

# Impact of Federal Policy on Academic Research and Academic Brain Drain

July-August 2021 Ethnic Profiling Survey

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Michigan State University Chinese Faculty Club

Iowa State University Chinese Faculty and Staff Association

# Survey background



Survey PI/Co-PI: Detroit Arab American Survey (2003); Reducing Prejudice against Arab Americans (2020); Of People and Pandemics: Survey of International Coping and Compliance (2020)

- Invitations were sent to 927 members of Asian/Chinese faculty associations at five universities: University of Michigan, Michigan State, Iowa State, Columbia, and Notre Dame
- No public criminal or civil charges of disclosure violations, fraud, theft, or espionage at any of these universities
- Survey was conducted via Google Forms, July-August 2021
- 295 full responses were received, for a 32% response rate
- Respondents came from all academic disciplines
- Students and postdoctoral fellows are not included

We need a  
secure, open,  
and supportive  
environment for  
science.

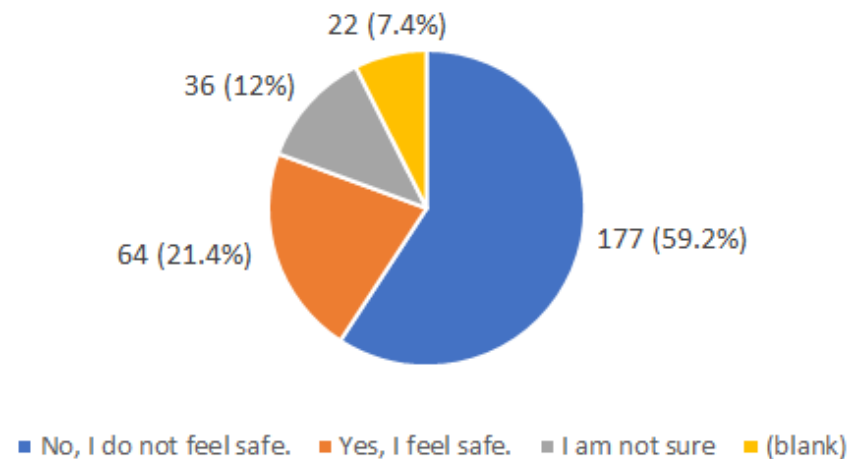
- Academic researchers are frightened.
- Their fears are grounded in federal policy, and in the university response.
- "Brain drain" is a serious potential consequence.

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**Academic researchers are  
frightened.**

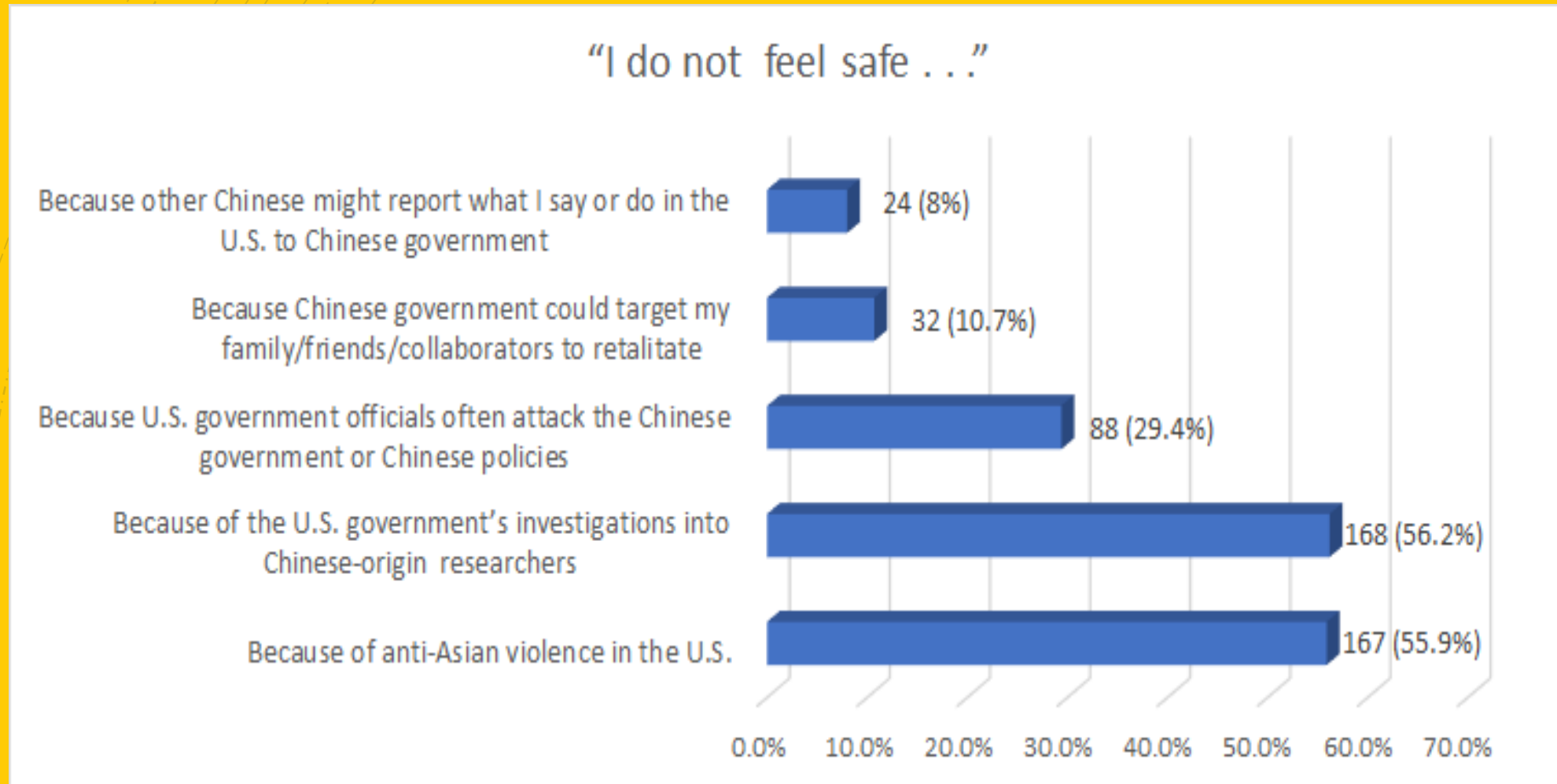
## 71% of Chinese American researchers do not feel safe, or are uncertain about their safety in the future.

Question: Do not feel safe as Chinese-origin academic researchers in the U.S



- **59% do not feel safe; 12% are not sure**
- “While the current situation is not too bad, I am concerned about the deteriorated situation in the future.”
- “Honestly I have mixed feelings.”
- “Overall, I have confidence in the American system but have some concerns.”

# “I do not feel safe . . .”

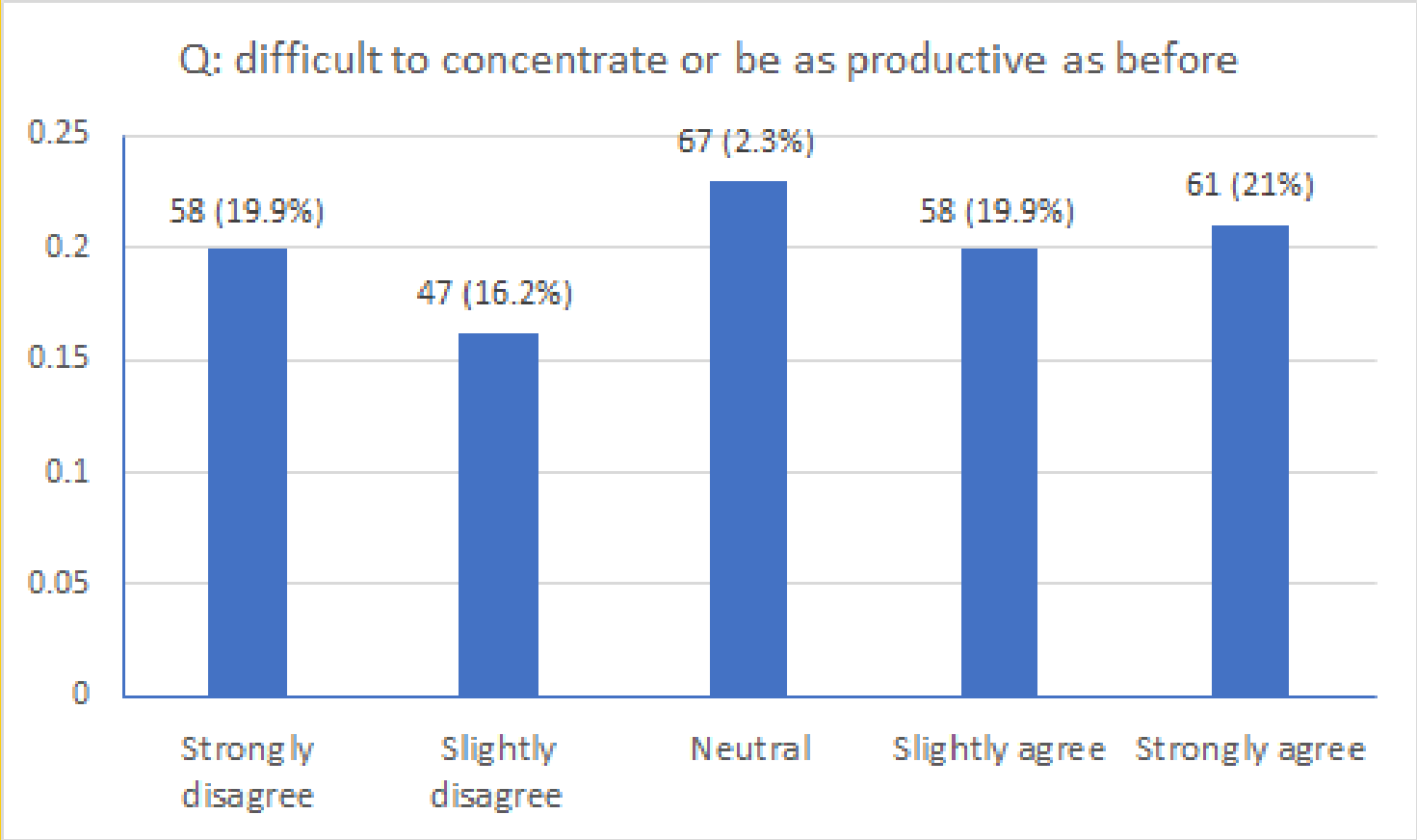


12% expressed  
fear of China. All  
were also fearful  
of the U.S.  
government.\*

\* This slide was not part of the 02.25.2022 presentation but was added in response to questions.

- 11% of respondents feared that “my family, friends, or collaborators in China might be targeted by the Chinese government in retaliation for something I say or do.”
- 6.4% of respondents feared that “other Chinese might report what I say or do in the U.S. to the Chinese government or the CCP. Nearly all were also afraid of retaliation (see above).
- Every person who expressed fear of the Chinese government also felt unsafe because of the “U.S. government’s investigations of Chinese-origin researchers” and/or “because U.S. government officials often attack the Chinese government or Chinese policies.”

**41% find it difficult to concentrate or be as productive as before**





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A White male approached my family member at Campus and spit on them without any reason. This leaves my family member not knowing how to respond. This was never reported to any authority.

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When my daughter and I walked in campus, a student (presumably) cursed us with racial slurs in front of my daughter

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I have been demoralized by my department's lack of interest and support regarding the anti-Asian climate and Atlanta shootings.

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I believe that the immigrant desire "not to make waves" allows university leadership to take advantage of the work that Asian Americans do on campus and in the community.

**Anti-Asian  
actions and Asian  
invisibility**

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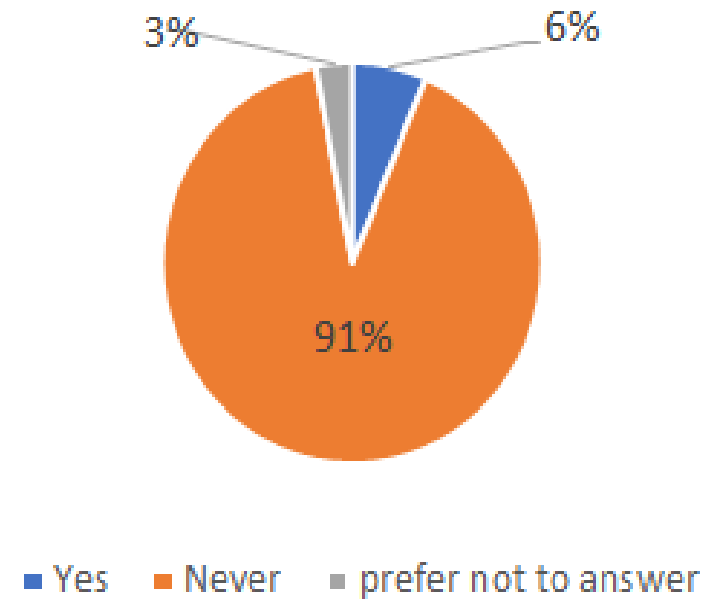
**The fears of researchers are  
grounded in federal policy,  
and in the university response.**

## Federal law enforcement, federal agency, and university inquiries (32 individuals)

Questioned by university administrators (VP for research, deans, chairs)	Questioned by federal law enforcement	Questioned by funding agencies	Total inquiries	Total responses
<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>295</b>

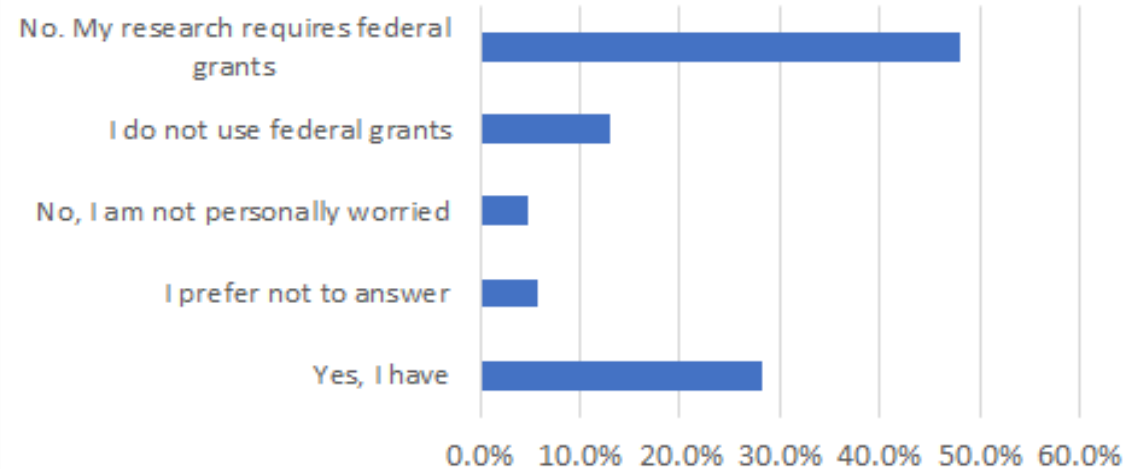
**91% of those facing questions were not informed of their rights or responsibilities**

Did you know, or were you informed, about your rights and responsibilities prior to any discussion? (32 responses)

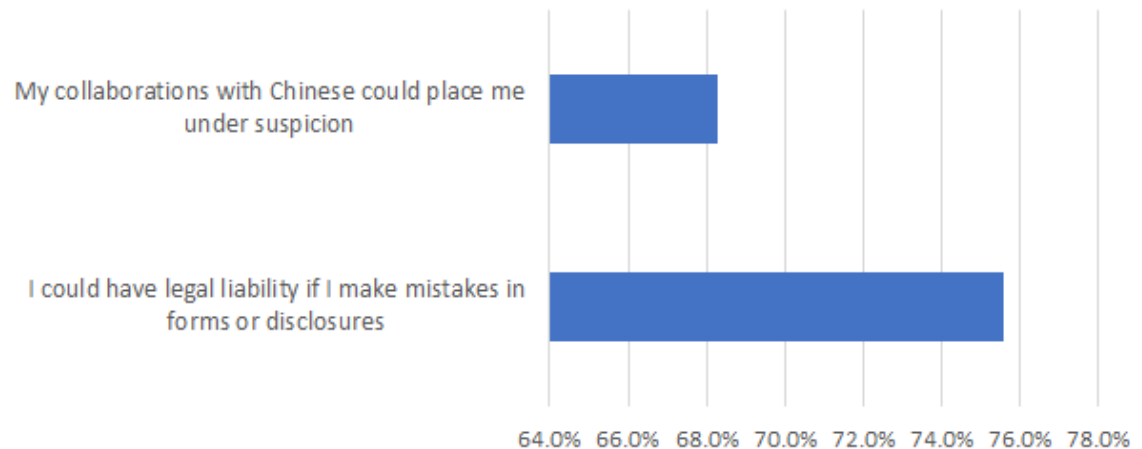


**28% have considered avoiding federal grant applications. 48% feel they have no choice but to apply.**

### Have you considered avoiding federal grants? (291 responses)



### I have considered avoiding federal grant applications because I am afraid that ...



**81% of researchers know  
WHERE they should disclose  
COI to universities**

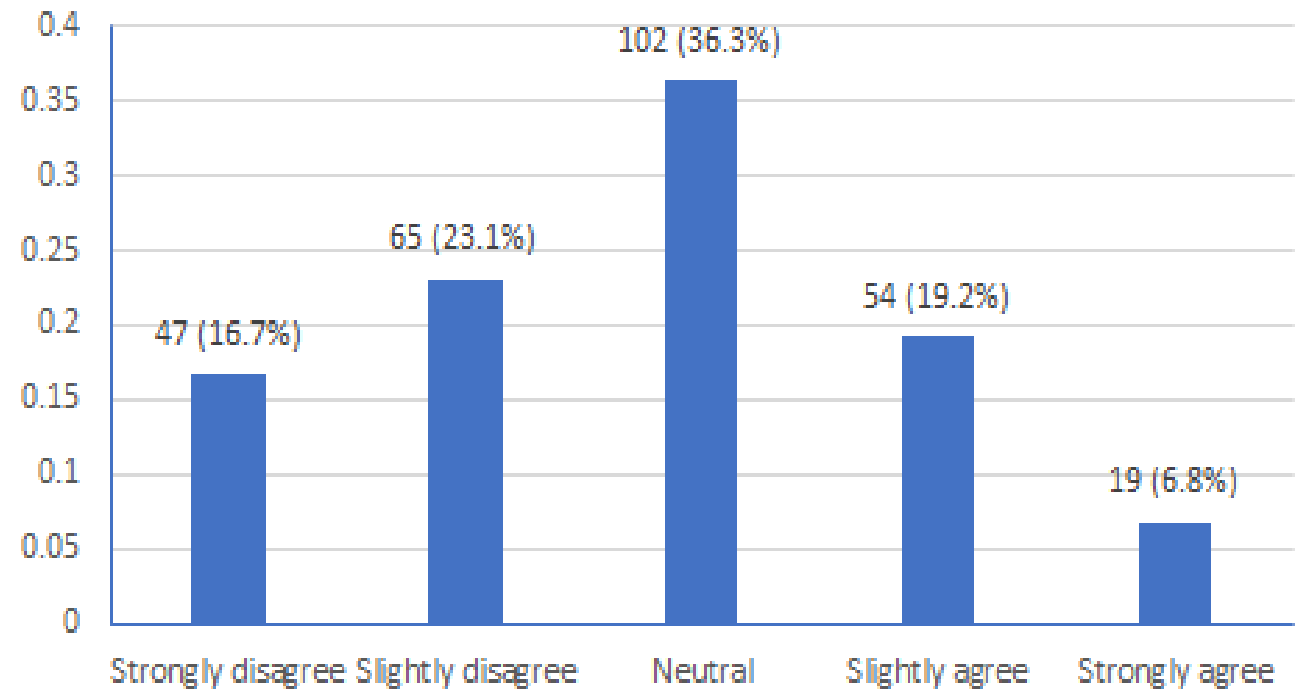
**Only 29% know what should  
be disclosed to universities**

**Only 36% know what should  
be disclosed to federal  
funding agencies**

- “The policies have been changing in the past several years. One would think they are clear at one time but then the policies change. It's almost a moving target.”
- “The new requirement for disclosure is so vague and different universities or different people can interpret in different way. People are just scared. . . . The vague criteria for disclosure is just set up a trap to get someone in violation”

**40 percent fear university will not support Asian American faculty, staff, or students if targeted by the U.S. government.**

Q: University will support Asian American faculty, staff, or students if targeted by the U.S. government



1. Strongly Disagree

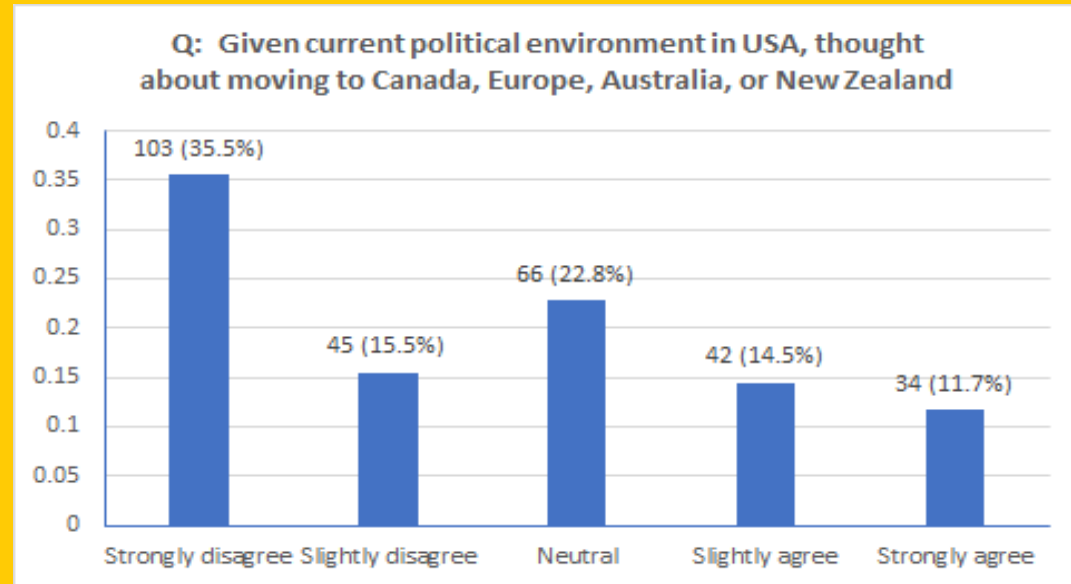
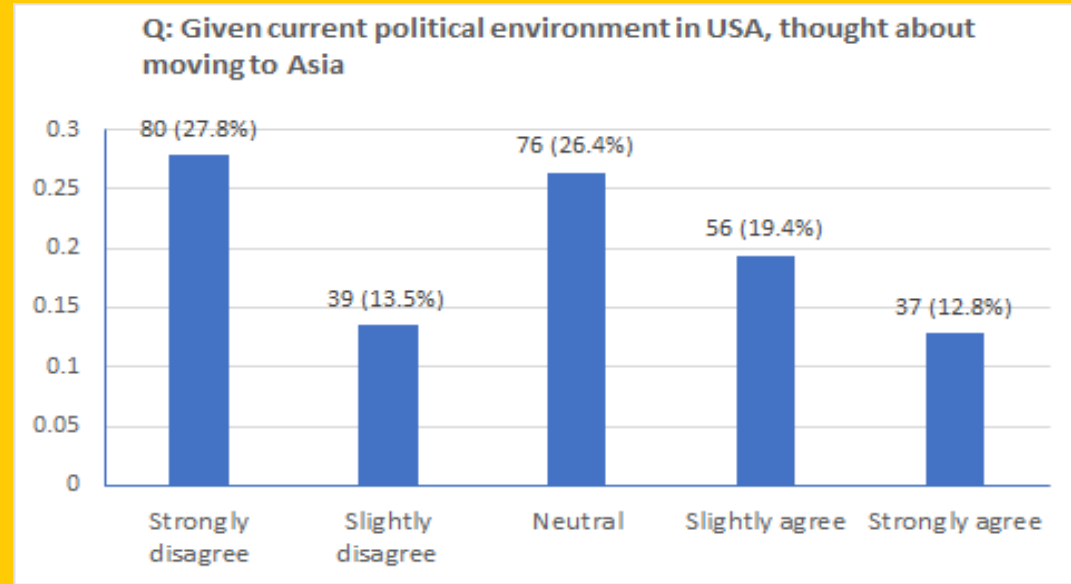
5. Strongly Agree

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**“Brain drain” is a serious  
potential consequence.**

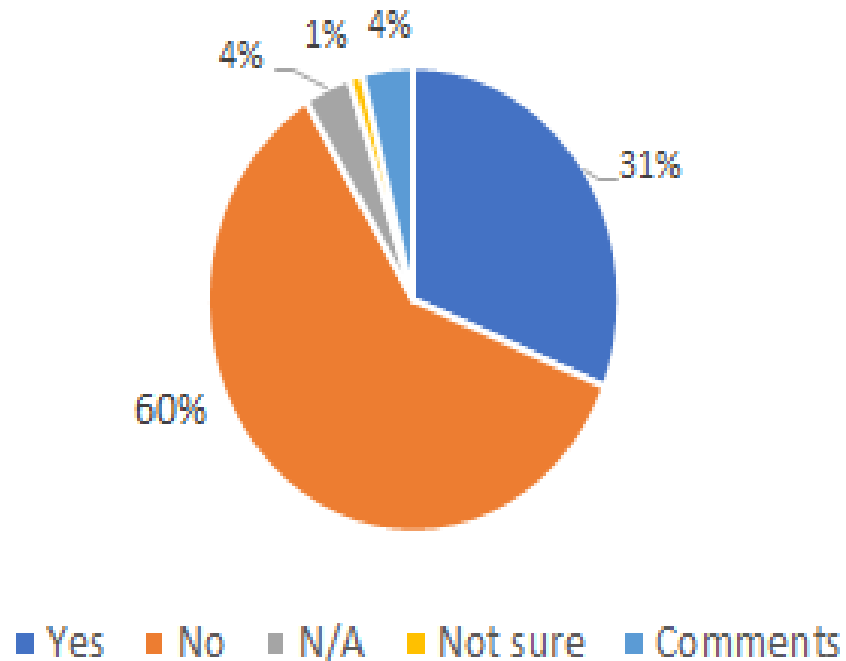


**32% have thought about leaving the U.S. for another country**



1. Strongly Disagree ----- 5. Strongly Agree

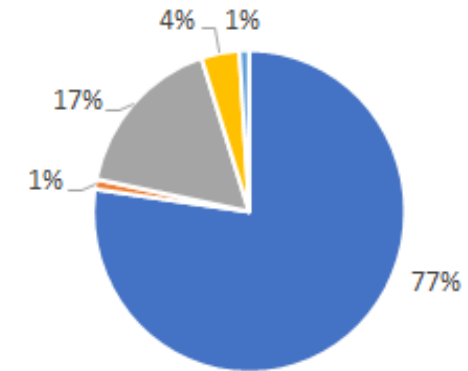
Do you have students or postdocs who have turned down offers from U.S. institutions because they feel the U.S. is not a welcoming environment for people like them? (300 replies)



**31% have students/postdocs who turned down U.S.-based offers because the U.S. is no longer welcoming**

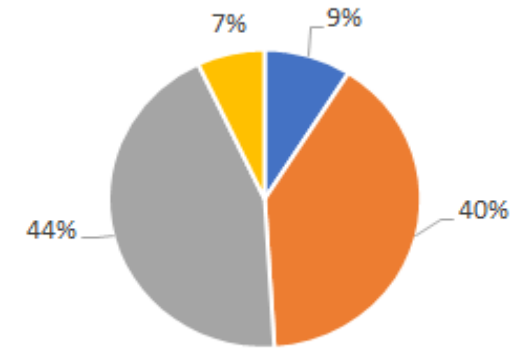
**77% believed their university encouraged collaborations in China before 2018. Only 9% do now.**

Before 2018, did you feel that the University encouraged collaborations in China? (139 responses)



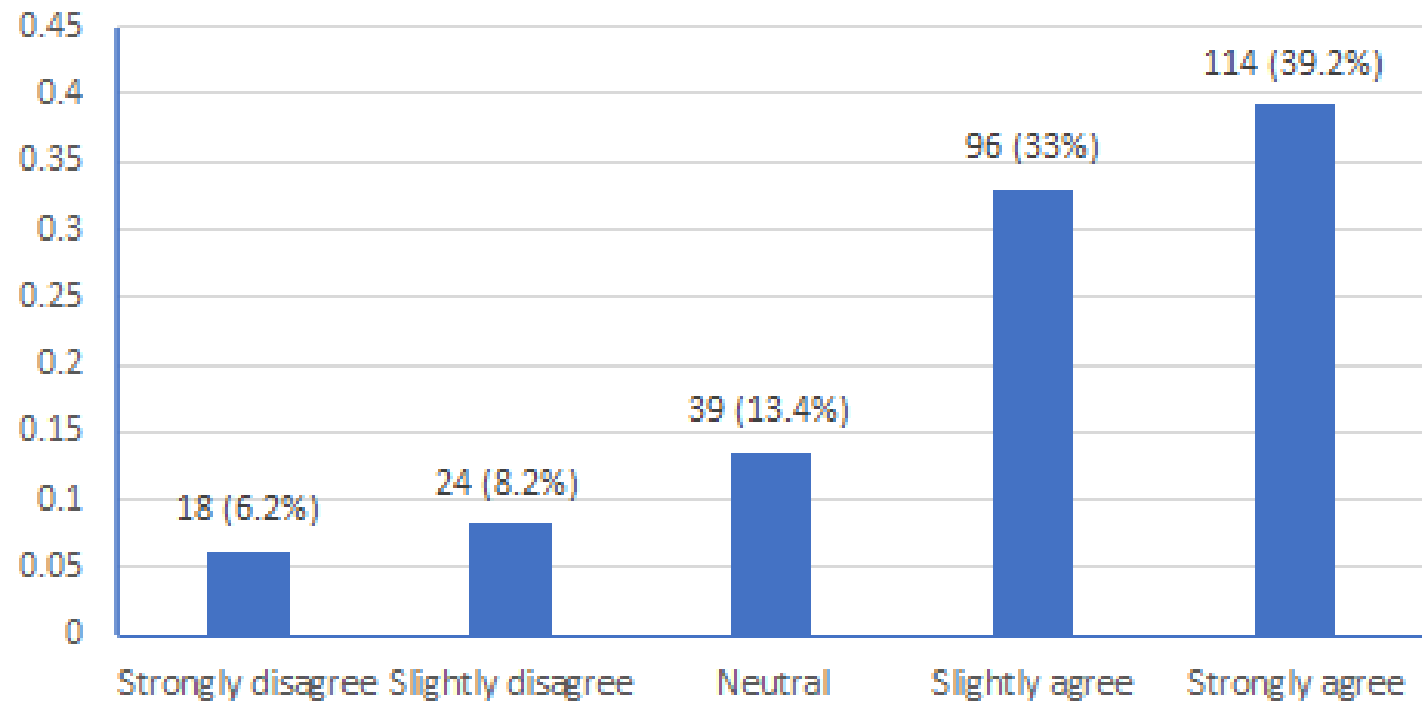
■ Yes ■ No ■ Neither ■ Not in the University before 2018 ■ Not sure

Do you feel that this university currently encourages collaborations in China? (168 responses)



■ Yes ■ No ■ Neither ■ Not sure

Q: Worried about traveling to and/or bringing students to China (post-pandemic)

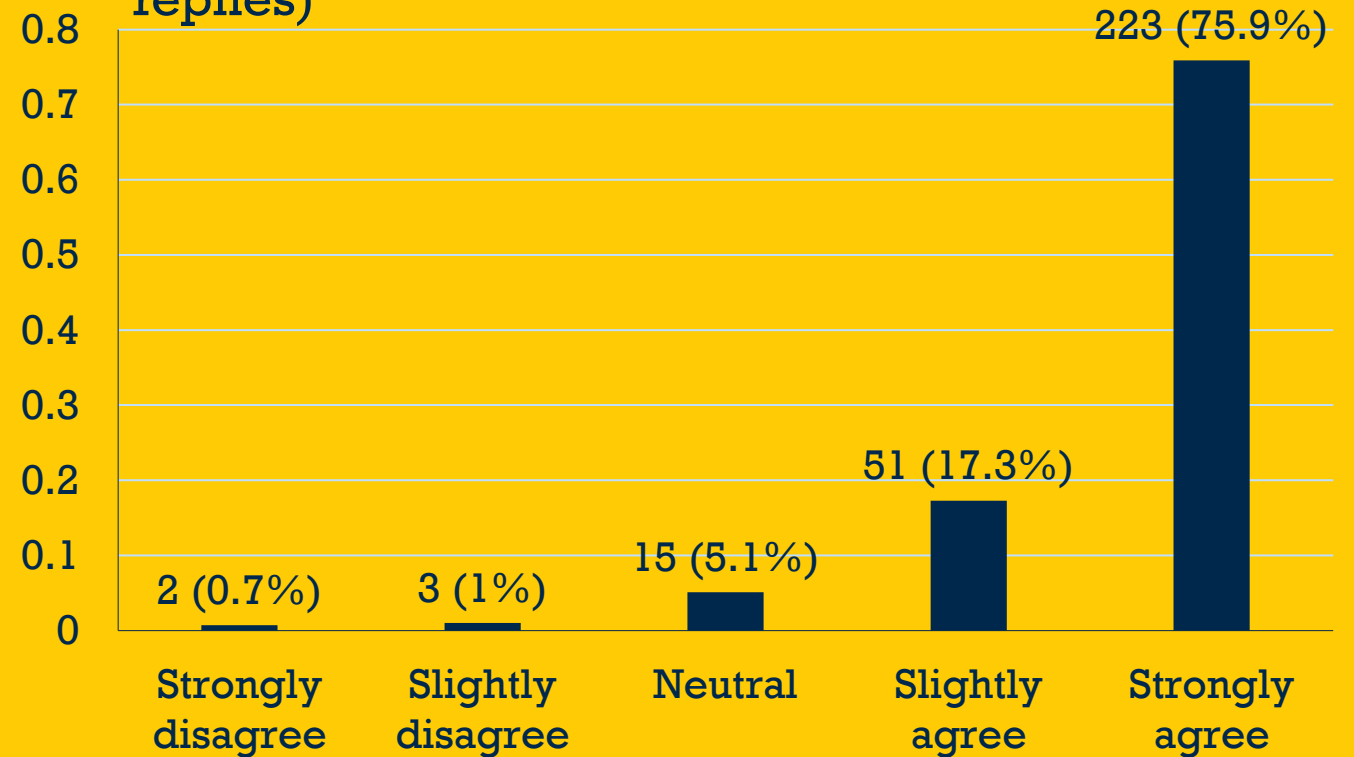


**72% are worried about traveling to and/or bringing students to China (post-pandemic).**

1. Strongly Disagree ----- 5. Strongly Agree

**93% want universities to collectively and publicly raise concerns about ethnic profiling.**

Q: Want university to collectively and publicly raise concerns about ethnic profiling (294 replies)



1. Strongly Disagree ----- 5. Strongly Agree

We need a  
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- Academic researchers should not be fearful of doing their jobs.
- The federal government and universities should foster research, not condemn it.
- The United States attracts the best talent from around the world. Let's keep it that way.

Thank you for your attention!