

# 2020 WholeRen White Paper on Chinese International Student Dismissal and Consequences



WholeRen Group Research Center

May, 2020

## About WholeRen Education

WholeRen Group, LLC was established in 2010. WholeRen is a multinational, professional education company which seeks to create and promote Sino-U.S. educational opportunities. We integrate a range of educational services from middle school, high school and college application assistance to academic emergency services, transfer assistance, on-going academic counseling, immersion classrooms, landing services, executive education programs, winter/summer camps, career planning and more. WholeRen is the nation's first international student educational organization to achieve certification from the American International Recruitment Council (AIRC). We have been invited to interview with mainstream media such as CCTV, CGTV, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal. We are among the most knowledgeable professionals regarding American and Chinese academic cultural differences and have a dedicated research team that pays close attention to the long-term development of students. The WholeRen Group Research Center devotes itself to research analysis on Chinese international students in America in order to provide accurate consultations based on first-hand data. If you are interested in learning more about WholeRen, we invite you to visit our website:

<https://www.wholeregroup.com>.

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## Abstract

Over the last decade, the number of Chinese students studying abroad keeps increasing. With abundant educational resources and outstanding instructional quality, the United States continues to be the first choice for Chinese students looking to study abroad. There are more international students from China studying at U.S. universities than international students from any other countries. In 2020, approximately 33.7% of international students studying in the United States are Chinese students.<sup>1</sup> Although many Chinese students wish to study in America, it can be a difficult journey. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) standards, the WholeRen Group Research Center compiled data from 8,655 dismissed Chinese international students who studied in the U.S. from 2013-2020 and received WholeRen's services. A random sample of 1,000 cases from March 2019 to March 2020, representing the latest trends regarding academic dismissal, were selected to develop this report. The 2020 White Paper on Chinese International Student Dismissal and Consequences ("2020 White Paper") is the latest 7th addition to our annual White Paper reports from 2014-2019.

The 2020 edition of the White Paper investigates Chinese international students who were dismissed from U.S. schools, analyzes why they were dismissed, and looks at changes and trends which led to their dismissals. The 2020 White Paper provides valuable data to international students, universities, governments, industry professionals, host families, and all those involved with Sino-U.S. educational exchange.

The data from the past year shows that poor academic performance and academic dishonesty are still the two primary reasons for Chinese international student dismissal. The proportion of students who were dismissed due to poor academic performance remains approximately 37.22% in 2020, while the proportion of students who were dismissed because of academic dishonesty slightly increased to 41.57% in 2020 compared to 2019. Academic dishonesty remains the number one reason for Chinese international student dismissal in two consecutive years.

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Places of Origin." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/research-and-insights/open-doors/data/international-students/places-of-origin>

## Table of Contents

Part 1 Background Overview .....	04
1.1 Overview of Chinese Students in America .....	04
1.2 Research Intent .....	06
Part 2 Data Analysis On Students Who Have Been Dismissed .....	08
2.1 Data Collection .....	08
2.2 Personal Data Analysis .....	09
2.2.1 Age and Gender Distribution of Dismissed Students .....	09
2.2.2 Distribution of Academic Level at Time of Dismissal .....	11
2.2.3 Distribution of the Rank of Schools from which Students were Dismissed .....	12
2.2.4 Location of Student Dismissals .....	13
2.3 Analysis of Reasons for Student Dismissal .....	14
<i>Academic Dishonesty</i> .....	14
<i>Poor Academic Performance</i> .....	15
<i>Behavioral Misconduct</i> .....	15
<i>Attendance Issues</i> .....	15
<i>Incomplete Understanding of Academic Policies</i> .....	15
<i>Health Issues</i> .....	16
<i>Other Issues</i> .....	16
2.4 Five-year Comparison on Reasons for Dismissal .....	17
Part 3 Visa Status of Dismissed Students .....	19
3.1 Importance of valid I-20 record .....	19
3.2 Influence of invalid OPT on international students .....	20
Part 4 Conclusion .....	22
References .....	23
Appendix .....	24
Examples of Dismissal Cases due to Academic Dishonesty .....	24
Examples of Turning Things Around After Dismissal .....	24

## Part 1 Background Overview

### 1.1 Overview of Chinese Students in America

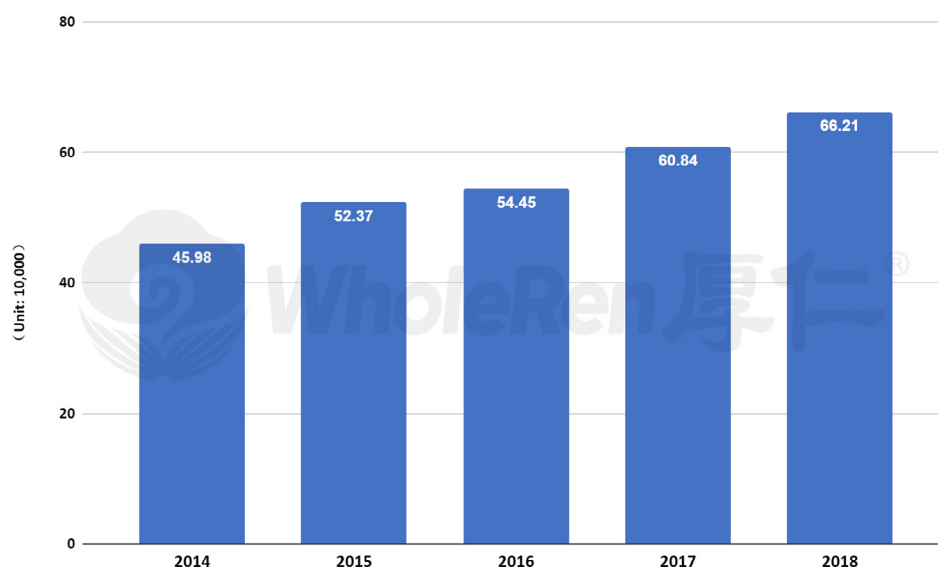


Figure 1-1: 2014-2018 The Number of Chinese Students Studying Abroad (Unit: 10,000)

The number of Chinese students studying abroad has gradually increased over the last decade and continues to rise. According to the statistics released by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, the total number of Chinese students studying abroad in 2018 was more than 600,000, an increase of 8.83% from 2017 (Figure 1-1).<sup>2</sup>

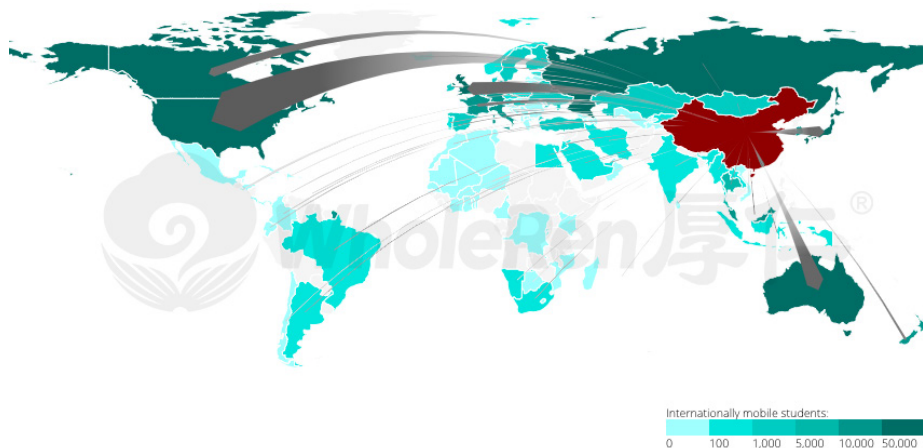


Figure 1-2: The Number of Chinese International Students Studying in Each Country

As shown in Figure 1-2, according to the latest data provided by UNESCO, Chinese students continue to study abroad globally. With a growing number of Chinese international students each year, the United States remains the most popular destination for Chinese students.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Zhong, J. (2019, March 27). "2018 Wo Guo Chu Guo Liu Xue Ren Yuan Qing Kuang Tong Ji". In Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from [http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb\\_xwfb/gzdt\\_gzdt/s5987/201903/t20190327\\_375704.html](http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/201903/t20190327_375704.html)

<sup>3</sup> Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students. (n.d.). In United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved May 1, 2020, from UNESCO Institute For Statistics.

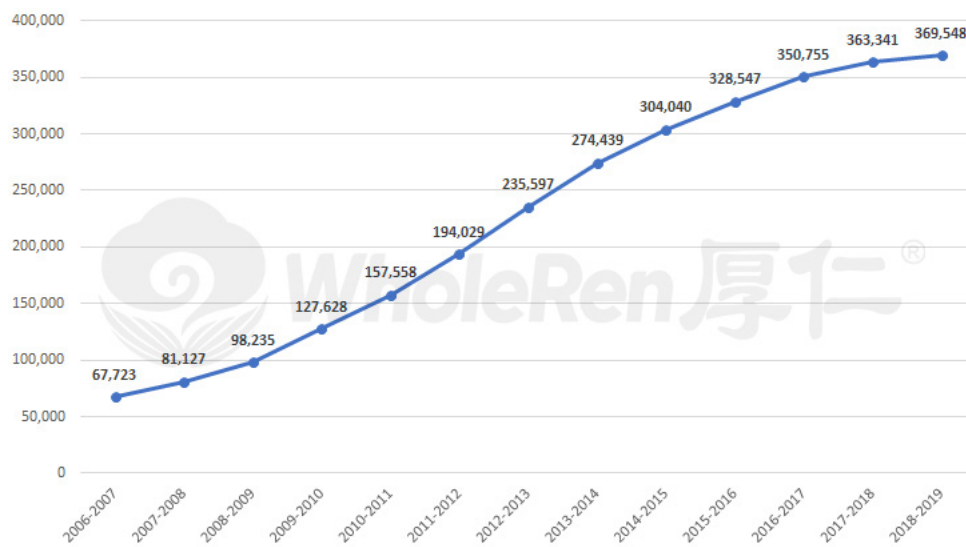


Figure 1-3: The Number of Chinese International Students Studying in the U.S.

According to the 2019 Open Doors Report on the International Educational Exchange, China remained the largest source of international students in the United States in 2019-2020. This report found, as indicated in Figure 1-3, Chinese international students increased to 369,548 across undergraduate, graduate, non-degree, and optional practical training (OPT) programs. In 2019, the number increased by 6,207 from the previous year, but the growth rate appears to have slowed.<sup>4</sup>

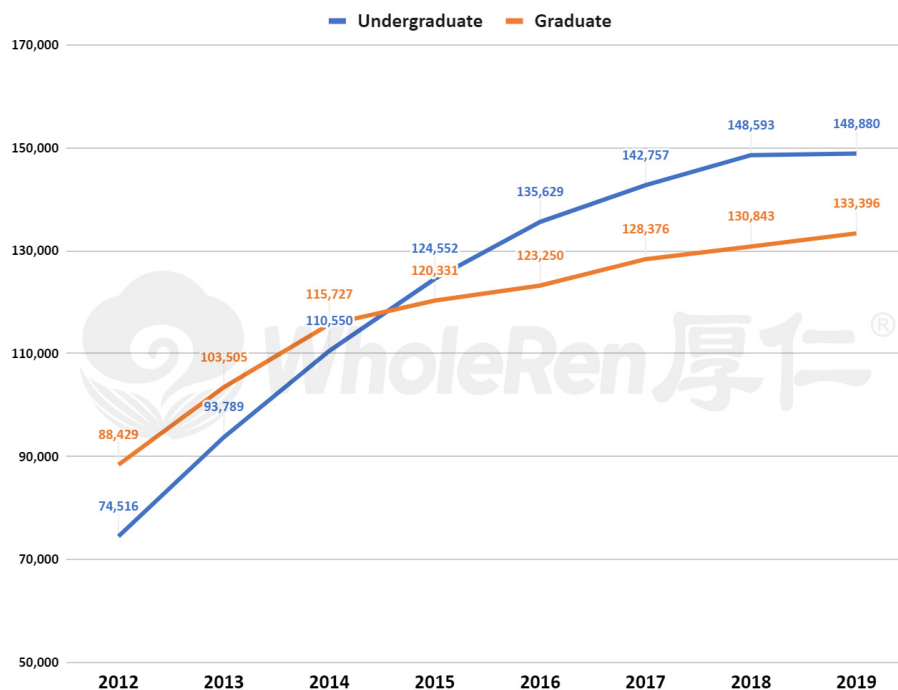


Figure 1-4: The Number of Chinese Undergraduate and Graduate Students Studying in the U.S.

<sup>4</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Data by Region Fact Sheets." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Fact-Sheets-and-Infographics/Data-by-Region-Fact-Sheets>

We categorized the students based on their pursued degrees. Figure 1-4 indicates that the number of Chinese international students attending undergraduate and graduate programs in the U.S. continue to increase every year. However, since 2014 the growth of Chinese international students studying in the United States at the graduate level has slowed down but in the past year, the increase in graduate students was significantly more than that of undergraduate students studying in the U.S.<sup>5</sup>

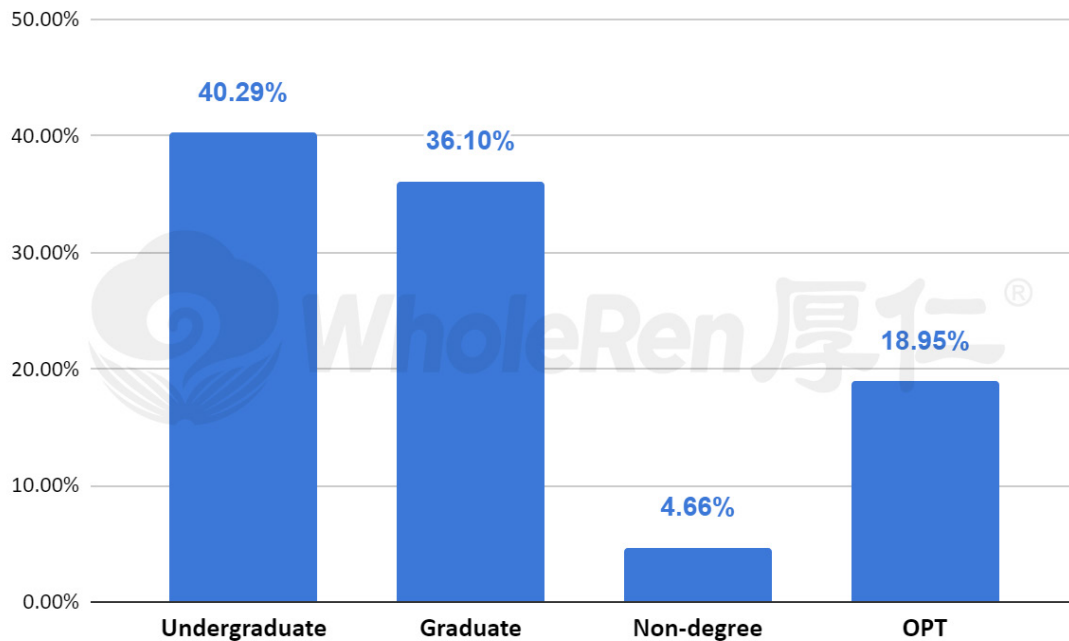


Figure 1-5: 2019 Academic Level Distribution of Chinese International Students Studying in the U.S.

Figure 1-5 indicates that in 2019, the majority of Chinese international students in the U.S. were undergraduate students, who comprised 40.29% of all Chinese international students in the U.S. Graduate students were the second largest group at 36.10% and 4.66% were in non-degree programs including language programs and certificate programs. 18.95% of students participated in OPT programs with temporary employment.<sup>6</sup>

## 1.2 Research Intent

The number of Chinese international students studying abroad has gradually increased over the last decade and China remains the country with the largest number of students studying abroad. However, despite the popularity of studying abroad, recent data have shown several of the challenges common to many Chinese international students such as a lack of independence and preparedness for studying abroad prior to arriving in the U.S. If left unchecked, these issues have resulted in serious consequences such as academic probation, suspension, and even dismissal. In recent years, academic dishonesty has been an increasingly common problem for Chinese students and a significant obstacle when it comes to completing their degrees.

<sup>5</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Place of Origin." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Places-of-Origin>

<sup>6</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Place of Origin." Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Places-of-Origin>

The 2020 WholeRen White Paper on Chinese International Student Dismissal and Consequences continues the analysis of Chinese international students studying in the United States that previous White Papers began. During our research, we found that the one reason for Chinese international student dismissal in the U.S. was due to difficulties in adapting to their new environment. When students come to the U.S., they live far away from their family in a completely new environment with a different culture and education system. Thus, it is very likely that the challenges they face will have a negative impact on their academic performance or even lead to behavioral misconduct which, in turn, may lead to warnings or even suspension. Once disciplinary action has been taken against them, these Chinese international students have been found to be at an even higher risk of misconduct or expulsion if they cannot get help.

The WholeRen Group Research Center carefully monitors Chinese international students who have been dismissed from school. We continue to collect and analyze data from 2014 to 2020 regarding the causes of dismissal, individual student situations, and further development of these students after dismissal. One of our main focuses is whether or not students who were dismissed are able to continue studying and complete their course of study in the U.S. We hope that what we have learned from our findings can help students get back on track academically and avoid any additional setbacks.



## Part 2 Data Analysis On Students Who Have Been Dismissed

### 2.1 Data Collection

Data in this report is from WholeRen Group's proprietary database. WholeRen Group was the first professional educational organization in the United States to provide second-chance opportunities for international students who had been dismissed. As such, this database is compiled by America's only organization with an expertise in international students who have previously been dismissed and contains comprehensive information on the students and why they were forced to leave their schools. In the following sections, "we/us" will refer to the WholeRen Group Research Center.

Following the 2014-2019 editions of the White Paper, we further continued to examine the age, duration of stay, school location, academic performance, school ranking, and other relevant pieces of information for students who had been dismissed in order to determine the root causes of dismissal. We aim to compile data over the years so that we might acquire a deeper understanding of high-risk international students and the challenges they face.

From 2013 to 2020, WholeRen Group used our proprietary database to compile 8,655 cases of Chinese international students who were dismissed. Of these cases, 7,957 had complete data and were used. These complete cases represent 92.14% of the total cases. 1,447 cases occurred from March of 2019 to March of 2020 and 1,000 of them were randomly selected for the analysis in this report.

In accordance with the scientific method, WholeRen meticulously collects and refines its data. The simulated entry shown below has been derived from specific cases in WholeRen Group's database.

[Sample Data Example]

When collecting the data, we first obtained student Y's basic personal information and academic information to produce the profile below:

Full Name: Y	Dismissing School's Type: Public
Gender: Male	Dismissing School's Location: NY
Date of Birth: XX/XX/1999	GPA at Time of Dismissal: 2.9
Age at Time of Dismissal: 20	Year Dismissed: 2019
School Level at Time of Dismissal: Undergraduate	Grade at Time of Dismissal: Second-year undergraduate
Major: Computer Science	Length of Stay in America Prior to Being Dismissed:
Dismissing School: University of AA	2 Years
The rank of the Dismissing School: 104	Reason for Dismissal: Academic dishonesty

[Analysis Process]

By analyzing the selected sample from WholeRen Group's database, we aim to:

1. Conduct a descriptive analysis of student information
2. Classify and analyze the specific reasons why a student was dismissed
3. Compare and compile historical data and analyze longitudinal trends
4. Put forth a summary of the characteristics of the most vulnerable and high-risk academic demographics among Chinese students
5. Analyze current trends and highlight root causes for dismissal

## 2.2 Personal Data Analysis

We looked at the age of students at the time of dismissal, length of their stay in America, degree being pursued, and reasons for dismissal.

### 2.2.1 Age and Gender Distribution of Dismissed Students

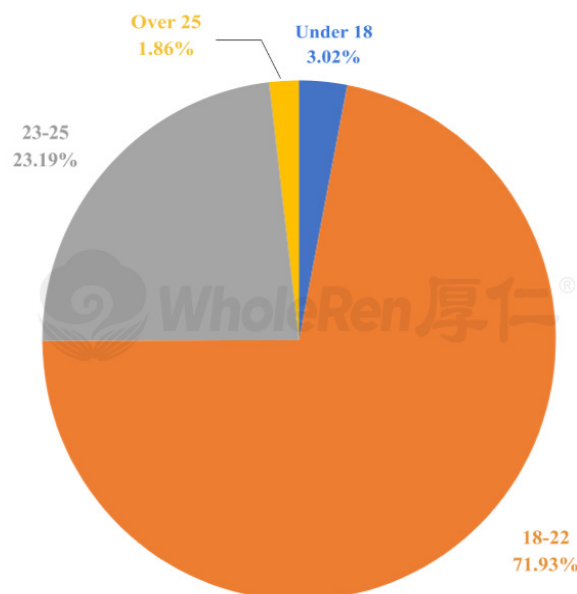


Figure 2-1: 2020 Age Distribution of Dismissed Students

This year, we started by looking at the age of dismissed students. As shown in Figure 2-1, we compared the ages of students who were dismissed in 2020. 3.02% were under 18 years old, 31.93% were 18-22 years old, 23.19% were 23-25 years old, and 1.86% were above 25 years old. The students who have been dismissed in the age range of 18 to 22 continue to be the largest group of dismissed students in 2020.

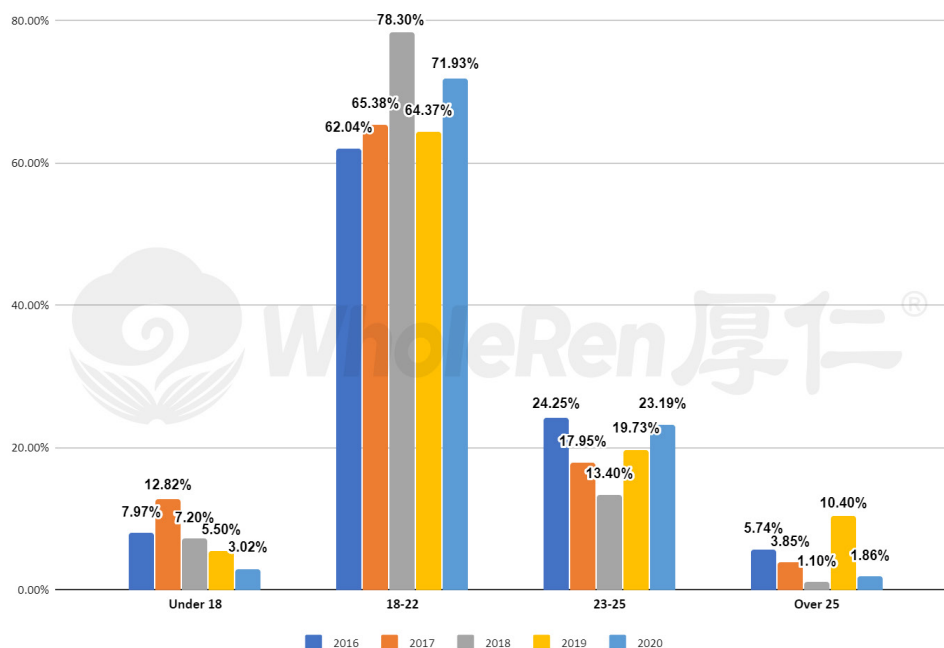


Figure 2-2: 2016-2020 Comparison of Age Distribution for Dismissed Students

In Figure 2-2, we compared the age distribution of students who had been dismissed from 2016 to 2020. The percentage of dismissed students under the age of 18 reached its peak in 2017 and then decreased to its lowest point of 3.02% in 2020. The percentage of dismissed students between 18-22 years old showed some fluctuation over the five years but remains as the largest group of dismissed students. It has recently increased from 64.37% in 2019 to 71.93% in 2020, a more than 7% increase over the last year. The group of dismissed students from 23-25 year olds has seen decreases in their percentages since 2016 but started to increase from 2019 up to 23.19% in 2020. In contrast, the percentage of dismissed students over 25 years old decreased significantly from 10.40% in 2019 to 1.86% in 2020.

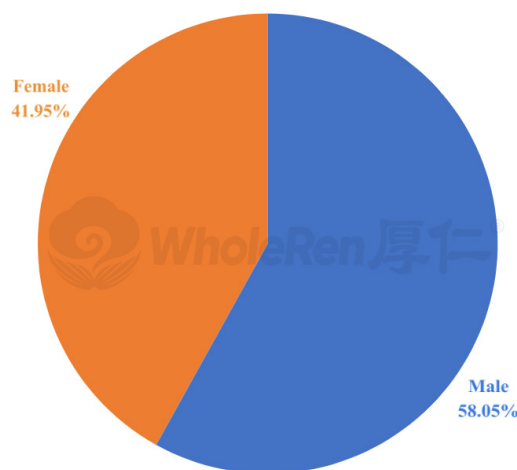


Figure 2-3: 2020 Distribution of Gender for Dismissed Students

Besides age, we also looked at the distribution of students who were dismissed in 2020 by their gender. In 2020, as shown in Figure 2-3, 58.05% of dismissed students were male while 41.95% were female. This is in line with the historical trends as male students are more vulnerable to academic dismissal and still make up the majority of dismissed students.

## 2.2.2 Distribution of Academic Level at Time of Dismissal

In this section, the academic level of students at time of dismissal was analyzed in order to observe which group of students are most likely to be dismissed. As can be seen from Figure 2-4, 74.02% of the students in our sample who were dismissed in 2020 were at the undergraduate level, while 19.53% were at the graduate level and 1.31% were at the doctorate level. Undergraduate students remain the majority of dismissed Chinese international students.

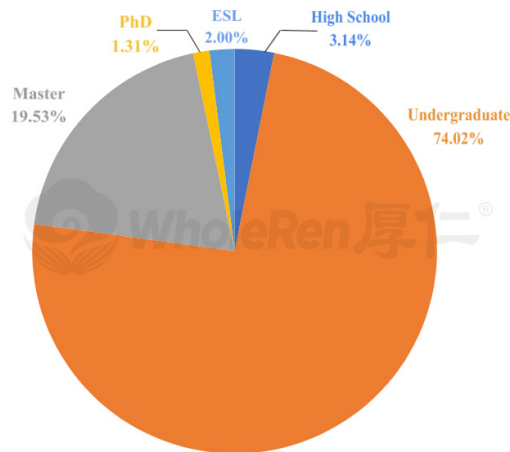


Figure 2-4: 2020 Distribution of Academic Level at Time of Dismissal

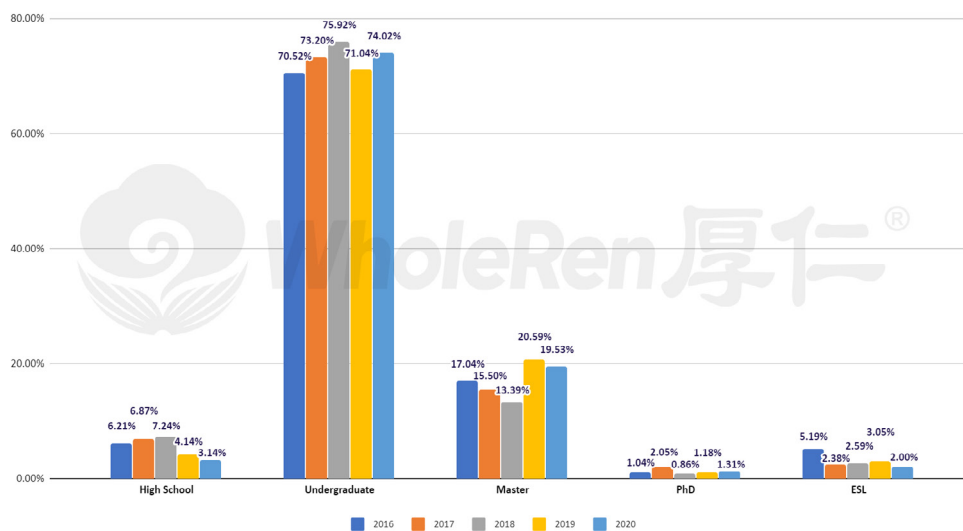


Figure 2-5: 2016-2020 Comparison on Distribution of Academic Level at Time of Dismissal

If we only focus on undergraduate and masters level students, as indicated in Figure 2-7, the percentage of freshmen who have been dismissed has steadily decreased from 23.78% in 2017 to 15.88% in 2020. In 2018, sophomores were dismissed at the highest rate (28.19%) which then decreased to 21.67% in 2020. However, the sophomore year continues to be when we see the highest dismissal levels. The number of dismissed junior students has been relatively stable while the number of dismissed senior students increased from 16.91% in 2019 to 19.29% in 2020, becoming the second-largest group of dismissed students in 2020. The number of students who were dismissed at first-year and second-year masters level is overall less than undergraduate students. However, in 2020, their numbers seem to be climbing.

## 2.2.3 Distribution of the Rank of Schools from which Students were Dismissed

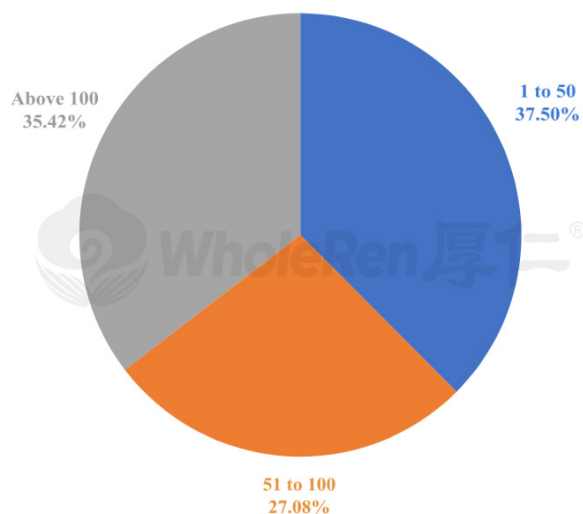


Figure 2-6: 2020 Distribution of the Rank of Schools from which Students were Dismissed

We analyzed the rankings (U.S. News & World Report) of the schools from which students were dismissed in the past six years and studied the relationship between school rankings and the number of dismissed students. As shown in Figure 2-6, 37.50% of dismissed students came from the top 50 universities in 2020. 27.08% of dismissed students came from schools ranked in the 51-100 range and 35.42% of dismissed students came from schools ranked beyond the top 100.

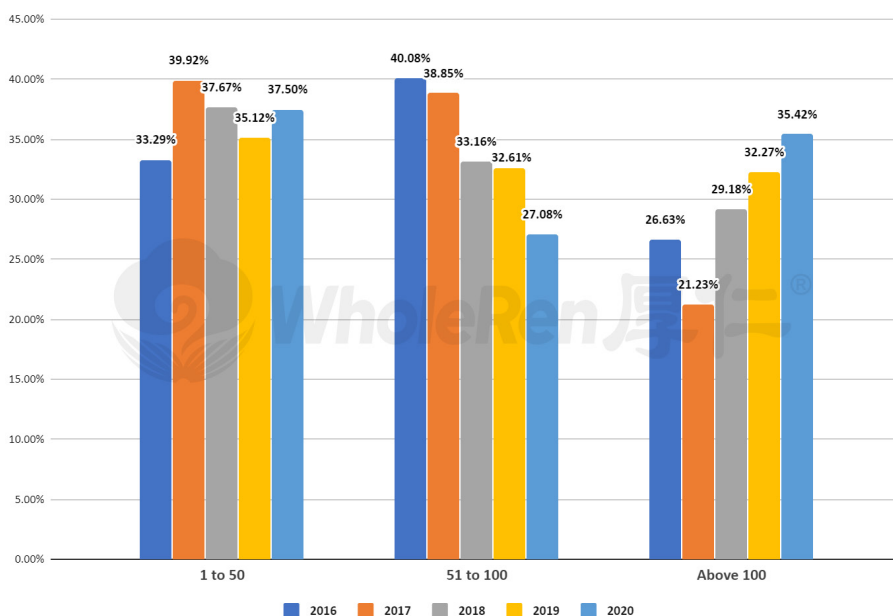


Figure 2-7: 2016-2020 Comparison of Distribution of the Rank of Schools

Reviewing the past five years' data as illustrated in Figure 2-7, the proportion of students dismissed by schools ranked in the top 50 has been relatively stable. But the proportions of dismissed students from schools ranked in the 51-100 range and above 100 have changed dramatically. In 2020, the number of students dismissed from universities ranked above 100 exceeded those who came from universities in the range of 51-100 for the first time since we began our longitudinal analyses.

## 2.2.4 Location of Student Dismissals

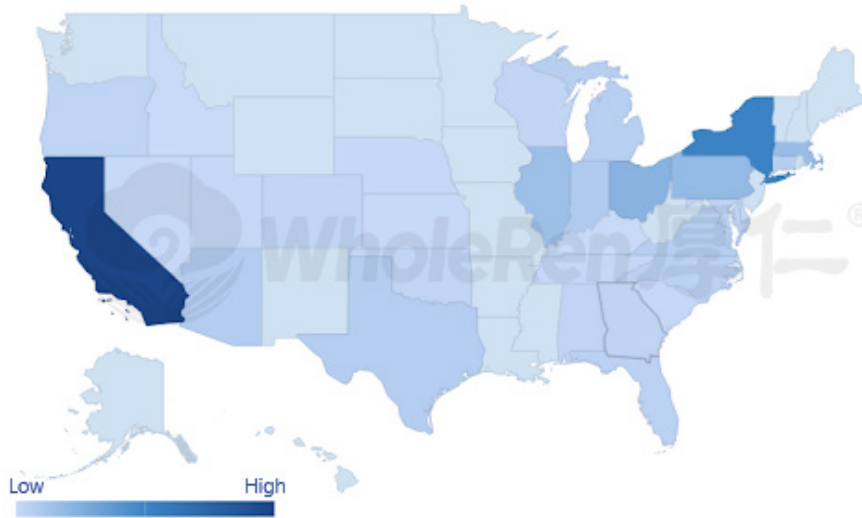


Figure 2-8: Location of Student Dismissals (Data from March 2019 to March 2020)

Reviewing the map in Figure 2-8, we can see that dismissals happened frequently along the western coast, most prominently in California. In addition, a large number of cases also occurred in eastern areas such as Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania as well as the Great Lakes region (including Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and others). The areas with the most serious cases are often economically developed, Chinese immigrant centers, and also popular destinations for Chinese students studying in America. In addition, the universities in these areas tend to be ranked higher than those in other locations.

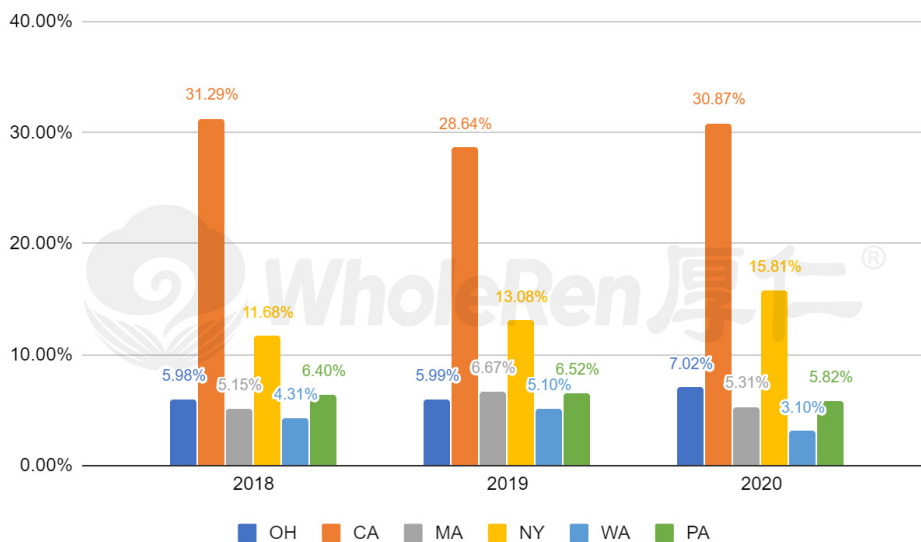


Figure 2-9: Comparison of the number of dismissed students located in the top six states from 2018 to 2020

Based on location of student dismissals, we highlighted the top six states which have the most student dismissals since 2018 and their corresponding percentage each year. The six states are California, New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Compared to the other five states, California has the most students who were dismissed in the past years (approximately 30% of overall student dismissal). New York has the second most dismissals, and continues to see an increase in the number dismissals from 11.68% in 2018 to 15.81% in 2020. The other four states' dismissal rates have not fluctuated significantly.

## 2.3 Analysis of Reasons for Student Dismissal

By analyzing the data from 1,000 students who sought help from WholeRen Group regarding their dismissals between March 2019 and March 2020, we are able to take a closer look at the reasons behind student dismissals, including poor academic performance, academic dishonesty, behavioral misconduct, attendance issues, incomplete understanding of academic policies, and health issues, among others.

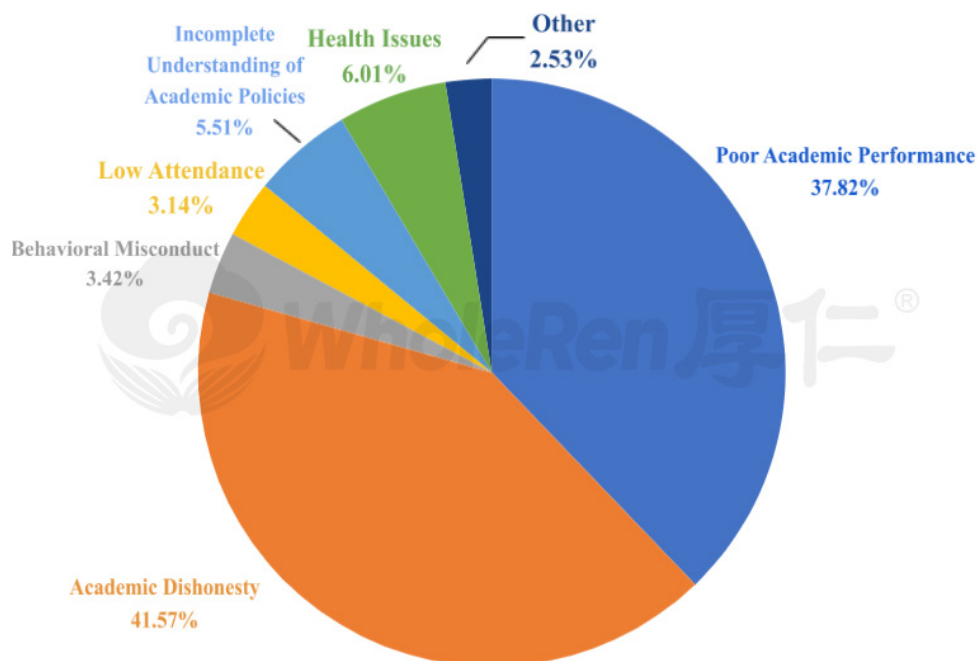


Figure 2-10: 2020 Distribution of Reasons for Student Dismissal

### Academic Dishonesty

In 2020, academic dishonesty continued to be the most common reason why Chinese international students were dismissed, accounting for 41.57% of dismissed Chinese international students. The most common behaviors categorized as academic dishonesty include cheating on tests, impersonation, plagiarism, incorrect citations, application material fraud, and falsifying grades.

Academic dishonesty can be divided into intentional or unintentional behavior. Intentional academic dishonesty most commonly manifests itself in the form of willingly cheating on homework or tests in order to pass a class. In recent years, taking exams or completing homework on behalf of someone else has become its own industry as many students are willing to pay for this kind of service. Unintentional academic dishonesty often occurs due to a lack of understanding with regard to the culture of academic integrity in the United States. Examples of this include incorrect citations when writing papers, not knowing the rules of online exams, being generally unfamiliar with habits regarding academic integrity, and not following the school's academic code of conduct.

## **Poor Academic Performance**

37.82% of our student sample were dismissed because of poor academic performance (defined as when a student's GPA is lower than the school's minimum requirement). American colleges and universities generally stipulate that undergraduates cannot have a total GPA of under 2.0 and graduate students cannot have a GPA below 3.0. More often than not, the first time a student has a low GPA, the school places the student on academic warning or probation. If academic performance does not improve or if the student has a low GPA for consecutive semesters, the school will likely suspend or dismiss the student.

## **Behavioral Misconduct**

Chinese international students who were dismissed due to behavioral misconduct account for 3.42% of our sample from the past year. Students who fall into this category violate school regulations or U.S. laws by bullying, fighting, engaging in violent behavior, drinking underage, driving under the influence, smoking marijuana, and/or racially discriminating. In America, if a student threatens public security, it is highly probable that in addition to facing dismissal, the student will be subject to a judicial trial and repatriation.

## **Attendance Issues**

Attendance is also a factor which can lead to student dismissal. 3.14% of Chinese international students who were dismissed in 2020 were dismissed because of low attendance. For younger students, living alone in the United States means a lack of regulation from their parents, likely for the first time in their lives. This sudden independence can easily result in "slacking off" and not attending class as scheduled. The primary reasons international students report for their low attendance include becoming addicted to video games and laziness. Class attendance is an important factor for students' academic performance. For example in language programs, low attendance can directly result in academic dismissal. Low attendance can also have other negative impacts on international students, such as making it more difficult to get through customs after a suspension or dismissal. If academic attendance and progress is irregular, U.S. customs may have reason to suspect that the student has ulterior motives for coming to the United States.

## **Incomplete Understanding of Academic Policies**

Chinese international students who were dismissed due to an incomplete understanding of academic policies accounted for 5.51% of Chinese international students in our sample from 2019 to 2020. These students generally encountered problems such as not registering in time, not enrolling in required courses, and not taking enough credits. These are avoidable problems which unfortunately occur due to a student's lack of understanding of school policies. American colleges and universities typically have orientations at the beginning of the academic year, when schools outline general rules and policies. However, missing information - whether due to a language barrier or inattention - can lead to difficulties for all students, including international students. Furthermore, some students do not realize the importance of such events and fail to attend orientation, putting them at a much greater risk for school policy violations.



## **Health Issues**

Health issues were cited by 6.01% of Chinese international students dismissed in 2020 as the primary cause for their dismissal. Health issues encompass both physical and mental illnesses. Students with physical health issues may have difficulty in attending classes, and encounter problems with studying, resulting in poor academic performance and academic dismissal. On the other hand, international students face a great deal of pressure while studying in the United States which lead some to develop mental health issues that affect their studies and occasionally lead to their eventual dismissal. The challenge of trying to do many things all at once such as graduating, finishing homework, overcoming language barriers, making friends, adjusting to an American diet, and dealing with changes in one's family and environment were the main struggles cited by our student sample. An inability to cope and lack of help-seeking behaviors result in physical and psychological stressors which can impact academic behaviors.

## **Other Issues**

Other less common reasons such as visa concerns, financial issues, and “pay-to-stay” schemes account for 2.53% of dismissed Chinese international students from 2019 to 2020. Chinese international students studying and working in the United States must hold a valid I-20 form. Once a student has been suspended or dismissed from school, the I-20 form will be invalidated. Even if a student's U.S. visa is still valid, the student no longer retains their legal status as an international student. With little recourse, some students "pay-to-stay" in the United States, which typically involves the use of fictitious universities that offer F-1 status to paying customers but do not actually enroll students. If discovered by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, these students will lose their legal status in the United States and need to prepare for immediate departure.

## 2.4 Five-year Comparison on Reasons for Dismissal

In order to further study the reasons for academic dismissal, we summarized the data from 2016 to 2020 in Figure 2-11. The reasons for Chinese international students' dismissals remain similar each year. However, there are still some differences.

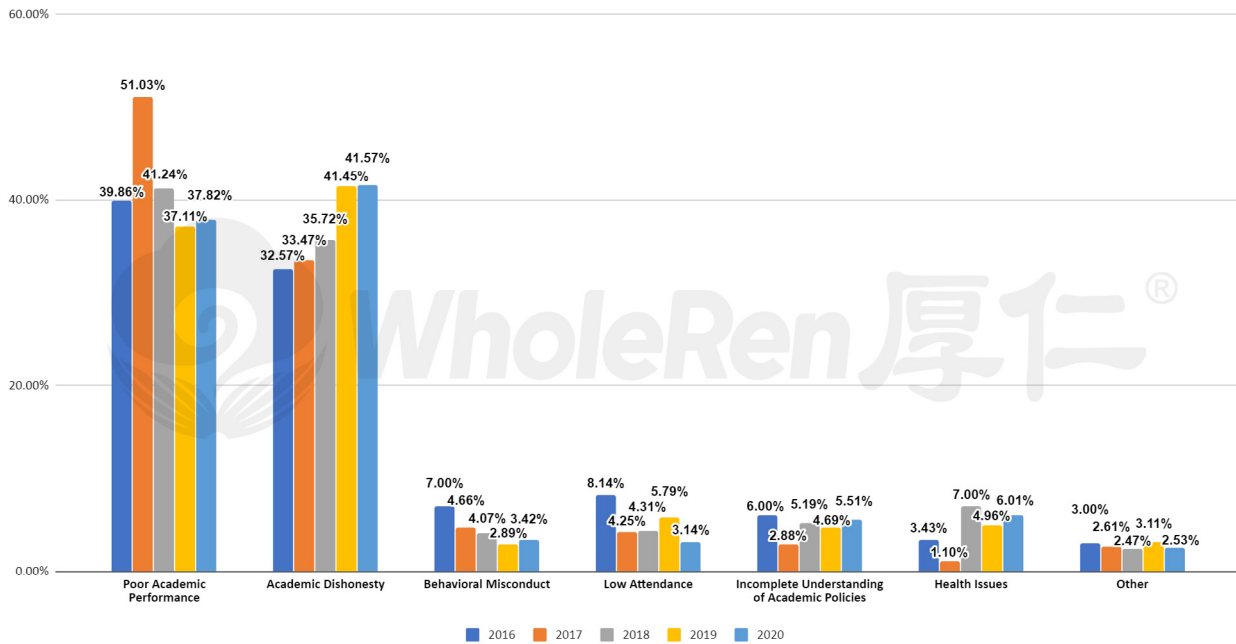


Figure 2-11: 2016-2020 Comparison on the Reasons for Dismissal

The proportion of students who were dismissed because of academic dishonesty has steadily increased, going from 32.57% in 2016 to 41.57% in 2020. After five years of continual growth, it has become the most common cause for Chinese international student dismissal in the U.S. The percentage of students who were dismissed because of poor academic performance reached its peak of 51.03% in 2017 and has gradually decreased. It is ranked the second most common reason for Chinese international students dismissals in 2020.

Furthermore, the proportion of students who have been dismissed due to behavioral misconduct has decreased since 2016, dropping from 7.00% to 3.42% in 2020. The proportion of students who have been dismissed due to low attendance has been declining from 8.14% in 2016 to 3.14% in 2020. In contrast, the proportion of students who have been dismissed due to health issues has been increasing since 2016 and has reached 6.01% in 2020.

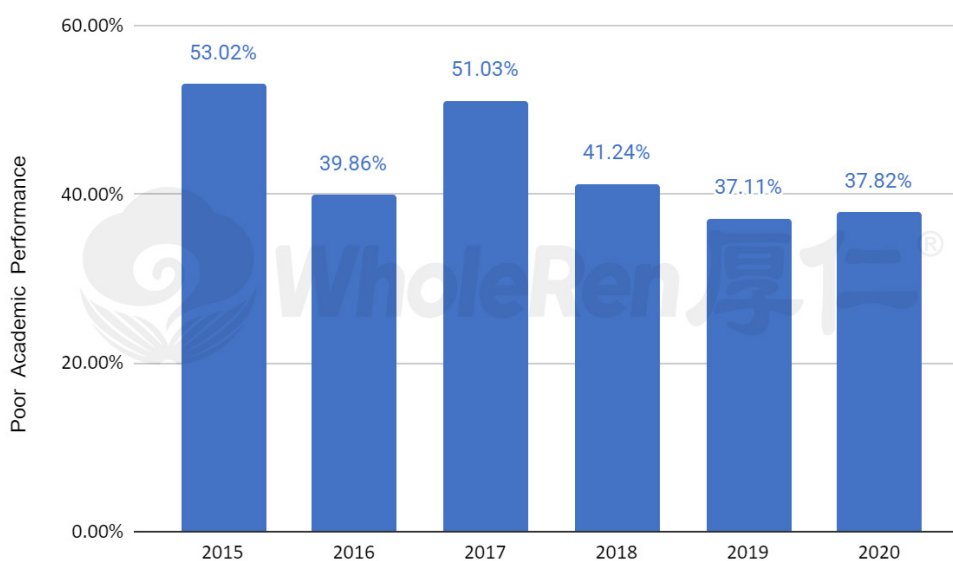


Figure 2-12: 2015-2020 Comparison on Dismissal due to Poor Academic Performance

From 2015 to 2020, the percentage of Chinese international students who were dismissed due to poor academic performance has fluctuated dramatically. It reached a peak of 53.02% in 2015, dropped to 39.86% in 2016, and then rose to another peak of 51.03% in 2017. It has been the top reason for Chinese international students' dismissal from 2015 to 2018. Since 2019, poor academic performance decreased to approximately 37% and became the second most common reason for academic dismissal.

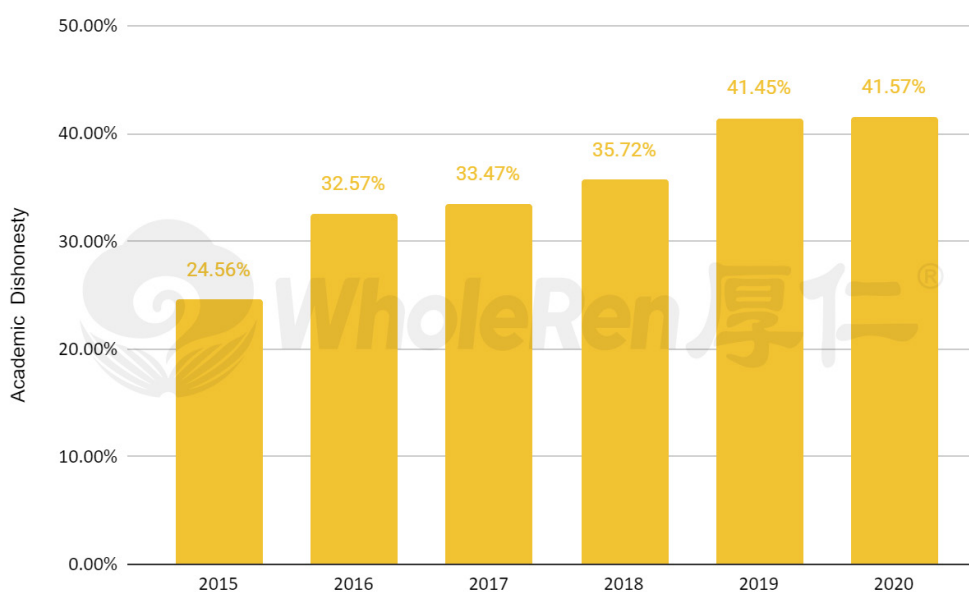


Figure 2-13: 2015-2020 Comparison on Dismissal due to Academic Dishonesty

Since 2015, the proportion of Chinese international students who have been dismissed owing to academic dishonesty has gradually increased from 24.56% in 2015 to 41.57% in 2020. Although the level of increase is slowing down, it remains to be the first reason for academic dismissal.

## Part 3 Visa Status of Dismissed Students

### 3.1 Importance of valid I-20 record

The I-20 form is an important legal document for every international student. It is requested for identification purposes when entering the U.S., applying for employment authorization, or other such instances when proof of nonimmigrant student status is required. Students who do not have a valid I-20 must leave the U.S. immediately. Otherwise, the student will develop a permanent record which will negatively impact their chances for visa application and returning to the United States.

Due to the importance of maintaining a valid I-20, we compiled and analyzed the I-20 status of students who had been dismissed at the time of receiving help from WholeRen in 2020. As shown in Figure 3-1, of the students in our sample who contacted WholeRen in 2020, the percentage of those who had a valid I-20 when they reached out was 79.12%. This indicates that the majority of students who were dismissed understand the importance of a valid I-20 and actively seek help to solve their academic problems before their I-20 becomes invalid.

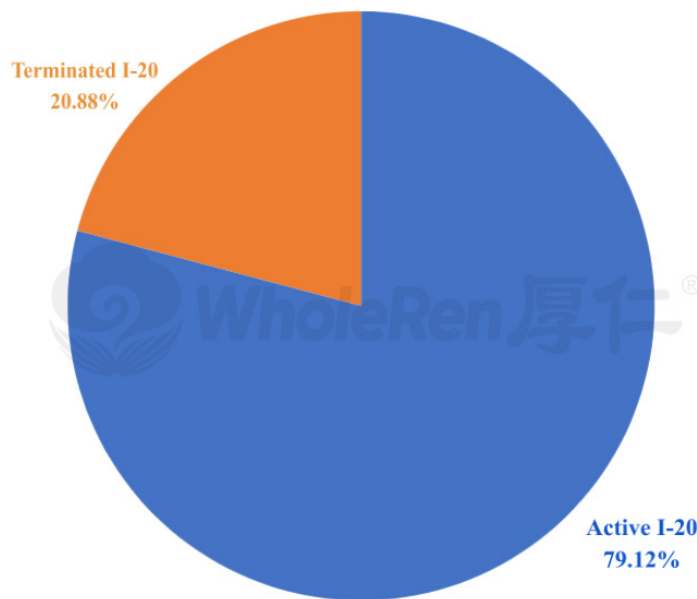


Figure 3-1: I-20 Status at the Time of Dismissal

An invalid I-20 does not mean the student's only option is to leave the U.S. They can still attempt to reinstate their I-20 or apply for valid I-20 from another school and re-enter. However, students with an invalid I-20 will face a huge risk of re-entry denial. Because of this, we highly recommend that when facing an academic crisis, students seek help right away before I-20 becomes invalid.

## 3.2 Influence of invalid OPT on international students

Optional Practical Training (OPT) has become increasingly popular for Chinese international students after graduation. OPT grants temporary work authorization that is available to international students who are holding an F-1 visa and plan to seek employment in the United States in their fields of study. OPT applications are processed and approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). Students with approved OPT applications will receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS as evidence of the employment authorization.

According to the data published by the Institute of International Education, as shown in Figure 3-2, the number of international students who applied for OPT has steadily increased over the last five years with 223,085 OPT applications received by USCIS in 2019.<sup>7</sup>

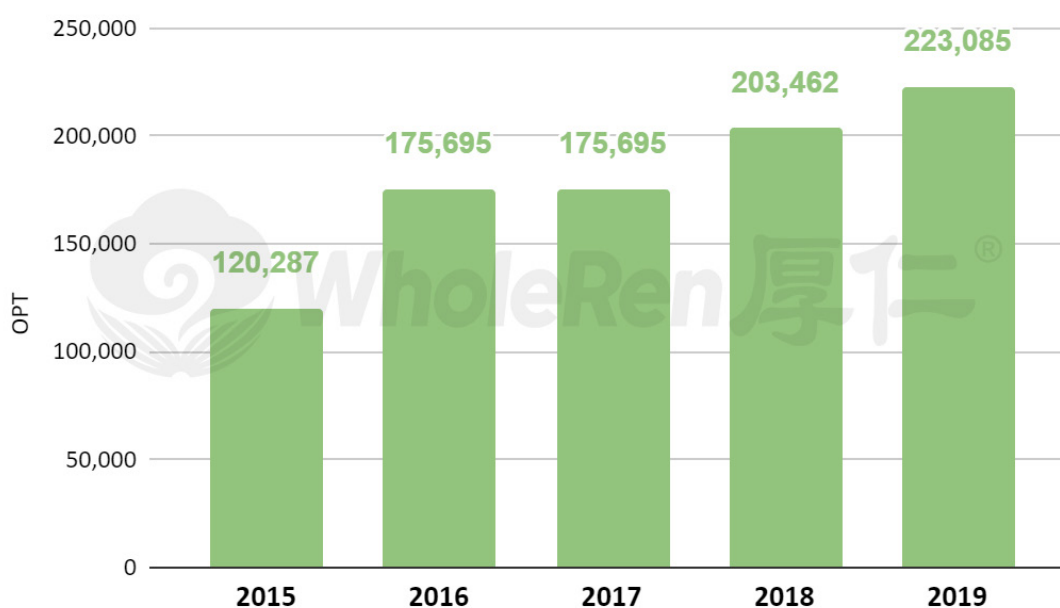


Figure 3-2: 2015-2019 The Number of OPT Application from International Students

International Chinese students, as the majority of international students studying in the U.S., continue to actively seek employment by applying for OPT. The number of OPT applications from Chinese students has grown since 2015 and reached 70,037 in 2019, increasing by 4,357 (21.4% increase) compared to 2018.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Enrollment" Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Enrollment>

<sup>8</sup> Institute of International Education. (2019). "Place of Origin" Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Places-of-Origin>

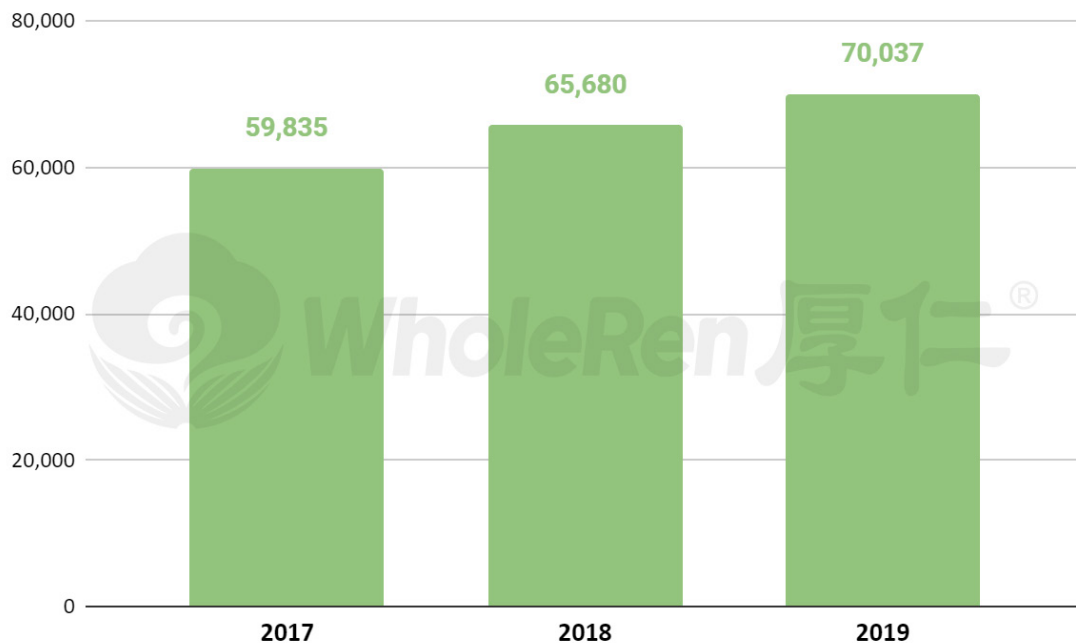


Figure 3-3: The Number of OPT Applications from Chinese Students

Students who wish to seek employment after graduation or internships can submit their OPT application no earlier than 90 days prior to graduation. Before submitting the application to USCIS, students have to contact their school's International Student Scholar Service to request a new I-20. If students do not submit OPT applications within 60 days of graduation, they must leave the country immediately to avoid overstaying their visa.

After starting OPT work, students should know that there are still many rules and regulations to maintain their OPT status and one of the most important rules is days of unemployment. Students on a 12-month OPT have up to 90 days aggregated maximum allowed period of unemployment and an additional 60 days allowed for STEM OPT Extension. Students with unemployment more than 90/150 days are required to leave the U.S. before violating the immigration status. If students overstay, it may lead to severe consequences including loss of immigration status or denial of a future visa application.

## Part 4 Conclusion

In summary, there are more international students from China than from any other country studying in the United States with nearly 370,000 recorded in 2019. Many students still encounter a number of obstacles when it comes to studying abroad. The 2020 White Paper compiled and analyzed data on Chinese international students who were dismissed from U.S. schools between 2015-2020 and continues to highlight several important trends in student dismissal. Academic dishonesty and poor academic performance remain the largest reasons for dismissal.

By analyzing trends of Chinese international student dismissal over the last six years, we found that the number of students dismissed due to academic dishonesty has continuously increased, exceeding the number of students dismissed due to poor academic performance. American universities have always maintained strict academic policies and thus it is not surprising that international students who have not taken the time to familiarize themselves with such policies will encounter difficulties studying in the U.S. To avoid facing dismissal, Chinese international students need to understand the rules and regulations of American universities, especially with regard to academic integrity and plagiarism. Otherwise, they risk violating their institution's code of conduct and even U.S. laws.

Examining the validity of a student's I-20 at the time of dismissal impacted their subsequent academic development, it is clear that students need to pay special attention to their legal status in the United States after being dismissed to make certain that their I-20 remains valid. Dismissed students should seek help as early as possible in order to increase their chances of being able to remain in the United States to study. Though it can be very tempting for international students to seek "pay-to-stay" schools or illegal institutions to help them maintain their legal status in the U.S., legal options are readily available if a student seeks the appropriate support immediately. Illegal work authorization will also result in the termination of an I-20. If students need work or internships, they must conform with the school's international student office, and avoid taking on any illegal work. Otherwise, the student will develop a permanent record which will negatively impact their chances for future study in the United States.

Even if students are dismissed, with timely support they can still have the chance to return to their academics and apply for admission to universities in the United States. Therefore, it is imperative that students see their dismissal as an opportunity to grow and learn.

*The development of this White Paper benefited significantly from the input and support provided by the outstanding staff in the WholeRen Group Research Center and WholeRen Group. In particular, we thank Sa Guo, Yanan Zhang, Wendong Li, and Bingjie Shi for their contributions and insights which greatly improved this manuscript. We are also grateful to J.Y. Chu for the comments and edits.*

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## Appendix

### Examples of Dismissal Cases due to Academic Dishonesty

#### Case One: Academic Dishonesty Due to Unauthorized Collaboration

Student L studied at Harvard University. He was caught for unauthorized collaboration with others during an exam for an online class and was reported to the Office of Academic Conduct. Evidence included a video record was submitted, showing the occurrence of dishonest behavior. As a result of the investigation, student L admitted his behavior of academic dishonesty and was facing a suspension for his academic dishonesty.

#### Case Two: Academic Dishonesty Due to Thesis Plagiarism

Student W was a senior studying at the University of California, Irvine and he was caught for homework plagiarism. In particular, he was reported for copying others' ideas without using proper citation and submitting that work as his own. While it was not the intention of Student W to plagiarize, he was found in violation of academic honesty policies and this was noted on his permanent transcript. This often happens when a student is not familiar with community-academic policies/standards.

### Examples of Turning Things Around After Dismissal

#### Case One: Admitted by Columbia University after Dismissal due to Academic Dishonesty

Student G initially studied at a university ranked near 50 in the U.S. During his study, he was found to have engaged in academic dishonesty repeatedly and was consequently dismissed from the school. After reaching out to WholeRen for help, he was able to transfer to another college and continue his studies in the U.S. Following his transfer, he rectified his past mistakes and his study habits began to change. In addition, he received tutoring support in his native language from WholeRen's expert tutoring staff. With this support, he was successful in all of his classes. This laid the foundation for his successful graduate application to Columbia University.

#### Case Two: Getting back on Track After Dismissal due to Academic Dishonesty

Student S was an undergraduate at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB). He was dismissed due to plagiarism and cheating during exams. In order to be readmitted after transferring, Student S had to keep his GPA above a certain requirement set by the University. After an in-depth discussion with Student S about his situation, WholeRen analyzed the root causes of his academic performance issues and provided advice for his future academic career. During the conversation, he admitted his mistakes and resolved to do better. With WholeRen's support, he transferred to another school to continue his studies. We also designed a detailed and personalized academic plan for him. Afterward, Student S was able to apply for readmission and returned back to IUB to finish his studies.



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