good teachers, just like good specialists in any other walk of life, are in great demand. Why would a good teacher come to SCUPI with its air pollution, the worst in world as Figure 13 shows? To get a lung cancer? The only way to attract good teachers to SCUPI would be to compensate the risks they are taking with large salaries, excellent apartments, excellent medical and dental insurance, long vacations. All of it was promised to me, yet what was delivered was quite the opposite: low salary with large deductions, hazardous living conditions, no proper medical/dental coverage, very short vacations, harassment and fraud. Who would work in SCUPI under such conditions? Only those who cannot find a job anywhere else and who are desperate to find a job. The powers that be behind SCUPI understand that, yet they do not seem to be interested in providing proper working and living conditions to attract good teachers. Why? It begs the question of SCUPI's true purpose, why was SCUPI created and what is its true purpose? I leave to the reader to answer the questions.

The school is run by Minking Chyu, the frontman for the truly powerful hiding behind him. Most of the things I heard from him were 1) how great he was as Chair of a department in the University of Pittsburgh; 2) how inappropriate it was for me to ask questions, or, as he liked to put it, to question the decisions of the leadership; 3) how inappropriate it was for me to ask for things promised to me; and 4) reminders of my status as a 'non-tenured' faculty as if being non-tenured made me a second class person. Did I ask for too much or in an inappropriate way? I

don't think so; all I asked for was what was promised to me and asked for it in the most courteous manner. Minking Chyu seems to be concerned more with the clothes the faculty wear and whether the faculty have Chinese names than with Physics and Chemistry labs, faculty safety and health. Most of his decisions have been flawed and his leadership best described by the Biblical quote 'If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit'. Is that how he ran the department he chaired for 15 years? Or did he change coming to SCUPI and why? Minking Chyu's style was formed in the University of Pittsburgh, he is the product of the school, and clearly reflects the current values in the University of Pittsburgh.

Because of SCUPI I lost other employment opportunities, the money lost can be earned but the time lost can never be regained. However, we should not complain; many, who fall for jobs which prove to be 'too-good-to-be-true', fare much worse, e. g. <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/courts/woman-forced-into-prostitution-after-being-lured-with-job-offer>, stories described in

<https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=igxTBAAQBAJ&pg=PT86&lpg=PT86&dq=lured+too+good+to+be+true+job&source=bl&ots=6l4KcS95YI&sig=CNOWOFqkeEIt2EwsRxtEf5eFaL4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj67Nzv26XJAhVFnpQKHbtNAFkQ6AEIKjAD#v=onepage&q=lured%20too%20good%20to%20be%20true%20job&f=false>. How could I fall for it? Mainly, because the promises were made under the auspices of the University of Pittsburgh, supposedly a decent North American school, the birth place of the first polio vaccine; and its Swanson School of Engineering, supposedly a decent Engineering school. SCUPI is a joint project of the University of Pittsburgh and Sichuan University, with both schools, supposedly, being responsible for SCUPI. Yet the leadership of both schools, fully aware of the situation in SCUPI, chose to do nothing, they never even replied to my emails. While in US, the University of Pittsburgh administration follows the law: it provides medical insurance to employees, accommodations for the disabled, documents for all financial transactions, etc.; they chose to treat SCUPI employees differently: no decent medical coverage, no monthly salary statements, no safe living accommodations. The problems were communicated to the University of Pittsburgh Provost Dr. Patricia E. Beeson, who, according to <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/information-on/who-we-are/beeson.html>, <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/information-on/who-we-are/beeson-bio.html>, is a Professor of Economics and Public Policy. Web site <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/information-on/>

[who-we-are/beeson.html](#) states her responsibilities as "She works closely with Chancellor Patrick Gallagher and other members of the University's leadership team, providing the academic vision and the fiscal discipline to foster future success in an environment characterized not only by nearly limitless opportunities but also by clearly limited resources. " Yet Patricia E. Beeson did not show any objections to Minking Chyu's withholding monthly salary statements, or deception of employees of the employment conditions in SCUPI. By disregarding my appeals to her, Provost Dr. Patricia E. Beeson threw all her weight behind Minking Chyu and provided support and cushion for his actions. Patricia E. Beeson's reaction, or rather lack of any reaction, shows that Minking Chyu's behavior was sanctioned and approved by the University of Pittsburgh's leadership.

Minking Chyu ordered me to not send emails, even though he had no objections to emails sent by others. Why? Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda chief, may have provided the answer with his famous words "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. ... It thus becomes vitally important ... to use all ... powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie ... ". Minking Chyu had lied to the faculty and students of SCUPI, he hoped people would eventually come to believe his lies; he saw me as a voice of the truth and the mortal enemy of his lies. Joseph Sobran once said, "The attempt to silence a man is the greatest honor you can bestow on him. It means that you recognize his superiority to yourself.", <http://www.quotes.net/quote/17600>. Did Minking Chyu's attempts to silence me partly stemmed from SCUPI leadership feeling inferior when I was around? Leonard da Vinci once said, "Nothing strengthens authority as much as silence"; did Minking Chyu's attempts to silence me were intended to strengthen his weak authority over the members of SCUPI? Minking Chyu needs a guaranteed cloak of secrecy, because he does not want to answer questions about health insurance, salary deductions, rent, and other 'inappropriate' things.

I doubt I was the only one deceived, most likely so were other faculty members. But they would not talk out of fear of losing their jobs. Have the students of SCUPI also been deceived to encourage their enrollment? I suspect so. Would the faculty and administration admit to making unrealistic and unsubstantiated promises to the students? I don't think so, simply because the jobs of the faculty and administration depend on students' enrollment.

What can SCUPI offer to its students? As far as I can see, absolutely nothing, compared to other schools. If students want to learn Engineering, they are better off taking Engineering in

Sichuan University, or, even better, in a higher ranking Chinese Engineering school listed at http://www.china.org.cn/top10/2013-05/31/content_28991210_10.htm; that way they won't have to worry about listening to the material in a language they cannot comprehend. If students want to learn English and have financial means to study in US/Canada/Australia/UK, they should go to those countries to study. If students want to learn English but do not have financial means to study in US/Canada/Australia/UK, they should consider India or the Philippines, where in the English-language environment they are bound to learn English within a year or so. Trying to learn English and Science/Engineering at the same time is like trying to swim in two pools at the same time. SCUPI is sold by the offering of two degrees, one from Sichuan University and the other one from the University of Pittsburgh. Is it really important to have two papers instead of one? With thousands of unemployed college graduates all over the world, college degrees are a dime a dozen; they don't guarantee anything. What can guarantee students future employment is the knowledge they gain, e. g. what the job market is looking for is knowledge: Bill Gates never finished college, nor did Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, Michael Dell, Larry Ellison, Travis Kalanick and many others; Warren Buffet earned a college degree but from the rather lowly-ranked University of Nebraska. An Engineering degree from a top school from http://www.china.org.cn/top10/2013-05/31/content_28991210_10.htm would certainly count more than the two degrees SCUPI offers, one from Sichuan University and the other one from the University of Pittsburgh. Going to SCUPI is a gamble akin to gambling in a casino; only in a casino one gambles money, in SCUPI students gamble their lives. Is it worth it?

The founders of SCUPI expected to get Caltech/MIT-caliber students, yet with neither Sichuan University nor the Swanson School of Engineering of the University of Pittsburgh breaking into top 10, 20, 30 or even 40 in the World ranking, attracting Caltech/MIT-caliber students proved to be an impossible task. Caltech/MIT-caliber students choose better school, e.g. the top ten Engineering schools in China listed at http://www.china.org.cn/top10/2013-05/31/content_28991210_10.htm. Instead, SCUPI recruited regular kids, many of whom lack English language proficiency sufficient to study in English and some lack prerequisites to study Mathematics and Science. Additional seminars/revision sessions were introduced wasting precious time students could have otherwise spent on studying. The students may lack English language proficiency and some required background in Mathematics and Science; but these can be learned, as long as they

are taught properly. Watering down the contents of the courses may make the students feel they are doing well, but it will not teach them much. Inadequate teaching will backfire later on when students enter the job market and will have to compete with other, better-prepared, students; in my over-three-decades-of-teaching I have seen this scenario repeat itself over and over again. While SCUPI students are busy unsuccessfully learning basic English, doing questions like "How many meters of sausage can be made from one cow?" (this is an actual question from homework 7 of 'Introduction to Engineering' due on 17-11-2015), engineering students from Sichuan University build robots, flying machines, etc. Which of these students will have better chance of landing a good job upon graduation?

What can I suggest to others to avoid falling into the same trap? We all hope for the better, but we should be prepared for the worse so watch out for red flags: sudden change and/or withholding of the employment contract; an incomplete and fuzzy employment contract, e.g. like in my case the employment contract was stated to be subject to the Sichuan University rules but the rules had never been communicated to us; sudden changes to the conditions of employment, e. g. drastic increase in rent, downgrade of the promised lodging accommodations; unrealistic promises and expectations, e.g. in my case Minking Chyu's promise that the students would be way better than in US and Canada; vague promises, e. g. like in my case Minking Chyu's promise of secondary employment in the Institute for Disaster Management; requests to discuss important things by phone or Skype rather than traceable email. Foreigners are not allowed to form unions in China and many other countries, yet no law prevents employees from talking to each other. So talk to your colleagues about salaries, medical insurance, etc.; forget about privacy and confidentiality; privacy and confidentiality serve to divide and conquer employees, not to protect their rights. Your employer cannot fire all employees, so as long as you stick together you are safe. The Chinese government, as well as the governments of many other countries, have enacted many rules to protect employees, make sure you are aware of them. And make sure you have a lawyer to represent you in case a problem arises, and sooner or later problems do arise.

Not everything was bad in Chengdu. There we met a lot of warm and decent people, nowhere in the world have I seen so many people willing to help us, even if it required them to go out of their way. The memories of our encounters I will always cherish. To them and their children I dedicate this book; may they always be treated with respect and honesty, the two commodities in

short supply in SCUPI and its parent organizations; and may they never be deceived by SCUPI or a similar institution.

柯立夫 Chengdu, China, November 12, 2015

18 Post scriptum: how I learned that in China I was "a piece of foreign trash".

You walk around with a plastic smile,
 It covers your true character and bile.
 Your words are smooth, you speak with so much fire;
 It didn't take me long to understand you're just an empty liar.
 You told me almost every day you're such a great administrator,
 But proved yourself to be a pitiful dictator.
 In bending truth your expertise is truly domineering,
 You certainly deserve to be a Full Professor in the Swine's Sons School
 of Racketeering. Found attached to the door of our apartment
 in Chengdu with the words "Dedicated to Minking Chyu", the author
 is unknown; edited to soften it up.

In late November - early December of 2015 I emailed the first draft of the book to all students, faculty and staff in SCUPI, the President and Vice-President of Sichuan University and the Provost of the University of Pittsburgh. I signed the book with my Chinese name and, well-aware that my emails could be blocked from SCUPI servers, I sent the emails from a different email address. I have not heard back from them until 12/31/15 when I received an email from Da Seni from 2134595635@qq.com , X-originating IP address 112.26.70.36 (<http://www.ip-tracker.org/locator/ip-lookup.php?ip=112.26.70.36> places it in Ma'anshan, China, at or very close to the Anhui University of Technology), claiming to be a parent of one of the SCUPI students, " ... My son is freshman at Sichuan University SCUPI in Chengdu, China ... I dislike very much you harass my son and insult his school. ... If you do it again, I am sure you end up harass your own son and daughter. You should take this notice very seriously ... "; in my reply I suggested he/she read the book. On 01/02/16 Da Seni wrote back to me "... I talk to my son ... and chat with parents group. ... everyone say you are a terrible teacher and don't care

our children. Students even call your nickname terrorist. Now many parents are very angry at you harass their children and affect their study. ... Also how dare you are insulting my son and other classmates scholar achievement in the book. You must know this is a Beijing central government guaranteed institute, because our prime minister personally came only for this institute to guarantee successful in west China. You can guess some powerful parents have checked out your information and family. They say if you public attack the institute is same attack the government of China and you will be hunt down as a international terrorist, even you use fake name and hide in different country. Also if you use the book or any thing continue to insult students and their school, we parents will ('go' must be missing here) after your son ... and daughter ... to make even. I have ... son and I have money for him to go this institute and go America in future (If Da Seni's son is a chip off the old block, the Department of Homeland Security should certainly keep him out of USA.) ... I will handle you big revenge for sure. Other parents to do the same. ... "; followed by another email "... I don't need to hire lawyer to deal junky people like you, I fix my way. ... ", a 1/3/16 email "... your book insult to China, Chinese people, and you harass my son and his classmates will revenge seriously. If you destroy my son, I will destroy yours to make even. ... ", a 1/5/16 email " ... It is good your daughter has Chinese blood (actually both of my kids have Chinese blood) ... you will destroy her life like you harass my son and his classmates and try to destroy their future with attacking their school and study records. ... You ... have criminal problems in Canada ... you are a big liar dog..." and another 1/5/16 email " ... no one will believe whatever you write ... you are a piece of foreign trash ... so we decide to teach you a lesson. ... We also have many skillful parents friends and resources to check out many details of you and your family. ... Our children ... love their school and studies, even if you don't like it, it is not your business to harass them by attacking their school and you should leave them alone. ... if you don't stop we have no choice to hit back and hard to make even. ... will I be so stupid to use my real name? ... we will watch you. " My kids' names, not mentioned in the book, are typical American names but their spelling differs slightly from the usual spelling. Remarkably Da Seni knew the exact spelling of my kids' names. That Da Seni knew the unusual spelling of my children's names; the use of the words 'harass' and 'harassment' so similar to Minking Chyu's use of these words; and that the tone of his emails was so similar to the threatening tone of Minking Cyu's previous emails show, in my opinion, that either Da Seni is Minking Chyu or

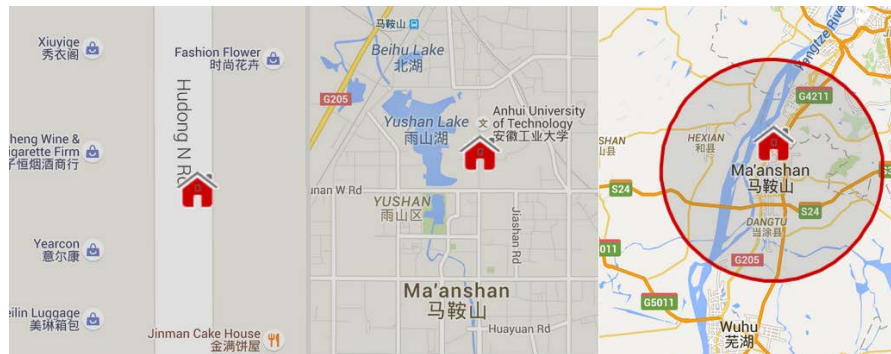


Figure 15: All Da Seni's email came from X-originating IP address 112.26.70.36, web site (<http://www.ip-tracker.org/locator/ip-lookup.php?ip=112.26.70.36>) provided these pictures/maps of where Da Seni sent his emails from.

Da Seni is close to Minking Chyu who divulged my kids' names to him to threaten my children. Da Seni's his first email came on December 31, right after the drastic jump in air pollution shown in Figure 14, which undoubtedly made the leadership of SCUPI scared that the faculty, fed up with the pollution and poor working conditions, may start leaving the school. Seeing my book as a spark capable of igniting the exodus of the faculty from SCUPI, Minking Chyu and/or one of his associates must have sent the emails in an attempt to stop me from publishing the book. How low can Minking Chyu fall?

Da Seni's emails also showed me that despite all the changes, China is still a communist country with 'Cultural Revolution' mentality: kill those you perceive to be in your crooked way; that truth-speaking is still a great crime in China. Web site <http://chronicle.com/forums/index.php/topic,185813.0.html> provides a few comments by employees of Wenzhou Kean University, their experience appears to be very similar to mine; the 'modus operandi' abroad does not seem to be unique to the University of Pittsburgh. One of the comments on the web site "You dodged a bullet-almost literally. I hear the preferred way of ending your employment there is to "fall" off the 18th story of Faculty Apartments. I wish this was a myth, but ask faculty who have been there for a while - and very few have - if it is true ..." resonates with Da Seni's threatening emails. I guess I made a wise decision not to even mention this book while in China, I could have easily 'fallen' of the 18th story off the building where we lived.

What I witnessed in SCUPI and Da Seni's emails make me wonder of the true purpose of SCUPI and similar institutions: were they conceived, at least originally, as educational institutions,

or something else? I doubt I will ever know the answer. That I have never received monthly salary statements and the statement of the severance payment; the story with the medical insurance, and the condition of the apartment seem to support my belief that there is a lot of funny stuff going on in SCUPI and SCUPI-like institutions. Then why are these institutions supported by supposedly respectable American schools like the University of Pittsburgh and the Swanson School of Engineering? If Minking Chyu is indeed a true face of the Swanson School of Engineering and the University of Pittsburgh, I wonder whether the names 'Swine's Sons School', suggested by the unknown author of the epigraph to this section, and 'University of Frauddsburgh'¹ would be more appropriate for them.

With the air pollution index reaching over 900, an improperly built building we were put in, and lack of proper medical insurance, our stay in China was not merely unpleasant, it was a game of Russian roulette which powers that be from China and the University of Pittsburgh played with our lives. To them we, American citizens, are dispensable, to be used and thrown away. But why would a supposedly respectable American University support them? The reader, interested in the answer, may wish to contact Minking Chyu directly, by calling his home number (412) 963 9566 or visiting him at '220 Field Club Rd Pittsburgh, PA 15238-2251', where Minking Chyu resides according to <http://www.411.com/name/Minking-K-Chyu/Pittsburgh-PA/852hvs2> with Yushin Chyu, Erika Chyu, Darrik J. Chyu, and possibly Yushin S. Chyu. Should the reader wish to contact Provost Patricia E. Beeson directly, he/she may do so by calling her home number (412) 681 5354 or visiting her at '5541 Wilkins Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15217-1209', where she resides according to <http://www.411.com/name/Patricia-E-Beeson/Pittsburgh-PA/4prvjyd>. Should the reader wish to contact Professor Ariel C. Armony, Senior Director of International Programs, his phone number is (412) 648 7374 and his email is armony@pitt.edu.

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