

Confucius Institutes in the US that Are Closing

Rachelle Peterson, National Association of Scholars, peterson@nas.org

December 2019

	<u>Institution</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Date of Decision</u>	<u>Stated Reason for Closing</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Other Background Info</u>
1	University of Chicago	IL	September 2014	The university said that offensive comments from Xu Lin, director-general of the Hanban, led the university to close its Confucius Institute: An official "Statement on the Confucius Institute at the University of Chicago" said that "recently published comments about UChicago in an article about the director-general of Hanban are incompatible with a continued equal partnership."	https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2014/09/25/statement-confucius-institute-university-chicago	In April 2014, 108 faculty members signed a petition calling for the Confucius Institute to close. Hanban director-general Xu Lin challenged the university to maintain its Confucius Institute, and a Chinese paper, the Jiefang Daily, praised Xu for her "toughness" and crowed that "Her attitude made the other side anxious. The school quickly responded that it will continue to properly manage the Confucius Institute." https://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/09/26/university-of-chicagos-relations-with-confucius-institute-sour/?_r=0
2	Pennsylvania State University	PA	September 2014	Dean Susan Welch told Inside Higher Ed that "several of our goals are not consistent with those of the Office of Chinese Languages Council International, known as the Hanban, which provides support to Confucius Institutes throughout the world."	https://www.insidehighered.com/quacktakes/2014/10/01/another-confucius-institute-close	Penn State's decision came within a week of the University of Chicago's decision to close its Confucius Institute.

3	Pfeiffer University	NC	May 2016	Moved to University of North Carolina at Charlotte	Email from Colleen Keith	
4	Tulane University	LA	2017	No stated reason	NAS phone call with the School of Liberal Arts.	
5	University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign	IL	September 2017, reported March 2018	Daily Illini reported in March 2018 that according to Interim University Provost John Wilkin, "The institute was shut down when the University's funding was not substantial enough to maintain it, but the University is exploring the opportunity to reestablish the institute on campus."	https://dailyillini.com/news/2018/03/03/university-confucius-institute-closed-months-fbi-monitoring/	
6	University of West Florida	FL	Fall 2017, announced February 2018	February 2018 Pensacola News Journal reported that according to George Ellenberg, senior vice president and provost, a "lack of student interest" led the university to decide in fall 2017 not to renew the contract when it expired in May 2018. Ellenberg said, "We determined that we weren't really getting adequate return in terms of student interest and decided to discontinue it."	https://www.pnj.com/story/money/business/2018/02/07/uwf-cuts-ties-chinese-run-confucius-institute-criticized-controversial-chinese-government-affiliated/312966002/	One day before the university announced its decision, Senator Marco Rubio sent a letter to all Confucius Institutes in Florida, urging them to close.

7	Texas A&M University	TX	April 2018	Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Shields cited a letter from two Congressmen as the key reason for the university system's decision: "They have access to classified information we do not have. We are terminating the contract as they suggested."	https://www.dallasnews.com/news/higher-education/2018/04/05/congressmen-urge-ut-dallas-texas-universities-cut-ties-chinas-confucius-institute	Two Texas Representatives, Republican Michael McCaul and Democrat Henry Cuellar, mailed a letter to all Texas Confucius Institutes on March 23, 2018, urging them to close. The university's announcement came on April 5, the same day the Congressmen's letter was reported on in the local press.
8	Prairie View A&M University	TX	April 2018	Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Shields cited a letter from two Congressmen as the key reason for the university system's decision: "They have access to classified information we do not have. We are terminating the contract as they suggested."	https://www.dallasnews.com/news/higher-education/2018/04/05/congressmen-urge-ut-dallas-texas-universities-cut-ties-chinas-confucius-institute	Two Texas Representatives, Republican Michael McCaul and Democrat Henry Cuellar, mailed a letter to all Texas Confucius Institutes on March 23, 2018, urging them to close. The university's announcement came on April 5, the same day the Congressmen's letter was reported on in the local press.
9	University of Iowa	IA	July 2018	The University of Iowa announced its plans to close seven centers due to cuts in state funding. The contract for the Confucius Institute will not be renewed upon its expiration on July 31, 2019.	https://now.uiowa.edu/2018/07/ui-forced-make-difficult-budget-decisions-following-state-funding-cuts	

10	University of North Florida	FL	August 2018	The University of North Florida announced its plans to close the Confucius Institute in six months (February 2019). A statement on the university's website says, "After reviewing the classes, activities and events sponsored over the past four years and comparing them with the mission and goals of the University, it was determined that they weren't aligned."	http://www.unf.edu/publicrelations/ospreyupdate/submissions/2018-08-14_UNFs_Confucius_Institute_Closes.aspx	In February, Senator Marco Rubio sent a letter to all Confucius Institutes in Florida, urging them to close.
11	North Carolina State University	NC	November 2018	North Carolina State University announced it intends to close its Confucius Institute in June 2019, as part of a project to "restructure" its Asia programming. A statement from University Communications on the university's website says, "After June 2019, NC State will no longer offer academic and cultural programs through the Confucius Institute (CI). This transition is part of NC State's efforts to create a more comprehensive Asia strategy led by the Office of Global Engagement, of which Chinese language and culture programs will continue to play a significant role."	https://news.ncsu.edu/2018/11/nc-state-will-restructure-asia-programming-in-2019/	

12	University of Michigan	MI	December 2018	James Holloway, vice provost for global engagement and interdisciplinary academic affairs, said the university would bring more of its China studies programs in-house: "This transition is driven by a desire to more broadly include the work of exploring and studying Chinese visual and performing arts within U-M's regular academic and cultural units." However, the university announced that it remains open to working with the Hanban in other ways: "Meanwhile, U-M is in communication with Hanban, exploring alternative ways to support the greater U-M community to continuously engage with Chinese artistic culture."	https://record.umich.edu/articles/u-m-end-agreement-confucius-institute-next-year	
13	University of South Florida	FL	December 2018	USF cited the national security concerns that members of Congress have raised, along with falling student enrollment. Only 65 students enrolling in Confucius Institute classes in fall 2018.	https://www.tampabay.com/breaking-news/usf-shutters-controversial-confucius-institute-on-new-years-eve-20190102/	In February, Senator Marco Rubio sent a letter to all Confucius Institutes in Florida, urging them to close.

14	University of Rhode Island	RI	December 2018	A spokeswoman told WPRI 12 that the university was concerned the Confucius Institute could jeopardize federal funding to the university.	https://www.wpri.com/news/top-video/uri-ending-relationship-with-controversial-confucius-institute_20181217234023/1663688481	
15	University of Massachusetts Boston	MA	January 2019	Katherine Newman, the interim chancellor at UMass Boston, declined to give a specific reason in an interview with Boston's Commonwealth Magazine, but said the university will pursue new negotiations with Renmin University of China to develop other ways to promote Chinese language and culture.	https://commonwealthmagazine.org/education/umass-boston-severs-ties-with-confucius-institute/	In March 2018, U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA) sent letters to UMass Boston and other universities in Massachusetts, urging them to close their Confucius Institutes or avoid opening new ones.

16	University of Tennessee Knoxville	TN	January 2019	Gretchen Neisler, vice provost for international affairs, said the university will maintain a partnership with Southeast University in China but close its Confucius Institute in spring 2019 in order to make its Asia programs more flexible. "Our global efforts must be nimble; from the languages we teach to the research opportunities we pursue, we have to stay relevant and keep an eye on the future. It's easier for us to do that if we're running our own program."	https://news.utk.edu/2019/01/24/ut-transitions-strategic-focus-for-its-global-engagement-in-asia/	Tennessee State Representative Martin Daniel has repeatedly criticized the Confucius Institutes. In February 2017 he sent three Tennessee universities a letter expressing concern for China's "blatant disregard for human rights" and warning that Confucius Institutes "avoid classes that cover controversial subjects that the Chinese Government has deemed inappropriate — such as student-led demonstrations that resulted in the Tiananmen Square massacre." https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/politics/2017/02/22/tennessee-lawmaker-takes-issue-confucius-institute-and-ties-chinese-government/98246406/
----	-----------------------------------	----	--------------	---	---	---

17	University of Minnesota	MN	February 2019	Meredith McQuaid, associate vice president and dean of international programs, said the university would have lost federal funding as a result of the NDAA ban on Pentagon funding to Confucius Institute-linked programs. McQuaid also said "The Chinese language teaching community in greater Minnesota ... has definitely grown and matured over the last decade. Their needs have evolved," such that the CI is no longer needed.	https://www.mndaily.com/article/2019/02/n-china-funded-institute-set-to-close	State Sen. Jim Abeler, R-Anoka, sent a letter to the Confucius Institutes at the University and St. Cloud State University in 2018 expressing his concerns with the programs
18	University of Montana	MT	March 2019	According to The Missoulian, Deena Mansour, director of the Mansfield Center where the Confucius Institute was based, "Identifying alternate funding sources will allow us the freedom to assess the best way to support mutual relations between the U.S. and China within the Priorities for Action framework," referencing UM's plan to set priorities.	https://missoulian.com/news/local/university-of-montana-shutters-confucius-institute/article_218eb6a5-2c0e-56e9-a920-10fe4eec3a2f.html	The Mansfield Center, where the Confucius Institute was located, also held the Defense Critical Language and Culture program funded by the U.S. Department of Defense--which has ceased funding programs at universities that also have Confucius Institutes.

19	Indiana University-Purdue University	IN	April 2019	"This decision ensures ongoing operations of some programs within IU impacted by federal changes surrounding Chinese language programs," university spokesman Chuck Carney told the Washington Post.	https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/americas-universities-are-finally-waking-up-to-the-china-threat/2019/04/04/1b21e616-5716-11e9-9136-f8e636f1f6df_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.43b5cbe638e0	The 2019 NDAA forbade Pentagon funding to universities with Confucius Institutes, unless the university receives a waiver.
20	Western Kentucky University	KY	April 2019	"The decision to close the CI, which has operated at WKU since 2010, came when the University could not secure a waiver from the Department of Defense that would allow WKU to operate both the CI and the Chinese Flagship Program."	https://www.wku.edu/news/articles/index.php?view=article&articleid=7622	However, in July 2019, the university moved the Confucius Institute to Simpson County Schools. https://www.wku.edu/news/articles/index.php?view=article&articleid=7814
21	University of Oregon	OR	April 2019	"The University of Oregon is closing its Confucius Institute because a new law approved by Congress last year prohibits academic institutions from running such a program if they receive U.S. Department of Defense funding for Chinese language programs."	https://around.uoregon.edu/content/uo-confucius-institute-close	

22	Northern State University	SD	May 2019	"The decision was made after a thorough review of Northern's international programs and activities. The university seeks to shift resources strategically toward services more aligned with its mission, including study abroad programs."	https://www.northern.edu/news/confucius-institute-northern-state-university-close-2020	
23	San Francisco State University	CA	May 2019	"As of Monday, May 6, 2019 the Confucius Institute at the San Francisco State University campus is closed."	http://www.sfsu.edu/ci/	
24	University of Hawaii Manoa	HI	May 2019	"The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa closed its Confucius Institute effective May 31, 2019, in order to maintain federally funded research and educational opportunities for its faculty and students. "	http://manoa.hawaii.edu/confuciusinstitute/	

25	Arizona State University	AZ	May 2019	"As of May 31, 2019, the Confucius Institute at Arizona State University is closed."	https://web.archive.org/web/20190530012459/https://confuciusinstitute.asu.edu/	The 2019 NDAA forbade Pentagon funding to universities with Confucius Institutes, unless the university receives a waiver. "ASU applied for a waiver to this law over the summer, but the Pentagon denied the request to fund ASU's Language Flagship Program while the Institute remained open, ASU spokeswoman Katie Paquet said in an email." https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona-education/2019/08/23/asu-confucius-institute-china-closes-u-s-defense-department-objections/2101486001/
26	San Diego State University	CA	June 2019	"SDSU closed and transferred the [Confucius Institute] on June 30, 2019 to San Diego Global Knowledge University. " Instead, the university is "launching a new Chinese Cultural Center."	https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/sdsu_newscenter/news_story.aspx?sid=77714	The 2019 NDAA forbade Pentagon funding to universities with Confucius Institutes, unless the university receives a waiver."SDSU ... had submitted a waiver to keep its Confucius Institute and still receive federal funding. But Everett-Haynes said that waiver was denied." https://thedailyaztec.com/94940/news/sdsu-launches-new-chinese-cultural-center-as-confucius-institute-closes/

27	Miami Dade College	FL	Announced Sept. 2019, will close Dec. 2019	The college said in a statement to Politico that the decision was “due to low and declining enrollment that does not justify the operational cost.”	https://www.politico.com/states/florida/story/2019/09/06/miami-dade-college-is-shutting-down-its-confucius-institute-1174166	In February 2018, Senator Marco Rubio sent a letter to all Confucius Institutes in Florida, urging them to close. Miami Young Republicans also lobbied against the Confucius Institute.
28	University of Delaware	DE	Announced Oct. 2019, will close February 2020.	Associate Deputy Provost Ravi Ammigan said “It was simply a decision made due to decreased activity.”	http://udreview.com/confucius-institute-set-to-close-in-early-2020/	
29	University of Kansas	KS	Announced December 2019, will close January 2020.	The Lawrence Journal-World reports that the decision is "because of a 2018 law that restricts Department of Defense funds to universities that host Confucius Institutes."	https://www2.ljworld.com/news/ku/2019/dec/17/ku-will-close-controversial-confucius-institute-in-january/	