

The Commoditization of Distance and Virtual Learning
- Formidable Strategic Imperative or Impractical Academic
Challenge?

**Strategic Definitions for Exporting Business Education to
China**

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Introduction

“May you live in interesting times!” is a Chinese proverb that sounds much like a good-luck wish. But it actually is a curse. China’s membership in the WTO may just turn out to be such an ambivalent experience. Committed to a socio-politically cautious, deliberate, localized, and incremental absorption of market-economic structures into its system, beginning as early as in the 1980s China initiated a multitude of concomitant internal reforms in support of matching up its infrastructure and competitiveness to Western standards of commerce. Particularly cognizant of the impact and leverage of education in this context, the overhaul of the education system, with particular emphasis on academic and higher education, has been and still is amongst the more pressing initiatives.

Amongst the various disciplines in turn, China is especially handicapped by a serious shortage of business leadership and a near-absence of post-capitalist management-style culture. Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji, for example, – a driving force behind the nation-wide efforts to revamp the education system - specifically acknowledged that China needs 1.5 million MBAs over the next 10 years. Other estimates are in the millions (Southworth 1999). And even if a 2001 Gallup survey more modestly estimated the number at 350,000, it remains that this demand by far exceeds the most optimistic capacity estimates of Chinese universities’ business programs despite the explosive proliferation of proprietary MBA education during the 1990s, given the over 284, 000 state owned enterprises (SOEs), more than 428,000 joint ventures or foreign-owned corporations and about 2,000,000 private or township enterprises in the country (Chinese MBA Website 2002). But quantity is not the only issue. Of major concern is the different

nature and “quality” of Chinese business education with its limitations and shortcomings in terms of tradition, content, delivery, pedagogy, and competitiveness.

This new context has not gone unnoticed by U.S. business education providers. Pressured by domestic market maturity, dwindling subsidies, and a slow economic recovery, in helping China fill the void, domestic Universities recognize a tremendous opportunity for expansion into this extremely populous and vibrant of markets and are ready to respond.

U.S. Business Education in particular lends itself well to this type of export. It is our crown jewel of strategic competitiveness, it is in high regard throughout the world as demonstrated by the many foreign students and graduates of U.S. Business Programs, it is portable and almost universal, it is politically unobtrusive and almost inconspicuous, and it is a substantial source of revenue. However, differences in culture, tradition, philosophy, and socio-politico-economic infrastructure will certainly bring about challenges for American and other Western providers of Business Education, domestically, as well as locally. Providers of Business Education to China or the services to restructure Chinese Business Education locally will have to take into account idiosyncrasies of tradition, culture, and environment in formulating their solutions and offerings. Thus the question is not only one of “adoption” of our Western Business Programs by Chinese students and institutions, but also one of appropriate and relevant levels of “adaptation” of such programs.

In this article, we will take the position that China's interests could probably be served satisfactorily and quickly with the adoption of Continental-European and Anglo-Saxon business education models by students and institutions respectively. We will explore four alternative strategies: (a) education of Chinese students in the U.S. (b) local education of Chinese students; (c) adaptation and reconfiguration of Chinese universities' business education departments; and (d) Distance Education provided to China from overseas, the U.S. for example.

Of those four, we will ultimately retain only the latter for its attractiveness from an effectiveness and efficiency perspective. It is notably economically most viable, consistently scalable, politically feasible, and most expediently realizable.

We will then develop a framework for analysis for deployment by U.S. Business Education entities to assess their competencies and capabilities towards a proper response on their part and contribution to this ambitious educational effort. To that effect we will address the following four elements in our analytical framework:

- (a) Is the Chinese learner receptive to Distance Education?
- (b) How capable is the Chinese infrastructure to accommodate this paradigm?
- (c) How can the market be penetrated?
- (d) What adaptations need to be implemented?

1. Four Possible Marketing Strategies

Generally, four possible marketing strategies are conceivable: (a) education of Chinese students in the U.S. (b) local education of Chinese students; (b) adaptation and reconfiguration of Chinese universities' business education departments; and (c) Distance Education provided to China from overseas, the U.S. for example.

(a) Attracting Chinese Students to Study in the U.S.

One first powerful approach is to attract more Chinese students and accommodate them in the domestic business school market. This is certainly not a novel approach. U.S. colleges and universities traditionally have been accommodating an increasing numbers of foreign students. But, with respect to China, this approach could enjoy renewed interest. Chinese GDP growth has been robust and accelerating for two decades, averaging an astounding 9 percent, and consequently, an increasing proportion of the future management elite can actually afford overseas education. Recent research suggests that China has sent over 320,000 students to study overseas in 103 countries between 1978 to 1998 (Shen 2000), and currently around 50,000 Chinese students study abroad every year (Yi 2001). This number is increasing at 20 percent annually (*People's Daily* 2001). English-speaking countries account for approximately 75 percent to 80 percent of Chinese students abroad and the top four destination countries favored by prospective Chinese students are the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia (Böhm & King 1999). China's share of the total international students in these host

countries has increased significantly in recent years. In the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, Chinese students make up more than 10 percent of all international enrolments. Thus China has become the number one source country for these host countries. Of these Chinese students, about 30 to 40 percent are enrolled in business courses (Böhm & King 1999; Economist 2003).

Albeit cognizant of the new realities, with some relevant exceptions, traditional U.S. colleges and universities, i.e. presumably the ones that most urgently need an injection of a fresh student population following domestic saturation and the end of the Baby Boom impact, are nevertheless seriously handicapped by their inert structures. Originally conceived as regional monopolies, with little incentive for efficiency and effectiveness, preoccupied with fund raising and campus building, their structures barely accommodate the occasional self-selected foreign student without the usual administrative snags in registration, payment, and visa application processes, let alone large numbers of foreign students in a coordinated fashion. Due to the war on terrorism, this has been exacerbated by the recent immigration restrictions including additional interaction with the INS successor organization “USCIS”.

But as a politician would say: “There are no problems, just new challenges and opportunities.” We see this new complexity best addressed via specialization, performed by a new type of “education intermediary” that will “package” cohorts of students by undertaking the necessary marketing and administrative processing, evaluation, and acculturation efforts. As an example, such intermediation could be established on terms

whereby the University stipulates profit sharing with the intermediary, “outsources” a certain selection of core course to be taught by the educational intermediary in an effort to consolidate the foreign students into economically viable cohorts, and prepare them for the typical interactive environment in business schools’ advanced courses and seminars. Such courses can then be integrated via traditional waivers or recognized directly if taught with the requisite quality.

However attractive, it remains a “physical” environment, with all its ancillary constraints especially with respect to the students’ financial endowment: domestic logistics of student housing and lodging, work, family, and opportunity cost of local residency can become prohibitive.

(b) Direct Presence in the Chinese Market

Some of the renowned and endowed institutions have ventured down a more progressive path. Fordham University’s graduate business education entity (to name but one for its first-mover ambitions) maintains its “Beijing MBA” (BiMBA) in its entirety in China. This is the first foreign MBA degree in Beijing to be approved by the Chinese government. According to the Fordham’s website (www.bimba.org), “[t]he goal of the Beijing International MBA is to provide world-class graduate business education for exceptional students and executives in China as well as for a small group of foreign students. Profiles of entering students, both full- and part-time, are comparable to entering classes of top U.S. business schools. With all courses in the BiMBA program

taught in English, it is possible for students from participating consortium schools like Fordham to attend a semester in Beijing for credit toward their MBA. Currently, student population at BiMBA is about 250, a substantial increase from the 80 students enrolled in its first class two years ago. Further, this year marked a special occasion in the program's development, with 22 members of the first BiMBA graduating class traveling to New York to participate in Fordham's diploma ceremonies. In a separate but related development, Fordham has agreed with the China Institute to create a pilot language program in Mandarin Chinese tailored to faculty who are planning to teach in Beijing and to students who wish to spend a semester at BiMBA.”

Such comprehensive and involved efforts remain, however, the domain of the well endowed Fordhams, the Columbias and the NYUs of the world. It may be true that the financial and administrative efforts of such an implementation are commensurate with the prestige and positioning that the school will enjoy in the long run, but rarely are such resources readily available. Though we certainly do not dismiss this strategy, we consider that it may not be generalizable enough to benefit the average American college. We would also point out that there is a significant difference between credible, renowned programs and the “hundreds of foreign involved MBA education or training programs [...] currently running in Mainland China, either permitted by the Chinese central government or in collaboration with regional authorities (Shi 2000)” according to Peng (2003). Peng (2003) further suggests that “[a]s the Chinese central government maintains strict control over foreign degrees being offered in China, a common way to tap into the market is to build alliances with local Chinese educational institutions. Other alternatives

include cooperating with major multinational companies in China which have an immediate demand to train their local Chinese employees or selling courses over the Internet with assistance of a local agent to recruit and administrate students.”

(c) Reconfiguring Chinese Business Education

The most robust but also the most intensive approach is the direct investment into a distinct and specific Chinese academic business education culture. This, however, is a discussion that needs to include additional sociological and political considerations as it goes at the very core of Chinese management education traditions. For the three post-war decades, a command and planning model became ingrained as China’s economic systems that reduced the enterprise entity to a mere production unit in the national economic system (Newell 1999). Western management theories introduced in the late 1890s were gradually replaced by Soviet-style socialist and Marxist ideology and didn’t survive but in isolated instances such as at Shanghai Jiaotong University (Li & Maxwell 1989). In fact, Wang notes that such subjects as organizational behavior or Western style market economics were considered antisocialist and, understandably, were not allowed to be taught in Chinese higher education institutions before 1978 (Wang 1987). Chinese higher education institutes emulated the Soviet structure of three types of institutions, i.e. comprehensive universities, technological institutes, and financial and economic colleges (Borgonjon & Vanhonacker 1994; Shi 2000) which map to three streams of management education philosophy. At comprehensive universities, management education focused on macro level issues to incorporate Marxist economics and socialist theory (Zhao 1997). A

second stream stressed industrial management engineering (at technological institutes), largely influenced by Taylorian scientific management theory and emphasized quantitative methods (Shi 2000). The third stream with a financial management emphasis was delivered at specialized financial and economics colleges, catering to book-keeping requirements for the central-planned socialist economy (Wang 1987). Only after the open door policy following 1979, were more qualitative courses introduced, such as strategic management, marketing, human resource management, and management information systems. Interestingly, but expectedly, these patterns also coincided with the dominant ideologies of the day. While the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) stressed Marxist and socialist ideas, Taylorism became popular after 1979, allowing for improving production efficiency without threatening socialist ideology, yet allowing for quick economic reform (Borgonjon & Vanhonacker 1994). Traditional Chinese management education was thus biased towards a quantitative approach, away from a people oriented one, as observed by many Western scholars (for example, Borgonjon & Vanhonacker 1992; Branine 1996; Warner 1992).

The post-1979 dramatic economic transition, however, demanded unprecedented levels of new managerial competence, evolving from bureaucratic order-takers to innovative entrepreneurs (Newell 1999), as state owned enterprises (SOE) were gradually transformed from 'government production units' to independent economic entities with increased decisional autonomy, in-flow of FDI via numerous joint ventures rapidly increased, and thousands of private and rural (collectively-owned) enterprises have emerged with only limited policy guidance from local governments. Fan uses a vivid

metaphor to describe the new attitude towards this competitive, uncertain, and unpredictable environment (Borgonjon & Vanhonacker 1994): A Chinese manager felt like “a non-swimmer being suddenly plunged into the ‘sea of market’ by the force of reform [...] rushed in desperate search for new management concepts and techniques”. (Fan 1998, p. 203)

In response, the Chinese government implemented several management training schemes throughout the 1980s by taking a ‘look West’ approach (Borgonjon & Vanbonacker 1994). Among them, two are important in terms of influencing the development of Chinese MBA education. The first was a cooperative management training agreement between the Chinese government and the United States’ Department of Commerce in 1984, culminating in the establishment of the National Center for Industrial Science and Technology Management Development in Dalian (Fischer 1999; Li 1996). This Dalian-based program provided MBA courses from Buffalo College of Administration, New York State University, complemented by the then Dalian Institute of Technology for China-specific aspects(Li 1996). The second program was sponsored by the European Commission and the China Enterprise Management Association, with the China Europe Management Institute (CEMI) in Beijing in 1984 (Fischer 1999). This second Sino-Foreign program recruited both MBA and EMBA students, and drew teaching faculty from leading business schools across Europe through the network of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) (Southworth 1999).

Although ostensibly successful these two international cooperative projects had distinct destinies. After 10 years and after graduating 241 MBA candidates propelled to high profile positions in the Chinese government (Li 1996), the Sino-US program folded due to the American government's inability to maintain its involvement (Fischer 1999). The Sino-European program on the other hand, after graduating 236 Chinese managerial personnel during its initial operation from 1984 to 1994 (Wang 1999) was relocated in September 1994 to Shanghai and renamed to China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), now a joint venture of the European Union Committee and the Shanghai Municipal Government with its proper facilities on the Pudong campus of Shanghai Jiaotong University (Southworth 1999). CEIBS is now a leading international MBA education institute in Mainland China, and was ranked the 43th worldwide as well number one in Asia for its English MBA programs (Economist Intelligence Unit 2002). These two initiatives are credited with laying the foundation for subsequent proper Chinese efforts. Deng Xiaoping's pragmatism and the dynamism of the new Chinese economy of the 1980s (Clarke 1999) triggered an urgent need for Chinese managers (Borgonjon & Vanhonacker 1994). Consequently, a series of developments resulted in Chinese domestic MBA programs since the late 1980s (Shi 2000; Wang 1999; Zhao 1997). Initial progress to develop Chinese domestic MBA education was made in 1988 when a number of management professors were assembled by the national Academic Degrees Committee (ADC) to conduct a feasibility study with respect to MBA education in Chinese universities (Li 1996). Consequently, a task force was set up in 1989 to formulate a working plan regarding training objectives, admission criteria, course

structure, teaching methods and degree conferment of MBA programs to be provided in Chinese universities (Shi 2000). Then in 1990, a national decree was issued by the State Council to legislate setting up MBA programs on a trial base in selected Chinese universities (Zhou 1998). Formal MBA education started in the early 1990s in Mainland China. In 1991, a National MBA Coordination Group was organized to implement trial MBA programs and nine universities were authorized to offer experimental MBA programs with a total of 86 intakes (Wang 1999). A further seventeen universities were added to the initial group, totaling 26 universities eligible to offer MBA education in China in 1993. As Chinese higher education institutes were still lacking the necessary expertise and teaching materials for MBA education, many of these experimental universities sought assistance from their Western counterparts: Nanjing University partnered with the University of Missouri-Columbia, Qinghua was assisted by the University of Western Ontario, and Beijing University cooperated with Fordham University. In the immediate, the Chinese MBA providers simply emulated Western curricula (Shi 2000). To ensure the quality of these national MBA programs, a National MBA Guiding Committee was set up in 1994 to replace the previous National MBA Coordination Group (Zhou 1998) to standardize screening, admissions, and examinations practices (Shi 2000; Li 1996). In 1995, thirty more universities were approved to offer MBA programs (Shi 2000). A mandatory national MBA entrance examination system called GRK and modeled after the GMAT was established in 1997 (Zhao 1997). In addition, efforts were made to compile case materials that were specific to the Chinese business context (Wang 1999). With this increase of officially authorized MBA programs (62 currently), the annual enrollment of MBA students in Chinese universities has grown

from 86 in 1991 to about 15,000 in 2002 (*People's Daily* 2002). Peng (2003) estimates that the annual intake of MBA students will need to be expanded to around 30,000 by 2006 and he concludes that “[m]anagement education in Mainland China has evolved from a political-ideology-dominated model to an economic-function-oriented approach. In particular, the rapid business growth brought about by economic reform and the open door policy has created an unsatisfied demand for professional managers. Differing from those earlier pure policy implementers required in the central command system, the professional managers demanded for the free economy should, first of all, understand the underlying mechanism of a market economy. Furthermore, they should be able to utilize available resources to maintain sustainable corporate development in a dynamic competitive environment. To meet the demand for such professional managers, Western style MBA education was imported into China in the early 1980s and Chinese MBA education has experienced a dramatic growth in the last decade of the twentieth century.” (Peng 2003, p.23)

(d) Indirect presence in the Chinese Market through Internet-mediated Distance Education

There is opportunity for Internet-mediated Distance Education. The maturing of the Internet to a ubiquitous medium for learning, business, and lifestyles has also spurred an explosive proliferation of distance learning offerings in Business, especially due to the “Internet-readiness” of the content. But while we may consider the paradigm ubiquitous to us, it may not enjoy the same acceptance level elsewhere. A careful analysis of the

antecedents and success factors of Internet-mediated Distance Education to foreign students is paramount (Shive, 2000).

2. The Conditions of Success of Distance Education in China

If we retain the latter model for its appeal of immediacy and we need to identify the success factors. They will depend on the receptiveness of students to this paradigm, the maturity of the technology and the infrastructure, the correct market penetration approach, and the requisite level of culturally motivated adaptation of the paradigm.

(a) The Receptiveness of Chinese Students to Distance Learning

From a historical perspective we advocate that Distance Learning in China has a significant advantage over other modes due first and foremost to a tradition mostly longer than in any Western system.

Indeed, “Dual Mode” correspondence based learning started the “first generation of long-distance education” [Yuhui 1988] as early as 1953 at the People's University of China. By 1997, this first generation mode was implemented in 635 conventional universities via their correspondence education divisions/schools, which provide for printed course materials, correspondence tutorials (assignments marking), compulsory face-to-face tutorials, and regular semester-end convocations.

The second generation was marked by the predominant use of the 'new broadcast media'. Indeed, China was one of the first countries to use radio and television for higher-educational purposes with the opening of its first Radio and Television University in 1960. In a phased approach, a first group of Metropolitan TV Universities also emerges in 1960.

Though interrupted by the 'Cultural Revolution' (1966-76), these original initiatives experienced heightened interest after 1976, especially as a consequence of the Open Door policy. This socialist modernization project called for an extensive qualified work force. Although the general level of primary and secondary education in China was higher than in most developing countries, admission of students to higher education institutes was relatively limited. In 1975, the enrolment rate in China's higher education was less than 2 per cent, whereas in ninety-two other developing countries the rate was over 4 per cent. The number of college and university students constituted a mere 0.7 per cent of China's adults above the age of 25. The number of qualified technicians and engineers accounted for only 2.5 per cent of the country's work force in state-owned enterprises and institutes. A turnaround could not be accomplished by relying solely on conventional colleges and universities within a short timeframe. This led to the founding of the National Radio and Television University in February 1978, subsequently culminating in the establishment of the National Radio and TV Universities system in 1979. A Central Radio and Television University (CRTVU) was set up in Beijing supported by a system of initially 28 provincial radio and television universities (PTVUs), 279 prefectural/civic branch schools and 625 district/county work stations.

In October of 1986, TVU teaching programs began to be transmitted by satellite every evening from 4.50 to 11 p.m. Forty-nine teaching hours of transmission time was thus added to thirty-three teaching hours per week via this microwave network. All these changes have provided new opportunities for TVUs to develop and expand. [For a comprehensive discussion of the Chinese DL in higher education up to 1988, see Yuhui 1988.]

We interpret this level of exposure and length of experience of the Chinese learner to Distance Education and non-traditional forms of delivery as a potential proxy for evidence of robust acceptance and receptiveness levels for today's Internet-mediated Distance Education, especially when considering the quickly evolving imaging technologies and video-conferencing possibilities due to rapid expansion of bandwidth, throughput, and capacity.

(b) Infrastructure Considerations

With respect to China's digital infrastructure the following milestones are ample evidence of its capability and quality (Ji'an 2001): At the end of 1994, sponsored by the former Education Commission of PRC, Tsinghua and other 9 universities, China completed the China Education and Research Network (CERNET) Pilot Project, the first TCP/IP-based public computer network in China. In 1996, Wang Dazhong, President of Tsinghua University, had the lead in advocating Distance Learning. In 1997, Hunan

University, through cooperating with Hunan Telecom, established China's first on-line university. In 1998, Tsinghua University launched the on-line master programs. In September of the same year, the Ministry of Education officially entitled Tsinghua University, Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications, Zhejiang University and Hunan University as the first batch of educational institutions to pioneer the digital era of Distance Learning. August 1999, Beijing University and the Central Broadcast and TV University were added to the list. In 1999, the Ministry of Education promulgated the “Comments on Developing Advanced Distance Learning in China”, stipulating guidelines, aims and tasks of Distance Learning in China. As it reads, the mandate for Distance Learning development focuses on "overall planning, demand driving, expanding deregulation and improving quality".

Another significant milestone was reached in December of 2000 as the "CERNET High-speed Backbone Project" was completed. In support, the Ministry of Education had released in July of 2000 the Provisional Administration Methods for Educational Website and On-line Schools, stipulating the jurisdiction of the Ministry over educational websites and Internet-based schools. The Ministry also granted Distance Learning licenses to Tsinghua and another 14 universities, and expanded the pioneer list to include 31 universities and colleges. It also promulgated the “Several Comments on Supporting Some Universities and Colleges to Set up Internet Education Schools and Pioneer Distance Learning” granting the 31 universities and colleges substantial autonomy in their Distance Learning initiatives, allowing them to set admissions criteria and determine the admission quota, to offer programs outside the subject catalogue, and to award degree certificates statutorily recognized for example. In July of 2000, the 31 pioneers formed a

consortium named "Coordination Team for Advanced Distance Learning in Higher Education", with the objective of enhancing inter-pioneer communication and cooperation and facilitating sharing and leveraging of educational resources. In October the China Advanced Distance Learning Satellite Broadband Multimedia Transmission Platform got into operation, allowing simultaneous transmission of video and multimedia channels at different rates. Moreover, the Internet access service provided by the platform enables high-speed interconnection with CERNET, forming a satellite-land consolidated bi-directional education network. Operation of this platform thoroughly changes the situation of the initial one-way transmission over the satellite TV network in China.

According to the latest estimates by the Ministry of Education the 31 pioneering institutions have accommodated nearly 190,000 degree seeking students. This vast infrastructural effort clearly demonstrates China's capabilities and readiness for interactive multimedia delivery of programs designed in the West.

(c) Market Penetration Strategies

Potential Western providers of Distance Education to China must take note of market structural and cultural idiosyncrasies. The American model is characterized by private and competitive initiative, dominated by concerns for organic growth, and motivated predominantly by *effectiveness* concerns. And to maintain the parallel, in e-Commerce terms, it is a quest for *richness*. The Chinese model is grounded in the central planning tradition and culturally motivated by the concerns of a very large collectivist society for

universal access to education and thus exploits the *efficiency* paradigm of Distance and Virtual Learning and, consequently the *reach*-paradigm of e-Commerce. This implies that the Chinese market cannot be approached the same way as the domestic market. The cultural paradigm of collectivism demands level of large-scale cooperation and collaboration with the political superstructure just as much as at individual institution level. Traditionally, to enforce intimate level of cooperation, the Chinese economy has accommodated foreign investment only in form of joint ventures with equal ownership. This leaves little room for incrementalism and experimental small-scale partnerships, but requires potential providers to immediately demonstrate capacity for large coverage. This commoditization and liberalization of education requires careful unbundling and outsourcing of some aspects of the education process as well as the integration of partners from business and industry. While most college faculty knows how to “chalk-and-talk”, the design and production of effective learning tools and activities in an online environment is a distinct skill. Teamwork between content specialists, curriculum designers, and online technicians from both cultures will be necessary, but can complicate the process and progress significantly (Shive 2000). While there is no magic solution to an endeavor of such ambitious magnitude, we advocate a multi-dimensional strategy that begins with partnership building as a distinct milestone long before content and delivery are considered.

(d) Necessary Adaptations of Delivery, Content, and Pedagogy for the Chinese Market

From an American perspective, what the e-Commerce revolution was for Business, Distance Learning was for Education! A fast-paced revolution atop a rather inert body of knowledge issued from several hundred years of evolution and centered around “talk-and-chalk” technology. But, analogous to Peter Drucker’s vision in ‘The Post Capitalist Society’ of Management as a practiced but widely un-conceptualized discipline, in the now almost typical pattern for technological change, Distance Learning has come without much warning and is being practiced without much preceding theoretical development. Especially in the U.S. it is still treated as a phenomenon, with all its experimental characteristics.

As such, it cannot be leveraged to serve the Chinese market. The demands and the size of the Chinese market require standardization, quality control, and the recognition that course production is no longer the private preserve of individual faculty members. Ironically, this approach seems to have failed in the U.S. market as demonstrated by some recent divestments from NYU, Columbia, and other reputable institutions that couldn’t recapture the initial investment into large-scale course-design. Finally, what attracts students to the American market is the very experience of the program delivered by English speaking faculty. It will be important to recognize that Distance Education to China pedagogically involves more than posting asynchronously to bulletin boards and synchronous face-less chatting. Pedagogically then, we conjecture that the crucial success factor will be to evolve our own Distance Learning into Internet mediated video conferencing, the mode that made Distance Education in China successful in the first place. This in turn requires us to first and foremost review and revise our own distance

learning models. Even if the Management Discipline so naturally seems to lend itself to face-less Distance Learning for the Western market, it remains that its mission expands when provided to China. It must stimulate more than just descriptive and analytical outcomes, it must become generative for an entire culture to change.

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