

Xian Xu sets sights high for Fudan-UC Center



Meet the new managing associate director with visions of bolstering collaborations across UC and making new research connections

By Sarah Pfladderer | GPS News



Though Xian Xu has been settled into the UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS) since October, the new managing associate director of the [Fudan-UC Center on Contemporary China](#) is feeling the “pressure.”

“I feel quite a lot of pressure,” said Xu, former assistant dean of the School of

Economics at [Fudan University](#) in Shanghai. “This is *the first* Chinese university to go abroad and have a joint research center with a leading foreign university. Because it’s the first one and the first try—not only for Fudan University, but also for the Chinese government—they pay a lot of attention to our Center.”

However, there’s no safer bet than Xu to help lead the Center over the next two years—his research focuses on risk management and insurance, after all.

Under the directorship of Professor Richard Madsen, the Fudan-UC Center forges ties between UC and Fudan University. It brings together leading research scholars from both universities for conferences and lectures and facilitates cooperative research to promote deeper mutual understanding between the U.S. and China.

“Within these next two years, we must do something good for Fudan University and University of California but also do something meaningful for the U.S.-China relationship,” Xu said.

As part of that effort, he hopes to amplify the Center’s agenda beyond just UC San Diego. This means upscaling its cooperation across all 10 campuses of the UC system as well as organizing new workshops, conferences and stronger means to connect UC scholars with those at Fudan University.

“Fudan University regards the Fudan-UC Center as the ultimate think tank,” Xu explained. “This is very good for us (Fudan) to be here and help people understand both sides of the U.S.-China relationship.”

In bolstering UC and Fudan’s understanding of U.S.-China relations, Xu also hopes the Center can engage in policymaking dialogues on government levels in China and the U.S.

He’ll leverage his own think tank experience to do so.

In addition to his obligations at the Fudan-UC Center, Xu also has ongoing involvements at Fudan University as director of the China Insurance and Social Security Research Center, deputy secretary general at the Shanghai Institute for Free Trade Zone Research and assistant director of the Financial Research Center. Outside of the university, he also is an executive council member of the Insurance Society of China, a senior member of the Accounting Society of China

and a research associate at the Centre for European Economic Research in Germany. Such commitments have led him in the past to lend advice to the Chinese and Shanghai governments' bank and insurance regulations committee, among other areas.

Backing up his experience in the insurance sector is a yearlong stint at [Allianz](#) and eight years of higher education in Germany—a Master of Arts in International Economics from Georg August University Göttingen, a Master of Laws from Osnabrück University, and Ph.D., in economics from Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

Now, it's this insurance expertise—and a growing one in disaster economics—that Xu also lends to Fudan University students. And it's also one he hopes to continue honing and offering to scholars at GPS.

"I'm open for a lot of collaboration," Xu said. "If GPS students are interested in China or insurance—not only how to measure insurance, but also about disaster relief and management—they should contact me. ... I'm hoping to connect with UC scholars or students who also are interested in this field so we can co-research together."