

“We Are All Gang Chen”

Gang Chen

Department of Mechanical
Engineering

Massachusetts Institute of
Technology



Key Timeline of My Ordeal

- January 22, 2020, Logan Airport interrogation
- December, 2020, prosecutor informed MIT and my lawyers no eminent indictment
- January 14, 2021, arrested at home
- January 20, 2022, all charges dropped

Absurdity of Prosecution

- On the day of my arrest, chief prosecutor Stephanie Siegmann indicated to my lawyers that they rushed the case.
- She said among all accusations, she was most angry that I served as a reviewer (“review expert”) for the China’s Natural Science Foundation.
- In a news conference on the same day, the outgoing US Attorney Andrew Lelling questioned my loyalty to US.
- In the same news conference, FBI Special Agent in Charge Joseph Bonavolonta said “we found Chen has accepted approximately \$29 million in foreign funding”.
- While at my house an agent told my wife that “he took \$19 million dollars.” When she asked, “where is the money?” He said, “the money is at MIT”.

Seven Patterns of Misconducts

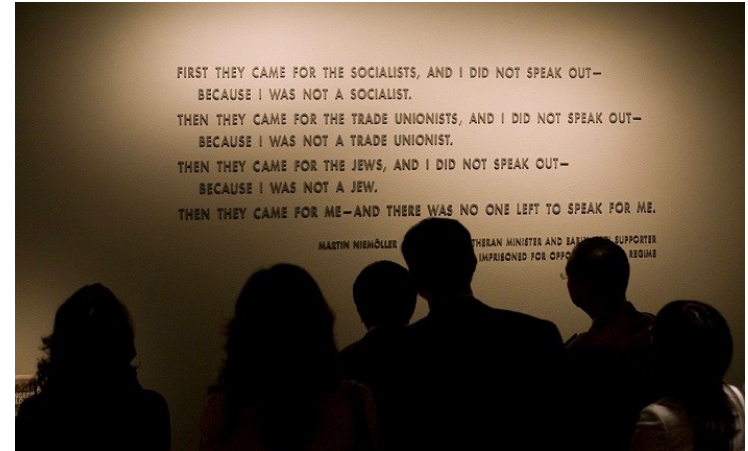
- 1. They knowingly distort facts**
- 2. They criminalize normal scientific activities**
- 3. They use emails I did not reply as criminal evidence**
- 4. Following the law and rules is also a crime**
- 5. They rushed the case; they did not do their job**
- 6. They hide the truths**
- 7. They never apologize**

<https://aasforum.org/2022/01/24/upcoming-webinar-professor-gang-chens-case/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RAaEqUaHqo>



MIT Saved Me!

I am the luckiest among the unlucky ones!



MIT President Rafael Reif wrote on 1/14/2021 to MIT community: “For all of us who know Gang, this news is surprising, deeply distressing and hard to understand.”

Professor Yoel Fink: “When the lightning stroke, I acted on it.”

MIT Faculty Spoke Out!
“We are all Gang Chen”

MIT Faculty Newsletter

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021 | VOL. XXXIII NO. 3

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[Faculty Letter to President Reif in Support of Professor Gang Chen](#)



January 21, 2021

Dear President Reif:

#WeAreAllGangChen



MIT Professor Arrested and Charged with Grant Fraud

Defendant allegedly failed to disclose his work for the People's Republic of China to U.S. Department of Energy

Thursday, January 14, 2021

MIT Professor Gang Chen Charged With Millions In Grant Fraud, Hiding China Ties

January 14, 2021 at 12:07 pm



MIT Professor Who Received \$19M in Federal Grants Arrested for Concealing Ties to China

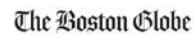
January 14, 2021 2:18 PM



MIT Professor Charged With Fraud for Failing to Disclose Work for Chinese Gov't

Gang Chen, 56, of Cambridge was arrested Thursday morning

January 14, 2021 at 4:39 pm



MIT professor indicted by federal grand jury for allegedly failing to disclose ties to China and wire fraud

January 20, 2021, 10:00 a.m.



MIT Faculty Newsletter

Faculty Letter to President Reif in Support of Professor Gang Chen

January 21, 2021



Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Letter to the community re. SUSTECH Relationship and Professor Chen

January 22, 2021



Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Member of the US National Academy of Engineering

Department Head Mechanical Engineering MIT

MIT Capers and Marion McDonald Award for Excellence in Mentoring and Advising

Bloomberg Businessweek

Anti-Asian Atmosphere Chills Chinese Scientists Working in the U.S.

April 26, 2021, 4:00 AM EDT



U.S. scientists want Congress to look into complaints of racial profiling in China Initiative

Feb. 5, 2021, 3:30 PM

Bloomberg Opinion

Criminalizing Science Is Really Dumb

The U.S. is playing into China's hands by prosecuting researchers it ought to be welcoming.

January 27, 2021, 9:00 AM EST

The New York Times

A Scientist Is Arrested, and Academics Push Back

Gang Chen, an M.I.T. professor, faces federal charges of hiding affiliations with China. His colleagues, and M.I.T., are publicly challenging the allegations.

Gang Chen, a professor of mechanical engineering at M.I.T., was arrested on suspicion of hiding affiliations with Chinese government institutions in order to secure U.S. federal grants. M.I.T.

Jan. 26, 2021



MIT Profs Back Colleague Facing 'Flawed' Fraud Charges

(January 22, 2021, 7:02 PM EST)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Justice Department Weighs Amnesty for Academics to Disclose Foreign Funding

Proposal comes as faculty members escalate opposition to criminal cases and the U.S. balances international academic collaboration with proper disclosure

Jan. 22, 2021 5:14 pm ET

Slide From
Yoel Fink

Community Support

- Professor Jeff Snyder (Northwestern University) online petition to legislatures “We are all Gang Chen” received 1483 signatures.
- Karen Chen launched “Gofundme” on Jan. 22 and reached its goal in first day. The effort raised awareness of people in similar plights. I am working on donating the raised funds to a nonprofit organization to support people in similar plights.
- Professor Chris Dames (UC Berkeley), [“In Defense of Gang Chen, in Defense of Academy freedom”](#)
- Regular gifts and messages from former group members, colleagues
- [Open letter](#) to DOJ on 3/17/21, signed by APS leadership team, and [APS webinars](#)
- Civil rights groups: [APA Justice](#), [AASF](#), [AAJC](#), [C100](#), etc.
- [Congressional roundtable](#), [congressional inquiries to DoJ](#)
- [“Winds of freedom”](#) letters from ~200 US Universities to DoJ calling for an end of China Initiative
- ...

Zigang Suo
Harvard University



Jeff Snyder
Northwestern Univ



Chris Dames
UC Berkeley



[Back to Webinar Series](#)



The US government is ending the China Initiative. Now what?

The Justice Department's effort to prosecute cases of economic espionage had drifted from its stated mission and drawn fierce criticism for appearing to target researchers because of their ethnicity.

By Jess Aloe & Eileen Guo

February 23, 2022

“But by grouping cases under the China Initiative rubric, we helped give rise to a harmful **perception** that the department applies a lower standard to investigate and prosecute criminal conduct related to that country or that we in some way view people with racial, ethnic or familial ties to China differently.”

Matthew Olsen (Assistant Attorney General)



ANNA MCNEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES

The Damage Already Done!

- I had 15 students/postdocs, now I have one post-doc and two students
- We cannot get rid of the nightmares and are constantly fearful
- A colleague is leaving, and three of his faculty friends already left US, citing my arrest was the last straw

Survey of Asian American Scholar Forum of 1354 US faculty members, mostly of Chinese heritage

- **64% is fearful of US government**
- **67% is considering leaving the country**
- **90% thinks it is more difficult to recruit international talents than five years ago**

“I have told my kids, be prepared to take care of their mom when they take me away” (a faculty friend)
“Everything they accused of you can be said of me. FBI director Christopher Wray said that they open a China related case every 10 hours. It won't take long before they come to me.” (another faculty friend)

And the Witch Hunt is Still Going On!

“There is a lot of commonality between that case and this one, factually” (Judge Robinson)

Professor's conviction questioned

LEGAL AFFAIRS | Franklin Tao, a chemist and engineer at the University of Kansas, last week was found guilty of about his ties to a Chinese research institution—and then received a sentence of setting a date to sentence. S. District Judge Julie Robinson took the unusual step of asking federal prosecutors to explain why they believe Tao intended to defraud two U.S. agencies that had funded his research. In June 2019, Tao was the first academic scientist arrested under the U.S. government's China Initiative, although he was never accused of economic espionage, the

science.org **SCIENCE**

- FBI's recent visit of a colleague's home
- Another professor stopped at airport a few weeks ago



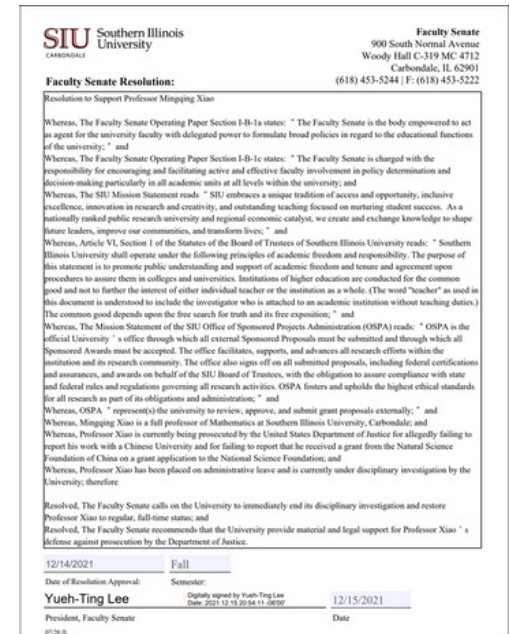
Mingqing Xiao
Mathematician
SIU Carbondale
Trial starts 4/25/22



Legal Defense Fund for Franklin Tao



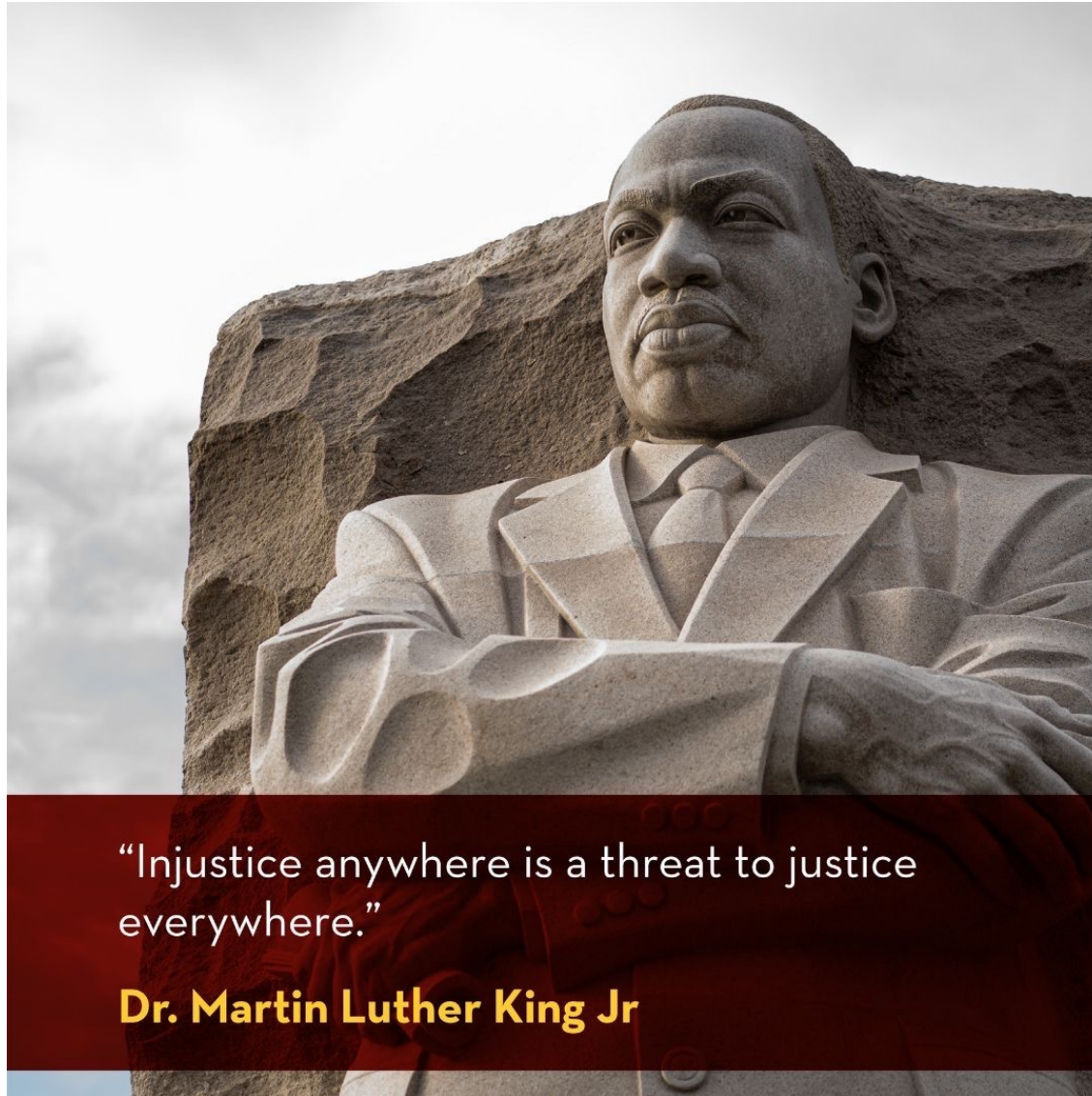
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/Legal-Defense-Fund-for-Franklin-Tao>



<https://www.apajustice.org/mingqing-xiao.html>

Five Lessons Learnt

- 1. We are all losers, US is the biggest loser.**
- 2. Leaders from universities, professional societies, and industry should stand out and protect their researchers.**
- 3. The funding agencies need to learn lessons.**
- 4. Know our rights: do not talk to FBI without lawyers.**
- 5. Politics impacts everyone, we must speak out.**



“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr