

House Committee Leaders Urge Duke University to End Partnership With Chinese University

China's Wuhan University 'is a direct extension of the Chinese military and intelligence apparatus,' the chairmen wrote in their letter to Duke University.

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Chairman of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party Rep. John Moolenaar (R-Mich.) presides over a hearing in Washington on March 5, 2025. Madalina Vasiliu/The Epoch Times



By Frank Fang

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The chairmen of two House committees are calling on Duke University to end its partnership with China's Wuhan University, saying that the relationship is advancing the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) military ambitions at the expense of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

Rep. John Moolenaar (R-Mich.), chair of the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, and Rep. Tim Walberg (R-Mich.), chair of the Committee on Education and Workforce, expressed their concerns in a [letter](#), dated May 14, addressed to Duke University President Vincent Price.

"Duke Kunshan University's website promotes Chinese military training. It is outrageous an American university would lend its name to training the military of a foreign adversary," Moolenaar [wrote](#) on the social media platform X on May 16.

In an X post on Friday, Walberg [said](#) that "No American university should assist the CCP in its attempts to undermine our national security and expand its dictatorial regime."

The lawmakers pointed out in their letter that "Wuhan University is not an ordinary academic institution. It is a direct extension of the Chinese military and intelligence apparatus."

They noted that the Chinese school is home to several of China's national defense research laboratories and trains cyber warfare specialists for the regime's military, the People's Liberation Army.

The two schools [established](#) Duke Kunshan University (DKU) in 2013. The partner institution has a [200-acre](#) campus in Kunshan, a city in coastal China's Jiangsu Province. Duke said on its website in December 2023 that DKU had 1,713 enrolled students, with 1,279 from China and 434 international students from 66 countries, including the United States, Canada, Denmark, and Italy.

According to the letter, DKU offers undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs and "specializes in high-technology fields with direct military applications, including data science, artificial intelligence, and materials science."

"As part of these programs, many DKU students spend time at Duke University, gaining access to federally funded U.S. research," the lawmakers wrote.

"Given the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) well-documented efforts to exploit U.S. academic openness, this partnership creates a direct pipeline between U.S. innovation and China's military-industrial complex."

The lawmakers cited a [joint report](#) from their committees released last year, saying that China–U.S. joint institutions and academic programs had become pathways for transferring “sensitive U.S. technologies and research expertise” that directly support China’s defense industry and military modernization.

In response to a request for comment, a Duke University spokesperson confirmed with The Epoch Times that the school received the letter.

“Duke respects Congress’ important oversight role and will work to further educate Congress about Duke’s global education mission,” the spokesperson said.

‘National Security Risk’

DKU’s researchers have co-authored publications with Chinese defense scientists from major Chinese companies, including Huawei, Tencent, and Lenovo, the lawmakers said, adding that these three companies “are at the forefront of Beijing’s military-civil fusion strategy.”

The Pentagon has [identified](#) Chinese tech giant Huawei and Chinese conglomerate Tencent Holdings as “Chinese military companies” operating in the United States.

The U.S. State Department [states](#) on its website that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is implementing the fusion strategy to acquire advanced technologies through “licit and illicit means” to advance its military capabilities and achieve military dominance.

“Several members of DKU’s Advisory Board have ties to Chinese government bodies, the CCP, and organizations linked to the United Front Work Department,” the lawmakers wrote.

The Chinese regime’s united front effort is spearheaded by its Central United Front Work Department, which runs a network of organizations to co-opt civic groups, gather intelligence, shape other countries’ political environments, and facilitate illegal technology transfer.

DKU’s board of trustees includes Chen Liyan, the mayor of Kunshan, according to DKU’s website.

Chen, who is also Kunshan’s party secretary, told local officials at a political meeting in January that they must be “loyal to the Party” and use CCP leader Xi Jinping’s political doctrine to “strengthen their political consciousness, political ability, and political responsibility,” according to Kunshan’s government website.

The lawmakers also pointed out that 62 Duke students became “pawns for CCP propaganda” during their trip to China in 2024, as they were “coached to recite ‘I love China’ in Mandarin” in front of Chinese state-run media cameras.

“Students described feeling ‘used’ as part of a ‘traveling circus’ that was ‘paraded in front of local press’—their faces later appearing on state media,” the lawmakers wrote. “This was not education but exploitation.”

The lawmakers urged Duke to follow the lead of four American universities, including the [University of Michigan](#), that have ended their joint institutes with Chinese institutions.

“Given your university’s federal funding, your partnerships with PRC military-linked institutions represent a national security risk,” the lawmakers wrote.

“The security of America’s technological edge cannot be compromised.

“Therefore, you should end your PRC collaborations to prevent further PRC exploitation of U.S. research capabilities and taxpayer investments.”

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