

Story 1: Arrival, Wang Lingling (1985)

Arriving on the Shenzhen University campus the first week of September, 1987, was a most special event in my life. I, the third daughter born of a peasant family, am the first child of my generation to go to university. My first elder brother, who is ten years older than me, was considered bright enough to go to college, but he was born at the wrong time. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution interrupted his study. When he returned home from the commune where he had been assigned in a distant part of our vast country, he felt he was too old to still be a student. Anyway, he had the duty as eldest son to take care of our parents, who had almost starved to death during that period we call "the ten chaotic years." So now he, his wife and children live with our elderly parents; he manages the crops and does a little business on the side.

My second elder brother, who is just ten months older than me, studied hard in primary school. My parents wanted him to get the education they never had. In fact, my parents do not read or write, but they are good people. My second elder brother studied hard at school. Because he did well in the tests, he was advanced to the best junior primary school in our township. He studied hard to get good test scores for high school entrance. But he failed. Not many places in the county's Number One High School are reserved for pupils from Hidden Rock Village. Only four pupils from Second Elder Brother's class were accepted his year. If the high school had been larger, he might have been the fifth. Both my elder sisters dropped out of school; it was unusual in the 1970s for girls to continue their education. One left school in order to take care of our grandparents (they are now dead) and help out on the farm. The other was married to a worker's family in a neighboring village. When I say I am the first daughter to go to university, I mean I am the first girl of our entire village to go past high school.

I got the highest score in primary school and was sent to boarding school when I was nine years old. I continued to score well on entrance tests. To go to university would be a true honor, not just to my parents and my ancestors, but to myself also. I try never to show how proud I am of myself. My parents and brothers will give me their life savings so I can afford this education. I am the pride of Hidden Rock Village.

It takes sixteen hours by long distance bus from our village to the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. I had met only one person who had ever

been to Shenzhen, which was created by the “opening-up and reform” policy of Deng Xiaoping, the greatest leader of modern China. When my family learned that I was thinking about going to university in either Guangzhou [the capital of Guangdong Province] or Shenzhen, a distant relative introduced me to a man who had once visited Shenzhen. The man told of a marvelous world that imitated Hong Kong, the British colony that was just next door. Everyone had telephones, televisions and washing machines. Shenzhen was a place where people were so rich that if someone dropped a ¥10 note in the street, no one would stoop to pick it up because in Shenzhen money of such small denominations was only good for toilet paper. My relative’s friend was on his second or third bottle of baijiu [“white lightning,” a distilled spirits made from sorghum], so I figured he was given to exaggeration. Still, I thought Shenzhen people would probably not pick up a ¥5 note, and I imagined going downtown on the weekends to pick up discarded bank notes. Maybe that was the way I could make ends meet.

Near the end of the bus ride, we slowed down and joined a queue of vehicles. We were ushered off the bus and told to show our identification. No one was allowed into the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone without proper authorization. At that time, of course, I did not have a Shenzhen ID card, but I produced my university admissions letter. The frontier guard waved me into a city that, more than any other place in China, proves the national willpower to achieve the Four Modernizations.

When the long distance bus arrived at the Shenzhen terminus, I was greeted by two sophomores. As a sort of “help out new students” policy, the university sent upperclassmen to meet freshmen at the railway station and long distance bus station. I am glad they did; I had never been in such a cosmopolitan place. We took a mini-bus to get to the university, which was about 30 kilometers away. Passing through the streets of Shenzhen city, I noticed that the streets were not exactly paved with gold, but everyone was very smartly dressed. There were a few skyscrapers with their tops just below the clouds. All the office buildings were new, for just a half dozen years earlier Shenzhen had been a village not much larger than the one I had grown up in. Now, however, there were very few peasants to be seen on the streets, and everyone wore bright colors. Many of the women wore dresses; I remembered that I owned but a single dress. Shenzhen in 1985 was a boom town. Dozens of families and hundreds of factory and construction workers were arriving every single day. The construction crane was considered the mascot of the city. We quickly left downtown,

which was only several kilometers long. After that the country was open, with rice paddies and vegetable fields to the side of the road, just like back home. Occasionally, factories or worker housing appeared, and we passed the future site of the Shenzhen Golf Club. I had heard that golf was some sort of sport of Scotland; I did not think Chinese knew how to play.

Shenzhen University was my first choice. My test scores were so high that I could have gone to almost any university in China. I had thought about going to Beijing or Shanghai to a famous brand school, but if I had gone up there, I did not know where I would end up after graduation. University graduates in China were allocated to jobs upon their graduation. If I had gone to Qinghua University, China's best school in mechanical engineering, my field of study, I might have been assigned a job in the remote regions of China—Tibet or Inner Mongolia. Shenzhen University did not assign jobs. Students had to find them themselves. That was a bit scary, but I had enough faith in myself to take the risk. I wanted to be able to visit my aging parents easily, and all my friends and relatives live in Southern China. Maybe Shenzhen's streets were not filled with money, but Shenzhen offered opportunities because of the opening-up and reform. These are opportunities that people of my parent's generation could hardly imagine. My elder brothers also told me to go to the new economic zone and once I had made it they and our parents would follow.

When we climbed down from the mini-bus, I found myself in the middle of a field of weeds. September can be a month of typhoons, but on this day it was hot and humid, much hotter and more humid than in my small mountain village. There was a water buffalo tethered to a power pole. A few hundred meters away was Shenzhen University, a set of new buildings that glistened in the hot, tropical sun. I could see no sign; there was no fence, no gate. I knew Shenda was an open university. Shenda is Shenzhen University's abbreviation. Shen stands for, of course, Shenzhen, which pays for the university. Da stands for da xue, literally big school. Primary schools in China are called xiao xue (small schools) and secondary schools are called zhong xue (middle schools) It is a privilege to be among the 2% of China's 1.2 billion people who go to da xue.

We dragged my suitcase across the weeds, the same suitcase that my brother had used when he returned from the Cultural Revolution. We walked through the campus to get to the dorms, which were located just behind the teaching building. The Shenda campus looks much different from the older schools in China. For one thing, there is a lot of open space. The center of the campus is a shallow pool the size of a football

field, with fountains that shoot water in several different places. Set back from the pool on three sides are massive buildings. The center building is the university library. On its left are the teaching buildings, four connecting classroom buildings that are known as Teaching Blocks A, B, C and D. On the right side of the library is the administration building and just behind it the Science Building, which was still under construction when I arrived. The Library was opened just a few weeks after I came to campus.

Shenda is not a crowded campus. Older universities have been forced to convert all their open space into buildings. Shenda was planned so as to avoid this from ever happening. Construction began in early 1984 and the first phase was finished in time for classes to begin in the autumn. Nor is Shenda a rambling campus. It took me just ten minutes (suitcase and all) to reach the girls' dormitory area. I was housed in a dorm with my classmates in Mechanical Engineering, with only one roommate. Most universities in China put six or eight students to a dorm room, sometimes in triple-deck bunks. But Shenda treats her students as people, not as animals in cages. I am glad I chose Shenzhen University.

1. A university in perspective

When Wang Lingling arrived in Shenzhen on that muggy day in 1985 to embark on her college experience, her amazement at the modern, glistening city she encountered is hardly surprising. Shenzhen is the largest new town built in the shortest time in the history of human settlement, and downtown Shenzhen—the heart of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SEZ)—is a miracle even among many miracles in China's recent struggle to become modern.

China, known to the Chinese as *zhong guo* (literally, center country) which is often translated by foreigners as the Middle Kingdom, is the result of over fifty centuries of development. Ancient China, a series of dynastic empires, was at various times the most modern place on earth. The Tang (AD 618-888) and Ming (AD 1368-1644) Dynasties, considered by many the height of Chinese cultural and scientific development respectively, reached achievements centuries before the same accomplishments came to medieval Europe. These included gunpowder, the compass, paper-making and moveable type. But feudalism, poverty, famine, and foreign invasion took their toll on the Middle Kingdom, and by the dawn of the Twentieth Century, the nation as personified by the Qing emperors was weak, and China was ruled to a large extent by feuding warlords.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was founded on 1 October 1949. Following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, China embarked on a modernization drive under the paramount leadership of Deng Xiaoping. One aspect of Dengist reform was the creating of special economic zones (SEZ), of which the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone was the largest.

The Shenzhen SEZ abuts Hong Kong, which for over a century was a British colony until 1 July 1997 when sovereignty was transferred to the PRC. Hong Kong's influence on Shenzhen is obvious. Fashion resembles Hong Kong or what is portrayed as Hong Kong style on Hong Kong television (two Cantonese and two English stations), which is freely accessible in the zone (but mostly not elsewhere in China). Much investment in Shenzhen enterprises comes from Hong Kong. Tens of thousands of Hong Kong businessmen/women are in Shenzhen on any given day. Many Hong Kong people have purchased apartments in Shenzhen, something which is often blamed for inflating the price of housing as well as increasing the number of prostitutes and mistresses. (Both Hong Kong and Shenzhen newspapers oc-

asionally describe the “second families” of Hong Kong men who own flats in sections referred to as “villages of mistresses.”) Shenzhen also serves as a vacation spot for Hong Kong people.

With over 300 hotels and 550 guest-houses, the zone provides a convenient weekend retreat for tourists from both Hong Kong and elsewhere in China.¹ Restaurant and hotel prices are from half to two-thirds of the comparable costs in Hong Kong. Shenzhen has numerous attractions, including a safari theme park, a collection of villages depicting China’s cultural minorities, a park with China’s famous sites replicated in miniature (surrounded by a miniature Great Wall), and a “Window to the World” which displays miniaturized Western attractions at one-third scale, such as the Eiffel Tower, the Coliseum, Mount Rushmore, the Golden Gate Bridge and Red Square. The largest influences from Hong Kong are probably its culture and business ethos. A popular criticism of Hong Kong (by those in Hong Kong themselves) is the complaint that the city is a cultural wasteland, with people only caring about money. Many Mainland Chinese, especially those from the North, offer the same criticism of Shenzhen *ren* (people), if not all of those in Guangdong, China’s most economically prosperous province. Average per-capita annual income for Shenzhen is reported as ¥10,117.70 (US \$1,200), the highest in China. The ¥120 (US \$14) billion in total savings deposited in Shenzhen banks (i.e., excluding deposits in foreign banks) ranks the municipality as fourth among Chinese cities.²

Education in Shenzhen

Although people often think of Chinese culture as emphasizing education, only recently has education been available to most of the population. Universal basic education has been a dream of Chinese politicians across the Twentieth Century; only in the last two decades, however, has the government been able to provide ways to deliver schooling to most rural children. Education has always been special in China, primarily because it was so hard to acquire. Similar to the situation in other poor countries, higher education was considered a vehicle for entry into the civil service. In feudal China, this took the form of independent study which was geared to passing the civil service exam. China did not have universities until about 100 years ago.³

Table 1.1: Educational enrollment in Shenzhen⁴

	primary		general secondary		vocational and technical secondary		higher education	
	schools	students	schools	students	schools	students	schools	students
1979	226	47,022	24	13,686	1	80		
1980	238	29,168	24	12,296	1	142		
1981	244	51,560	26	13,088	4	133		
1982	246	54,538	28	17,080	5	262		
1983	248	56,319	30	20,982	4	366	1	216
1984	260	62,021	35	27,636	10	2,009	2	1,236
1985	258	70,277	38	35,334	10	3,766	2	3,206
1986	257	77,884	40	40,208	11	5,225	2	3,478
1987	255	84,601	43	44,910	12	7,257	2	4,330
1988	257	96,474	47	43,267	12	9,696	2	4,710
1989	264	104,041	47	45,056	15	10,247	2	4,419
1990	263	111,711	49	46,473	15	11,428	2	3,964
1991	260	118,460	51	50,625	16	10,657	2	3,779
1992	261	127,978	53	55,857	15	11,766	2	3,653
1993	267	139,272	51	60,337	23	12,353	3	3,680
1994	269	147,186	56	66,037	23	12,954	3	4,227
1995	274	157,210	62	71,540	28	13,393	2	5,291

Another general feature of Chinese education is its focus on practicality. Education should serve the motherland by producing productive members of society. The purpose of education is not to develop *individuals* per se. Its purpose is to develop individuals *so that they can serve society*. In terms of higher education, this means producing *rencai* (talented people) for the workforce. In the early 1980s as Shenzhen was being built, it became apparent that the special zone needed a pool of well-trained managerial and professional personnel at both senior and mid-level positions.

The [Shenzhen] labour pool in the early 1980s was unable to meet these demands, either in terms of required job-skills or absolute size of the needed workforce. For instance, in 1979, of the 6,865 cadres in Baoan County, only 325 (4.7%) were technical/professional personnel. By 1984, cadres had almost

quadrupled to 26,767 or about 8.2% of the total workforce. Among them, technical/professional personnel accounted for about 4% of the total workforce. Among these cadres, 27% had post-secondary degrees...⁵

Schools in Shenzhen before 1980 provided only primary and very limited secondary schooling. For a dozen years straddling the 1970s, no Shenzhen resident had been admitted to university. Unless Shenzhen was prepared to rely solely on immigrants for its workforce, this phenomenon had to change. Accordingly, the zone started building new schools and expanding existing facilities (see Table 1.1). Shenzhen University became part of this educational expansion. In 1982 only 3.2% of Shenzhen exam-takers went to university. The corresponding figures for the years 1983 and 1984 were 19.5% and 62.8%, respectively.⁶ By 1996, the tertiary sector of Shenzhen's education (which included SZU and two smaller institutions—a teachers college and a polytechnic institute) accounted for 1.7% of students at all levels in municipally financed educational institutions (compared to 1.5% in the tertiary sector for the nation as a whole). Other students went to kindergarten (20.3%), primary (50.5%), lower secondary (17.7%) and upper secondary (9.9%).⁷ Education, of course, carries with it a price tag, for which Shenzhen government footed most of the bill. Public educational expenditures are presented in Table 1.2.

Shenzhen University has consumed most of the Shenzhen's expenditure in the higher education category. Often, for statistical purposes during some years, the Shenzhen Radio and Television University has been considered a higher education institution. The Shenzhen Teachers College is another higher educational institution. It consisted of two entities—the Shenzhen Education College and the Shenzhen Teachers [Normal] *Zhuanke* College. The former offered courses for adults; the latter offered curricula that led to *zhuanke*, or specialized, short-cycle certificates. In 1993 the Shenzhen Higher Vocational/Technical College (Shenzhen Polytech)⁸ was added, and the following year saw the Teachers College merge into SZU. Students in education prior to 1994 were restricted to taking three-year *zhuanke* programs. Curricula at the Teachers College from 1994 included both a five-year *benke* and a three-year *zhuanke* program. The five-year program aimed to award a double degree—a Bachelors of Education and a Bachelors in a particular teaching subject (e.g., mathematics, Chinese, physics, etc.).

Table 1.2: Public educational expenditures, Shenzhen⁹

	total (million ¥ in 1978 price)	capital expendi- ture (%)	recurrent expendi- ture (%)	as % of public expendi- ture ^a	as % of GDP	higher education as % of total education
1979	2.99	na	na	14.0	1.52	na
1980	4.37	na	na	14.0	1.71	na
1981	5.84	na	na	14.0	1.39	na
1982	5.14	na	na	14.0	0.79	na
1983	9.87	na	na	14.0	0.98	na
1984	56.12	na	na	14.0	3.27	51.6
1985	29.04	34.6	63.4	8.3	1.47	na
1986	22.71	34.6	65.4	6.0	1.14	na
1987	na	na	na	na	na	38.8
1988	60.91	42.9	57.1	14.7	2.21	31.8
1989	64.91	43.1	56.9	10.6	2.23	na
1990	64.81	30.2	69.8	11.8	1.47	na
1991	82.18	na	na	12.3	1.32	15.5
1992	100.77	35.6	64.4	9.4	1.25	11.4
1993	144.82	26.2	73.8	12.4	1.49	10.5
1994	177.99	25.1	74.9	14.03	1.55	15.5
1995	270.04	29.97	70.03	na	1.86	na

Although published data on higher education is not disaggregated according to institution, SZU appears to have gotten about 7/8 of all higher education funding, prior to 1994. This proportion is derived by comparing figures for fixed assets. According to the *1991 Shenzhen Yearbook*, a type of municipal annual report that the city makes available to upper levels of authority as well as to the public, SZU's fixed assets were ¥140 million, while fixed assets for all Shenzhen higher education were reported to be ¥160 million.¹⁰

University founding

Just as the Shenzhen SEZ grew from plans that were initially quite modest, SZU itself was not originally intended to be a comprehensive university. China sanctions only about fifty comprehensive universities out of a total of around 1,050 institutions of higher education. Thus, Chinese colleges and universities are for the most part specialized, usually in engineering or the sciences. The first half of the 1980s was a time of great educational expansion in China as the nation strove toward the Four Modernizations in agriculture, industry, national defense and science/technology. Over 400 new institutions of higher education were founded at that time, only a few of which were designated comprehensive. All new institutions required the approval of the State Council, China's executive cabinet. The chain in decision-making for setting up a university also included the immediate level of government which would supervise the school as well as the ministry or province that would oversee its operation.

Given the emphasis on specialization in Chinese education, it was not surprising that the Shenzhen government at first sought to set up a business/commercial college rather than a comprehensive university. Provincial authorities, however, recommended building an institution of a more comprehensive nature—but one that would not duplicate what already existed in inland China. From conception, the university's *raison d'être* was to provide *rencai* for the Shenzhen SEZ. The stress on practicality and the focus away from theoretical study were features that would always characterize SZU's academics.

Inspection team report

In 1982 the Party Committee of the Shenzhen municipality suggested the establishment of a Shenzhen economics college. Such a request was forwarded to Guangdong Province and given to the provincial Higher Education Bureau, which was in charge of colleges and universities. The request from Shenzhen received a quite detailed response from the Bureau's eight-person investigative team which visited Shenzhen in late 1982.¹¹ The provincial educationalists suggested the building of a comprehensive university rather than an economics college, offering the following reasons:

- The special economic zone needs not only economics personnel but also people from other majors, like law, industrial and commercial enterprise management, architecture, tourism, foreign language, etc.

- A ‘comprehensive university’ is more appealing than an ‘economics college,’ and this appeal will help to get good teachers and support from home and abroad and to develop academic exchanges with Hong Kong and foreign countries.
- Guangdong already has a foreign trade college; there is an economics college in Jinan University. Zhongshan University is planning to change its economics department into an economics college. Shantou University has determined to set up an economics department. Hainan University is planning an economics department. Recently, Guangdong has approved the establishment of Guangdong Finance and Economics College. Thus, Guangdong will have four economics colleges and two economics departments. If we establish Shenzhen Economics College, there apparently will be too many economics colleges or departments in Guangdong, and it will not be easy to get government support to set up another such college.

The report then turned itself to explaining why the Shenzhen SEZ should build its own university rather than recruit its personnel (*rencai*) from China’s existing universities that were run by provinces or ministries. This practice of having institutions train current or future staff was called *daipei*. The inspection team focused on the “special-ness” of the *rencai* that would be needed by the SEZ and wrote what amounted to an indictment of China’s existing universities:

- The business of the SEZ is highly foreign-related; these enterprises need personnel who know both socialism and capitalism and can handle matters both domestic and foreign-related. This type of *rencai* is difficult to train in common inland institutions, which don’t have foreign-related courses and foreign-related teaching materials, not to mention a place for job practice. Therefore, the SEZ should have its own comprehensive university and train its own people, set up its own courses and edit its own teaching materials. The SEZ and Hong Kong can be the base for job practice and some teachers can be hired from Hong Kong and overseas. The economic nature of the SEZ is varied: a state-run economy, a collective economy, and a combination of the two, as well as private businesses, joint ventures, and a capitalist economy which involves sole foreign investment. In the future the SEZ will become a free market without tariffs. And there is the possibility of a special currency for the SEZ. Some non foreign-related personnel can be trained by inland universities, e.g., doctors and teachers.

- SEZ needs personnel who are ‘occupation-oriented’ which means students take jobs immediately upon graduation. But graduates from inland universities are more theoretical and have few professional skills.
- Adult education is an outstanding task for SEZ education because many cadres and workers badly need further training. It is not practical to send them outside the SEZ for training since most will study on a part-time basis.
- Research on foreign-related issues is an important task of SEZ construction. The SEZ foreign-related work concerns complicated struggles, and the nature of these struggles is similar to the struggle between capitalism and socialism. It is important for us to study the capitalism of Hong Kong and foreign countries. [Using an idiom from Sun Zi’s *Art of War*] ‘If you know yourself and your enemy, you are invincible.’ Research work should be done by higher education institutions. It is very necessary for the SEZ to have a comprehensive university.
- The development of the SEZ is at a rapid speed, and eventually it will need all sorts of personnel. If eventually the zone will need to train these, why not be comprehensive from the very beginning? A comprehensive university will help improve the local culture and education.

The expert group of policy advisors developed a quite detailed vision of the future SZU. Students would be drawn from province-wide recruitment; upon graduation they would be expected to work in Shenzhen or other SEZs. The group drew a picture of a school that would encompass multiple types of education: regular undergraduate, adult education, and correspondence, with long- and short-term programs in various subjects. The experts suggested that a *zhuanke* certificate programs be initiated first, followed by degree-awarding *benke* programs. The setting of majors should be based on the needs of the SEZ; SZU should not mimic patterns used by inland universities. SZU’s majors should be unique; for common majors, inland universities could train SEZ *rencai* through *daipei*. Using the terms “long-thread” and “short-thread” to differentiate between theoretical- and practical-oriented education, the advisors recommended the latter, going so far as to say that SZU should offer only foreign-related or short-thread courses. Foundation study in arts and sciences could be offered, but majors in those disciplines should not be available. The team envisioned a campus located close to downtown Shenzhen, serving mostly commuters from Shenzhen, with accommodation and food services handled by organizations from outside the university. The province would oversee SZU’s academics; other areas would

be handled by Shenzhen municipality, which would be responsible for funding the university.

Finally, the inspection team saw a bright future for Shenzhen University, which could tap support from Hong Kong and overseas. It was labeled an “experimental school” that would benefit not only the SEZ but also China’s educational system by offering an “experience in educational reform.” It stressed that favorable conditions then existed at the three key levels of government: municipal, provincial and central government. Implicit in this suggestion was that Shenzhen should act immediately if it wanted to build a university.

Table 1.3: Planned/actual major setting¹²

major	year to be initiated	actual initiation
foreign trade	'84 -'86	'83
finance	'83	'83
tourist economy	'84 -'86	-
English	'83	'83
law	'83	'83
fine arts [Chinese]	'84 -'86	'84
petroleum chemistry	'87	-
planning and statistics	'84 -'86	-
industrial economic management	'83	'83
commercial economic management	'83	'83
industrial finance and accounting	'84 -'86	'85
commercial finance and accounting	'84 -'86	'85
electronics technology or electronic components	'87	'84
architectural material engineering	'87	'83
food processing technology [chemistry]	'87	'86
industrial enterprise management engineering	'87	'85
mechanical engineering	-	'85
civil engineering	-	'85
physics	-	'85
mathematics	-	'85

Government approval

Within about two months of first receiving the provincial report, Shenzhen formally responded to the province.¹³ The city accepted virtually all the ex-

pert team's recommendations, including them in its own document. Some suggestions were further flushed out. In the opening paragraphs of its response, the municipal government explicitly defined the "principle of SZU to be training advanced personnel in economic management, foreign trade, foreign language, industry, commerce, law, and tourism." The setting of subjects and majors would be determined by the needs of the SEZ. Initially, sixteen majors were to be phased in, so that by 1986 eleven finance and arts majors would be in place; five science majors would be added in 1987 (see Table 1.3, previous page). In addition, research centers were planned in several areas: SEZ economy, world economy, international law, economic law, Hong Kong-Taiwan law, management modernization, science and technology information, and petro-chemistry.

The city document reiterated that the university would be under the dual leadership of province and municipality authorities, with the city providing funding. A campus site was chosen about 25 kilometers away from downtown Shenzhen, in contrast to somewhere in the central city, the type of location recommended by the expert group. SZU would recruit students province-wide and teachers nation-wide. The university would practice the presidential responsibility system under the leadership of the school Party Committee. SZU would train graduates for work in Shenzhen or other economics zones, but the document omitted the possibility that graduates could be employed in inland China, as suggested by the expert group. It alluded to several possible educational reforms, including students finding their own jobs (as opposed to China's job allocation system), a scholarship rather than a stipend system, and the credit system.

In February, Guangdong Province formally requested that the State Council establish SZU.¹⁴ The provincial request, an abbreviated version of the document that Shenzhen had sent to Guangdong, presented a time schedule for funding, which it also included in a separate message to the municipality.¹⁵ In March, confident of central government approval, Guangdong publicly announced its intention to set up SZU.¹⁶ Within two months, on 10 May 1983, The Ministry of Education (MOE, the forerunner of the SEdC) issued a document announcing the State Council's approval of establishing SZU and other universities.¹⁷ As stated in previous documents, classes were to begin in September, then only four months away.

The temporary campus was housed on the site of the Shenzhen radio/television university, which was located in an old section of Shenzhen (near the present-day Diwang twin-tower skyscraper). During the university's first academic year in 1983, the over 200 SZU students used these fa-

cilities, which included a seven-story classroom building. Students lived two or three to a room in a dozen two-story dormitory buildings located about one-half kilometer away. After the university moved to its new campus, the radio/television university buildings were turned over to SZU's Adult Education Department which based its operations there.

The MOE selected Zhang Wei, the first vice-president of Qinghua University in Beijing, to become the founding president of SZU. Zhang Wei shared the aspirations of the provincial investigators. A few weeks after the university opened, Zhang enumerated for a local journalist what he envisioned as SZU's defining characteristics.¹⁸ First, the German-educated scholar preferred broad majors which permitted students to take many optional courses. Practice should be stressed over theory; reduced hours of instruction would allow for an education outside of classroom walls. Second, Zhang did not want to see students initially pigeon-holed into majors or specializations. He preferred broad categories of recruitment (e.g., economics or management rather than commercial enterprise management or industrial enterprise management). Students should be permitted to change departments in the sophomore or junior year. Third, students were to be enrolled for five years, but they would be permitted to graduate early or late. Flexibility would allow arts students to take courses in science, and vice-versa. All students should take foreign language and management courses. Fourth, upon graduation students would find their own jobs; there would be no job assignment (*fenpei* or allocation) of the type experienced by Niu Ye (Story 4). This radical departure from the *fenpei* system that ensured all university graduates of jobs with the State was not mentioned in the inspection team's report, which in fact uses the very term *fenpei*.¹⁹ This proposed innovation was consistent with the belief held by many intellectuals in China that the country needed to break the iron rice bowl (*daguofan*), a term which had come to symbolize the individual's dependency on the state. Zhang Wei's fifth characteristic was also an innovation. Students would no longer receive automatic stipends (*zhu xuejin*, or student helping money), but rather would have to qualify for scholarships (*jiang xuejin*) earned on the basis of performance. The university should be able to provide loans for students who faced financial difficulties; students could take leaves-of-absence and return to continue their studies.

Because of his commitments at Qinghua, Zhang Wei could only be in residence at SZU for several months a year. Most of the work of building the new university fell on the shoulders of Luo Zhengqi, the Party secretary and first vice-president. A graduate of the Qinghua Architecture Depart-

ment, Luo took direct charge over university operations, including supervising the design of the new campus. Lacking support from upper level leaders, however, Luo was removed from office in the wake of events surrounding 4 June 1989, at which time the months-long confrontation between students and government ended in violence at Tiananmen Square, Beijing. The new SZU leadership team that replaced Luo canceled many of his innovations, placing more emphasis on traditional moral/political education. Those leaders—Wei Youhai as president and Wu Zewei as Party secretary—remained in power for about three years. After they departed, their positions were assumed by a single man, Cai Delin, who himself was removed from office in July 1996. Cai resurrected many of Luo's educational reforms while maintaining the political elements that the Wei-Wu team had introduced. The political history of SZU, characterized by politics in charge, has been described in detail elsewhere.²⁰ The present volume, therefore, will focus only on those aspects of administration that relate most directly to the university's principal mission of teaching, learning and research. Suffice it to say that SZU in its first dozen years experienced a series of traumas caused by changing leaders and their policies. These events, over a dozen years, concussed education, negatively impacting quality. The next section, following Story 2, examines the educational policies of SZU's first three administrations.

Story 2: Pioneer Meng Tao

I am from the Class of 1983. In China, the year of your class is the year you enter, rather than the year you graduate. The class of 1983 had only 215 students—the first 215 students at Shenda; we were made to feel very special.

For the first year we lived at the temporary campus located downtown, taking over the buildings that were used for the Radio and Television University. We had lovely accommodations: for the first time in my life I had my own bed. I can never remember a time when I did not share a bed with one of my brothers. Actually, I thought everyone in China shared beds. My parents slept together; Meimei [younger sister] slept with our grandmother; a pair of brothers slept together; and another sister slept with the cat (she often wet her bed and the cat was the only one who did not mind). Fortunately, we had a small family: parents, six children and a grandmother. With only one roommate at Shenda (and no one aside me in bed!), the first few nights were very difficult. Eventually, I got used to the loneliness.

Overall, Shenda was not lonely. The first year was like living with a big family. We knew everyone by name, and we even knew all the romances between students. We often saw the President, Luo Zhengqi, eating in the canteen. Actually, President Luo was only a vice-president the first year, but we all knew he was the one really running the school. He often asked us what we liked and what we disliked. You could say anything to him; he was like a favorite uncle.

Even before we took our first class on the temporary campus, we were driven by bus to the new campus. Well, not exactly a campus; more like an abandoned farm with a lot of dead fruit trees. It was in the middle of nowhere. It really smelled bad. One area of the campus was a huge graveyard. We were not impressed, until President Luo gave us a tour and told us where the buildings would go. He was so enthusiastic; he made the abandoned farm come alive. He described a beautiful, grassy campus with reflecting pools and a dozen places to eat. With the mountains behind and the sea in front, the new buildings would definitely have good fengshui [literally, wind water]. Fengshui is an ancient Chinese art that ensures buildings are built in accord with nature. There are stories about architects in Hong Kong having to hire fengshui masters to help them redesign skyscrapers because no business wants to rent an office that offers bad

fengshui. Luo, of course, did not mention fengshui, which is not officially condoned (and often condemned as superstition) in the People's Republic. But everyone knows the importance of fengshui; we do not need to talk about it.

Why did I choose Shenda? Well, to be honest, I was not accepted by any of the schools I listed as my first choices. My primary and secondary schooling was not very good. I can cite you chapter and verse from the quotations of Chairman Mao, but by the time I took the college entrance examination, other subjects, like Chinese, mathematics and physics, had become more important. My score was not very high; but I wanted to go somewhere to college. Shenda gave me a chance. I did not know much about Shenda. My teachers read to us the school's introduction and encouraged us to list it as our last choice. I had heard about Shenzhen which was supposed to be like Hong Kong, Singapore or Taipei [Taipei, Taiwan]; I knew that the economic zones were China's future. You might say that I came to Shenzhen, rather than Shenda. Shenda was just a way to get to Shenzhen.

My family is of average wealth, in other words, poor. In my early years I remember living on a collective farm. I would work in the fields with my baby sister strapped to my back. Now, my father has a good job with the railroad as a night watchman, but they still have a lot of mouths to feed. My father had borrowed money from the railway so I could have the first semester's tuition (¥25) and accommodation fees (¥5), and almost ¥100 for food and books. But I went to Shenda not knowing how I would even pay for the next semester or how I would ever pay my father back. Obviously, the school understood our money problems, and almost from the beginning, we had many opportunities for making money. We went to the site of the future campus on weekends, and we were paid ¥1 for every tree we planted. Even the girls could plant at least ten trees per visit; the strongest boy planted 35 during a single visit and had his picture taken with President Luo. (He is now a millionaire in Shenzhen). Another job at the new campus involved digging a lake. We were paid ¥4 for two hours' work. At different times, I worked both as a security guard (¥60 per month for several hours a night) and as a toilet cleaner (¥30 per month, for an hour a day). This taught me that nothing is free in the New China, but that if you work hard, you can get ahead.

I studied business at Shenda. Because of my poor foundation, I had to study hard. Most of my teachers were temporarily employed, and they did not stay many years at Shenda. I entered Shenda expecting the college ex-

perience to last five years, but the rules were changed so that all students, except for those in Architecture, studied for only four years. We were supposed to graduate in 1988, but actually our diploma is dated December 1987. From summer 1987, however, almost all of us had full-time jobs. We were encouraged to have job practice before we actually graduated. I started working for a large state-run company. After five years there, I set up my own toy export business. I employ just one other person, but with hard work I have managed to create a good, small company. My wife works for a state company, and together we have been able to buy a flat. My company owns a car and a mobile phone. I am just an average business success. Shenda gave me a chance; for that I will be eternally grateful. By the way, after my first semester I reimbursed my father ¥150 when I returned home for Spring Festival. That feeling of personal success, doing honor to my family, I shall never forget.

Changing educational policies

Policies on educational structure as well as on teacher and student management and curriculum changed at SZU from administration to administration. Luo Zhengqi, who formally became SZU president on 17 March 1987, had a very clear vision of the type of educational institution SZU should develop into, and he had definite ideas on how to achieve this vision, painted with broad strokes: student and faculty participation and self-management, Party integration, an open management style, and an institutional focus on students. It was these elements, as much as specific reforms—no job allocation, a credit system, student work-study—that characterized his tenure. His successors, the Wei-Wu team, considered almost all of Luo's policies to be problematic. Many of his systems were altogether abandoned; others were put on hiatus, to be partly resurrected by Cai Delin, who replaced Wei-Wu. Over these periods of reform and rectification, students and teachers were sometimes notified in advance of policy changes; most often they were not. These policy about-faces helped create a university in the state of turmoil.

Luo's focus on students

That SZU should focus on students might seem patently obvious to an observer not familiar with China's educational cosmos. In fact, one might argue that Chinese universities do not focus on students. In one view, students provide only the *raison d'être* and rationale for operating the school. In other words, students are the justification for having universities. Institutions of higher learning are necessary for China's modernization. Graduates who serve the motherland are part of the process of developing China into a world economic and political power. If China could develop in this direction without higher education, it might well do so! Indeed, alternative forms of education have been tried since 1949, most notably education through labor. In the Cultural Revolution the intellectual élite was disparaged; according to the view of that time, education should not elevate one's status; to the contrary, intellectuals—anyone with a secondary education or above—were considered the “stinking ninth group.” Today, higher education affects only a small portion of the Chinese population; even if correspondence courses and distance learning through radio and television are taken into account, under 5% of the Chinese people experience post-secondary education (compared to over 30% in the U.S). Another view that supports the belief that Chinese

universities do not focus on students argues that universities in China are more concerned about their employees than students. The students serve merely as a justification for running an institution that provides public sector employment and welfare. The old joke that schools in China have more employees than students is only a slight exaggeration. Even today, after nearly two decades of educational reforms geared at improving efficiency, staff-student ratios in China are at least double their counterpart statistics in other countries.

Luo Zhengqi firmly believed that the entire university should serve its students.²¹ He referred to Zhang Guangdou, a vice-president from Qinghua, who had once said: “students are the ones who give me food and clothes.” According to Luo,

all the sub-systems of a university should begin and end with students. This is clear for primary and secondary schools, but not for universities. The staff and families often outnumber students by several times. A lot of systems are self-service, taking care of themselves: eating, drinking, going to the toilet. A smaller proportion of school energy goes to students; new buildings and departments are not for students.

Luo’s views were not shared by many staff and teachers in the SZU community, who felt that they, themselves, should be the focus of the university. Luo addressed these concerns:²²

Some argue that putting the student as the central focus degrades the teachers’ position. They think the students are masters and teachers become only servants—that students become emperors. We emphasize that students are the main focus and teachers are the main guides. Students, teachers and staff are all masters of the school.

Luo’s beliefs were reflected in the motto of the university located in a footprint-shaped relief in the lobby of the administration building: *zili, zilü, ziqiang*, self-autonomy, self-discipline, self-strengthening. The Three Selves philosophy was the foundation for student management and the basis of learning. Students through their organizations governed and disciplined themselves. Students, alone, determined whether they attended classes. Students were permitted to skip classes, study on their own, and take the final exam of a course.

Counseling center

Three years after SZU's founding, the Student Psychological Counseling Center (*xuesheng xinli yu xingwei zhidao*) was set up.²³ Fifteen teachers of various ranks and from a wide spectrum of disciplines worked as part-time counselors; all conversations with students were held confidential. The center also gave 978 students admitted in 1987 and 1988 international questionnaires that led to compiling personality profiles.²⁴ These tests were also confidential and were not included in the dossiers (*dangan*) that would accompany the students to their work-units. (For *dangan* purposes, universities such as SZU are considered the students' work-units.) Students were given access to their personality profiles and were supposed to be able to keep them upon graduation. According to the Counseling Center, the tests on 1988 freshmen showed a "better" psychological quality (meaning bolder and with a strong pioneering spirit) than in the previous year.²⁵ The center's analysis found that two students had abnormal behavior and that 58 students inclined toward abnormal psychology, evidencing either an inferiority complex, manic depression, or anti-social behavior; 18 inclined toward aggressive behavior as manifested in attacks on others. Therapy was started for ten students. Over 1988, individual consultations were given to 485 students.

The amateur counselors imparted mostly common sense advice and served as people whom the students could talk to. Most students sought advice on interpersonal relationships, especially in matters involving parents and significant others. For example, one female student came to the center distraught over the fact that her parents were not getting along. The counselor advised her to ignore her parents and suggested that the student live her own life. Another reported case involved a group of women who alleged that a certain male student was harassing them. This matter was investigated by the Students' Self-Disciplinary Committee. On his own, the male student went to the Counseling Center where he received advice. He was told that although his desires were quite natural, his patterns were neither suitable nor legal. He was given reading material, and several days later the center arranged for him to meet with representatives of the female students. He apologized for his behavior, and the girls forgave him.²⁶

In general, students were made responsible for their own performances. SZU was the first university in China to cancel automatic subsidies and replace this form of "iron rice bowl" with a scholarship system. Students received scholarships based on their individual academic achievement. Students with a grade point average (GPA) over 85 (out of 100%) and who

ranked in the top 3% of their major and grade received a first grade scholarship, which translated as ¥100 per month. Lower scholarships provided less money, with about half the students at any one time receiving merit-based awards.

Work-study program

Part of Luo Zhengqi's educational philosophy concerned the university's full participation in society. Grounded in the discipline of architecture, Luo saw education as practical and shared the general view in China that schooling should benefit the collective; benefits to individuals were secondary. The attempt to have the school serve society took several forms. The setting of majors and the curriculum at large served the needs of the SEZ. While studying at the university, students took part-time jobs, something which exposed them to the real world. The university itself ran factories and enterprises that produced goods and services for both export and domestic use. And the university's major output—its graduates—was to serve society when these *rencai* entered the workforce.

Work-study allowed full-time *benke* students to take part-time campus jobs in their spare time. Night school students in the part-time *zhuanke* program were able to take day-time jobs on campus. University officials were pleased with work-study because it yielded a “double harvest” for students. They learned skills and acquired on-the-job experience, and they put what they had learned in the classroom to practical use on the job. The work-study program served as a bridge between academia and society. Students could leave the “ivory pagoda” and learn about the real world. Luo Zhengqi, himself, considered the work-study program to be one of the university's most important reforms.²⁷

Indeed, one of the well-publicized, defining features of pre-1989 SZU was its work-study program.²⁸ Combining work with study had existed in China before 1949, but then it had disappeared. Work-study at SZU was initiated for very practical purposes. In the early 1980s, almost all SZU students (like Wang and Meng in Stories 1 and 2) were poor and needed ways to earn money for living expenses and to pay the costs of their education. Luo used the Cantonese colloquialism “looking for food” to describe this aspect of work-study. Second, the new university had a lot of jobs that required workers, but it did not want to be saddled with excessive permanent employees (called “fixed staff”) and their families. Generally, a Chinese work-unit takes care of not only its employees but their entire families, by

Box 1.1: Xu Jiyang, student/manager²⁹

I manage a hostel of four floors, 48 rooms and 21 staff. I am a 1985 freshman, majoring in Mechanical Engineering. I used to be a spoiled daughter; I did not even wash my own clothes. Now, in order to get familiar with hotel management, I've learned to make beds, wash windows, mop floors, and clean toilets. I used to be willful; now I have to learn to smile at guests even those who nit-pick my work. Even when I am scolded I have to be pleasant. My staff includes both benke and zhuanke students. Most benke students are girls who come to work in the afternoon. Zhuanke are all boys who work in the morning. These men are less easy to get along with. When I try to be strict with them, they complain I am nit-picking. One day, their foreman formally approached me, wondering if I was going to fire them. I told them they would have to meet my strict requirements. They asked: 'What is your standard? What can we do to satisfy you?' I said: 'Don't expect me to be satisfied. I will never be satisfied unless I am no longer the manager.' 'Then give us a model room,' they demanded. I told them: 'I must admit that I cannot do better than you in tidying the rooms. I have a standard of the model room but I cannot do it myself. I am there to manage. The school leaders cannot do better than you, but they want better. They are stricter than even me.'

providing them housing and welfare benefits. Spouses and children of employees are often hired in positions created just for them. To use students as temporary employees would thus ease the school's long-run financial burden. Third, work-study was considered a "minor area" from which to initiate other reforms; it could proceed quickly because it generated little opposition. It served as a prototype to prove how reforms could start small and mature into new, workable systems. In providing students a source of income, its very existence helped mitigate the need for a stipend system characterized by automatic distribution. In this way, a little reform led to a bigger improvement. Work-study was considered an ideal prototype because it combined other systems: teaching, ideology, management. After just a few months in operation, it became obvious to the school leadership that work-study was about more than just "looking for food." It served as a "second classroom," teaching students to be independent and not to be parasites. It was adopted as a formal part of the curriculum; students earned academic credits for their work.

The part-time work program served Luo's main thesis that a university should be about students and that all staff should support the training of students, who in turn serve society's needs. Administrative and support staff would be in constant contact with students who worked part-time in their

offices and work-units. In contrast, in most Chinese universities non-teaching staff rarely interacted with students. Most staff were less educated than students; the two groups had little in common, and they were not exposed to each other in the work place. Given their very different educational levels, they often could not work together on tasks to pursue common objectives. Having SZU students interact with less-educated staff would give them useful experience for the real world.

According to Luo, part-time jobs helped point out some short-comings of SZU's education. Students lacked sufficient training for jobs. Their moral education was abstract and not linked to reality; it did not adequately teach behavior and work ethics. Their understanding of economic concepts was vague; often concern over finance was considered to be only money-worshipping. There was an absence of leadership and management training; students were not always able to handle interpersonal relations. SZU's experience with part-time jobs led the school to strengthen these weak areas. Students developed more responsible attitudes in their jobs and accepted the consequences of their mistakes. Even those holding high positions could be punished. The chair of the Student Union, for example, got into a fist fight with other students and was punished by the Student Self-disciplinary Committee. An editor of a student newspaper also got into a fight and was fired from his job. Later, he took a job cleaning the teachers' dormitory area.³⁰ The system of part-time work permitted students to take risks and make mistakes. Students ran many of the school's businesses: the bookstore, laundry, post office, bank, hotels. For some this activity cut into study, although *benke* students were not supposed to work more than 12 hours per week and part-time *zhuanke* students were limited to 6 hours per workday. In Luo's view, part-time work did not usually compete with study. He used the comparison of a store increasing its product line. "Carrying hardware does not hurt grocery sales." In some cases, students who were busy being managers lost their academic-based scholarships. "But should we cancel a course just because some students fail it?" Luo asked. "Having several classrooms (traditional instruction, part-time jobs, extra-curricular activities) allows one to make up for the short-comings of another."

Another benefit from work-study was that students developed pride in work and acquired a sense of humility. Work-study was the ideological opposite of the "iron-rice bowl," in which payment was guaranteed, regardless of productivity. In the early years of SZU, virtually all students held part-time jobs sometime during their university experience. Some became reluctant to accept money from their parents, preferring an income from their

part-time jobs which gave them a sense of self-independence and the feeling of being a full adult (see Story 2).³¹ In its early years, SZU received municipal funds earmarked as ¥7 per student monthly subsidy, an amount that would have at the time covered tuition and room costs. The university, instead, put this money towards scholarships and work-study payments, a decision that student leaders had supported.³² Payment in work-study was earned, often at jobs that were less than glamorous. Underclassmen/women took jobs involving manual labor, such as cleaning toilets, mopping classrooms and removing rubbish. They were not provided uniforms or even given adequate tools. Still, they took pride in their work. Luo recounted the story of once visiting the toilet when a student was cleaning it. The student showed visible embarrassment. Several weeks later, the student was no longer embarrassed. Once Luo received a list of suggestions from a student, who signed it “the cleaner of a certain dorm area.” Senior students often took jobs in offices or enterprises. Some job selection involved competition. When the university set up a student laundry, for example, it accepted proposals and allowed students to compete with one another.

Flexibility in Education

Luo adopted and expanded upon the liberal educational policies of his predecessor, Zhang Wei.³³ The university used the credit system, and students were allowed to graduate early as soon as they earned enough credits to meet graduation requirements.³⁴ Students who did not earn sufficient credits to graduate within four years were permitted to remain another year as fee-paying students; or they could choose to take a completion certificate (*jie ye zheng*), but not a diploma. Then, while employed, they could study by themselves, pass the exams, and get a diploma.

Students, as in other universities in China, were admitted to SZU by major. After completing their first year, however, SZU students could apply to change majors, with the approval of both departments if departments were also changed. SZU was probably the first university in China to permit changes in major, as Chinese institutions of higher education generally adhered to the European system which was less flexible in these regards than its North American counterpart (or more disciplined depending on point of view).

Starting with the class that entered in 1987, students were permitted to take double degrees if they met certain requirements by their third year—an accumulated GPA of at least 80 (on a 100% scale), credits within the first

major that exceeded the requirement, and two recommendation letters from teachers ranked lecturer or above. A student who strove to take a second degree but failed to acquire sufficient credits could convert the intended second degree into a minor, or could take an extra year to obtain the second degree.

Attendance was required for courses with much practice, such as laboratories, military training, physical education, computing, design, foreign language basics and social investigation. Students who were absent from these courses more than one-third of the time were to fail the course. Other courses did not have mandatory attendance. The Luo administration also encouraged departments to offer self-study courses, based on reading lists and periodic group discussions. Teachers were permitted to exempt students from courses, upon request, or allow students to “test out” of a course by passing an exam within a month of the beginning of the course. Thus, in this way some students were able to graduate in three rather than four years by studying over the vacations and passing exams that allowed for exemptions.

The academic system included a set of rewards and punishments.³⁵ Merit-based scholarships accompanied individual ¥100 awards given for particular subjects or achievements. The top graduates in every department received a ¥200 gift, and anyone who graduated early also received ¥200. Punishments included academic probation, the result of a failing GPA (below 60), too few accumulated credits, or failing three or more courses. Students faced expulsion if their GPA for the semester was below 44. Under some conditions, students who failed courses were permitted to take make-up exams. Only one make-up was given for required courses. No make-ups were allowed for students who failed over three courses in a semester, had a GPA below 40 for the semester, failed to attend the exam without a proper excuse, or were caught cheating.

An expansive view of education

Formal education in China in one sense is comprehensive. It is often described as a three-part system that addresses the intellectual, moral and physical needs of students. (Students who excel in each area are known as Three Good students). Luo subscribed to this expansive view of education and further developed it. He believed SZU should include Three Classrooms as opposed to the Five Ones.³⁶ The first classroom, of course, was the traditional classroom. The second classroom (*di er ketang*) consisted of part-time jobs, and in many ways it was considered more useful and more important

than the first classroom, which was still plagued by ineffective pedagogy—where much time was wasted in useless meetings and ideological studies. The third classroom consisted of student extracurricular activities, including clubs and voluntary societies, as well as self-management organs of student government.

SZU itself included more than just teaching and research. There were various school-run enterprises on campus that earned money for the school. Some students worked in these units, which provided them real life work experiences. One student's story appears in Box 1.1. The enterprises provided a major source of revenue without which the university would have had run annual deficits since it always overspent city-allocated funds.

Consistent with SZU's opposition to the iron ricebowl mode of operation was the policy that departments should learn to take care of themselves. Teachers and staff were encouraged to run side-businesses so they would become less dependent on hand-outs from the university, which itself depended on subsidies from the city government.

Rectification under Wei-Wu

Luo's successors, Wei Youhai and Wu Ziwei, found abhorrent his policy of the Three Selves—self-independence, self-discipline, self-strengthening. The new administration found this attitude irresponsible on the part of the university; it closed the Psychological Counseling Center. In its place, it established a network of political tutors and conducted annual “learn from Lei Feng” exercises, in which the life of the model soldier made famous by Mao Zedong was studied. This education, along with tightened discipline, produced positive results as measured by number of disciplinary cases. More students were punished in 1990 than in previous years; the next year the number of disciplinary cases decreased (presumably as the result of better behavior rather than weaker enforcement), and no students had to be punished.

Dorm management

Regulations on student dorm management, as first promulgated in 1987, had presented general guidelines such as instructing students not to rent out their rooms or entertain overnight visitors (Persons of the opposite sex were not allowed to stay past 11 p.m.).³⁷ In addressing slack dorm discipline, the Luo administration issued regulations in 1988 that identified possible dorm violations and established five levels of punishment.³⁸ The mildest punishment

was a warning, followed by a negative notation (bad record—BR), a severe negative notation (big bad record—BBR), probation and finally expulsion. Punishments by 1988 categories appear in Box 1.2. As far back as 1986, the Luo administration had recognized a deterioration of campus study atmosphere (*xue feng*). This concern continued through the remainder Luo's tenure, but it is impossible to assess what effect, if any, the 1988 regulations had on improving study atmosphere, given that Tiananmen changed administrations, rules and attitudes.

Regulations introduced by the Wei-Wu team within months after they arrived on campus in 1989 attempted to strengthen the existing rules by specifying monetary penalties for violations, in other words hitting problem students where it would be felt—in the pocket book.³⁹ Penalties generally reflected a ranking of misbehavior in terms of severity consistent with the Luo administration's view, except that one area—sleep-overs with the opposite sex—commanded harsher penalties. In addition to fines, a point-deducting system was employed, as presented in Box 1.3, so that the basic scholarship (¥30/month) would be canceled for students whose point total exceeded 20. This system largely replaced the work of the Student Self-disciplinary Committee, whose status became unclear after Wei-Wu took over, and its members were allowed to act as a sort of vigilante group. More offenses were added to the 1989 list, including gang fighting (BBR or expulsion), noise after midnight (warning), taking advantage of power/water failures to initiate a riot, smashing bottles or starting fires (BR or above), smuggling and marketing forbidden commodities (Public Security notified), prostitution or rape (expulsion or sent to Public Security). Eating in a restaurant and refusing to pay, *bawanfan* or general rice, a practice that exempts leaders from paying for food, earned a BBR.⁴⁰

Box 1.2: 1988 punishable offenses under Luo Zhengqi⁴¹

Fighting: All fighters get at least a warning; those providing weapons get warnings; initiators get bad records (BR). If a fighter enters in the name of stopping the fight but is in fact taking sides and makes the fight more serious, s/he gets a BR. If fighters are drunk and hurt others, BR; fight with weapons, big bad record (BBR); injuring others seriously or cause handicaps gets BBR; serious fights even earn more serious punishments.

Thefts or financial crimes: if under ¥50, warning; ¥50-100, BR; ¥100-200, BBR; ¥200-300, probation; over ¥500, Public Security is informed. For corruption or embezzlement, under ¥100, BR; ¥100-300 BBR; ¥300-500 probation; above ¥500, Public Security is informed. In the event of looting or taking advantage of catastrophe, like a fire, BBR or worse.

Damage to public or private property: If damage is by mistake, offender is criticized by public announcement and if serious, must repay and get warning or BR. If damage is on purpose, must repay and gets BBR; if purposeful and it hurts others, get BBR or worse.

Gambling: first offense, warning; repeatedly, BR or BBR; a gambling organizer gets BBR; all gambling equipment confiscated.

Obscene material: for distributing, copying or reading pornography or viewing pornographic videos: first offense, warning; several times, BR, BBR. If pornography is profit-making, probation or worse; all literature is confiscated.

Unauthorized habitation: violators are fined and driven out; providers of housing are punished by warning or BR.

Sexual impropriety: cohabitation or unlawful sexual behavior, probation; messy sexually obsession (*yin luan*) [an imprecise term that might include just about anything except vaginal sex between a married couple], probation or above.

Property crimes: violations that result in property damage, medical charges, days off job, traveling or nutrition expenses are shared by violators, with proportions corresponding to responsibilities. Damage must be repaid. For fencing property, BR, BBR or probation. All income is confiscated; if owner is unknown, value of fenced property goes to the student activity fund.

Cheating: if by oneself, BR; if helping others or substitute test-taking, BBR. All cheaters get zeros in the course, with no make-up exam given.

Obstruction of justice/character defamation/false testimony: if one interferes or attempts to stop staff from carrying out their duties (*fangai zhixing gongwu*), warning, BR, or BBR. Slander, rumor or humiliation against others, warning, BR. Deceit to protect others, like providing false alibi, warning, BR.

Box 1.3: 1989 penalties for dormitory violations⁴²

offense	fine	point loss	remarks
changing rooms without permission	¥20	5	name publicized
letting others bed down in room	¥20/day	2/day	
renting room out	¥50	10	denied right to live on campus
structural changes to room or furniture		3	publicize name in department
damage to dorm property	¥10	2	reimburse repair costs
purposeful damage to dorm property	¥50-100	5	serious warning
posting bills or dirtying wall/ceilings	¥10	1	must pay repair costs
spitting or discharging waste water/ rubbish from windows/balcony	¥10	3	if jettisons hurt others, responsible for medical charges.
if act/ intend to create a riot	¥100	10	warning.
Blocking sewerage pipe with rubbish	¥10	2	reimburse repair charges.
guests linger after 10 p.m. curfew			repeated violations get more serious punishment.
staying out overnight without permission			1 point per violation
returning after lights-out		½	after first time, 1 point
a person of opposite sex stays overnight	¥200	20	additional penalty of probation or expulsion possible if more serious
same sex overnight visitors without permission	¥50	5	publicized on campus and serious warning;
gambling in dorm			penalty unspecified
overuse electricity and water			pay double charge; 1point loss if waste purposeful
insult, curse or beat up dorm managers	¥50	5	
taking revenge on those who report violations		10	additional penalties possible

Student behavior changed, but probably not because of these rules. The dorms had never been places for solitude or contemplation. Students believed those purposes to be the library's. The dorms, instead, were for relaxation and letting off steam. They were noisy, but a description written by a Wu associate probably exaggerated the situation.⁴³

In the past SZU students could freely choose roommates, regardless of class, major or year. Therefore, students drank and sang late into the night and played mahjongg all night long. Some students stayed in bed until the sun was high in the sky. Even students of different sex stayed together overnight.

In any case, dorms in 1990 became quieter at night, and their exterior perimeters gathered less rubbish. The other problems addressed in the new regulations had not existed to any great degree. For example, few students (at least until the 1990s) had had sexual experiences, nor did they habitually "insult, curse or beat up dorm managers." Defacing the dorms was not widespread, either. Ironically, damage did not occur until students were forced to change rooms in adherence to a new 1990 policy that required them to room together as a unit by department, year and class. Previously, the selection of roommates was not restricted to one's own classmates. The 1990 forced relocations angered many students, who damaged the rooms they were leaving by breaking windows, yanking out wiring, jamming door locks, and disassembling furniture. Repairs cost the university over ¥170,000, a loss that Wu attributed to Luo's lax ideological education.⁴⁴ Room relocations the next year were closely supervised; no excessive damage was reported.

Psychological counseling center closed

No public reasons were ever given for closing the Psychological Counseling Center. Informants report that the new school leaders suspected that members of the amateur counselors team had been "black hands" behind the student demonstrations in May. These charges were informally investigated, but no evidence ever surfaced that proved the suspicions valid. Nevertheless, the center was closed at the opening of the 1989 fall term. Department heads were informed that students who needed counseling should be handled by their assigned political tutors. Individual departments were thus made responsible for the psychological health of their students. Political tutors were usually recent college graduates. They were untrained for dealing with others' problems, but unlike the amateur counseling team, the young political

tutors lacked life experiences to guide them as counselors. Ironically, as SZU disengaged from centralized counseling, other Chinese universities were beginning to realize the importance of structured-in counseling for students.

College students everywhere in the world are at a transitional point in life, but Chinese college students in recent years have faced even greater worries about their futures, for they feel they cannot foresee China's future in the rapidly changing environment that engulfs them. The closure of the Counseling Center meant that SZU's students had few places to turn to for advice. Students were reluctant to approach their teachers with their own personal problems. In primary and secondary school, teachers enjoy close bonds with students that sometimes last a lifetime. In many Chinese universities, the teacher-student relationship is a solid one that lasts many years. This, however, was generally not the case at SZU. By 1990 the separation between teacher and student was rather firm. Students rarely visited with teachers outside the classroom. In the early years of the university, teachers would invite whole classes to their homes or out for a meal. As the school got older, however, teachers became more concerned with their own personal finances. They stopped pursuing academic interests and started to improve their quality of life through part-time and second jobs. Some students turned to their overseas teachers, especially on issues of emigration, religious faith and romance; but in most cases students could find few channels of help.

The national trauma that occurred in spring 1989 left an especially profound effect on university communities around China. Only seldom, if at all, were the events of that time written about in the Chinese press in an objective way; discussions almost never deviated from the official line. Media remarks had a tone of propaganda, not analysis. Chinese newspapers and magazines in their entirety are state-supervised. Generally, higher authorities do not micro-manage publications; rather, editors sift through upper-level policy documents as they attempt to discern the constraints they should operate under. When journalists err, penalties are severe. Sometimes, newspapers are closed, as was the case in the 1980s in both Shenzhen and Shekou (the special industrial zone closest to SZU).⁴⁵ This has reinforced a degree of self-censorship which is just as insidious to freedom-of-the-press as state-imposed censorship.

Students, in the weeks and months after Tiananmen had nowhere "safe" to express their ideas and explore their feelings. According to a perceptive report in the *Los Angeles Times* six months after 4 June, students in Beijing evidenced quiet defiance or open despair; some went in pursuit of a way out.⁴⁶ Intimidated by a government for which they had lost respect, politi-

cized students turned cynical. The *Times* article recounted a commonly heard witticism that classified three kinds of college students: the dancers, who spend all their time looking for lovers; the mahjongg players, who have given up hope of doing anything significant with their lives; and the English-studiers, who dream only of going abroad. This pattern generally fit SZU. Few SZU students were ever very politicized, as most put their faith in money, not politics. Love affairs (mostly platonic until the 1990s) was a major recreational pursuit, with about half of the students paired off in relationships by the time of graduation. Many students were business-oriented and looked for futures that could make them rich. Others put effort into emigrating. Precise figures are not available, but an estimated 10-20% of SZU students and teachers have left China for a life abroad. In sum, a confidential counseling service that operated after June 1989 may well have continued to provide students a venue for dealing with psychological problems.

Within the four-year period after the Counseling Center was closed, the university community witnessed at least three suicides, two murders, several incidents of mayhem, and two other campus deaths-by-misadventure. Three deaths occurred around 1 October 1991. A female student jumped out of her dorm window after she saw her boyfriend walking hand-in-hand with another female student. In the second incident, a young man who had been drinking fell to his death as he attempted to climb a ladder to get into an upper floor dormitory room. The third incident occurred just after freshmen military training was completed. Prior to Wei-Wu's arrival, military training had been held in a rural location an hour's drive from campus. From 1989, however, freshmen were trained at SZU, with the team from the People's Liberation Army staying on campus with the students. Just after autumn 1991's training had finished, one of the army instructors hanged himself. An investigation concluded that his three-week stay at SZU had sent him into a deep depression. A few years previously, the instructor had himself failed to gain admission to a university; his stay at SZU had made him confront his sense of personal inadequacy. His ultimate solution—to hang himself in the student dormitory—had a sadly ironic twist.

Educational management

Being busy creating a new SZU CCP and developing systems to regulate the campus and the members of the university community left the post-Tiananmen leaders little time to reform education. Educational reforms—

ones that more directly involve teaching and learning than do CCP restructuring or personnel management—took a back seat to the other changes. The major academic reforms of Wei-Wu came in the form of terminating or suspending various systems that Luo Zhengqi had put in place. Some of these abandoned reforms were later reinstated after the Wei-Wu transitional team was retired.

Inflexibility established

Luo's system had permitted a high degree of flexibility. Under lenient conditions, students could change majors, graduate ahead of time or delay graduation. Students were not required to attend most classes. Double majors and double degrees were allowed. Since students could study on their own and get credit for a course by passing the final exam, they could sign up for several courses given at the same time. This allowed some students to register for as many as 60 hours of class a week (tuition was standard, not based on class hours). The philosophy of the Three Classrooms implied that the traditional classroom was not the only source of education for university students. As educational traditionalists, however, Wei-Wu found these policies abhorrent; Luo's reforms were in effect all canceled.⁴⁷ New regulations did not specifically prohibit students from changing majors, but this is what in fact happened as department heads, acting in spontaneous unison, refused to permit changes. The cancellation of double degrees was enforced retroactively so that several dozen students who had enrolled in 1987 and had obtained sufficient credits for double majors or double degrees were denied them when they graduated in 1991. Lengthy regulations affected examinations by instituting numerous detailed changes but offered little of substantive value.⁴⁸ Detailed regulations concerning the postponing of exams were subsequently implemented; a grade of zero was given for incompletes (which could only be changed through an involved process); exam absences were permitted only with medical verification.⁴⁹

Permitting students to skip classes was seen as an anathema by the new administration. In an article published in the university's internal journal and reprinted in the *1989-1990 Yearbook*, the leaders used a pen name when they pointed out the weakened study atmosphere.⁵⁰

SZU's classroom management has always been bad. Students could freely be absent from classes and arrive or leave the classroom freely. Student affairs management has not been serious. If you failed *benke*, you can go to *zhuanke*. If you failed *zhuanke*, you could go to night school. Therefore, there exist

bearded [old] students. Students do not care about grades at all. This time we expelled over 20 students who failed courses, and many students were shocked.

In their first year in office, the Wei-Wu team negated most of Luo's reforms that had directly affected students. In their second year, they promulgated only one regulation that related to *xuefeng*: students were prohibited from taking pagers into classrooms.⁵¹

Closing the second classroom

The Wei-Wu administration did not formally terminate the part-time jobs program. Students, as late as 1991, were still cleaning classrooms at night; but few other jobs were made available. Eventually, no jobs existed, although the work-study program was still on the books. A major "adjustment" to the program prohibited students from becoming managers. The new school leaders forbade students from running school-enterprises under contract.⁵² Thus, the student-run print-shop, laundry, beauty salons, hostels, café, and stores were all turned over to teachers and staff. These enterprises had earned student managers as much as ¥3,000 per month; running them was quite appealing to SZU staff who were themselves looking for part-time jobs to offset the zone's high living costs. The rationale for these policy changes was to eliminate the student attitude of emphasizing business, while neglecting study. Wei-Wu also attempted to rid the students of their money-worshipping philosophy—seeing everything only in terms of money (*yi qie xiang qian kan*).⁵³

Policies under Cai Delin

Cai Delin had been a vice-president at Anhui Daxue in Hefei, the capital of Anhui Province. Arriving at SZU in fall 1991, Cai served as vice-president and deputy Party secretary for a year, during which time he learned how the university operated. When he became president in fall 1992 (he assumed the role of Party secretary in early 1994), he launched Ten Measures of Comprehensive Reform.⁵⁴ These reforms addressed the staff employment system and offered ways to modify the delivery of campus services. An attempt was made to de-emphasize the money-making practices of the various teaching departments while increasing teacher/staff payments from school-run enterprises. Although none of Cai's reforms directly addressed pedagogy, the president proposed to increase foreign exchanges as a way to indirectly im-

prove SZU education. Another measure discussed adjusting majors. It recognized that SZU could not compete with established, inland universities which had been offering and perfecting certain majors over many years. Rather, SZU should have its own majors, such as real estate development, enterprise culture, or tourism. The latter two were offered by the Chinese Department, which had moved away from teaching language, literature and culture.

Another reform measure aimed to enhance competition in teaching and study. This measure marked the partial return to the flexible curriculum setting that had existed in the Luo years, as characterized by double-degrees, early/late graduation, and double majors. Two keys to Luo's policy, however, were never resurrected. Neither changing majors after admission nor receiving credit for part-time jobs was ever reinstated. Cai shared the Wei-Wu view that part-time work was inconsistent with full-time study. In the reform document, Cai specifically mentioned that optional courses "with SEZ characteristics" had been stopped because the teachers involved had not taken them seriously. In fact, optional courses were always relatively unimportant in terms of credits generated. Departments preferred to focus on degree requirements and generally did not provide courses to non-majors, the type of classes that were usually optional courses. Cai's policy was ambiguous on the issue of whether SZU should have the sort of open curricula that characterized American general education or should follow the European (and former Soviet) model that was more geared toward specialization. Cai never confronted these educational issues directly; his credit system reform in 1993 reconfirmed the existing system that preferred specialization to general education. In discussing teaching and study, Cai reprimanded students for lacking a good foundation. "Inland students find it hard to adapt themselves to the workplace, but they have strong foundations; SZU graduates are just the opposite." Specifically, he criticized students' writing abilities. "The calligraphy of most SZU students is horrible," he noted. Student's oral English was very good, he said, but their English writing was below that of their peers in inland universities.

Two other reform measures considered educational issues. One was concerned with improving academic research quality and increasing academic achievements. From 1989 for several years, the research output of SZU faculty had declined dramatically. In attempting to reverse this trend, Cai formulated a policy that would tie promotion more closely to publications. He also established three new research entities that would not have ties to teaching. These included architecture/construction, communica-

tions/electronics, and bio-chemistry. Another of the Ten Measures was concerned with improving adult education. This policy attempted to narrow the quality gap at SZU which existed between regular university education (where students were mostly admitted according to examination scores) and adult education (where students in the various programs were admitted through disparate channels). Cai proposed using the credit system for night school students and expanding regular adult education to include special programs in which *zhuanke* graduates could top off their certificates with more courses, thus achieving a *benke* bachelors degree. Wei-Wu had attempted to rectify adult education by consolidating three course-offering units and ensuring that all certificates had value. They contended, in a report filed with the city in spring 1992, that they had remedied the situation in which “academic merchants” engage in “rampant certificate-giving” in adult education and as well as in side-course that fell outside the state-approved plan.⁵⁵ At that time, the most fragrant abuses had stopped, but the adult education degree was still held in low regard, especially relative to degrees offered at most other institutions. During Cai’s tenure, however, the SZU system began to conform with the China-wide adult education system, in which students had to take standard exams on completion of each subject.

Focus on education

The Ten Measures suggest Cai’s shotgun approach to reform. Cai took aim at a lot of targets, not singling out any one in particular. This approach suited Cai who, unlike some of his predecessors, was not a “detail person.” He preferred to come up with grand-designs which lower levels, in this case departments, were told to implement. With so many irons in the fire and with two months of each year occupied with foreign travel and entertaining incoming delegations, however, Cai had little time to follow-up on his reforms. As time passed, Cai’s speeches began to focus on what he perceived to be his broad achievements. His biography on the SZU homepage summarized his accomplishments.⁵⁶

He has led teachers and students of the whole school to correct and unite teaching principles and to adhere to the principle of ‘teaching is the fundamental aspect of the school.’ SZU should emphasize scientific research and work out a balance between the market economy and educational principles. There should also be an equalization between practical teaching and study and the building of foundation knowledge. We should balance specialization with general education norms, upgrade teaching quality and research levels, and

raise the standard of educational layers and educational training. Cai Delin has made a prominent contribution in building SZU into a first grade special zone university, which trains first grade people; a window university that promotes international, cultural, educational and technological exchange and cooperation; and an experimental university that explores reforms for other Chinese institutions of higher learning.

Cai Delin wanted to be known as the education president of SZU. Luo Zhengqi had been the university's architect; Wei-Wu were its political reformers. Cai's role, as he defined it, was to raise the quality of teaching and learning, by putting additional resources into these areas and by raising teachers' salaries.

1995 SEdC accreditation

Cai's greatest achievement was his success at guiding SZU through an accreditation by the SEdC. In 1995, the central government began an accreditation process in which all universities established in the post-Mao reform period would be closely examined. Some of the 400 institutions in this group were small, with only a few hundred students. Some had been converted from existing teachers colleges or in some cases from high schools. It was these types of institutions, many of them under-resourced by the cities which funded them, that were expected to come under the most intense scrutiny. SZU was placed in the first batch of 100 chosen for evaluation.⁵⁷

There was never much doubt that SZU would get accredited, given the generosity of the Shenzhen government which provided an additional ¥10 million to ensure success. The only possible hitch was the requirement that students were to be tested in select areas. The specific majors/years and subjects to be tested were not supposed to be known until just before the examinations were given. In order for students to prepare for these tests, regular education at SZU was all but suspended for fall semester 1995 so that students could cram for any exam that they might *possibly* be given in November. A week before the exams, an official from the SEdC phoned SZU to inform the university leadership exactly which classes would be tested in which subjects. During the following week, while students who were not to be tested returned to their regular curriculum, students facing tests spent their entire schedules on the subjects on which they were to be examined. They took repeated practice exams and had evening tutorials. Teachers from Mathematics, for example, were required to work overtime tutoring students. Whether students needed this extra attention is unclear;

each group passed the tests, some by wide margins. The university received accreditation.

Student management

Student management became a major concern to Cai Delin, especially after two on-campus murders occurred in spring 1993. These so-called “accidents,” although hardly ever officially mentioned, were in the back of everyone’s minds. In a December 1993 report, Cai noted that an effective student management system had still not been established.⁵⁸ Dorm regulations were often breached, he said, and students were often idle because campus part-time jobs for students—which presumably kept them out-of-trouble—had shrunk because of the employment of temporary workers. In one of the few public mentions of the murders, Cai reported that they had exposed problems and weak links of management and said “this lesson is very painful.” Cai’s bottom line was that problems were the result of loose discipline. Like Wei-Wu, and in contrast to Luo, Cai did not advocate self-discipline. He supported tighter enforcement of regulations.

Punishment regulations

During their final months, Wei-Wu published a detailed set of punishment regulations to supplement those already in existence.⁵⁹ The rules were consistent with Cai’s philosophy that tighter regulations could produce better disciplined students. The new rules abandoned the earlier Wei-Wu approach that had tied offenses to fines and a point system (see Table 2.3). This complicated system had not been enforced, as neither student political tutors nor the pensioners who were hired as dorm guardians were inclined to serve as police and alienate the young men and women who were put under their charge. Luo’s five-stage system of punishments that ranged from warning to expulsion was reinstated, although the categories bad record and big bad record were renamed serious warning and bad record.

New provisions concerning absences, tardiness and student attire were added. Punishments for class absence ranged in severity according to the cumulative total absent hours during a semester: 10-19 hours equaled a warning; 20-29, serious warning; 30-50, bad record; over 50, suspension. Arriving back on campus 2-3 days late after a vacation could result in a warning or serious warning; 4-7 days late meant bad record/probation; and late return over one week called for automatic suspension. Students caught in class three times either barefoot, smoking, or wearing slippers/singlets

were given a warning. Another new clause punished graduates who damaged school property at the time of graduation. This was a direct response to events in 1991. The annual graduation ceremony in mid-June of that year was followed by the traditional lunch-time banquet, at the conclusion of which students—both men and women—showed their contempt for the university administration by breaking several hundred beer bottles on the canteen's cement floor. Hence, the regulations were promulgated in May 1992.

Other items were treated more strictly. Twice breaking the 11:30 p.m. curfew generated a serious warning, compared to 1989 when it earned just ½ penalty point (20 points meant loss of the ¥30 month basic subsidy). Mahjongg—the most popular board game in Southern China—was now prohibited; and mahjongg with gambling resulted in suspension. Renting out the dorm room resulted in a bad record (compared with 10 points previously). Punishments for theft were regrouped, perhaps to reflect inflation. Stealing under ¥100 could result in a serious warning or bad record; ¥100-300, probation; over ¥300 or three incidents, expulsion.

It is uncertain to what extent students generally paid attention to new regulations, or even if they knew about them. Yet, the detailed changes provide insight into the state of mind of the administrators who wrote and approved them. The new rules, for example, took a different view of cheating. The 1988 regulations had differentiated cheating by whether it was done alone (bad record as punishment) or involved a partnership or conspiracy (big bad record). The 1992 regulations also saw cheating as context-related, but here the context became the importance of the test. Cheaters in quizzes received a verbal admonishment; cheating in mid-terms recorded a warning and cheating during final exams earned the violator a bad record. Being caught twice put a cheater on probation.

Comprehensive evaluation of students

One way to improve student management became the comprehensive evaluation of students. From the founding of the university, students completed self-evaluations. This endeavor became more serious after Tiananmen. During SZU's middle years, self-evaluation forms were discussed among an evaluation group of students appointed by department leaders for each class, then reviewed by the political tutor and the department head, and forwarded to the Student Affairs Office. Students were permitted to comment on the reviews. During Cai's tenure the evaluation acquired a high level of detail.⁶⁰ Scores were computed on a 100 point basis (20% for moral quality, 70% of

academics achievements, 10% for physical prowess). Instructions were issued to prevent students from inflating their marks, and the number of points was specified for various activities. Contests that students won at the city level, school level or department level, for example, received 8, 5, and 2 points, respectively. If SZU had awarded a student by publicizing his/her name, 2-5 additional points accrued. An early pass of Band 4 (the province-wide test of English which was a graduation requirement for non-English majors) achieved 3 points; passing the more difficult Band 6 earned 6 points. Good deeds like fighting hooligans, rescue work during a natural disaster, finding and returning property, or helping the handicapped or wounded could result in 1-10 additional points. Conversely, points were deducted for bad deeds. Being criticized by SZU or one of its departments brought a 2-5 point deduction. A Party or Youth League reprimand cost 10 points; a serious warning, 15 points; a bad record, 20 points; probation, 40 points; expulsion from the CCP, 60. Damaging public property resulted in 5-10 points' deduction. Students lost 2 points if they were caught being absent from public activities such as tree-planting or Lei Feng-type activities, but if they belonged to an arts or athletic team they earned 3-5 points. Students with good evaluations were encouraged to show them to prospective employers.

Four keys

Cai attempted to develop the university's academic reputation by constructing Four Keys. These were key courses, key subjects, key labs and key teachers to be trained.⁶¹ The concept of key (*zhongdian*) is found throughout Chinese education. High schools which send large numbers of graduates to college become key high schools, and receive preferential funding by cities. The nomenclature of key primary and junior secondary schools was abandoned by SEdC edit in the early 1980s, although *de facto* key schools still exist at these levels. At the university level, of course, key is an important tag, setting high admission standards. Key institutions receive superior teaching and research facilities that attract the highest quality among the nation's intellectuals. Key status also defines prestige in terms of the way the public recognizes the values of various institutions' diplomas. Degrees from Beijing University or Qinghua University are *ipso facto* the best in China.

The concept of key carries with it an implied degree of stratification. When initially presenting his proposals, Cai admitted, "Since our foundation is weak, only if we get the keys, can we bring up the whole condition." This is a commonly accepted notion in China, a massive country with one-quarter

of the earth's population. It was part of Deng Xiaoping's reform philosophy that some people will get rich before others. It is capsulized in the Chinese idiom: *ti gang xie ling*, which refers to grasping an entirety by first taking the most important part. The idiom specifically relates to grabbing a coat by first hooking its tag. Cai's idea was to identify outstanding teachers as "key teachers for training." They would be given special salaries and book funds and also permitted special study leaves abroad. This proposal coincided with Cai's policies to upgrade all teachers' salaries and his regulations that permitted most teachers to travel abroad for conferences or research. All teachers were better off; some were just becoming more better off than others.

At the department level, Cai suggested that certain "fist" (*quan tou*, an old fashioned term) majors, fist subjects and fist courses be identified. They were to receive special attention and special departmental allocations, which totaled ¥250,000 (US \$43,000) in 1993. The best teachers were to be assigned to teach them. SZU identified key courses in each department and sought eventual provincial recognition of the quality of these courses. The improvement of teaching was also tied to these key courses.

International exchange

SZU's reputation, it was widely believed, would be enhanced by international exchange. Since 1986 SZU had had a relationship with Lancashire Polytech, which in the 1990s became known as University of Central Lancashire, when the U.K. upgraded polytechnic institutions to university status. About a half dozen students and teachers had gone to Lancashire for research or study; all emigrated from China. SZU had faculty or student exchanges with other schools, including Manchester University (U.K.) and Kumamoto University of Commerce (Japan), but most of the over 30 cooperation agreements did not result in exchanges of students or faculty. Generally, cooperation first involved the exchange of visiting delegations of leaders. Cai continued President Wei's goal of expanding international exchanges, which emphasized delegation travel. In 1992-93, cooperation agreements were signed with 16 foreign institutions. During the same period SZU received 2,400 visitors from abroad, most of whom were given campus tours by the Foreign Affairs Office. In addition, several major exchange programs were embarked upon. They resulted in several dozen students going from SZU to Edmonds Community College, Seattle, and to Lancashire. Another large-scale "twinning program" involved Victoria University of

Technology, in Melbourne. These and other exchange programs are evaluated in a later chapter.

Concluding thoughts

Over its first dozen years, SZU experienced abrupt changes in educational policies as each administration attempted to put its stamp on the university. Given the university's political dynamics, SZU lacked a consistent educational policy with a clearly defined focus. This often led to confusion among students and staff, and many in the university community became alienated. Take students, for example. Several of the first students I taught, in the Foreign Language Department in 1988, were interested in taking courses in other departments in order to pursue a well-rounded education as well as to acquire special knowledge. Luo's policy allowed them to do this. The students I taught five years later, however, had all but given up trying to take many courses in other departments. The policies had changed every semester since they had entered the university. Just to get enrolled in a course could involve several hours of chasing down signatures on the requisite forms. Some students felt that the only way they could avoid the red tape was to give gifts to teachers as a way of encouraging them to streamline the bureaucracy. Most students, however, threw in the towel and stuck with courses in their own major. Policies on teacher promotion often changed, also. From one year to the next, there was little consistency in the number or type of publications required for promotion. At least one teacher who had been denied a promotion one year decided not even to try the following year because the new rules had excluded from consideration publications that had been accepted the prior year. There is no way to quantify the extent to which policy chaos negatively influenced student and teacher morale, but it appears to be a crucial factor that led to their disengagement from the academy.

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1. Seventy of the 300 hotels have star designation (e.g., 5-star hotel, 4-star, etc.) and another 85 were placed in the "pre-star" category, which presumably means they are striving for stardom. Total beds include 540,000 in hotels and 260,000 in guest-houses. *1995 Shenzhen Yearbook*, p. 346.
 2. *1995 Shenzhen Yearbook*, p. 120. US dollar equivalencies are based on official exchange rates for the particular years discussed.
 3. For the history of universities in China, see Hayhoe, *China's Universities*, 1996.

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4. Source: Xiao, "Vocational/technical education in Shenzhen," 1997, Table 2. The vocational and technical secondary category includes both specialized secondary schools and other vocational/technical secondary schools. Data for 1995 is from the Shenzhen Education Department.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. "Higher education," *1986 Shenzhen Yearbook*, p. 169.
 7. Xiao, "Vocational/technical education in Shenzhen, China," 1997, Figure 1.
 8. *Shenzhen (gaodeng) zhiye xueyuan*. By fall 1997 "higher" (*gaodeng*) was removed from the name for unspecified reasons.
 9. Source: Xiao, "Vocational/technical education in Shenzhen," 1997, Table 4. Extreme right column: Shenzhen Yearbooks. Public expenditure rates for 1979-1984 provided by government.
 10. *1991 Shenzhen Yearbook*, pp. 381-2.
 11. Guangdong Higher Education Bureau, "Investigative report on the founding of SZU, 16 November 1982," *1986 Yearbook*, pp. 149-52.
 12. Source: Shenzhen Municipality and Party Committee, "Report to Guangdong Province on creating Shenzhen University," *1986 Yearbook*, p. 154.
 13. *Ibid.*
 14. Guangdong Province, "Report to State Council on the founding of SZU, 26 February 1983," *1986 Yearbook*, p. 159.
 15. Guangdong Province, "Reply to Shenzhen on SZU's approval, 8 March 1983," *1986 Yearbook*, p. 160.
 16. Guangdong provincial radio, 1983.
 17. Ministry of Education, "1983 Document 079, 10 May 1983," *1986 Yearbook*, p. 161.
 18. "Zhang Wei on how to run SZU, interview with *Shenzhen News and Briefs*, 17 October 1983," in Tang, *Searching for Shenzhen University's Reform Path*, 1988, p. 8.
 19. The first public announcement on establishing SZU stated that "graduates will be assigned to work in Shenzhen City." Guangdong provincial radio, as reported in "Plans formed for setting up Shenzhen University," *FBIS-CHI-83-052* (16 March 1983), p. P1.
 20. Agelasto, *University in Turmoil*, 1998, pp. 21-116, 173-213.
 21. Luo Zhengqi, "Part-time jobs bring big changes to SZU, 16 July 1986," *1986 Yearbook*, pp. 83-93.
 22. *Ibid.*
 23. Zhong Jialing, "Psychological counseling center," *1987 Yearbook*, p. 119, *1988 Yearbook*, pp. 121-4; Chen Hao, *New Thoughts, New Explorations, New Patterns*, 1989, pp. 77-80.
 24. Tang, *Searching for Shenzhen University's Reform Path*, 1988, p. 278.
 25. Zhong Jialing, "Psychological counseling center," *1988 Yearbook*, p. 123.

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26. Chen Hao, *New Thoughts, New Explorations, New Patterns*, 1989, p. 80.
 27. Luo Zhengqi, "Part-time jobs bring big changes to SZU, 16 July 1986," *1986 Yearbook*, pp. 83-93.
 28. Chen Hao, *New Thoughts, New Explorations, New Patterns*, pp. 33-44; Luo Zhengqi, "Profound change caused by the work-study program in SZU," *Shenzhen University Journal* (1986, no. 3), pp. 1-11; *Guangming Ribao*, 17/21 October 1987; Tang, *Searching for Shenzhen University's Reform Path*, 1988, pp. 289-90.
 29. Xu Jiyang, "I am a student and a manager," in Tang, *Searching for Shenzhen University's Reform Path*, p. 289.
 30. Shao Binjun, "Seek self-independence in competition," in Tang, *Searching for Shenzhen University's Reform Path*, 1988, p. 290. From his diary: "October 14, 1986. Weather fine. Tuesday. About 6 p.m. I am in my room alone; no one knows I am starving now because I have only a 40 cent meal ticket left. My economic crisis has lasted for half a month. As long as I can pass this crisis, I will be a hero. My family is quite rich, but the first day I entered SZU I wrote them in my first letter that I wanted them to send me not a single cent. With part-time jobs, scholarship, and payments for writing, I have been supporting myself for about 30 months."
 31. Chen Hao, *New Thoughts, New Explorations, New Patterns*, 1989, p. 35.
 32. Chen Xiaobo, "A symphony of spring breeze turns to rain," 1986, p. 16.
 33. "Regulations on students' study, 3 August 1987," *1987 Yearbook*, pp. 123-9.
 34. The credit system is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.
 35. "Regulations on students' study, 3 August 1987," *1987 Yearbook*, pp. 123-9.
 36. One classroom, one teacher, one teaching material, one piece of chalk, and one notebook.
 37. "Student dorm regulations, 21 May 1987," *1987 Yearbook*, pp. 152-5.
 38. "Punishments, 30 November 1988," *1988 Yearbook*, pp. 201-3.
 39. "Draft student dorm management regulations implementation plan, Oct 1989," *1989-90 Yearbook*, pp. 213-4.
 40. "Punishments for violating regulations," *1989-90 Yearbook*, pp. 217-9.
 41. Source: "Punishments, 30 November 1988," *1988 Yearbook*, pp. 201-3.
 42. Source: "Draft student dorm management regulations implementation plan, October 1989," *1989-90 Yearbook*, pp. 213-4.
 43. Li Zao, March 1990, "Truly enhance Party leadership over the school," *1989-90 Yearbook*, p. 30.
 44. Zhang Bigong, "All for the cultivation of students," *1991 Yearbook*, p. 199.
 45. A Shekou newspaper was closed after it reported a labor strike; *Zone Workers Daily* and *Shenzhen Youth News* were both closed in 1987 for carrying articles by leading political reformers. See Crane, *The Political Economy of China's Special Economic Zones*, 1990, p. 133.

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46. Holley, "Quiet defiance, open despair and pursuit of a way out," 1989.
 47. "Student affairs management regulations, October 1989," *1989-90 Yearbook*, pp. 198-203.
 48. "Examination regulations, 1 December 1989," *1989-90 Yearbook*, pp. 206-9.
 49. "Procedures for postponing final exams, 26 June 1990," *1989-90 Yearbook*, p. 211.
 50. Li Zao, March 1990, "Truly enhance Party leadership over the school," *Shenda Tongxun* (no. 9, 1990), p. 7, reprinted in *1989-90 Yearbook*, p. 30.
 51. "No beepers in class, 30 November 1991," *1991 Yearbook*, p. 252.
 52. "Work plan for SZU part-time jobs, 13 March 1991," *1991 Yearbook*, p. 238.
 53. "Freshen up you spirits, march forward boldly: Party Committee's work prospects for 1990," *1989-90 Yearbook*, p. 15.
 54. These measures are repeated in three separate essays in the *1992-93 Yearbook*. See, "Ten measures on comprehensive reform," pp. 31-41; Cai Delin, "Deepening the reform, strengthening management and promoting development, report to the teachers representatives conference, 17 December," pp. 60-1; "Ten measures to further deepen the reform at SZU, July 1992," pp. 77-81.
 55. "Major points of SZU work report, 30 April 1992," *1992-93 Yearbook*, p. 24.
 56. <http://www.szu.edu.cn/cdl.html>, retrieved June 1996.
 57. For more information see Agelasto, *Turmoil in Education*, 1998, pp. 260-5.
 58. Cai Delin, "Deepening the reform, strengthening management and promoting development, report to the teachers representatives conference," *1992-93 Yearbook*, 17 December, p. 58.
 59. "Punishment regulations," *1992-93 Yearbook*, pp. 126-8.
 60. "Comprehensive evaluation of students, May 1992," *1992-93 Yearbook*, pp. 119-22.
 61. Cai Delin, "Deepening the reform, strengthening management and promoting development, report to the teachers representatives conference," *1992-93 Yearbook*, 17 December, p. 60.