FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING AND LEARNING EVALUATION AT REGULAR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FROM 2003 TO 2008 IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

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This study explored how faculty members at regular higher education institutions in China perceived the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE). Specifically, this study examined how the NUTLE influenced faculty teaching and research and how the NUTLE influenced student learning outcomes. Primarily descriptive and exploratory, the quantitative study utilized a web-based bilingual survey that was sent to 595 faculty members affiliated with 15 institutions in Northwest China. The survey achieved a response rate of 46.9%. Descriptive statistics and cross tabulation analyses were used to better understand the relation between demographic characteristics and faculty perceptions.

Findings indicated that the majority of the faculty members were informed of the NUTLE at formal meetings and were involved in preparing for the NUTLE. After the NUTLE, most faculty members reported that their universities required them to do more research than before the NUTLE. Most of them believed the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality, with only 7.4% believing the main purpose was to enhance student learning. While disagreeing that their institutions made every effort to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes, regardless of institution types, year of evaluation, and the NUTLE grade received, most of the faculty members’ overall perception of the NUTLE was positive.

The findings were analyzed and interpreted through Hofstede’s framework of cultural dimensions. Implications for policy and practice were addressed, including reducing government administration and intervention in the implementation process of higher education evaluation, empowering colleges and universities by providing them more training opportunities
to understand higher education evaluation both locally and globally, and setting up offices of
Institutional Research to collect data for proactive self-evaluation. Recommendations were also
provided for future research.
This dissertation is dedicated to my dearest mom Shuru Hao (郝淑茹) and my most supportive daughter Yun Hao (郝韵).
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This doctoral study focuses on faculty perceptions regarding the first National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) implemented from 2003 to 2008 at four-year regular higher education institutions in China. Higher education evaluations had been conducted on a trial basis for the purpose of practice in different types of universities by the Ministry of Education (MOE) before the 2003-2008 NUTLE was implemented at four-year regular higher education institutions. Regular higher education institutions in China enroll students with passing scores in the yearly National Entrance Examination. All regular higher institutions are funded by the government and are also administered by the government at different levels. Of all regular higher education institutions, some offer four-year undergraduate programs only, some offer four-year undergraduate programs together with three-year graduate programs, and the rest offer three-year associate degree programs. According to the MOE (2008), a total of 2,263 regular higher education institutions exist in China, of which 1,079 offer undergraduate programs that lead to bachelor’s degrees. In the NUTLE, of all the regular higher education institutions offering bachelor’s degrees, more than half (598) were evaluated from 2003 to 2008.

A Brief History of Chinese Higher Education

Historically, there was no institution of higher learning in the Chinese tradition that could be called a “university” in the European sense (Hayhoe, 1996; Yang, 2005). Modern Chinese higher education did not start to develop until the late 19th century after foreign powers invaded China (Du, 1992). Although there were elements of higher education in the teaching and learning practiced in China, higher education per se occurred when the government sent young people to other countries so that they could be trained to be national officials of high rank (Gu,
1984). Later, higher education institutions were gradually developed with the influence of foreign countries such as Japan, Germany, France, Great Britain, and the US (Du, 1992; Hayhoe, 1996).

Initially named the Imperial University of Peking (*Jingshi Da Xuetang*), Peking University was established in 1898, as the first national higher education institution in China, and this marked the threshold of modern Chinese higher education (Du, 1992; Gu, 1984; Yang, 2005). Peking University was patterned on the University of Tokyo, which, in turn, had been influenced by both French and German academic models (Hayhoe, 1996). Following the American model, Tsinghua University was established in 1911 with American Boxer Indemnity funds as a language school named Tsinghua Imperial College (i.e., *Tsinghua Xuetang*). Historically, Tsinghua Imperial College was a preparatory school for those students who would be sent by the government to study in the US (Tsinghua University, 2011). By the late 1920s, Tsinghua University became one of the most prestigious national universities, led by outstanding Chinese scholars who had been educated in the US (Hayhoe, 1996).

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the new government prioritized higher education and decided that the principle of education was to serve socialist construction (Du, 1992; Wang, 2003; Yang, 2005). Since 1949, the purpose of education in China has been pragmatic, focused on socialist construction, and promoted with well-known slogans that education must serve the people in producing well-educated laborers for socialist construction along the lines of China’s political and economic development (Du, 1992). Since western policies sought to isolate China at the time that the Communist Party of China came to power, Chairman Mao Zedong announced that China would learn from the socialist Soviet Union (Yang, 2005); thus, the new government began the higher education reform or
reorganization with the help of the former Soviet Union. Specifically, between 1950 and 1952, 126 Soviet specialists worked in China as consultants to help with higher education reform (Hayhoe, 1989). There were approximately 700 Soviet scholars teaching as foreign experts in Chinese higher education institutions in the early 1950s to help reorganize the higher education institutions based on the Soviet model (Hayhoe, 1989; Yang, 2005). After the reorganization, 204 institutions of higher education were formed. These institutions could be classified into four types: (a) comprehensive universities with liberal arts and sciences; (b) poly-technical colleges and universities with a wide range of applied scientific fields; (c) independent colleges with specialties in engineering, agriculture, medicine, business administration, political science, law, languages and literature, arts and physical culture; and (d) normal colleges and universities for teacher training (Du, 1992).

During the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, higher education in China was severely impacted (Du, 1992; Wang, 2005). Enrollment in higher education, classroom teaching, and higher education administration were all suspended (Du, 1992; Yang, 2005). Faculty and administrators were sent to factories or farms to "reform their world views," the result of which was that no classroom teaching was conducted and students were openly encouraged to criticize administers and faculty. Mao Zedong attempted to “build an egalitarian system of education available to all” (Du, 1992, p.13). Such egalitarian practice would provide students from working-class families with opportunities to study at the once-prestigious institutions of higher learning. However, this egalitarian approach to education did not fulfill the goal of producing high-quality technicians and scientists that China needed for its socialist construction (Yang, 2005). The consequences of the Cultural Revolution for higher education were that Chinese
colleges and universities were left with a faculty composed of instructors who had not taught for 10 years or those who had been trained only for a short time (Du, 1992).

After adoption of the 1976 Open Door policy for economic reform proposed by former President Deng Xiaoping, economic reform was practiced in order to realize the Four Modernizations (Du, 1992). The Four Modernizations, in the fields of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology, were goals set by Zhou Enlai at the 1963 Conference on Science and Technology focused on developing China into a great economic power. Higher education institutions at that time were required to train students to be specialists to help realize these Four Modernizations.

Foreign Influence on and Development of Chinese Higher Education

From the time that the Open Door policy was adopted and practiced in 1976, China was ready to learn advanced developments in science and technology from western countries. The way to do this was through education, specifically through higher education. Chinese higher education began to be much more influenced by the American and European models than ever before (Du, 1992; Yang, 2005), especially after Deng Xiaoping advocated in 1978 that China send “tens of thousands of students to study abroad” to learn about advanced technologies (Deng, 2003). Right after Deng’s speech, there was the first large number of students going abroad to study, particularly in the US and Great Britain in the 1980s.

Because the Chinese government called for learning western technologies to build socialist modernizations, it became popular for young people to receive college education in western countries. According to the data from the Institute of International Education, China sent very few students to the US from the 1950s until 1975. In the 1980s though, the numbers of Chinese students studying in the US increased dramatically, and China is now the second leading
source of international students studying in the USA (Institute of International Education, 2011). After finishing their studies, Chinese graduates returned to China with enhanced knowledge and experience to contribute to the country’s economic and social development (Deng, 2003). Not only did the study-abroad students return with knowledge in applied science and technology, they also returned with western forms of educational assessment and evaluation. The idea of assessment and evaluation was introduced to Chinese higher education in the 1980s, and shortly thereafter the government decided to implement an evaluation of higher education in China. According to the MOE, the first evaluation in higher education (i.e., the Higher Engineering Education Evaluation) was conducted in 1985.

With the rapid development of the national economy, China’s higher education also developed steadily. Higher education enrollment has been on the increase since the Open Door policy was initiated. The most pronounced period of growth started in the mid-1990s (Gao, Zhang, Chen, Lan & Zhang, 2009; Lin & Zhang, 2006; Mok, 2009; Ngok, 2008; Zhang, 2008). Although China was already practicing a market economy, the quota system was still functioning in the higher education sector. In order for more students to gain access to higher education, the Chinese government decided to increase quotas for higher education institutions in the 1990s.

**Expansion and Accountability in Higher Education**

From 1998 to 2002, the higher education student enrollment rate in China increased by 165% (Cheng & Li, 2005). By 2004, the number of students studying at colleges and universities was more than 20 million (Zhou, 2009). By 2007, the number of enrolled students in regular higher education institutions was 20,210,249 (Ministry of Education, 2009), and roughly about 1,060,000 were receiving higher education abroad (Chen, 2007). With the dramatic increase of students studying and living on Chinese campuses, the availability of resources,
including infrastructure, library materials, and teaching faculty, was inadequate (Li, Zhu, & Liu, 2010). As a result of inadequate facilities and infrastructure and high faculty-student and staff-student ratios (Zhou, 2009), quality in higher education became a primary concern for the government and for higher education institutions themselves as well (Li, Zhu, & Liu, 2010a).

To better utilize resources in higher education for the enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness (Mok, 2005), the Chinese government encouraged institutions to merge, resulting in universities with a broader range of knowledge and more programs in the arts and sciences as well as professional specializations (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004). This merging was the largest scale reform in management and governance since early 1994 (Mok, 2005). The merging was described as “an effective reversal of the specialized system,” which was established under the Soviet model in the 1950s (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004, p. 88). According to the 2006 data from the Ministry of Education, there were 431 mergers between 1990 and 2006, which account for 24% of the total number of higher education institutions in 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2007). The “merger wave” involved almost all types of higher education institutions in China (Wan & Peterson, 2007, p. 683) and has resulted in a notable diversification of the earlier Chinese higher education system (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004).

Externally, there has been a growing tendency for accountability all over the world for higher education institutions to meet public, academic, and market demands. Global neoliberalism has impacted higher education in terms of performance, efficiency, and consumerism. Neoliberalism, according to Turner (2008), is committed to the importance of the market, minimal state intervention, and private property. The Chinese government has adopted the neoliberal ideology and has cast higher education into the market by allowing private higher education to develop and providing less government funding (Mok, 2005).
Internally, with the fast expansion of student enrollment since 1999 and the slow pace of improvement in classroom facility accommodations, lack of availability of basic infrastructures, and undesirable faculty student ratios, classes had to be bigger and bigger; buildings had to be converted to classrooms that were scattered in many places; and more programs were approved without qualified faculty and appropriate textbooks. In this situation, quality assurance became a great concern not only for the MOE, but also for parents, society, and higher education institutions.

**Overview of Regular Higher Education in China**

The term “regular higher education” is used in contrast to private higher education and the five other means of higher education (i.e., television and radio higher education, on-the-job higher education, correspondence higher education, night college education, and self-taught higher education) in China. Regular higher education institutions are institutions approved by the MOE. They include institutions of four-year undergraduate and three-year graduate programs, four-five year medical professional programs, and colleges of two-year and three-year associate programs. They are public higher education institutions, which do not include vocational and private institutions, except for the vocational schools established with the national policy of higher education expansion. This subset of vocational schools was approved by the MOE and they are affiliated with the public colleges and universities providing infrastructure, facilities, and faculty.

Regular higher education enrolls secondary school graduates who have passed the National Entrance Examination in a yearly cycle. After students are admitted to regular higher education institutions, they are required to be full-time students and live in campus dormitories throughout the duration of their study. Regular higher education institutions grant associate,
undergraduate, and graduate degrees. All regular higher education institutions are under the jurisdiction of the MOE, either directly or indirectly, through the central government or local governments at different levels (Wang, 2003).

**The Higher Education Evaluation Center in China**

The Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC), an administrative organization under the supervision of the MOE, was established in August 2004 to organize, supervise, and implement the evaluation of baccalaureate degree programs and associate degree programs conferred in institutions of higher education (HEEC, 2011). The HEEC was established as a result of the MOE’s intention to develop a comprehensive evaluation agency to be responsible for all evaluations in higher education in China (Jiang, 2009). Its main responsibilities include organizing and implementing evaluations, based on the guidelines, regulations, and evaluation of the MOE; conducting research in terms of policies associated with higher education evaluation; organizing and training experts for evaluations; and providing consultation and information about higher education evaluation (HEEC, 2011). This organization is responsible for all sorts of higher education evaluations. Working under the MOE, the HEEC sets rules that institutions of higher education are supposed to follow.

The National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) for regular higher education institutions was conducted from 2003 to 2008 through a top-down process. The purpose of the NUTLE, according to China’s former Minister of Education, Zhou Ji (2009), was to establish a sound system of “monitoring teaching quality, gaining a major promotional effect on teaching work, and encouraging colleges and universities to shift [the] focus of their work to improving quality” (p. 12). The government was using the NUTLE as a tool to guide higher education. The MOE established a five-year cycle evaluation system in 2003, and evaluation in
higher education for “systematization, professionalization, and science [modernization]” was underway (Zhou, 2009, p. 12).

In 2004, the Ministry of Education in China issued the *Circular of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on the Printing and Distribution of the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation Plan for Regular Higher Education Institutions (Trial Implementation)* (MOE, 2004). This plan provided the guiding principles of “consolidation, deepening, improvement, and development” (p. 8) for the NUTLE. According to then Vice-Minister of Education, Wu Qidi, the NUTLE represented the direction in which China would continue “with efforts to strengthen evaluation of its higher education institutions” (as cited in Jiang, 2009, p. 4).

The NUTLE was implemented after several years of experimental evaluation in different types of regular higher education institutions in China. According to the MOE, the NUTLE from 2003 to 2008 was conducted with the intention that regular higher education institutions would “actively promote teaching reforms and development . . . [to] improve the quality of talent cultivation” (MOE, 2004, p. 8). The 2004 plan was a result of amendments to the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation Plan for Regular Higher Education Institutions (Trial Implementation) printed and distributed in 2002. The 2004 plan provided an index scheme, an index and grade standards, conclusions and criteria, evaluation plans and rationale for participating institutions to self-evaluate their own institutions and for expert teams to refer to during the NUTLE implementation (General Office, MOE, 2004). When the first cycle of evaluation came to an end in 2008, there were reflections and critiques among educators, parents, and society.
Statement of the Problem

Although higher education evaluation in western countries, like the US, has long been practiced (Shavelson, 2010), it is a comparatively new concept in the context of Chinese higher education (Jiang, 2009). Evaluation is widely conducted in American higher education institutions for accountability and accreditation. Accountability in higher education is “related to efficiency, effectiveness, and performance evaluation” (Jiang, 2009, p. 40). Evaluations of efficiency, effectiveness, and performance are becoming prevalent worldwide because of neoliberalism, a dominant ideology in the marketplace as well as in higher education in the US (Harvey, 2005) and “one of the most widespread tendencies of the new millennium,” which has penetrated higher education around the world (Giroux, 2009, p. 30).

Since evaluation in higher education was introduced to China in the 1980s (Jiang, 2009), it has become one of the most often debated topics in recent years, especially after the NUTLE was conducted between 2003 and 2008. The most common themes discussed in the literature are achievements, problems, and prospects of the evaluation. There is little discussion about the evaluation process in terms of expert teams’ site visits, and the ways in which teaching and learning was evaluated.

The NUTLE was the largest scale evaluation ever in the history of higher education evaluation in China (Wang, 2007; Zhou, 2009). During the first cycle of the five-year evaluation from 2003 to 2008, 589 colleges and universities of regular higher education had been approved for the evaluation from the MOE, and they were evaluated under the organization and supervision of the HEEC. This evaluation of undergraduate teaching was “the most far-reaching reform since the readjustment of colleges and departments” (Jiang, 2009, p. 4), which had reorganized higher education institutions in China after the Soviet model in the early 1950s. The
purposes, standards, and procedures of the NUTLE are nearly identical to those of higher education accreditation in other countries (Gao et al., 2009). Undergraduate teaching and learning evaluation in higher education in China was intended to work as a quality assurance mechanism in the stage of massification of higher education when increase in the higher education gross enrollment rate reached 21% (Zhou, 2009). Zhou (2009) emphasized in his 2006 address at the Meeting to Exchange Experiences on the NUTLE that teaching evaluation was “a critical measure to improve the quality of education and teaching” (p. 12). With the implementation of the NUTLE, higher education evaluation of undergraduate teaching and learning had been put “on the track of standardization and systemization” (Gao et al., 2009, p. 87).

The MOE already announced that this type of evaluation would be conducted once every five years (MOE, 2003). Accordingly, the second round evaluation would be scheduled to start in 2009; however, there was a three-year break before it was implemented again in 2012 for conformity assessment. After the 2003-2008 NUTLE was completed, those in power, such as government officials and university administrators, praised the benefits of the NUTLE while also hinting at possible drawbacks. In contrast, those not in power, such as faculty, staff, and students, either had little voice or focused heavily on the side effects of the NUTLE (e.g., formalism; waste of time, money and labor; and job stress).

This research study explored faculty members’ perceptions regarding the Nationwide Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) that was conducted in China from 2003 to 2008. The NUTLE was planned, designed, supervised, and conducted under the authority of the MOE. It was designed to evaluate the overall practice of undergraduate teaching and learning in such aspects as mission of the university, faculty demographics and development,
teaching conditions and utilization of existing facilities, program development and teaching reform, teaching management, academic culture, and student learning outcomes. The evaluation was designed to be conducted in all regular higher education institutions in China over a five-year period. The organization that works under the guidance of the MOE, the HEEC, was responsible for implementing the NUTLE.

Therefore, the research summarized in this dissertation examined the perceptions of the NUTLE from the perspective of faculty members who actually did the teaching and interacted with the students during classroom teaching. Their perceptions of the evaluation are critical to add to the existing literature concerning the impact that the NUTLE had had on post-evaluation undergraduate teaching and student learning outcomes.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore how faculty members perceived the NUTLE that was implemented from 2003 to 2008 in China. Specifically, this study examines what faculty members regarded as the influence the NUTLE has had on undergraduate teaching and learning.

Faculty members from the Northwest region were invited to participate in this study. The Northwest region is one of the six main geographical administrative regions set by the central government at the founding of the PRC. They are Northeast China, North China, Northwest China, Southwest China, South Central China, and East China (See Figure 1). Participants for this study were recruited from the Northwest region. Of the six regions, Northwest is regarded as an underdeveloped region with very low gross domestic product (GDP) (Shao & Chen, 2005). The number of regular higher education institutions was 69 in total by 2009 (China Education, n.d.). Target institutions in this study were from the 69 that had undergone the NUTLE.
Faculty governance is missing in China’s higher education governance. In the case of the NUTLE, although faculty contributed a great deal in preparation for the evaluation, they primarily took work orders from administrators and staff, who assigned tasks to faculty as required in the Plan issued by the MOE. For example, according to the Plan, on their site visits, expert teams would evaluate students’ examination papers three years prior to the evaluation of a particular institution, so the collection and the reorganization of students’ examination papers
would be delegated to faculty members. Some faculty members had to re-grade examination papers to meet the standards set in the Plan. Because there was a plethora of complaints about the additional workload, the MOE changed the requirement from three years to one year prior to the evaluation. Specific issues of concern in this study include how faculty members had been involved in the NUTLE, how much they were informed of the NUTLE standards and indices concerning teaching and student learning evaluation, and how this evaluation of regular higher education in China has impacted faculty teaching and student learning outcomes.

**Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following key questions regarding the 2003-2008 NUTLE at four-year regular higher education institutions in China:

1. How were faculty members informed of the NUTLE implementation and in what ways did they prepare for its implementation?
2. What were the perceptions of faculty members at regular higher education institutions regarding the 2003-2008 NUTLE?
3. Did the NUTLE impact faculty’s teaching and research afterwards?
4. How has the 2003-2008 NUTLE influenced undergraduate student learning from the perspective of faculty?

In all cases the answers to these questions were based on the responses of the total sample and the sample sorted by various independent variables of interest.

**Significance of the Study**

A goal of this study is to provide policy makers with a critical perspective because faculty were the ones who had direct contact with students, the ones who knew most about student learning experiences, and the ones who should have an important say in how teaching
and student learning should be assessed and evaluated. The majority of the existing literature related to the NUTLE is mainly associated with perceptions of people in administration, and the most discussed themes in the literature to date were reflections about achievements, problems, and prospects of the evaluation by MOE personnel, middle-level administrators and HEEC professors, presidents and deans of key national universities, and directors of the NUTLE office of higher education institutions (Jiang, 2009). The viewpoints of faculty members, as important stakeholders in the application of teaching, however, were missing. As called for by the government to deepen reform in undergraduate teaching (Zhou, 2009), faculty perceptions about the impact of the NUTLE could provide data for policy makers to design better higher education evaluations in the future.

Since China has a highly centralized top-down administration model, the evaluation was initiated by the government and implemented by the government agencies. Prior to the NUTLE implementation, the Ministry of Education notified all regular higher education institutions about the intended evaluation, and higher education institutions would apply to be evaluated. In the same way, university administration notified the whole university about the evaluation and established rules to prepare for it. Most faculty members participated as required by administrators and staff, and there were few opportunities for their concerns to be heard. This study provided faculty an opportunity to express perceptions and concerns about the NUTLE in which they had been involved. As former minister of the MOE, Zhou (2009) stressed that the improvement of teaching quality was the key to education quality. As such, faculty members were provided an opportunity in this study to give their significant say about the NUTLE. By ascertaining faculty perceptions of the NUTLE, this study seeks to inform policy makers of a
perspective that was too important to miss in a possible second round of this evaluation, planned by the MOE.

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. The first chapter has provided an introduction to the study, including a brief history of Chinese higher education and the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE). The second chapter provides relevant literature about the NUTLE. The third chapter introduces the methodology used in the study. The fourth chapter presents the study’s findings, and the fifth chapter discusses the findings, implications, and the limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for future research.

**Definition of Key Terms**

**211 Project Institutions**—were government-initiated to build one-hundred institutions of higher education and key disciplinary areas as a national priority for the 21st century. The “21” in “211” means the 21st century, and the second “1” in “211” means 100 universities. Together “211,” means in the 21st century, China was to strengthen 100 universities to train high-level professionals for China’s social and economic development (China Education Center, 2012). Universities in this project enjoy more government funding than ordinary institutions of higher education.

**985 Project Institutions**—were announced on May 4, 1998, by then Chairman Jiang Zemin. Jiang declared that “China must have a number of first-class universities” for international competition. In the term “985,” “98” means 1998, and “5” means May. In the Chinese culture, it is very common that an event or policy is named to mark the time the event took place. So, together “985” means with Jiang’s announcement in May 1998, the project was started. Beginning with nine universities, the project now has about 40 universities benefiting from an increased share of funding from the government (China Education Center, 2012).
Great Leap Forward—was a social economic and political movement in China that started in 1958 and ended in 1960. Mao Zedong, the Chairman at that time, called on the whole nation to develop industry and agriculture greatly in order to compete with the US. The consequences of the Great Leap Forward were that radical transformation of the countryside was made, and rural industries were started with unrealistic goals. Considered an economic failure, the Great Leap Forward caused shortage of food and raw materials.

Higher Education Quality—is a multidimensional concept that is more abstract than concrete in China. It includes almost everything related to the practice of higher education; however, it is hard to define exactly what it exactly means. This study applies Chen Wei’s (2004) definition that higher education quality refers to quality of graduates and quality of the higher education system, which includes the mission of a higher education institution, faculty demographics to meet the needs of its programs, infrastructure and resources for teaching and research, program development, and teaching practice and teaching administration.

Key Universities—are those regular higher education institutions selected by the government that receive more funding and more educational resources in China. These universities are the ones that are authorized the right to be the first institutions to enroll students who have higher National Entrance Examination scores. There are key universities on the national level, funded and administered directly by the Ministry of Education or other ministries in the central government. Key universities on the provincial level are funded by the provincial government and administered by both the central and the provincial governments. All key universities enjoy more educational resources from the different levels of government. All 985 and 211 Project institutions are key universities.
Neoliberalism—is a theory of political economic practices that advocates that a human’s well-being can be best advanced by “liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade,” a dominant hegemony in the US and much of the world (Harvey, 2005, p. 2). The neoliberal ideology emphasizes privatization, commercialism, and government deregulation.

Regular Higher Education in China—refers to higher education that recruits high school graduates through the National Entrance Examination every year. All regular higher education institutions are government-funded and administered. There are four-year regular higher education institutions and three-year higher education institutions. This study involves four-year regular higher education institutions. All regular higher education institutions are public institutions.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the purpose and philosophy of regular higher education in China, the law of education (jiaoyu fa) including the law of higher education (gaodengjiaoyu fa), teacher’s law (jiaoshi fa), as well as administration and governance in higher education in China. It summarizes the existing literature on Chinese higher education from different perspectives associated with reforms and their results. In particular, it examines literature on the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE), which is the focus of the present study.

Higher education in China has experienced dramatic expansion since 1999 and even expanded more than was projected in the Tenth-Five-Year Plan from 2001 to 2005 (Zhou, 2009). As a result, China now has the largest higher education system in the world, with more than 27 million students in various higher education institutions (Cen & Ross, 2009; Jiang, 2009). Just as argued by Li, Morgan, and Ding (2008), “a decline in quality accompanies the expansion of higher education” (p. 695), which was the concern of the government when higher education in China had the largest number of students enrolled.

Purpose of Higher Education in China

The Education Law of the PRC (China Education Center, n.d.) stipulates that education is “the foundation for construction of socialist modernization, [thus] the state shall give priority to the development of educational undertakings” (Article 3). Education at all levels in China works to serve the economic and social development of the country (Wang, 2003). Higher education adheres to the Higher Education Law of the PRC (China Education and Research Network, 2005). Higher education is “socialist higher education” in nature (Article 3), and it should be “conducted with the service of the socialist modernization in combination with productive labor”
so that the educated can “become builders and successors for the socialist course” (Article 4). The central government is, therefore, responsible for planning the development of higher education, administering higher education institutions, and promoting higher education.

The main task for higher education is “to serve the economic construction of the country” (China Education and Research Network, 2005). The role of higher education has been paramount in China’s political and economic development (Hayhoe, 1996; Wang, 2003). As expressed in the World Bank (1997) report, higher education institutions in China have always played important roles in sustaining its economic growth rates and in facilitating the socially and environmentally responsible development.

After China adopted the Open Door Policy of economic reform in 1978, colleges and universities were directed to train students in the goals of the Four Modernizations—agriculture, industry, defense, and science and technology, as set forth by Zhou Enlai in 1963 (Du, 1992; Wang 2003). In contemporary Chinese history, colleges and universities were, however, also places where political movements started. Two of the most well-known movements are the May Fourth Movement in Beijing in 1919, which marked a shift away from imperialism and toward nationalism (Du, 1992; Wang 2003), and the June Fourth Movement in 1989 for political reform in China. The May Fourth Movement included mass student demonstrations to protest the Chinese government’s weak response to the Treaty of Versailles for China. Seven decades later in June 1989, students from universities all over the country demonstrated at Tian’anmen Square calling for more political reform and democracy.

Since the 1980s, the market economic measures of neoliberalism have gradually penetrated higher education in China (Shi, 2009) with the establishment of private higher education institutions (Mok, 2005). Neoliberalism, according to Harvey (2005), is a theory of
political economic practices advocating that human well-being can be best advanced by
“liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework
characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (p. 2). In the global
neoliberal environment (Hill & Kumar, 2009), neoliberalism has evolved into one of “the most
widespread, antidemocratic tendencies” with corporations occupying public space and
disconnecting power from issues of equity, social justice, and civic responsibility (Giroux, 2009,
p. 30). Neoliberalism is strongly associated with free market and profits. As Giroux (2005)
argued, “Under neoliberalism everything either is for sale or is plundered for profit” (p. 2).
Neoliberalism helps to push for “the privatization of all non-commodified public spheres” (p. 14).
Higher education in China has been greatly influenced by the international trend of
neoliberalism. China’s increase in the number of private institutions since the 1980s could be
attributed to the Chinese government embracing neoliberalism. Likewise, influenced by
neoliberalism, the Chinese government decreased government funding, increased government
control (i.e., performance based initiatives), and introduced evaluation into Chinese higher
education.

Evaluation of higher education in China has been conducted in the light of the
international neoliberal trend, dramatic economic development and social transformation, as well
as the unprecedented expansion of enrollment in higher education since 1990 (Shi, 2009).
Currently, China has the largest higher education system in terms of gross enrollment in the
world. With the unprecedented increasing rate in enrollment in higher education since 1999,
quality enhancement has become the core issue for the central government in the higher
education sector (Shi, 2009; Zhou, 2009).
Overview of Higher Education in China

While China has thousands of years of history, formal higher education in China did not start until the establishment of Peking University in 1891. This university was a product of combined foreign influence from Japan and Western countries (Hayhoe, 1996). The term “university” would not apply in the context of Chinese higher education until the late nineteenth century, when modern higher institutions like those in Europe and North America were established on a new basis (Hayhoe, 1996). Aside from the teaching of emperors’ sons at the Royal Palace called guozijian, China’s authentic higher education started with Confucian colleges (shuyuan), where knowledge of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucian thoughts were disseminated (Hayhoe, 1993). In 1949, with the establishment of the PRC, the central government designed and structured Chinese higher education institutions for two purposes: one to sustain economic growth rates, and two to facilitate socially and environmentally responsible development in the country (World Bank, 1997). Economic development has always been at the top of the agenda for the central government since the Open Door policy was initiated. Everything in higher education, as shown in the national plan, is closely related to the development of the national economy (Yang, 2004).

After the 1949 founding of the PRC, the central government attached great importance to higher education development, and there has been significant progress in higher education (Department of Foreign Affairs of the State Education Commission of the PRC, 1996). Since the central government put higher education at the top of the agenda, it has been under constant reform (Du, 1996; Wang, 2003). As a result, the scale of higher education has been considerably expanded; the structure of higher education has become more suitable for socialist construction and the quality of education and training, as well as the efficiency of higher education.
Institutions has been noticeably improved (Department of Foreign Affairs of the State Education Commission of the P.R.C., 1996).

Under the new leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the central government practiced significant reforms with different foci in higher education. Specifically, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, and Jiang Zemin, three generations of leaders, all impacted higher education reforms. During Mao’s leadership, higher education was reorganized based on the former Soviet model. The government controlled all institutions, made all types of educational institutions public, including foreign-owned ones established by missionaries, and reorganized higher education institutions to satisfy the needs of constructing a new socialist country (Wang, 2003). Under Mao’s leadership, the former Soviet model reinforced the government’s administrative power over education, and China indiscriminately copied the former Soviet educational mode in the 1950s (Wang, 2003).

The Soviet model was adopted as an “Elder Brother” (because the former Soviet Union was a socialist country with experience for China to learn); this experience in socialist construction developed because the leadership under Mao believed that “direct and immediate emulation of the former Soviet model . . . would make possible the most rapid progress” (Hayhoe, 1993, p. 486). Accordingly, Soviet experts were sent to help reorganize all higher education institutions from 1952 to 1953. This was known as “the readjustment of colleges and departments” or reorganization (yuanxi tiaozheng), which was to give priority to the training of scientists, technicians, and teachers, as well as to the development of technical colleges (Qiang, 1996, p. 17). The reorganization dramatically changed colleges and departments. Programs were cancelled, merged, or created; colleges and departments were either created or abolished; and new institutions were established to adhere to the Soviet model (Hayhoe, 1996). All higher
education institutions were reestablished to serve different sectors in socialist construction, and these institutions were to report to corresponding ministries, rather than solely the Ministry of Education (Hayhoe, 1993). Thus, institutions of higher education were reorganized to train future employees as needed in specific fields under the planned economy, the result of which was that graduates were taught a narrow scope of knowledge in comparatively specialized fields of study.

With the beginning of the Great Leap Forward in 1958, Mao Zedong abandoned the Soviet educational model because the Sino-Soviet relationship changed. Instead, the decision was made that an education system with Chinese characteristics was to be established, and reforms in education were made, including “strengthening political and ideological education” (Wang, 2003, p. 10). The separation from the Soviet model helped cultivate higher education institutions with Chinese traditions, and the alienation from western countries forced China to rely on itself for the development of higher education. Mao Zedong introduced the idea of education to serve workers and peasants, which was the prelude to the notorious Cultural Revolution. When education was advocated to serve peasants and workers, students were required to immerse themselves with the masses in the countryside and factories for vocational education.

From 1966 to 1976, the Cultural Revolution swept China. This was a period of great upheaval in higher education when the national examination for admissions to higher education institutions was discontinued, admissions of undergraduate and graduate students were suspended for six years and 12 years, respectively, and admission of students from peasant and working-class family backgrounds was initiated in 1970. Oppression of intellectuals was prevalent, and faculty and administrators at higher education institutions were sent to the
countryside or factories to reform their world views. There was a widespread attitude of the uselessness of formal education. Honor was given to students who could not answer any exam questions.

When Deng Xiaoping came to power at the end of the Cultural Revolution, a new historical reform period started (Wang, 2003). Leadership under Deng Xiaoping became increasingly aware of the importance of higher education to ensure the quality of the country’s workforce and to carrying out cutting-edge research (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004). Reforms in higher education were characterized by decentralization and marketization to better serve economic reforms and socialist modernizations. Local governments and individuals were encouraged to be engaged in and contribute to the development of higher education (Mok, 1999; Ngok, 2008; Wang, 2003). Under both Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin’s leadership, the government recognized that higher education institutions could help economic and social development if they were given a considerable degree of freedom to shape their own identities. Promoting some of the key Chinese universities to world-class status was seen as a priority to advance economic and political construction (Cheng & Liu, 2008; Hayhoe & Zha, 2004). Two important initiatives were launched under Deng Xiaoping’s and Jiang Zemin’s leadership respectively: the 211 and the 985 projects.

**Projects 211 and 985**

With limited resources and high demand for quality higher education, the central government implemented policies that would give significant financial support to 100 universities to help them become competitive internationally (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004). Project 211 was launched in 1995 as the largest main construction project funded directly by the central government since the reorganization (Shi, 2009). This project was aimed at building 100 key
colleges and universities with programs competitive among the world’s higher education institutions. Project 985, announced by Chairman Jiang Zemin in his speech at the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Peking University, was aimed at “building a few world-class universities through national efforts” (as cited in Shi, 2009, p. 106). With these projects, the government committed great financial resources to make China more competitive with other higher education institutions around the world. It is clear that these two projects actually privileged some institutions over others in resource allocations since universities selected for these two projects received more government funding at the national and provincial levels (Hayhoe & Zha, 2004).

The third wave of reform, under Jiang Zemin’s leadership, involved significant higher education expansion starting in 1999 and was viewed as a remarkable change in China’s higher education (Ngok, 2008). After the Cultural Revolution, the national entrance examinations were resumed to recruit college students in 1977, and the percentages of gross enrollment have steadily increased. The World Bank data show that the gross student enrollment ratio in higher education in China was rapidly and steadily increasing. Between 1991 and 1995 period, the percentage increase went from 3% to 5%; between 1996 and 2000, from 5% to 8%; between 2001 and 2005, from 10% to 19%; and between 2006 and 2009, from 21% to 25% (The World Bank, n.d.).

According to Trow (2010), when the gross rate of enrollment in higher education reaches 15%, higher education is referred to as mass education rather than elite education. In the case of higher education in China, the gross rate of enrollment reached 15% in 2002, indicating the transition from elite higher education to mass higher education. Since 1999 higher education in China entered “an era of swift growth” (Ngok, 2008, p. 549), and this growth lasted until 2005. According to Zhou (2009), by the end of 2005, the total number of students in institutions of
higher education nationwide exceeded 23 million; the gross rate of enrollment reached 21%; and higher education in China had entered an internationally acknowledged stage of massification. Trow (2010) discussed the problems of higher education associated with this growth. He mentioned that the growth of higher education “manifests itself in at least three quite different ways: the rate of growth, the absolute size of both systems and individual institutions, and the proportion of the relevant age group enrolled in institutions of higher education” (p. 89). The case in higher education expansion in China reflects these three aspects of growth.

**Education Law of the People’s Republic of China**

By the end of the 20th century, China passed education laws to provide legal support and supervision to education at all levels. The Education Law of the PRC was adopted on March 18, 1995 and became effective since September 1, 1995 (China Education Center, n.d.). The Higher Education Law of the PRC was passed by the People’s Congress in 1998. According to the Higher Education Law, higher education in China “shall be conducted in adherence to the educational principles of the State, in the service of the socialist modernization drive and in combination with productive labor, in order that educatees shall become builders and successors for the socialist cause” (Article 4). The Law also stipulates that the government “formulates plans for the development of higher education, runs higher education institutions, and promotes higher education in various ways” (Article 6). The Law asserts that the government will provide “unified guidance and administration” for all higher education institutions in China. As Article 13 of the Higher Education Law (1999) explains, “the people’s governments of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government shall undertake overall coordination of higher education in their own administrative regions and administer the higher education institutions . . . that they are authorized by the State Council to administer.”
Education departments at different levels of the government have, therefore, the authority to administer the practice of higher education of all types. With the Higher Education Law serving as the guiding principle, the Chinese educational system became one of the most highly centralized systems in the world (Wang, 2003).

In the PRC, “teacher” is a general term for all who work in educational institutions, such as primary, junior, and senior high schools as well as colleges and universities. The responsibility of a teacher was described as “chuandao shouye jiehuo” (i.e., to transmit wisdom, to impart knowledge, and to resolve doubts) by Han Yu in ancient China. “Chuandao shouye jiehuo” explains that teachers are responsible for teaching values and principles, disseminating knowledge, and answering students’ questions. The cultural dynamic in Chinese society is that teachers are revered as both knowledgeable in their fields of study and role models (Hayhoe & Li, 2010). In Chinese society, teachers were, first, figuratively called “engineers of people’s souls” (renlei linghun de gongchengshi), which means teachers are supposed to disseminate knowledge and educate students so that they have proper moral standards. Teachers are also referred to as “intellectuals,” meaning that they are knowledgeable and can easily learn more and advanced knowledge. However, during the Cultural Revolution, teachers were popularly categorized as “the ninth stinking category” (chou laojiu), with the first eight categories being “landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, bourgeois rightists, renegades (traitors), enemy agents, and capitalist roaders.” Teachers were sent to “reform” themselves on farms or in factories instead of teaching in the classroom. However, after the Cultural Revolution, when the government prioritized education in order to develop socialist economic construction, teachers’ social status was improved. Society as a whole respected the profession of teaching, especially after the National College Entrance Examination was resumed in 1977.
Parents who were unable to receive higher education themselves respected teachers more because those teachers could help their children pass the college entrance examination and subsequently gain access to higher education.

To honor the teaching profession in China, the People’s Congress passed a motion in 1985 to have September 10 as Teacher’s Day. Under Jiang Zemin’s leadership, the National People’s Congress passed the Teachers Law of the PRC in 1993. This law was meant to protect teachers’ rights and clarify teachers’ obligations. The Law stipulates that teachers are responsible for training students to be socialist constructors, that teachers have the right to “put forward suggestions concerning education, teaching and the administration of the institution” (Article 7) and that teachers share the obligation to “implement education policies of the state, observe relevant rules and regulations, carry out teaching plans set up by the State, [and] accomplish assigned teaching tasks” (Article 8).

According to the Teachers’ Law, faculty (in the case of higher education) are authorized the right to make suggestions concerning academic affairs or administration of their own departments and institutions. Faculty and staff conferences are regularly held each academic year, when faculty representatives can exercise their rights to make suggestions about issues discussed at the conference. In addition, every regular higher education institution is required to have the Union, an organization in which every employee has membership. In addition to administering the Faculty and Staff Conference, the Union at a higher education institution works under the supervision of the Party Committee that sets the agenda and determines what topics will be discussed at the conference. Faculty and staff conferences provide opportunities for selected faculty representatives to have a voice on behalf of all faculty members.
Governance and Administration in Higher Education in China

Administration in higher education is highly centralized with “rigid government control” (Du, 1992, p. 19). All higher education institutions, especially before the Open Door policy for economic reform was adopted in 1976 (Paver & Wang, 1992), are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (MOE) directly or indirectly. The government used to be responsible for almost everything higher education institutions did, including but not limited to funding, external and internal governance, allocation of human resources, teaching, research, and job placement after graduation. Although there is now more freedom in terms of administration in higher education than before the Open Door policy, there is a desire for higher education institutions to be even more engaged in independent administration (Yang, Vidovich, & Currie, 2007).

Specifically, higher education institutions used to be completely administered by the central government, and the leaders of higher education institutions were supposed to adhere to the MOE outlines for all regular higher education. With the dramatic achievements in economic reform, higher education institutions were gradually given autonomy by the central government in terms of student enrollment, funding, curriculum development, and faculty and staff employment (Wang, 2003). This autonomy, however, has been described as “dancing in the cage” (Yang, Vidovich, & Currie, 2007, p. 575).

According to the Higher Education Law (1999), regular higher education in China is publicly funded and strictly administered by governments at different levels; thus, higher education institutions are jointly run by the central government, provincial governments, governments of autonomous regions and municipalities, and major cities. In May 1959, the central government appointed 16 universities as the first institutions to enjoy more educational resources (these institutions were labeled as key institutions), and later more institutions were
added to the list of key institutions at different times by the central government. All key
institutions in higher education have been prioritized in funding, and all key institutions have
been run directly by the Ministry of Education. Even today, the central government ranks higher
education institutions in a hierarchy that determines key institutions’ “inherited and continued”
prestigious status for more funding for their daily management and big projects including
infrastructure, appropriations, and research projects (Du, 1992, p.30). The key institutions also
have the priority for nationwide student selection and opportunities for government-sponsored
international exchange programs (Du, 1992).

According to the MOE data (2007), there are altogether 2,305 regular higher education
institutions in China, including tertiary-level vocational-technical colleges, which account for
almost half of all the regular higher education institutions. All regular higher education
institutions in China are categorized in the following hierarchical structure: on the very top are
the key institutions directly under the MOE, including all Projects “211” and “985” institutions,
all of which are national-level institutions except for the six normal universities (i.e., one in each
administrative region for teacher preparation); the second tier includes those institutions under
the central ministries in charge of different areas (e.g., industry, agriculture, chemistry, and so
on), which are responsible for funding those institutions and appointment or dismissal of
university leaders; and the third tier are those under provinces, autonomous regions and
municipalities, and major cities (Du, 1992; Wang 2003).

Governments at different levels in China are responsible for providing funding and
appointing or dismissing chief leaders at higher education institutions (Du, 1992; Wang, 2003).
Academic affairs and student management at colleges and universities are under direct
government guidance; that is, both teaching and research are governed under the guidance of the
MOE and its authorized organizations. Specifically, curriculum, teaching plans, teaching materials such as textbooks, and research agendas are determined by the government. Student management is under the guidance of the party committee at each institution, which is under the guidance of upper level governments (Du, 1992).

In terms of the power structure in China’s regular higher education institutions, shared governance manifests itself in dual leadership: that of the President and that of the Secretary of the Party Committee (Wang, 2003). The President is authorized to administer the institution as a whole, including faculty teaching and research, student learning, and faculty professional development. The Secretary of the Party Committee is responsible for the institution’s human resources and mid-level management personnel appointments. The President and the Party Secretary work together, but each has his or her respective focus in the governance of the institution.

Faculty at higher education institutions are usually not involved in the decision-making process unless they hold administrative positions. Deans and associate deans make decisions in academic affairs with or without consultation with faculty. Teaching faculty members are assigned teaching tasks based on teaching plans for each program by their deans. The teachers are free to set their own research agenda based on their research interests. If they want funding for their research, teachers may apply for funding from companies that have an interest in their research. There are also government grants, but to get government funding, their research topics must correspond to important topics issued by the government.

There has been, however, a fundamental change in higher education governance since the large-scale merge that occurred after 1990 (Mok, 2005). The new governance model has gradually evolved. Different from the governance model practiced before the large-scale merge,
this new model was a shift from the “interventionist state model” to the “accelerationist state model” that uses market forces as well as other forces such as individuals, families, local communities, and the society to save the state from being over-burdened in funding higher education (Mok, 2005, p. 82). Thus, market started to play an important role in deciding: (a) whether programs were to develop; (b) whether there was a need for new programs to be established; and (c) whether programs were to be merged or cut. This is one of the results of neoliberal influence on China’s higher education.

**Foreign Influences on Chinese Higher Education**

Hayhoe (1989a) summarized some main characteristics of traditional Chinese higher education institutions dated back as early as 771-221 B.C. as Confucian classics and imperial examination system, and influences from foreign countries. However, Hayhoe (1989a) also mentioned that “finding a modern Chinese university that could crystallize in ideal typical form a pure Chinese approach, as against the many amalgams based on foreign models, was not easy” (p. 161). The modern Chinese higher education system is a “direct result and product” of China’s interaction with both the West and East (Guo, 1998, p. 35). Chinese higher education, then, has all the traces of foreign impact from before the founding of the PRC until the present.

In the early period, between the 1890s and 1911, Japanese patterns dominated. From 1911 to the 1920s, European higher education had some influence. Between the 1920s and the 1940s, American patterns had the most influence. After 1949, it was the Soviet patterns that dominated the reorganization and restructuring of higher education in China (Hayhoe & Li, 2010) until the Great Leap Forward, which paved the way to the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution, higher education was devastated, and it was not until 1976 that the National College
Entrance Examination was resumed and Chinese higher education became more influenced by neoliberal forms of economic development.

Guo (1998) studied the roles of returned foreign-educated students in Chinese higher education and concluded that the Chinese modern higher education system is a direct result and product of China’s contact with both the West and the East. Beginning in 1872 when 30 students were selected to study in the US, studying abroad in the US, Europe, and Japan reflected the Chinese government’s plan to learn from the outside world so that returning foreign-educated students could contribute pragmatically in the socialist construction. These foreign-educated students returned to China and assumed positions in all branches of the government, education, and business. They influenced Chinese higher education with their foreign experience and learning. The influence of the foreign-educated has grown even stronger today. According to the MOE officials, 78% of the presidents of regular higher education institutions directly administered by the MOE had experience studying abroad, as well as 84% of the academics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences (a leading and prestigious institution in China), 75% of the academics at the Chinese Academy of Engineering, and 62% of doctoral advisors (Medeiros, 2011).

Today, with globalization in every aspect of society, China is increasingly connected to the world, and its higher education is more internationalized. It is common that China’s young people actively choose to study in foreign countries and students from other countries in the world are studying in China. According to the report of the Institute of International Education (2011), the number of Chinese students who traveled to the US to study increased dramatically from 1995 to 2010. In 1995, there were only 39,613 Chinese students studying in the US. The number kept increasing, and by 2010, there were 127,628 Chinese students receiving American
higher education, well over three times the number in 1995. Having returned to China, the foreign educated students have been playing important roles in higher education, scientific research, and business management with not only their new knowledge and expertise in their fields of study, but also their adopted philosophies and ideologies of higher education in the US (Guo, 1998). For example, of the 36 national key universities directly administered by the MOE, more than half of the presidents were returned scholars trained in foreign countries (Du, 1992).

The National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE)

The first higher education evaluation program was the Engineering Education Evaluation conducted in 1985 (HEEC, n.d.). According to the HEEC, Regulation of Higher Education Institution Evaluation (Draft) was issued in 1990 by the Ministry of Education, which set basic rules for higher education evaluation. From 1995 to 2002, 192 higher education institutions, including all newly established institutions with only undergraduate programs, were required to participate in the “University Evaluation Standards Project.” Other evaluations were also conducted, such as the “Exemplary Evaluation” and the “Random Evaluation” (HEEC, n.d.). In 2003, the MOE issued an education innovation plan which mandated that all regular higher education institutions with undergraduate programs should undergo quality evaluation every five years. To conduct the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) successfully, the MOE established the HEEC in 2004 to prepare for, supervise, and conduct the NUTLE, which was started in 2005. From 2005 to 2008, the HEEC conducted the evaluation for altogether 598 higher education institutions (Ji, 2009; Jiang, 2009; Liu, 2009; Zeng & Chen, 2009; Zhou, 2009).

The NUTLE was a response to both external calls for accountability and internal calls for quality education. In the context of global higher education, the term “accountability” was
introduced to Chinese higher education, along with higher education evaluation. Since the Chinese government decided to build and strengthen some Chinese universities to be competitive internationally, the growing tendency for accountability as higher education institutions become more and more held for performance and efficiency worldwide (Jiang, 2009) became an issue that Chinese higher education institutions need to face. Internally, after years of fast enrollment expansion, along with the merger wave in China’s higher education institutions, higher education quality in general was influenced by inadequate infrastructure, undesirable faculty-student ratio, limited teaching and learning resources, new programs approved without qualified faculty and appropriate textbooks. In such context, higher education quality became a major concern not only for the government, but also for parents, students, society, and higher education practitioners.

The NUTLE was implemented against this background of “breathtaking expansion” of the higher education system in China (Cen & Ross, 2009, p. 3). By the end of 2007, enrollment in higher education was about 27 million, which was about 23% of the college-age population (Ministry of Education, 2008). Zhou Ji, former Minister of Education in China, called for a “shift of focus from quantity to quality” in 2005 (as cited in Cen & Ross, 2009). Thus, the NUTLE was conducted from 2003 to 2008 with the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation Plan (MOE, 2004) as the principal guiding document. The Plan applied to all regular higher education institutions with specification regarding certain indices in disciplines such as medicine and pharmacy. The Plan required that all institutions self-evaluate in accordance with the Plan and debrief the MOE (2009, p. 9). The motto and principle for the NUTLE was 20 Chinese characters: yi ping cu jian (to promote development by means of evaluation), yi ping cu gai (to promote reform by means of evaluation), yi ping cu guan (to promote administration by means of
evaluation), ping jian jie he (to combine evaluation with development), and zhong zai jian she (to place emphasis on development). In the NUTLE scheme index, “Students’ abilities and capabilities in innovation” was listed as an indicator. However, the MOE did not provide a definition for innovation, which complicated how student learning outcomes were measured. The various categories of the NUTLE Evaluation Scheme Index are identified in Table 1.

**Regular Higher Education China**

Not only has the rapidly changing socio-economic environment brought by the rise of knowledge economy influenced higher education in China, but also globalization and neoliberal trends have had great influence on it (Mok, 2007). Neoliberalism has impacted Chinese higher education in that private funding was allowed and regular higher education started to be run like a business. Lu and Zhang (2008) argued that higher education systems in all countries have developed to resemble business to some extent, and China is no exception (Mok, 2007). The relationship between the government and higher education institutions is changing dramatically (Hill & Kumar, 2009). The Chinese government has implemented neoliberal policies to reform and restructure the education system for efficiency and profitability (Mok, 2007). The relationship between the government and higher education has changed from a controlling mode to a supervising and governing mode, called “from a state-controlled model to a state-supervised model” (Yang, Vidovich & Currie, 2007, p. 588). The government is no longer a service provider; it is changing its roles into “coordinator,” “regulator,” and “quality controller” (Lu & Zhang, 2008, p. 53), because the government has realized that depending only on the state could not satisfy the needs and demands for higher education (Mok, 2007). The neoliberal ideology is being practiced in higher education in terms of funding, provision, and regulation in higher education in China.
Table 1

**NUTLE Evaluation Scheme Index**

i. Guiding Principles of Institution
   1. Mission of Institution
   2. Line of Thinking on Institution Operation
      a) Progressive notions of education; strong awareness of quality
      b) Importance attached to undergraduate teaching

ii. Faculty Demographics
    1. Number of Teaching Faculty and Their Academic Ranks
       a) Student-faculty ratio
       b) Percentage of full-time faculty with Masters and Doctorate Degrees
    2. Principal Lecturers
       a) Percentage of professors and associate professors teaching undergraduate classes
       b) Quality of teaching

iii. Teaching Conditions and Utilization of Facilities
    1. Basic Teaching Facilities
       a) Classroom buildings equipped with facilities satisfying teaching needs
       b) Utilization of labs and practicum bases
       c) Effective utilization of library resources
       d) Sports facilities
    2. Funding for Teaching
       a) Resources
       b) Program development

iv. Program Development and Teaching Reform
    1. Programs
       a) Structure of disciplines and new programs
       b) Humane civilization plan
    2. Curriculum
       a) Teaching content and curriculum reform
       b) Textbook selection
       c) Reform in teaching methodology and approaches
       d) Bilingual teaching
    3. Practicum
       a) Practicum and practical teaching
       b) Contents and system of practical teaching
       c) Courses designed for practicum
       d) Lab hours

v. The Management of Teaching
    1. Management Team
       a) Structure and quality of management personnel
       b) Research on teaching management

(continued)
Table 1 (continued)

*NUTLE Evaluation Scheme Index*

2. Quality Control  
   a) Rules and regulations about teaching  
   b) Quality standards at stages of teaching  
   c) Quality assurance system  

vi. Academic Atmosphere  
1. Teacher Professionalism  
   a) Professional ethics and commitment to teaching  

2. Student Learning Atmosphere  
   a) Students obeying rules and regulations, and observing rules for examinations  
   b) Cultivation of learning culture to motivate students to study  
   c) Extracurricular activities in science, technology, and culture  

vii. Student Learning Outcomes  
1. Basic Theory and Skills  
   a) Students’ comprehension of theory and development of competencies  
   b) Students’ abilities and capabilities in innovation  

2. Undergraduate Thesis or Graduation Design  
   a) Nature, difficulty, and significance of topic selection  
   b) Thesis quality  

3. Cultivation of Ideological and Moral Standards  
   a) Ideological and moral quality, psychological soundness  

4. Physical Education  
   a) Evaluation of students’ overall physical health  

5. Social Reputation of the Students  
   a) Types of high school student applications and enrollment  
   b) Public perception  

6. Employment Rate at Graduation  
   a) Percentage of students employed as of graduation

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Adopting a case study approach, Yang, Vidovich, and Currie (2007) selected two universities in China and conducted 21 semi-structured interviews of administrators and faculty in Chinese regarding the changing autonomy in Chinese higher education to better understand institutional autonomy, focusing on the effects of key policy developments to “foster decentralization of control” in higher education by the central government (p. 575). Their study
was in the context of globalization, with globalization being “the most fundamental challenge confronting higher education” (p. 576). As China has been more engaged with the outside world, higher education has undergone dramatic systematic changes. Yang, Vidovich, and Currie’s (2007) research showed that there was a consensus among their participants that regular higher education institutions in China now have more autonomy than they did a decade ago in terms of governance; however, government at different levels in China still has considerable influence in certain areas such as human resource allocations within the institutions (p. 589). One example is that the central government still has absolute power in the appointment of university presidents and party secretaries; thus, Yang, Vidovich, and Currie argued that Chinese higher education institutions now have “regulated autonomy” because although some restraints have been removed, they were still not having complete autonomy on the institutional level (Yang, Vidovich, & Currie, 2007, p. 590).

In addition, Mok and Lo (2007) studied the impact of neoliberalism on higher education in China. The authors argued that China’s adherence to the neoliberal approach further widened the divide for access to higher education between the coastal and inland provinces, the urban and rural areas, the rich and the poor, and the powered and the powerless. This divide for access to Chinese higher education is the result of the Chinese government's neoliberal ideas of privatization in education in terms of finance and provisions. Mok and Lo analyzed policy practices and found that the growing tendency of privatizing educational finance and provision has indeed exacerbated inequality problems in higher education. Specifically, they found that higher education expansion in China is highly “uneven,” with the allocation of higher education institutions across China and the inter-province inequity shown in the number of students per 100,000 residents. Such a neoliberal approach has further widened the urban-rural gap. The
researchers concluded that the neoliberal ideology, so widespread and influential throughout the world, may not be able to address the already existing social injustice and inequality issues in China’s higher education sector.

In 2001, Zha (2009) utilized an analytical framework from the perspectives of population ecology, resource dependence, and institutional similarity to investigate the programmatic and institutional diversification of 594 universities. Zha further noted the influence of neoliberal ideas on Chinese higher education within this study by specifically examining the effects of governmental intervention and market influence on diversification of Chinese higher education through enrollment expansion. A correlation between the change in proportion of governmental appropriation in the total of institutional revenues and the addition of new specializations, and change in enrollment was conducted. The study found that China’s higher education has inevitably been influenced by the neoliberal agenda that has steered China’s economic reforms. Looking to the market and private sector to venture into higher education, the government has initiated policies to localize higher education and diversify sources of funding.

Issues of social justice have also been of concern. Jacob (2006) studied social justice in Chinese higher education through document analysis. Because of the hierarchical structure imposed by the government, regional issues of equity and access have become growing concerns. The Chinese government has always practiced different policies in different regions. When the Open Door Policy was adopted, the government also had geographical policies to encourage the coastal regions to engage in more reforms than were allowed in inner and more rural regions in the country. In Deng Xiaoping’s landmark speech on his South China Tour in 1992, he decided to “give some regions more access to favorable policies so that people in those regions could become rich first (these people would be able to help the rest to become rich)”
Such a policy, although clearly helping the development of the Chinese market economy, also “fostered inequalities based on geographic region” (Jacob, 2006, p. 153). The result of such a policy was that coastal regions progressed much more than the inner and rural regions. As a result, they have had more money to fund higher education in these developed areas, causing people from rural areas to migrate to coastal regions for jobs and education. In essence, the developed regions are better off with the government policy, and the rural regions are deprived of the opportunity to develop their economy and education.

Also in 2006, Zhang and Liu studied social justice in Chinese higher education from the perspective of social stratification and social mobility. They studied the distribution of opportunities for higher education among descendants of different social classes after the 1980s. Based on their findings, the authors argued that although universities have gained some sovereignty since 1990, higher education is still a part of planned economy because the Ministry of Education has the authority to make final decisions regarding enrollment and distribution. They explained the inequality as a result of (a) the accumulation of unevenness originating from the primary level of education under a separate educational system for urban and rural areas; (b) the uneven enrollment across areas, and (c) the institutional discrepancy in the student enrollment selection process. Three years later, Lao (2009) examined legal status changes in the educational system reform and concluded that the legal status of higher education institutions underwent unprecedented changes caused by educational system reforms over the last two decades.

Teacher education is also a recurring research topic in Chinese higher education. Teaching is the main task for faculty in undergraduate education. “The key to improving the quality of education is to improve the quality of teaching” (Zhou, 2009, p.9). Teachers, or
faculty as they are called in higher education, are responsible for carrying out this task. It is important that faculty work in an environment that will motivate them to improve their teaching practices continually. Du, Lai, and Lo (2010) argued that the quality of higher education is closely related to the dedication and work ethic of university professors. With increased dedication by faculty to their teaching, quality teaching and quality education can be guaranteed. Since teaching is a key component of a quality education, teachers are important subjects to study if higher education institutions are to offer quality education to their students.

Similarly, Zhou (2009) has concluded that teaching was the main channel of education, and the focus of improving the quality of education requires improving the quality of teaching. He regarded quality as the “lifeline” of higher education institutions, so China must balance development in scale and improvement of quality and unswervingly place the focus of work on improving quality. Accordingly, Zhou suggested that higher education focus on increasing investment in teaching, intensifying teaching administration, and deepening the reform of teaching.

Quality teaching is closely related to teacher training. Hayhoe and Li (2010) studied teacher education in different countries. Models of teacher education in the US, Japan, the U.K., and France, as well as China’s contribution to the development of international teacher education were discussed. With comparative historical reflections, Hayhoe and Li found that there were three models: (a) that normal colleges were absorbed into major comprehensive universities; (b) that normal colleges were upgraded to become universities of education; and (c) that normal schools merged into independent university-level institutes. The model that has been practiced in China was considered the fourth model; that is, teacher education occurs in national and provincial-level normal colleges and universities. China has a long history of valuing education
and knowledge, and China has created a teacher education model different from those in the US, Japan, the U.K., and France that is “deeply imbedded in Chinese culture . . . and is still widely embraced by Chinese people;” hence, teachers are usually given “the most respected socio-political status” (Hayhoe & Li, 2010, p. 96).

Faculty job satisfaction and stress have also been studied. Du, Lai, and Lo (2010) examined job satisfaction of university professors from nine Chinese universities. A questionnaire was distributed to 1,770 professors to investigate job satisfaction and the relationship between their job satisfaction and university demographics. Their findings revealed that the overall job satisfaction levels among the university professors were neither very low nor very high though salary and benefits contributed to a low level of job satisfaction. Zhang and Liu (2005) surveyed the ideology of teaching faculty at higher education institutions in eight provinces. Their survey results showed that the majority of teaching faculty adhered to the values and moral concepts of socialism, were devoted to teaching, and were happy to contribute to the development of higher education.

Similarly, He et al. (2000) compared job stress among university faculty in China and Japan. Their study identified differences between the two countries in terms of social and cultural environments, university histories and traditions, higher education ideologies and functions, as well as the relationship between the university and society. Their results showed that for university faculty in Japan, the main stress was reported to be lack of time to fulfill their tasks, while in China, faculty were more concerned about professional evaluation, a result of reform in the higher education system. Because of changes in government funding for universities, key universities in projects like 211 or 985 have been heavily funded by both the central and provincial governments. For higher education institutions receiving limited funding
from the government, the university leaders tended to encourage their faculty directly or indirectly to find additional jobs off campus to maintain or improve their life quality. In such cases, faculty in Chinese universities may experience more immediate stress from competition for limited resources for economic benefits. Later, Zhang, Chen, and Dong (2005) studied stress and other pressures experienced by teachers at higher education institutions. Their study found that teachers’ stress was mostly associated with work areas such as interpersonal relationships, job responsibilities and environment, personal security, and respect.

Professional ethics became a concern because of the influence of neoliberal ideas of efficiency in higher education with the expansion of higher education in China. Faculty professional ethics refer to ethical conduct in teaching, continuous pursuit in academic research, active participation in civic services, and ethical codes in interpersonal relationships. Luo and Song (2005) studied professional ethics of teachers at a higher education institution in Central China. They voiced concerns about improving the professional ethics of faculty and argued that professional ethics in higher education had become a real and urgent concern. Luo and Song distributed 200 questionnaires to full-time undergraduate students and analyzed how students perceived teacher professional ethics in higher education and factors that had influenced them. Their results showed that less than 60% of the students were positive and about 43% of the students were negative about faculty professional ethics.

Yang (2008) studied the reform of the undergraduate curriculum in China in the 1990s and regarded such reform as a breakthrough in higher education because it implied a transformation in the aims of higher education on the part of undergraduate students. Specifically, undergraduate students would have picked their major before they registered after the entrance examination. They later had opportunities to change their major if they realized
they had little interest in it. In terms of taking classes, there were very few optional classes to choose from, so the general case is that students enrolled in the same major would take the same classes and graduate at the same time. Yang’s study showed the challenge for students who were not ready to choose classes and to decide the future of their majors.

Faculty professional development has also been studied by Chinese scholars. In order to improve teacher performance, most teachers have the desire for professional development. According to the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China, the MOE is responsible for providing faculty opportunities for professional development. The MOE usually entrusts key universities to develop programs for faculty professional development in different disciplines. However, due to limited resources and the large number of faculty all over the country, only a very small percentage of faculty members have such opportunity for professional development every year, which does not satisfy the overall needs. For example, Zhan (2000) examined teachers’ perspectives on professional development in the discipline of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Zhan’s study found that most teachers did have an interest in professional development. They needed to improve their own English proficiency and learn about teaching pedagogy that would appropriately apply in their classroom teaching. Based on the research results, the author suggested that courses on classroom teaching pedagogy be added to the TEFL teacher education curriculum and that in-service training be offered.

As in western higher education, research has become more important for faculty development. Ma (1997) explored the importance of research and undergraduate teaching from the perspectives of administrators and faculty. Ma examined the balance of two primary functions of faculty, research and teaching, and found that teaching was becoming subordinate to research. The results also showed that faculty indicated that there should be an appropriate
balance between research and undergraduate teaching, but that this balance was missing in reality. Recently Bai and Millwater (2011) studied faculty perceptions on research and found that faculty felt increasing pressure to conduct research even though they self-reported that they still needed further research training. Universities, however, continued increasing research requirements. Faculty motivation to conduct research lay in self-interest, job security, or research obligations for professional promotions. Faculty valued research highly because they regarded research as an opportunity to enhance teaching. They also had a negative view about the emphasis on quantity over quality in both teaching and publication.

**Studies on the NUTLE**

The MOE started pilot projects for the NUTLE in 1994, and in 2003, the MOE formally established a cycling system of teaching evaluation every five years (Gao, 2009). By far, the NUTLE was the first large-scale evaluation of China’s institutions of regular higher education, and it had basically involved all regular higher education institutions that offer undergraduate programs (Huang, 2009). Of the approximately 592 undergraduate colleges and universities listed in the plan for the first round of the evaluation, more than 500 were successfully evaluated (Gao, 2009).

The MOE issued the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation Plan for Regular Higher Education Institutions (Trial Implementation), and *Circular of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on the Printing and Distribution of the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation Plan for Regular Higher Education Institutions (Trial Implementation)* was the revised 2002 document which was issued in 2004. Such documents became the guiding standard in directing the first round of NUTLE.
There were three stages of the evaluation. The first stage was self-evaluation, during which those colleges and universities to be evaluated presented their reports based on their self-evaluation corresponding to the index scheme (See Table 1). The second stage was site inspection by expert teams. The MOE recruited 1369 experts to form the “expert tank,” and nine to 13 experts from this tank would collaborate and visit each campus being evaluated. These experts would provide the NUTLE conclusions, which were divided into four categories: Excellent, Fair, Pass, and No Pass. The third stage was rectifications and reforms when evaluated institutions implemented reforms suggested by the expert teams. The indicator system had seven level-one indicators: (a) guiding thinking for operations, (b) faculty team, (c) teaching conditions and utilization of conditions, (d) specialty construction and teaching reform, (e) teaching administration, (f) academic atmosphere, and (g) teaching effectiveness. All the indicators and observation points are guidelines for institutions to self-evaluate and for expert teams to consider upon their site visits.

The National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) was conducted after the dramatic expansion because the government began to prioritize quality over quantity. Zhou, the former Minister of Education, emphasized the importance of teaching evaluations, arguing teaching quality is critical to education quality in higher education (2009). He addressed three challenges in higher education in China. First, higher education is unable to meet the requirements of economic and social development even with the expansion in the past decade and especially salient is the challenge of quality. Second, the reforms of education and teaching still have a long way to go to be internationally competitive. And third, higher education is challenged with “insufficient inputs of energy and funding” (p. 8).
As former Minister of Education, Zhou (2009) called for a focus on improving quality in higher education in times of expansion. “Quality is the lifeline of higher education,” (p. 8) and “the focus of improving the quality of education is on improving the quality of teaching” (p. 10). Zhou argued that teaching evaluations should be conducted in order to “build up a sound system of monitoring teaching quality” (p. 12), and thus the MOE, a five-year-cycle evaluation system, was established and the Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC) was set up to oversee these evaluations.

Representatives from the Department of Higher Education of the MOE and HEEC created the name Gao Siping (2003), which literally means “higher education [officials] reviewing evaluation” to reflect their efforts and concerns regarding the NUTLE. This group of authors examined the NUTLE and the setting-up of the cyclical system of evaluation of teaching and learning as “a key measure for improving teaching quality” (p. 21). They held that teaching evaluation was needed for government administration in higher education and that teaching evaluation is a powerful measure for “fundamentally improving education quality” (p. 22). They concluded that the NUTLE had (a) assisted higher education institutions to clarify missions and feature programs; (b) encouraged higher education institutions to place greater importance on teaching; (c) promoted teaching investments at evaluated institutions; and (d) strengthened standards of teaching administration at higher education institutions.

From a different perspective, the head of the Division of Institutional Teaching Evaluation, HEEC, Liu Zhentian (2009b) addressed three cognitive issues associated with the NUTLE: (a) Can institutions of higher education and their quality be evaluated? (b) Does evaluation affect or limit institutional autonomy? And (c) Will evaluation cause the models of operation at institutions of higher education to become identical? His answers to the three
questions were all affirmative. He held that the NUTLE had had positive impacts such as promoting teaching and teaching administration, enhancing reform, and having higher education institutions acknowledged in society (p. 57); however, there existed negative opinions about the impacts, such as “the presence of fraud, deceit, formalism, and other relatively superficial issues” in the course of the evaluation (p. 59).

Liu (2009a) suggested that “a conscientious review” be conducted to reflect on the NUTLE in order to promote “sustained and sound evaluation” in the future (p. 31). He pointed out that changes must be made in future evaluations. Teaching evaluations should be long-term and normative in nature. He suggested that government should step back and an evaluation network with third-party organizations should be formed to conduct evaluations objectively. In addition, he suggested that higher education institutions proactively seek development by means of analyzing their own data instead of passively meeting requirements and relying on investigations by experts teams. The rationale is that the evaluation should not be imposed by a top-down mechanism, but that higher education institutions should actively plan and seek to assess their work for improvement.

Similarly, Huang Daren (2009), president of Zhongshan University, held that “it is most necessary for colleges and universities to undergo evaluation,” and the NUTLE, “to a substantial extent, has ensured that undergraduate teaching has not declined as a consequence of rapid, large expansion” (p. 57). He held that students benefited most from the evaluation, and the most vociferous criticism came from “teaching staff” because “teaching staff must do a good job of teaching in line with high standards and must indeed spend more time and energy than they ordinarily would” (p. 57).
A dean at a college in East China, Chen Yukun, reviewed the NUTLE achievements and analyzed the problems during the process. According to Chen (2009), the NUTLE further advanced undergraduate teaching in that it had effectively improved the operating conditions at institutions of higher education in that it had attracted attention of local governments to provide more funding to satisfy standards required, so that facilities and infrastructure were improved. The NUTLE had also helped “standardizing administrative work” over undergraduate teaching at institutions of higher education (p. 64). However, he pointed out that problems did exist. For example, the unified standards and index of the NUTLE ignored the diversified nature of higher education institutions, the difficulty to measure some of the key indicators turned out grades with a high percentage of “excellence,” and the cost for the NUTLE, especially hidden costs were too high.

From the perspective of evaluation results, Li, Zhu, and Liu (2010a) discussed the NUTLE and argued that results of the evaluation graded Excellent, Fair, Pass and No Pass did not match the 20-character principle for the evaluation. While the 20-character principle was for formative evaluation, the results of four grade levels showed it was summative. Since all regular higher education institutions in China are funded by the government, receiving a low grade in the evaluation means the institutions were functioning at satisfactory levels, and no institution would like a low grade to impact their funding provision in the future negatively; therefore, many universities were making every effort to meet the requirements to be graded Excellent, putting a lot of faculty and administrators’ time to make everything appear acceptable to the expert teams during their campus visits. They also reported that society also noticed that regular higher education institutions were cheating in preparation for the evaluation. Regular higher education
In another study, Li, Zhu, and Liu (2010b) reflected on the formalism, fraud, and deception in higher education institutions’ preparation for the evaluation. They saw that many colleges and universities’ only purpose was to receive an “Excellent” grade. As a result, they practiced their own principle of “construction for the evaluation” and “reformation for the evaluation” (p. 59). They were reported to work diligently to determine what to present to the experts. One of the most important aspects for these institutions included a warm reception for the expert teams. For example, the Office for Evaluation led by the leadership committee would go to the airport to welcome experts and put on stage performances for the experts. Some even offered each expert a computer or a car to use.

In terms of assessment systems, Xu (2003) compared two major university assessment systems currently used in China: the NUTLE and Chinese Universities Evaluation Standings (CUES). The author analyzed both systems and argued that both have strengths and weaknesses. In the case of the NUTLE, since the government is the funding provider, evaluator, and policy maker, higher education institutions must satisfy the government’s expectations for excellence to receive funding; however, in the case of the CUES, non-governmental agencies are the evaluators and no funding issue is involved. The evaluators, therefore, usually provide clear and transparent evaluations of higher education institutions, as well as students’ and parents’ expectations. The latter one can more accurately reflect society and parents’ needs; however, since it does not involve either policy making or funding, it depends on government support to make the evaluations more worthwhile. Xu suggested that both systems work together to present a more accurate picture of the development of higher education in China.
Regarding the role of the government in the NUTLE, Liu (2009a) analyzed the functions of the Chinese government in higher education evaluations. Distinguishing between teaching and learning evaluation in higher education and higher education evaluation, Liu argued that higher education evaluation allowed the government to oversee and assure the quality of teaching and learning in regular higher education institutions; however, in the NUTLE, the government’s role was multi-faceted because the government was the provider, the evaluator, and the party that tried to assure the quality of higher education. With these many roles to play, it is not easy for the government to evaluate objectively and even harder for the institutions to be objectively evaluated because of the potential benefits that they are going to either enjoy or lose based on the evaluation results. Liu suggested that the Chinese government learn from governments in other countries and authorize non-governmental organizations to conduct the evaluation and objectively respond to the results.

Considering the importance of the expert teams’ site visits on campus, Xu (2006) and Li (2007) discussed team leader and individual expert qualifications. They suggested that it was a matter of responsibility to work as an expert evaluator. The authors also mentioned that experts who visited campuses had opportunities to be given gifts, gift cards, etc., and advocated that no team members take anything from any institutions they would visit. Xu and Li recommended that expert evaluators should demonstrate self-discipline and utmost professionalism.

While in support of the positive effects of the evaluation on “raising the quality of education, perfecting teaching administration, improving academic atmospheres, and improving the quality and standard of personnel training,” Ji Baocheng (2009), President of People’s University and former Head of the Department of Higher Education of the MOE, called attention to the problems associated with evaluation of higher education in China (p. 52). He argued that
there were too many indiscriminate evaluations that, in addition, lacked overall planning. Ji argued that institutions of higher education are over-burdened by the different types of evaluations, such as financial, auditing, and pricing, all overlapping each other. As a result, many aspects of daily work, including institutional administration, disciplines and programs, the “211” projects, the “985” projects, Party construction, and so on and so forth—all must be evaluated. He suggested that evaluations in higher education be concise. He pointed out that there were feelings of revulsion toward the NUTLE because some of the experts conducting site visits during the NUTLE abused power by placing frivolous demands on faculty.

Also, Shen (2008) described various formalistic behaviors and analyzed the causal factors for such behaviors. Staff members would ignore their daily job responsibilities for the year preceding the NUTLE to prepare documents for the evaluation. Faculty would have to re-grade students’ examination papers and help create whatever documents were needed to meet the standards to help the institutions to receive “Excellent” grades during the years of preparation for the NUTLE. During this time, slogans would be hung on campus to show that the whole institution paid a lot of attention to the NUTLE, and everyone on campus, students, faculty, and administrators alike were issued brochures containing questions, and answers about the evaluation so that when they were asked any questions by the experts, there would be “satisfactory” answers. Meeting minutes would be created, and test papers would be remade for the expert teams to evaluate.

The causal factors, according to Shen (2008), were that the government functioned simultaneously as both the funding agent and evaluator. The results were categorized into Excellent, Fair, Pass and No Pass, thus affecting institutions’ access to educational resources allocated by the government. Another causal factor was that some of the evaluation indices were
too vague, making it difficult for institutions to prove that they were doing a satisfactory job.

Suggestions were made that higher education institutions form associations so that academicians could collaborate with their peers to evaluate teaching and learning more accurately. Similarly, Gao (2009) also pointed out that there was “formalism, fraud, and deception” in the process of the NUTLE (p. 25). The downfalls were manifested as involving too much human labor, adversely affecting normal teaching order, giving evaluation experts receptions that exceeded established standards and norms, and committing fraud and deception in terms of documents and materials.

Gao, Zhang, Chen, Lan, and Zhang (2009) surveyed faculty, staff, and administrators at two teaching and research higher education institutions in Shanghai to study whether the NUTLE had fulfilled its intended functions designed based on the principles of the evaluation. They conducted a survey to examine how faculty and staff at the two institutions perceived the NUTLE. Both universities were evaluated in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Gao et al. sent out 1,300 questionnaires, of which 1,000 were sent to Shanghai Normal University and 300 were sent to Shanghai Fisheries University. The response rate was 1,147 out of 1,300. The focus of their study included faculty teaching, students studying, and teaching administration. For example, with faculty teaching, they surveyed “implementation of teaching plans,” “faculty renovation of teaching content,” “faculty improvement in teaching attitudes,” “faculty’s adherence to class teaching standards,” and “faculty’s attention to research on teaching methods” (Gao et al., p. 89).

The results at both universities showed faculty were not as positive as administrators and staff about the evaluation and the impact of the evaluation on teaching and student learning. Gao et al. (2009) explained that the process of undergoing evaluation at institutions of higher
education probably considerably increased the burdens on faculty. They reported that faculty had to take orders from administrators to fulfill the task of making up for missing documents for teaching archives in accordance with evaluation standards.

Similarly, Zhang and Zhang (2008) surveyed faculty perceptions of the NUTLE at thirteen regular higher education institutions. They distributed 160 surveys to faculty of all professional ranks, and the response rate was 146 out of 160. The focus of their study was on strengths and weaknesses of the first-round of the evaluation from the perspective of faculty so that the second-round could be better designed and conducted. Their survey results showed that about 80% of the faculty regarded it as highly necessary to have teaching and learning evaluation; 42% of the faculty thought that the result their institution received was objective; and more than 85% of the faculty thought the evaluation had direct influence on their jobs as teachers.

Huang (2009), President of Zhongshan University, held that “the most vociferous criticisms” were, however, voiced by teaching faculty because they “must do a good job of teaching in line with high standards” and they must “indeed spend more time and energy than they ordinarily would” (p. 57). At the same time, Huang explained that some institutions made all sorts of demands to satisfy the requirements of the NUTLE, and it was no wonder that teaching faculty would express disagreement and disapproval.

It should be noted here that the review of literature about the NUTLE is not abundant, compared with the in-depth literature on evaluation in the US. Perhaps this is because the topic is relatively new in the study of Chinese higher education evaluation. Most literature about the NUTLE was published in one journal, *Chinese Education and Society*, which devoted two issues to this topic. The authors of these articles were primarily officials from the MOE, officials from
the HEEC under the MOE, presidents, party secretaries, and deans from evaluated universities and only a few faculty members. Most of the existing literature related to the topic revealed administrators’ perceptions of the evaluation. The most discussed issues in the literature were achievements, problems, and prospects of the evaluation. There was little discussion about the process of the evaluation in terms of expert teams’ site visits, as well as how teaching and learning were evaluated. This dissertation provides some of the missing information from the faculty perspective, as it describes how faculty were involved in the process, how teaching and learning were evaluated, and how such evaluation has influenced faculty teaching and student learning outcomes.

From the studies presenting the perspectives of the MOE, HEEC, and administration at higher education institutions, there seems to be a universal agreement that the NUTLE has promoted undergraduate teaching at higher education institutions, especially in standardizing teaching administration (Zeng & Chen, 2009). Studies from the faculty's perspective were very scarce, but it is important for faculty to voice their opinions about whether the NUTLE has impacted teaching and teaching administration. Questions such as how faculty perceived the NUTLE and how their work had been impacted after the evaluation could help us better understand how the first round of evaluation had influenced teaching and learning, and how the NUTLE could be revised to enhance the quality of undergraduate education. Since higher education evaluation is key to quality assurance, the faculty perspective will provide critical information for policy makers to consider for later evaluation design.

This study aims to investigate how faculty perceived the evaluation and its impact on their work. It was hoped that faculty would honestly voice their opinions about the evaluation so that their opinions might influence the planning and implementation of the second round of the
evaluation. Since there is little literature that examines how faculty became involved in the
evaluation, what they did to prepare for the evaluation, how their teaching and student learning
outcomes were evaluated, and what impact the evaluation has had on quality of teaching and
learning in higher education, more research is needed to ascertain faculty’s perception of the
NUTLE. This study involves only teaching faculty and their perceptions of the NUTLE.

This chapter has discussed the purpose of China’s education and its governing laws. It
also has summarized the existing literature related to the NUTLE, as produced primarily by
government officials and presidents and deans of universities. The next chapter will be devoted
to research methodology. It will discuss research design, research questions, the target
population, data collection procedures, and data analyses.
CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand perceptions of faculty from four-year regular higher education institutions in Northwest China regarding the 2003-2008 National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE). The nation-wide NUTLE was the largest scale evaluation to date and had involved most four-year regular higher education institutions in China (Liu, 2009b; Zhou, 2009). Specifically, this study aimed to explore and understand how faculty members viewed the NUTLE in which their institutions had been involved; how the NUTLE had influenced their teaching and research; and how they felt the NUTLE had influenced student learning outcomes.

Since faculty members are the ones whose jobs were evaluated through the NUTLE, it is important to understand what faculty did to help prepare for its implementation at their institutions, to assess whether they had known about the standards and index in terms of teaching evaluation itself, and whether their own teaching and research were influenced by the NUTLE. As faculty interact the most with students in the classroom setting and the individuals who are responsible for assessment of student learning outcomes, it is important to know whether the faculty had knowledge of how student learning outcomes would be evaluated in the NUTLE, and if faculty believe that their institutions had put forth efforts to reform undergraduate learning. The faculty's knowledge of what was to be evaluated and how the evaluation was to be conducted would greatly impact their teaching and research, which in turn, may influence student learning outcomes. How teaching and learning had been evaluated in the NUTLE would, therefore, directly influence future teaching practice, and subsequently, student learning outcomes.
Research Questions

The following questions and sub-questions guided the research to ascertain faculty members’ perception of the NUTLE:

1. How were faculty members informed of the NUTLE implementation and in what ways did they prepare for its implementation?
   a) How were faculty members informed of the evaluation that their institutions were to undergo?
   b) What specifically did faculty members do in preparation for the NUTLE by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?
   c) How much information did faculty members know about the standards and index regarding the NUTLE by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?
   d) How much information did faculty members know about how student learning outcomes would be evaluated by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?

2. What were the perceptions of faculty members at regular higher education institutions regarding the 2003-2008 NUTLE?
   a) What did faculty think about the Main purpose of the NUTLE was by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?
b) Did faculty members think the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching by professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?

c) Did faculty members think the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate student learning outcomes by professional rank, highest degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE?

d) What were faculty members’ overall perception of the NUTLE by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, classes taught before the NUTLE, preparation for the NUTLE, and job stress?

3. Did the NUTLE impact faculty’s teaching and research afterwards by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and years worked in the current institution?

4. How has the 2003-2008 NUTLE influenced undergraduate student learning outcomes from the perspective of faculty?

   a) Did the evaluated institutions make effort to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes after the NUTLE by institution type?

   b) Did the evaluated institutions make effort to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes after the NUTLE by year of evaluation?

   c) Did the evaluated institutions make effort to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes after the NUTLE by NUTLE grade?

**Research Design**

This study can be classified as using a non-experimental, cross-sectional, descriptive, and exploratory quantitative research design, as defined by Mertler & Charles (2008). The survey design was chosen because the researcher wanted to describe the participants’ opinions and
perceptions (Creswell, 2009). The desired population for this survey involved faculty members at four-year regular higher education institutions in Northwest China who participated in the NUTLE between 2003 and 2008.

This study primarily was descriptive and explanatory, which Morrell and Carroll (2010) associated with providing the best possible summary description of the group being studied. Specifically, it explored: (a) faculty members’ preparation for and knowledge of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) implemented at their institutions between 2003 and 2008; (b) perceptions of faculty members regarding the main purpose and focus of the NUTLE by different demographics (e.g., faculty and institutional); (c) perceptions of faculty participants regarding the impact of the NUTLE on their subsequent teaching and research practice; and (d) the influence of the NUTLE on undergraduate student learning outcomes.

**Target Population and Sampling Procedure**

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the central government divided the country into six major political-administrative planning regions for the purpose of political and educational development. In the case of higher education, these geographical divisions were used to ensure “a rational geographic distribution of each functional type of higher education across the country” (Hayhoe, 1996, p. 79). The six regions are Northeast China, North China, East China, South Central China, Southwest China, and Northwest China. Each region has an administrative center with an educational bureau responsible for all levels of education.

The target population for this study included faculty members from Northwest China, which includes the Shaanxi Province, the Gansu Province, the Qinghai Province, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The administrative
center of the Northwest China region is Xi’an in Shaanxi Province. By the end of 2009, there were 68 four-year regular higher education institutions with undergraduate programs located in the Northwest Region (i.e., three in the Qinghai Province, five in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, 11 in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, 13 in the Gansu Province, and 37 in the Shaanxi Province) (China Education, n. d.). Most of the target institutions were from the Shaanxi province since this province had more than half of all the four-year regular higher education institutions in the region.

Northwest China was chosen for this study because the researcher is from this region and it would be easier to get assistance for participant recruitment through the researcher’s personal connections. The researcher was a faculty member at a four-year public university that was involved in the NUTLE in 2006. Having noticed faculty’s overwhelming preparation for the NUTLE, the researcher was interested in the NUTLE influence on faculty teaching and student learning outcomes after the NUTLE was over. This personal background may cause some degree of the researcher bias that needs to be taken into consideration.

This study employed non-probability sampling, a procedure by which “the researcher cannot specify the probability of individuals in the population being selected for the survey” (Mertler & Charles, 2008, p. 364). Specifically, this study employed convenience sampling, which uses participants who happen to be available (Mertler & Charles, 2008). The sampling procedure started with the communications between the researcher and the cultural informant. It is the cultural norm in China that when conducting research, recruitment depends largely upon how well connected the researcher is to the person who has access to the desired population. Without such connection, it would be almost impossible to have access to desired participants. Therefore, for the purpose of recruiting enough participants, the researcher sought assistance
from the cultural informant (i.e., the researcher’s personal connection), who in turn sought assistance from the institutional representatives that the cultural informant had chosen.

The cultural informant is a dean at the graduate school at a national key university in Shaanxi Province. He has published a lot of research as a professor in his field and has the respect of faculty. Having served on various committees in the region, the cultural informant communicates widely with higher education institutions in this area. The initial contact with the cultural informant was by phone. After the cultural informant agreed to help with the survey participant recruitment, the researcher sent an email (See Appendix D) with an introduction to the study and criteria for expected participants. The specific criteria were teaching faculty who (a) taught undergraduate or graduate courses before and after the NUTLE, and (b) taught at colleges or universities that had been involved in the NUTLE. The cultural informant communicated with institutional representatives that he had chosen from each targeted institution about recruiting participants for the survey and sent those institutional representatives the email composed by the researcher (See Appendix E). The institutional representatives, who were also faculty members, sent an email to teaching faculty members from their institutions who were qualified to participate in the survey (See Appendix F). Based on the responses they got from faculty members at their institutions, the institutional representatives collected the email addresses of faculty members who had agreed to participate in the survey and sent them to the cultural informant, who aggregated the email addresses from all institutional representatives and then sent them to the researcher.

The participants were from 15 four-year regular higher education institutions in Northwest China that had participated in the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation sometime between 2003 and 2008. The 15 institutions account for about 22% of the
total of 68 four-year colleges and universities in this region (China Education, n. d.). Altogether emails were sent to 595 faculty members to invite them to participate in the self-administered, web-based bilingual survey that the researcher had designed. The survey was open to the 595 expected participants for about two months from December 6, 2011 to February 7, 2012. Altogether 289 faculty members opened the link to the survey, but 10 did not answer any of the survey questions. These 10 cases were removed from the data set before analyses were conducted, leaving 279 usable cases, of which 210 faculty (75%) completed the survey in Chinese and 69 faculty (25%) completed the survey in English. The 279 represent 47% of all who were invited to participate. Although not everyone answered every question, these 279 faculty members are referred to as the “sample” or the “respondents” in this study.

**Independent and Dependent Variables**

Conceptually there were four different groups of independent variables: the participants’ personal and institutional demographic information, the institutions’ and faculty members’ preparations for the NUTLE, faculty member’s knowledge of the standards and indices of the NUTLE, and faculty member’s knowledge of how teaching and learning were going to be evaluated. Demographic information included institution type (i.e., Project 985, Project 211, ordinary, newly established after 1995), the year in which the participant’s institution was evaluated, the NUTLE grade that the participant’s institution received, the participant’s professional rank (i.e., full professor, associate professor, lecturer, teaching assistant), the participant’s highest educational degree (i.e., bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate), the number of years the participant had worked at their current institution, and types of classes (i.e., undergraduate, graduate, both) that the participant had taught before the NUTLE.
Dependent variables involved perceptions of participants regarding the evaluation itself, and the perceived impact the NUTLE had on faculty teaching and research, as well as on student learning outcomes.

**Survey Instrumentation**

According to Mertler and Charles (2008), surveys are used to “determine such things as opinions . . . attitudes . . . and teachers’ perceptions” (p. 34). Using a survey designed by the researcher, this study explored faculty’s perception regarding the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) and solicited feedback from faculty members to gain a better understanding about what impact the NUTLE has had on faculty teaching and research, and on student learning outcomes. The research instrument was a web-based bilingual survey for participants to self-administer at their convenience during a period of about two months (See Appendix G). The survey was designed and published in SurveyMonkey because SurveyMonkey allows both the English and the Chinese languages.

The survey consisted of 29 questions that would take no more than 10 minutes to answer. The survey was made up of multiple choice questions, Likert Scale questions, and open-ended questions. The multiple-choice questions would ascertain personal and institutional demographic information. Multiple-choice questions also included institutional and faculty preparation for the NUTLE, faculty knowledge of the NUTLE, the way teaching and learning outcomes were evaluated, faculty experiences with the NUTLE, and faculty perceptions of the NUTLE.

Likert scale questions applied four-point scale in order to have an even number of ratings in the scale, positive or negative, thus avoiding neutral responses. Because of cultural backgrounds or collectivist tendency to gravitate to the middle and possible concerns regarding
retribution, many participants might be inclined to pick the neutral choice, so this option was omitted. The rating options ranged from one to four (i.e., very satisfied — satisfied — dissatisfied — very dissatisfied). Such a format would have two possible categories of results, either negative or positive.

An open-ended question was placed at the conclusion of the survey. The open-ended question encouraged faculty to articulate their opinions, ideas, and suggestions for improvement based on their experiences with the NUTLE. As shown in Appendix H, the open-ended question was “what suggestions would you give to improve the NUTLE at regular higher education institutions in China?”

**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

To ensure instrument validity and reliability, the researcher discussed intended survey questions with two colleagues from China who were also studying at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). The researcher then elicited feedback by asking the two colleagues to answer the survey questions and comment on their relevance and clarity. These colleagues used to be faculty at universities that were evaluated in the NUTLE, and they were involved in the preparation for it. The researcher believed they would give useful and important feedback so that the researcher could revise the questions. With feedback from the two colleagues, the researcher modified the questions before a pilot test was conducted with six colleagues. The six colleagues included the initial two and four others who studied at BGSU recently. After the pilot testing, the survey was published in SurveyMonkey for completion by the faculty participants from targeted universities.

The survey was created in two languages, English and Chinese. Since some faculty members in China would feel comfortable completing the survey in Chinese and others may
prefer English, it was participant-friendly to have two versions. Therefore, the researcher first designed the survey in English and translated it into Chinese, and then translated the questions back into English. The researcher sent both Chinese and English versions of the survey to the cultural informant, who provided translation suggestions and ensured that the survey in both languages asked the same questions. The cultural informant is skilled at translation between Chinese and English since he has been teaching English at a key university in China for more than 20 years. He oversees graduate-level English programs at his university and has had experience studying at a US university. His knowledge and experience, thus, guaranteed that the questions asked of the faculty in Chinese were the same ones that were asked in English. Both versions were provided online. When participating faculty opened the survey website, the first question was “Would you like to do the survey in English or Chinese?” Subsequently, they were directed to the version with which they felt comfortable. About 75% of the participants chose to complete the survey in Chinese and 25% in English.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

In accordance with Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) requirements, a consent form was sent to all participants through email. In the consent form, the researcher clearly stated that participation in the survey was completely voluntary. The participants could withdraw at any time without penalty if they did not want to continue. Moreover, the results were aggregated. All participants were assured of confidentiality. The researcher guaranteed that all the participant information would be kept on a personal computer with password, and would be limited to the researcher and her advisor together with her committee while the study was in process. After the study is finished, demographic data will be destroyed. The survey did not ask for information that could identify either the participants or
their institutions so that the participants should feel little pressure when answering survey questions, thus encouraging honest responses.

After obtaining participant consent, emails were sent to each invited participant with the link to the survey for self-administration. Survey questions, which were developed based on the research problem, were published online through SurveyMonkey. To solicit more responses, the researcher sent six email reminders. Following the initial recruitment email, the researcher sent weekly reminders for each of the subsequent six weeks to those who had not yet responded (see Appendices I, J, K). While culturally, in the US this level of contact might be perceived as excessive, in China the norms are different; hence, the researcher received more responses each time a reminder was sent. The researcher set up the reminders in the SurveyMonkey so that reminders would be sent only to those who did not respond. Specifically, the first reminder was sent one week after the survey had been posted, the second reminder the third week, the third reminder the fourth week, the fourth the fifth week, the fifth the sixth week, and the last reminder the seventh week. The researcher closed the survey in the SurveyMonkey one week after the last reminder was sent. It is important to note that the researcher would have applied to a Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) in China to obtain permission to do this study, but an HSRB or a similar organization does not exist at agencies, school districts, or educational institutions in China.

This research yielded both quantitative and qualitative data. For quantitative data, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was utilized to produce descriptive statistics and cross tabulations to answer the research questions. In order to effectively conduct cross tabulation analyses, some responses were combined with those in other categories if there
were five or fewer responses in the original category. This procedure avoids small cell size violations of statistical assumptions for cross tabulation.

First, descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to give a general picture of the respondents and their institutions. To answer research question one that addressed how participants were informed of the NUTLE and what specifically they were required to do in preparation for the NUTLE, descriptive statistics and cross tabulation analysis were conducted. Cross tabulation analysis was conducted to examine if there were any relations between dependent and independent variables: faculty members’ knowledge of standards and index of the NUTLE, how student learning outcomes would be evaluated, their institution types, their professional ranks, their highest degrees, and classes they had taught before the NUTLE.

To answer the first-three sub-questions in research question two that addressed faculty perceptions of the NUTLE, cross tabulation analyses were conducted to explore whether faculty’s perceptions regarding the main purpose and the focus of the NUTLE were related to faculty’s institution types, their professional ranks, highest degrees, and classes that they had taught before the NUTLE. The fourth sub-question addressed faculty’s overall perceptions of the NUTLE. Cross tabulation was conducted to explore whether their institution types, professional ranks, highest degrees, classes that they had taught before the NUTLE, their preparation for the NUTLE, and their reported job stress were related to their overall perceptions of the NUTLE.

To answer research question three that addressed NUTLE impact on faculty teaching and research, cross tabulation analyses were conducted to explore if independent variables like their institution types, professional ranks, highest degrees, and years they had worked in their current institutions were related to the dependent variable, the impact of the NUTLE on faculty’s
teaching and research afterwards. To answer research question four that addressed how the NUTLE influenced student learning outcomes, the researcher cross tabulated institutional effort demonstrated to improve student learning outcomes and their institution types, the years their institutions were evaluated, and the grade their institutions received for the NUTLE to explore if institutional effort was related to the institutional demographics.

Qualitative data were collected through the one open-ended question at the end of the survey soliciting ideas or suggestions to improve the NUTLE. More than half (149) of the respondents answered this open-ended question, and the response rate (53%) was surprisingly high. This may be because faculty members were concerned about the NUTLE and wanted to make suggestions for its improvement. Qualitative data were read through carefully to see if there were any patterns or themes.

Theoretical Framework

The study explored how faculty members perceived the government-designed and government-administered evaluation of undergraduate teaching and learning at regular higher education institutions in China. To achieve this goal, Hofstede’s (1984) dimensions of cultural difference framework was used to explore how faculty members at four-year regular higher education institutions perceived the NUTLE. Hofstede described the “interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group’s response to its environment” as culture that can be applied to “human collectivities such as an organization, a profession, or a family” (p. 21). In this study, faculty members from regular higher education institutions are the group whose perceptions were explored in the educational setting of the NUTLE. Hofstede’s dimensions of national cultural differences “provide a psycho-sociological framework for the critique of education” (Kubow & Fossum, 2007, p. 268). In this study, the researcher examined faculty
perceptions of the NUTLE through the lens of three of Hofstede’s (1984) dimensions of cultural difference, namely, power distance, individualism versus collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance.

According to Hofstede (1984), power distance measures the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations (e.g., higher education institutions) accept and expect inequality that is usually formulated in hierarchical “boss-subordinate” relationships (p. 65), which suggests that an organization’s level of inequality is well accepted by the powerless. Individualism versus collectivism describes the power of a group over an individual. Hofstede (1984) explained the feature of a collectivist nation that a group’s interest prevails over an individual’s interest, which suggests that the powerful control activities and the individual is treated as a part of the group, not as a unique individual. Therefore, it is assumed that an individual needs to be responsible for the collective group in action or speech in a culture of collectivism. Uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which people from a cultural group feel uncomfortable with uncertainty or ambiguity. According to Hofstede (1984), countries exhibiting strong uncertainty avoidance have strict social norms including behavior and speech codes. Hofstede’s research result showed that China is significantly high in power distance ranking, is a collectivist society, and is strong in uncertainty avoidance, thus indicating a high level of acceptance of inequality within its society, group interests as more important than individual interests, and strict social norms.

Hofstede (1984) suggested that power is the major element to explain whether the values of the less powerful are included in educational issues. Applying this framework to issues in the NUTLE in China’s higher education, the researcher examined the perceptions of the faculty population regarding the NUTLE through Hofstede’s framework of power distance, collectivism versus individualism, and uncertainty avoidance.
This chapter introduced research design, data collection and analyses, and theoretical framework that is applied in analyzing the results of the study. The next chapter includes a presentation of research findings and interpretation of data analyses.
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

In this chapter, findings from the survey regarding faculty perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) are presented. The chapter begins with a description of the characteristics of the respondents and their affiliated institutions. Responses to the research questions are organized in sections focusing on preparation for the NUTLE, administration of the NUTLE, effects of the NUTLE, and perceptions of the NUTLE. Response frequencies and percentages to survey items designed to answer the research questions are provided for the total sample and sub-samples associated with independent variables of interest. Finally, the research questions are answered by examining frequencies of observations to identify relationships between cross-tabulated variables and independent variables concerning the sample and participant responses to the survey items.

Characteristics of the Sample

This section describes the survey respondents and their institutions. Tables 2 and 3 show that a majority of the respondents (66%) were lecturers, about 77% worked at ordinary institutions, and 78% had master’s degrees. About 62% indicated that they had worked in their current institutions for five to ten years, and 84% had taught only undergraduate classes before the NUTLE. Most of the respondents reported that their institutions (79%) were evaluated between 2006 and 2008, and all of the respondents reported that their institutions received passing grades. In fact, about two-thirds (66%) reported grades of “Excellent” while none reported a “No Pass” grade.

Description of Respondents’ Institutions

Table 2 presents a description of the respondents’ institutions. More than 77% of participants worked at "Ordinary institutions" (four-year undergraduate programs funded by the
government). About 3% worked at institutions that were newly established (after 1995) due to the increase in college enrollment in China. About 20% worked at 985 and 211 project institutions, institutions to which the government allocates extra funding with the goal of being competitive internationally and producing high-level technicians for economic development.

Fewer than 10% of institutions were evaluated in the first two years of the NUTLE (2003, 2004); the number went up moderately in the following two years to 12% in 2005 and 20% in 2006, and the majority (59%) of institutions were evaluated in the last two years of the NUTLE (2007, 2008). The grades that participant institutions received were highly skewed with more than 66% graded “Excellent,” a little over 33% graded either “Fair” or “Pass,” and none graded “No Pass.”

**Description of Respondents’ Demographics**

Table 3 presents a description of faculty demographics. In terms of professional rank, about 5% of the respondents were teaching assistants, more than 66% lecturers, 25% associate professors, and 3% full professors. Regarding the highest educational degree received, 79% had a master’s degree, about 7% had a doctorate degree, and around 14% had a bachelor’s degree. In terms of years they have worked at their current institutions, more than half of the respondents (62%) had worked for 5 to 10 years, 17% for eleven to fifteen years, 10% for sixteen to twenty years, and 11% for more than twenty years. Regarding the classes they taught before the NUTLE, about 84% of the respondents had taught only undergraduate classes, 14% both undergraduate and graduate classes, and 2% graduate courses only (see Table 3).

**Preparation for the NUTLE**

Table 4 shows how respondents were informed of the NUTLE, what they did to prepare for it, and the extent of knowledge they had concerning teaching and student evaluations of learning outcomes. A great majority of the respondents (89%) reported that they were informed of the
Table 2

Description of Respondents’ Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional characteristics</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution type ( (n = 278) )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>985 project institution</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>211 project institution</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ordinary institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newly established institution after 1995</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year evaluated ( (n = 262) )</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUTLE grade ( (n = 253) )</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
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<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Table 3

*Description of Respondents Demographics*

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<th>Descriptor</th>
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<td><strong>Professional Rank ($n = 277$)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching assistant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate professor</td>
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<td>25.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full professor</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Degree ($n = 273$)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
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<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years Worked at the current institution ($n = 275$)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
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<td>61.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
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<td>16.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Teaching before the NUTLE ($n = 275$)</strong></td>
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<td>Undergraduate classes only</td>
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<td>13.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate classes only</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NUTLE at a formal meeting, either at their institution meeting (42%) or their department meeting (47%), and about 11% were informed of the NUTLE by colleagues or from other sources, such as from emails, websites, and friends. Most respondents (68%) received a brochure with questions and answers about the NUTLE. Slightly more than half of the respondents (52%) were asked to re-grade some student examination papers; many (78%) were asked to address the issue of missing or deficient documents in teaching archives.

In terms of knowledge of teaching and student learning outcomes evaluations before the NUTLE implementation, 61% of the respondents reported having had some knowledge about how teaching was to be evaluated, and 74% reported having knowledge of how student learning outcomes would be evaluated. About 39% of the respondents did not know how teaching was to be evaluated, and 26% did not have any idea how student learning outcomes would be evaluated (see Table 4).

Administration of the NUTLE

Table 5 presents a description of the administration of evaluations of faculty teaching and student learning outcomes, together with respondents’ satisfaction with ways teaching was evaluated and their perception of the comprehensiveness of the teaching evaluation.

Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation

About 63% of the respondents reported that student learning outcomes were evaluated through conversations between students, experts, and instructors; around 55% through conversations between students and experts, about 44% through surveys conducted by the experts, and about 41% through students’ reflections after class.
### Preparation for the NUTLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>(f)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How informed of the NUTLE ((n=274))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At institution meeting</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At department meeting</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receive brochure ((n=267))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Re-grade exam papers ((n=266))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address issue of missing documents ((n=266))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of teaching evaluation ((n=267))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of student learning outcomes evaluation ((n=266))</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Evaluation

About 27% of the respondents reported that teaching evaluation was conducted through experts’ observation of their classes; about 15% of the respondents obtained feedback from experts, and about 26% of the respondents reported that teaching evaluation was conducted through discussions between experts and students after class. However, about 60% of respondents indicated that no expert came to observe their classes.

Comprehensiveness of and Satisfaction with Teaching Evaluation

More than half of the respondents (59%) regarded the teaching evaluation as not comprehensive, and 41% regarded it as comprehensive. In terms of degree of satisfaction with the teaching evaluation, although 52% of the respondents reported being "satisfied" with the teaching evaluation, no one was "very satisfied" with it. About 48% of the respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the teaching evaluation, of whom 6% were "very dissatisfied" (see Table 5).

Effects of the NUTLE

Table 6 provides descriptive information regarding the effects of the NUTLE. The vast majority of the respondents (89%) reported that their job stress was intensified due to the NUTLE; only 9% did not think their job stress was intensified. Regarding the saying that the NUTLE had little impact on post-NUTLE teaching, more than 60% of the respondents thought it was not true while about 34% agreed that the NUTLE did not have any impact on their post-NUTLE teaching. In terms of teaching and research requirements after the NUTLE, about 49% of the respondents agreed that they are now required to do more teaching than before the NUTLE, while 51% did not agree. Approximately 70% agreed that they are now required to do more research than they had done before the NUTLE. Concerning institutional efforts made to
Table 5

**Administration of the NUTLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student learning outcomes evaluation administered</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(n = 279)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ reflection</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey conducted by experts</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts and students’ talk after class</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts, students, and instructors talk after class</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching evaluation administered</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(n = 279)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts’ classroom observation</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts provided feedback</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts and students talk after class</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No experts classroom observation</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensiveness of teaching evaluation</strong> <em>(n = 254)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very comprehensive</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat incomprehensive</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not comprehensive</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction with teaching evaluation</strong> <em>(n = 251)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

reform undergraduate teaching and undergraduate student learning outcomes, about 57% of the respondents agreed that their institutions made a lot of effort to reform undergraduate teaching
after the NUTLE, and 46% of the respondents agreed that their institutions made a lot of effort to enhance undergraduate student learning.

**Perceptions of the NUTLE**

Table 7 presents descriptive information about faculty perceptions of the NUTLE. In terms of the main purpose of the NUTLE, more than half of the respondents (55%) thought it was to insure higher education quality, and 28% to standardize teaching and teaching administration, about 10% to exercise the central government’s control over higher education funding allocation, and only about 7% to enhance student learning. Regarding the focus of the NUTLE, more than half of the respondents (54%) believed that the focus was on teaching and about 40% believed that the focus was on student learning. In terms of resource commitment, the majority of the respondents (72%) agreed that the NUTLE had been a waste of money, time, and human labor. However, regarding the overall perception of the NUTLE, about 60% of the respondents thought the NUTLE was positive, and about 40% negative (see Table 7).

**Faculty Notification of and Preparation for the NUTLE**

How were faculty members informed of the NUTLE implementation and in what ways did they prepare for its implementation? To answer the first research question and its sub-questions, the researcher conducted frequency and cross-tabulation analyses. To conduct cross-tabulations, the research collapsed some variables because the number of responses in the cell would violate the assumptions if kept as original variables. By collapsing the original cells, new variables were created for cross-tabulation to see if there were relations between faculty NUTLE preparation and institutional and faculty demographics.
Table 6

**Effects of the NUTLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>$f$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job stress (n = 257)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Little impact on teaching (n =256)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very true</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More teaching required after the NUTLE (n = 255)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More research required after the NUTLE (n = 255)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efforts made to reform undergraduate teaching (n = 251)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much agree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efforts made to reform undergraduate student learning outcomes (n = 251)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7

**Perceptions of the NUTLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>$f$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main purpose of the NUTLE ($n = 257$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising government’s control over higher education funding allocation</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardizing teaching and teaching administration</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring higher education quality</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student learning</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The focus of the NUTLE was on teaching ($n = 256$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes ($n = 255$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUTLE was a waste of money, time and human labor ($n = 259$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much agree</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall perception of the NUTLE ($n = 256$)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Faculty Members Were Informed of the NUTLE

Faculty members were informed that their institutions were going to be evaluated in a variety of ways (see Table 4). The findings indicated that the great majority (89%) of the respondents were informed of the NUTLE formally either at their institution meeting (42%) or their department meeting (47%). About 9% were informed of the NUTLE by their colleagues and less than 2% of the respondents reported being informed of the NUTLE from other sources, specifically websites, emails, or rumors.

Faculty Preparation for the NUTLE

The findings from cross-tabulations indicated that regardless of institution types, more than half of the respondents had to re-grade students’ examination papers, respectively 51% for 985 and 211 project institutions and 53% for ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995. Also regardless of institution types, the great majority of the respondents had to address the issue of missing teaching documents in preparation for the NUTLE, respectively 77% for 985 and 211 project institutions and 79% for ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995 (see Table 8).

Similar to institution types, professional ranks did not make a difference in respondents’ assigned tasks of re-grading examination papers or making up teaching documents in preparation for the NUTLE. As indicated in the findings, more than half of faculty respondents had to re-grade students’ examination papers, approximately 55% for teaching assistants and lecturers and 53% for associate and full professors; likewise, the great majority of the respondents had to create additional teaching documents needed for the NUTLE, approximately 79% for teaching assistants and lecturers, and 76% for associate and full professors (See Table 9).
Table 8

*Preparation for the NUTLE by Institution Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 project (n=51)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly established (n=215)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-grade exam papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 139)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f =127)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make up documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 208)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 58)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9

*Preparation for the NUTLE by Professional Rank*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 193)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof. (n = 72)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-grade exam papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 139)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 126)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 208)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 57)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Highest educational degree seems to be related to the assignment of tasks to respondents in preparation for the NUTLE. The findings indicated that respondents with a master’s degree
were slightly more likely than those with a bachelor’s degree or doctorate degree to be asked to re-grade examination papers, and respondents with a Bachelor’s were slightly more likely to be assigned the task of creating teaching documents (See Table 10).

Table 10

*Preparation for the NUTLE by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s ($n = 38$)</th>
<th>Master’s ($n = 206$)</th>
<th>Doctorate ($n = 17$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$f$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$f$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-grade exam papers ($n = 261$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ($f = 137$)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ($f = 124$)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create documents ($n = 261$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ($f = 206$)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ($f = 55$)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classes taught before the NUTLE also seems to be related to the assignment of tasks to respondents in preparation for the NUTLE. The findings indicated that respondents who taught graduate classes were more likely than those who taught undergraduate classes to be asked to re-grade students’ examination papers, and respondents who taught only undergraduate classes were slightly more likely than those who taught graduate classes to be asked to create teaching documents. However, due to the very small number of respondents’ teaching graduate classes (five respondents), the proceeding conclusions may be misleading (See Table 11).
Table 11

*Preparation for the NUTLE by Classes Taught before the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 219)</th>
<th>Grad &amp; Under (n = 37)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-grade exam papers (n = 263)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 138)</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 125)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create documents (n = 263)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 207)</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 56)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Faculty Knowledge about Standards and Index*

The third sub-question asks whether institution type, professional rank, highest education degree, and classes taught were related to respondents’ knowledge about standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation. The findings indicated that knowledge about standards and index regarding NUTLE teaching evaluation was not related to institution types. The majority of respondents (61%) reported to have some knowledge about the standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation (see Table 12). The findings indicated that professional ranks were related to respondents’ degree of knowledge about standards and index applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation. Specifically, respondents with higher professional ranks were slightly more likely than lower professional ranks to know about the standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation with associate or full professors 69% and teaching assistants or lecturers 58% (see Table 13).
Likewise, highest educational degrees also seem to be slightly related to the degree of knowledge respondents had before the NUTLE. The findings indicated that respondents with Master’s degrees (61%) were slightly more likely than those with doctorate degrees (59%) and Bachelor’s degrees (55%) to know about standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation (see Table 14). Classes taught before the NUTLE also seem to be related to
the degree of knowledge respondents had in terms standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation. The findings indicated that respondents who taught both undergraduate and graduate classes (68%) were more likely than those who taught undergraduate classes only (60%) to know about standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation; those who taught undergraduate classes only were more likely than those who taught graduate classes only (43%) to have the knowledge regarding standards and index to be applied in the NUTLE teaching evaluation (see Table 15).

**Faculty Knowledge of Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation**

Research question #1-d) asks whether respondents’ knowledge of student learning outcomes evaluation were related to institution type, professional rank, highest educational degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE. The findings indicated that institution type was not related to respondents’ knowledge about evaluation of student learning outcomes. A great majority of respondents (75% for 985 and 211 project institutions and 74% for ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995 respectively) had some knowledge about how student Table 14

**Knowledge about Teaching Evaluation by Highest Degree**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s (n = 38)</th>
<th>Master’s (n = 207)</th>
<th>Doctorate (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (n = 262)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent/Somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 158)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little/Not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 104)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15

Knowledge about Teaching Evaluation by Classes Taught before the NUTLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 220)</th>
<th>Grad &amp; Under (n = 37)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge (n = 264)

To a great extent/Somewhat

(f = 160)

132  60.0  25  67.6  3  42.9

Very little/Not at all

(f = 104)

88  40.0  12  32.4  4  57.1

learning outcomes would be evaluated (see Table 16). The findings indicated that professional ranks, highest education degrees, as well as classes taught were slightly related to respondents’ knowledge about student learning outcomes evaluation. Specifically, although most respondents had some knowledge about student learning outcomes evaluation, those with higher professional ranks (associate and full professors, 85%) were slightly more likely than those with lower professional ranks (teaching assistants and lecturers, 71%) to know about it (see Table 17).

In addition, those with higher education degrees were slightly more likely (doctorate, 77%, master’s, 76%, and bachelor’s, 66%) to know about it (see Table 18). Similarly, respondents who taught both undergraduate and graduate classes (83%), and who taught graduate classes only (86%) were slightly more likely than those who taught undergraduate classes only (73%) to know about it (see Table 19).
Table 16

Knowledge about Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation by Institution Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 project (n = 51)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly (n = 215)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (n = 266)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent/Somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 198)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little/Not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 68)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17

Knowledge about Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation by Professional Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 191)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof (n = 74)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (n = 265)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent/Somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 198)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little/Not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 67)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18

*Knowledge about Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s (n = 38)</th>
<th>Master’s (n = 206)</th>
<th>Doctorate (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (n = 261)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent/Somewhat</td>
<td>(f = 194)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 194)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little/Not at all</td>
<td>(f = 67)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 67)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19

*Knowledge about Student Learning Outcomes Evaluation by Classes Taught before the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 220)</th>
<th>Grad &amp; Under (n = 36)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (n = 263)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent/Somewhat</td>
<td>(f = 196)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 196)</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little/Not at all</td>
<td>(f = 67)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 67)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up, most respondents reported being informed of the NUTLE implementation at their institutions at formal meetings. Institution types and professional ranks did not make any difference in terms of what faculty members did in preparation for the NUTLE. More of those respondents with master’s degrees and those who taught graduate classes tended to be asked to
re-grade students’ exam papers and more of those with bachelor’s degrees tended to be asked to create documents for teaching archives in preparation for the NUTLE.

In terms of knowledge of standards and index regarding the NUTLE teaching evaluation and how student learning outcomes would be evaluated, most respondents had some knowledge about them regardless of institution type. However, more of those with higher professional ranks and academic degrees tended to be knowledgeable about them. More of those who taught only undergraduate classes knew about standards and index about teaching evaluation, and more of those who taught graduate classes only than those who taught undergraduate classes only reported knowing about how student learning outcomes would be evaluated.

**Faculty Perceptions of the NUTLE**

What were the perceptions of faculty members at regular higher education institutions regarding the 2003-2008 NUTLE?

To answer the second research question and its sub-questions, the researcher conducted frequency and cross-tabulation analyses. To conduct cross-tabulations, the researcher collapsed some variables because the numbers that are smaller than five in the cells would violate the assumptions if kept as original variables. By collapsing the original ones, new variables were created for cross-tabulation to see if there were relations between faculty perceptions regarding the NUTLE by institutional and faculty demographics.

**Main Purpose of the NUTLE**

The findings indicated that most faculty respondents (48% for 985 and 211 institutions, 57% for ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995) considered that the main purpose of the 2003 - 2008 NUTLE was to insure higher education quality, and only a very small number of respondents (10% for 985 and 211 institutions, 7% for ordinary and newly established
institutions after 1995) considered that the main purpose was to enhance student learning. Respondents who worked at 985 or 211 project institutions (13%) were slightly more likely than those who worked at ordinary or newly established institutions (10%) to report that the main purposes of the NUTLE was “exercising government’s control over higher education for funding.” Similar was with “standardizing teaching and teaching administration” considered as the main purpose (29% for 985 and 211 institutions, and 27% for ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995, respectively). However, only about 8% of the respondents from all types of institutions in average believed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to enhance student learning (see Table 20).

Table 20

*Main Purpose of the NUTLE by Institution Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 project (n = 48)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly (n = 209)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main purpose ($n = 257$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising government’s control for funding allocation ($f = 26$)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardizing teaching and teaching administration ($f = 71$)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring higher education quality ($f = 141$)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student learning ($f = 19$)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings of the main purpose by professional rank were consistent with the findings by institution type. That is, most respondents (58% for teaching assistants and lecturers, and 45% for associate and full professors) thought the main purpose of the 2003 – 2008 NUTLE was to insure higher education quality, with less than 8% in average believing the main purpose was to enhance student learning, regardless of professional rank. Specifically, slightly more associate professors and full professors (15%) than teaching assistants and lecturers (9%) considered the main purpose of the NUTLE was to exercise government’s control over higher education for funding allocation. Similarly, slightly more associate professors and full professors (31%) than teaching assistants and lecturers (27%) were inclined to believe that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to standardize teaching and teaching administration (See Table 21).

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 187)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof (n = 69)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main purpose (n = 256)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise government’s control for funding allocation (f = 26)</td>
<td>16 8.6</td>
<td>10 14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardizing teaching and teaching administration (f = 71)</td>
<td>50 26.7</td>
<td>21 30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring higher education quality (f = 140)</td>
<td>109 58.3</td>
<td>31 44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student learning (f = 19)</td>
<td>12 6.4</td>
<td>7 10.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Highest education degree seems to be slightly related to respondents’ perceptions of the main purpose of the NUTLE. The findings indicated that more respondents with bachelor’s or master’s degrees (51% and 57%, respectively) that those respondents with doctorate degrees agreed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality than those with doctoral degrees (35%), who were more likely to agree that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to standardize teaching and teaching administration (47%) than bachelor’s (38%) and master’s degree holders (25%). Significantly, no respondents with a doctorate degree believed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to enhance student learning. Also noted was more respondents with a doctorate degree (18%) were inclined to believe that the main purpose of the NUTLE was for the government to exercise control over higher education for funding allocation than those with a master’s degree (11%) and those with a bachelor’s degree (3%) (see Table 22).

Classes taught before the NUTLE seems to be a significant factor regarding respondents’ perception of the main purpose of the NUTLE. The findings indicated that respondents who taught only undergraduate classes (56%) were most likely to believe that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality, followed by those who taught both undergraduate and graduate classes (51%). Those who taught graduate classes only were evenly spread over “exercising government’s control over higher education for funding allocation,” “standardizing teaching and teaching administration,” and “insuring higher education quality.” What was striking was that no respondent who taught graduate classes believed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to “enhance student learning” (see Table 23).
Table 22

*Main Purpose of the NUTLE by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s (n = 37)</th>
<th>Master’s (n = 198)</th>
<th>Doctorate (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main purpose (n = 252)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise government’s control for funding allocation (f = 25)</td>
<td>1  2.7</td>
<td>21  10.6</td>
<td>3  17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardizing teaching and teaching administration (f = 71)</td>
<td>14  37.8</td>
<td>49  24.7</td>
<td>8  47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring higher education quality (f = 138)</td>
<td>19  51.4</td>
<td>113  57.1</td>
<td>6  35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student learning (f = 18)</td>
<td>3  8.1</td>
<td>15  7.6</td>
<td>0  0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus of the NUTLE**

This question asks if professional rank, highest education degree, and classes taught before the NUTLE were related to respondents’ perceptions of the focus of the NUTLE being on undergraduate teaching. The findings indicated that professional rank made little difference in that just over half of the faculty respondents (54% for teaching assistants and lecturers, and 57% for associate and full professors) agreed that the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching (see Table 24).
Table 23

*Main Purpose of the NUTLE by Classes Taught before the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 212)</th>
<th>Under &amp; Grad (n = 37)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main purpose (n = 255)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise government’s control for funding allocation (f = 25)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardizing teaching and teaching administration (f = 71)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring higher education quality (n = 138)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing student learning (f = 18)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24

*Focus of the NUTLE by Professional Rank*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 185)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof. (n = 70)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus of the NUTLE was undergraduate teaching (n = 255)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 139)</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 116)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Highest educational degree seems to make some difference in respondents’ perceptions of the NUTLE's focus being on undergraduate teaching. Specifically, respondents with a bachelor’s degree (68%) were more likely than those with master’s degrees (52%) and those with doctoral degrees (47%) to agree that the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching. However, more than half of the respondents with doctoral degrees (53%) disagreed that the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching (see Table 25).

Similarly, classes taught before the NUTLE seem to make some difference in respondents’ perceptions of the NUTLE's focus being on undergraduate teaching. The findings indicated that the higher the level of courses they taught, the more likely they were to agree that the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching (67% for graduate classes only, 64% for both undergraduate and graduate classes, and 53% for undergraduate classes only, respectively). However, nearly half of those who taught undergraduate classes (47%) did not agree that the focus of the 2003-2008 NUTLE was on undergraduate teaching (see Table 26).

Table 25

*Focus of the NUTLE by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s (n = 37)</th>
<th>Master’s (n = 197)</th>
<th>Doctorate (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus of the NUTLE was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undergraduate teaching (n = 251)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 136)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 115)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 26

*Focus of the NUTLE by Classes Taught before the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 212)</th>
<th>Under &amp; Grad (n = 36)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The focus of the NUTLE was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undergraduate teaching (n = 254)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 139)</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 115)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Focus on Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes*

This question asks whether professional ranks, highest educational degrees, and classes taught before the NUTLE were related to respondents’ perceptions of the NUTLE focus being on undergraduate student learning outcomes. The findings indicated that more than half of the respondents, regardless of professional ranks, did not believe that the focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes, with 62% of teaching assistants and lecturers and 53% of associate professors and full professors, respectively (see Table 27). Similarly, a large majority of the respondents, regardless of highest educational degrees, did not regard undergraduate student learning outcomes as the focus of the NUTLE. Specifically, about 70% of those with a doctorate degree, followed by those with a master’s degree (59%) and those with a bachelor’s degree (58%) did not believe that undergraduate student learning outcomes were the focus of the NUTLE (see Table 28).
Table 27

*Focus of the NUTLE by Professional Rank*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer ( n = 184 )</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof. ( n = 70 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( f )</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes ( n = 254 )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ( f = 103 )</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ( f = 151 )</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28

*Focus of the NUTLE by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s ( n = 36 )</th>
<th>Master’s ( n = 198 )</th>
<th>Doctorate ( n = 17 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( f )</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>( f )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes ( n = 251 )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ( f = 101 )</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ( f = 150 )</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also exactly half or more than half of the respondents, regardless of classes taught before the NUTLE, reported the NUTLE’s focus was not on undergraduate student learning outcomes. Specifically, the findings indicated that more than half of the faculty respondents who taught undergraduate classes (60%) only and who taught both undergraduate and graduate classes (61%) did not consider that the focus of the NUTLE was on undergraduate student learning
outcomes. Opinions split half-and-half for the respondents who taught graduate classes only (See Table 29).

Table 29

*Focus of the NUTLE by Classes Taught before the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 211)</th>
<th>Under &amp; Grad (n = 36)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes (n = 253)

- Yes (f = 102)  
  - 85 40.3
  - 14 38.9
  - 3 50.0

- No (f = 151)  
  - 126 59.7
  - 22 61.1
  - 3 50.0

---

**Overall Perception of the NUTLE**

This question asks whether respondents’ overall perception of the NUTLE were related to institution type, professional rank, highest education degree, classes taught before the NUTLE, preparation for the NUTLE, and job stress. The findings indicated that the majority of faculty respondents, regardless of institution types, had positive perceptions of the NUTLE, with respondents affiliated with 985 project institution and 211 project institutions being 67% and those with ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995 being 59%, respectively (see Table 30). Similar to institution types, professional ranks did not make a difference in respondents’ overall perception of the NUTLE. As was noted in Table 31, more than half of the respondents had positive perceptions of the NUTLE, 61% for teaching assistants and lecturers, and 57% for associate and full professors, respectively. Specifically, less than half of the respondents (41% in average) had negative perceptions of the NUTLE, and notably, those with
higher professional ranks (associate and full professors, 43%) accounted for more negative perceptions than those with lower professional ranks (teaching assistants and lecturers 39%).

Table 30

*Overall Perceptions by Institution Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 (n = 49)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly established (n = 207)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall perceptions (n = 256)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive/positive</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 154)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative/very negative</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 102)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31

*Overall Perceptions by Professional Rank*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/lecturers (n = 185)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof (n = 70)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall perceptions (n = 255)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive/positive</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 153)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative/very negative</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 102)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also, highest educational degree seemed to make little difference in respondents’ overall perceptions of the NUTLE. The findings indicated that a majority of faculty respondents (61%) had positive perceptions regarding the NUTLE, regardless of highest educational degree. However, more respondents with bachelor’s degrees (65%) than those with doctoral degrees (59%) and those with master’s degrees (58%) reported to have positive perceptions (see Table 32). The findings also indicated that respondents who taught undergraduate classes (61%) or undergraduate and graduate classes (53%) were more likely to have positive perceptions of the NUTLE than those who taught graduate classes only (33%), which is consistent with the findings that respondents with higher professional ranks accounted for more negative perceptions, since these were the ones most likely to teach graduate classes (see Table 33).

Table 32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Perceptions by Highest Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall perceptions (n = 251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive/positive (f = 149)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative/very negative (f = 102)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The factor of preparation for the NUTLE by re-grading examination papers or creating teaching documents seems to make a slight difference in respondents overall perception of the NUTLE. The findings indicated that respondents who did not re-grade students’ examination
Table 33

Overall Perceptions by Classes Taught before the NUTLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Under (n = 212)</th>
<th>Under &amp; Grad (n = 36)</th>
<th>Grad (n = 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall perceptions (n = 255)</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive/positive</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 153)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative/very negative</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 102)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of jobs stress, a majority of the respondents (58%) who reported that their job stress had been intensified because of the NUTLE had, nevertheless, positive perceptions of the NUTLE; however, those who did not report that their job stress intensified because of the NUTLE were more likely (73%) to have positive perceptions. For those whose job stress had been intensified, nearly half of them had negative perceptions but for those whose job stress had not been intensified, less than one-third (27%) had negative perceptions (See Table 35).
Table 34

*Overall Perceptions by Preparation for the NUTLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Re-grade exam papers</th>
<th>Make up documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (n = 136)</td>
<td>No (n = 118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>(f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (n = 203)</td>
<td>No (n = 51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>(f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall perceptions \((n = 254)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very positive/positive</th>
<th>Negative/very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up, in terms of the main purpose of the NUTLE, most respondents believed it to be to “insure higher education quality,” regardless of institution types and professional ranks.

Table 35

*Overall Perceptions by Job Stress*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Job stress</th>
<th>intensified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (n = 228)</td>
<td>No (n = 26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall perceptions \((n = 255)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very positive/positive</th>
<th>Negative/very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The lowest frequency was found to be the purpose of enhancing student learning with all institution types and professional ranks. While more respondents with bachelor’s or master’s degrees and those who taught only undergraduate classes regarded the main purpose to be “insuring higher education quality,” more of those with doctoral degrees considered the main purpose to be “exercising government’s control over higher education in funding allocation,” and no respondent with a doctoral degree or those who taught graduate classes only regarded the purpose to be “enhancing student learning.”

In terms of the focus of the NUTLE, more than half of the respondents, regardless of professional ranks, thought the focus was on undergraduate teaching. More than half of those who had taught only undergraduate classes or both undergraduate and graduate classes agreed that the focus was on teaching; but more of those who taught only graduate classes disagreed that the focus was on undergraduate teaching. More than half of those with bachelor’s and master’s degrees, but not those with doctoral degrees, considered the focus to be on undergraduate teaching. However, regardless of professional ranks and highest degrees, most faculty respondents disagreed that the focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes. More than half of those who taught undergraduate classes only or those who taught both undergraduate classes and graduate classes disagreed that the focus was on student learning outcomes; and those who taught graduate classes only were split equally between agreeing and disagreeing that the focus was on student learning outcomes.

Finally, regardless of institution types, professional ranks, highest degrees, preparation for the NUTLE, and job stress, more than half of the respondents’ overall perceptions of the NUTLE were positive, with one exception for those who taught graduate classes only—two-thirds of them had a negative perception.
Post-NUTLE Impact on Teaching and Research

Did the NUTLE impact faculty’s teaching and research afterwards by institution type, professional rank, highest degree, and years worked in the current institution? To answer the third research question, the researcher conducted frequency and cross-tabulation analyses. In the same way as the research done to conduct cross-tabulation analysis, the researcher collapsed some variables because the number in the cell would violate the assumptions if kept as original variables. By collapsing the original ones, new variables were created for cross-tabulation to see if there were relations between faculty’s teaching and research regarding the NUTLE by type, professional rank, highest degree, and years worked in the current institution.

Little Impact on Teaching

The findings indicated that most respondents, regardless of institution types, reported it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching. Specifically, about 67% of respondents affiliated to 985 and 211 project institutions and 65% of those affiliated with ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995 regarded it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching, leaving about 33% believing that the NUTLE actually had little impact on their teaching (see Table 36). Similarly, more than 60% of the respondents, regardless of professional ranks, reported it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching, with less than 40% believing that the NUTLE actually had little impact on their teaching (see Table 37).

The findings also indicated that most respondents, regardless of highest educational degree or how many years they had worked at their current institutions, thought it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching afterwards. Specifically, more than 60% of the respondents with bachelor’s (65%) or master’s degrees (66%) thought it untrue and about 53% of
Table 36

The NUTLE Had Little Impact on Teaching by Institution Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 (n = 48)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly (n = 208)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Little impact (n = 256)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very true/True (f = 88)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat untrue/Untrue</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 168)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 37

The NUTLE Had Little Impact on Teaching by Professional Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturers (n = 185)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof. (n = 70)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Little impact (n = 255)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very true/True (f = 88)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat untrue/Untrue</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 168)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

those with doctoral degrees reported it untrue, too (see Table 38); more than 70% of the respondents who worked for 11 to 15 years at their current institutions, more than 60% of those who worked for five to 10 years (65%) or more than 20 years (64%), and about 55% of those who worked for 16 to 20 years regarded it untrue. It might be fairly said then that the NUTLE impacted about two-thirds of the respondents with bachelor’s or master’s degrees, and a little
over a half of those with doctorate degrees. Notably, respondents with 11 to 15 years of work experience at their current institutions could be said to be the largest group to have been impacted in their teaching by the NUTLE (see Table 39).

Table 38

*The NUTLE Had Little Impact on Teaching by Highest Degree*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s (n = 37)</th>
<th>Master’s (n = 197)</th>
<th>Doctorate (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little impact (n = 251)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very true/True (f = 88)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat untrue/Untrue</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 168)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 39

*The NUTLE Had Little Impact on Teaching by Years Worked at Current Institution*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>5-10 yrs (n = 156)</th>
<th>11-15 yrs (n = 42)</th>
<th>16-20 yrs (n = 27)</th>
<th>more than 20 yrs (n = 28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little impact (n = 251)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very true/True (f = 88)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat untrue/Untrue</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 165)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Increase in Teaching or Research after the NUTLE

In terms of whether respondents were required to do more teaching and/or more research, a majority of respondents, regardless of institution types, reported to have been required to do more research, with 74% for respondents affiliated with 985 and 211 project institutions, and 69% for those with ordinary and newly established institutions after 1995. However, more than half of the respondents from 985/211 project institutions (57%), were required to do more teaching than before the NUTLE, with 47% of the respondents in ordinary institutions required to do more teaching than before the NUTLE. It is clear that most respondents were required to do more research, regardless of institution types. It is interesting to find that research oriented institutions required faculty to do more teaching instead of ordinary or newly established institutions (see Tables 40 and 41).

Table 40

*More Teaching after the NUTLE by Institution Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211(n = 47)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly established (n = 208)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More teaching (n = 255)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f =125)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f=130)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While professional ranks seemed to make a slight difference on teaching requirements, with 51% of associate and full professors and about 48% of teaching assistants and lecturers reporting they were asked to do more teaching than before the NUTLE, professional ranks did
not seem to make a difference in respondents’ being required to do more research. Specifically, most respondents, regardless of rank, reported being required to do more research, with teaching assistants and lecturers about 70% and associate and full professors 68% (see Tables 42 and 43). So, regardless of professional ranks, faculty generally felt pushed to do more research; teaching assistants and lecturers might have felt pushed even more.

Table 42

More Research after the NUTLE by Institution Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>985/211 (n = 49)</th>
<th>Ordinary/Newly established (n = 206)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More research (n = 255)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 178)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 77)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 42

More Teaching after the NUTLE by Professional Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 185)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof (n = 69)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More teaching (n = 254)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 124)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 130)</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 43

More Research after the NUTLE by Professional Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TA/Lecturer (n = 185)</th>
<th>Associate/Full Prof (n = 69)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More research (n = 254)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 177)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 77)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings indicated that about half of the respondents with bachelor’s (50%) or doctorate degrees (53%) and less than half of those with master’s degrees (48%) reported to be required to do more teaching (see Tables 44 and 45). Although most respondents were required to do more research after the NUTLE, respondents with bachelor’s degrees (76%) felt most pushed and those with doctorate degrees (53%) least pushed to do more research after the NUTLE. Also, the findings indicated that the number of years that the respondents had worked at their current institutions did not make a difference in research requirements after the NUTLE. Specifically, the great majority of the respondents reported an increase in research requirements with 68% for those who had worked five to 10 years, 76% for those who had worked 11 to 15 years, 78% for those who had worked 16-20 years, and 66% for those who had worked for more than 20 years (see Table 47). In terms of teaching requirements, a little over half of the respondents who had worked for 11 to 15 years at their current institutions reported an increase (see Table 46), with less than 50% for the rest of the respondents. Therefore, although most respondents were required to do more research, respondents with 11-15 years of work experience at their current institution felt to be pushed both for more teaching and more research.
Table 44

More Teaching after the NUTLE by Highest Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s ($n = 36$)</th>
<th>Master’s ($n = 197$)</th>
<th>Doctorate ($n = 17$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$f$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$f$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More teaching ($n = 250$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ($f = 121$)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ($f = 129$)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 45

More Research after the NUTLE by Highest Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Bachelor’s ($n = 37$)</th>
<th>Master’s ($n = 196$)</th>
<th>Doctorate ($n = 17$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$f$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$f$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More research ($n = 250$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ($f = 174$)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ($f = 76$)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up, more than half of the faculty respondents regarded it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching, regardless of institution types, professional ranks, highest degrees, and years worked at their current institution. Similarly, more than half of the faculty respondents agreed that they were required to do more research regardless of institutional type, professional ranks, highest educational degree, and number of years they had worked at their current institutions. In terms of being required to do more teaching after the NUTLE, more
Table 46

More Teaching after the NUTLE by Years Worked at Current Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>5-10 yrs (n =156)</th>
<th>11-15 yrs (n = 42)</th>
<th>16- 20 yrs (n = 25)</th>
<th>more than 20 yrs (n = 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f     %   f       %      f   %      f       %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More teaching (n =252)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 122)</td>
<td>74    47.4  23      54.8    12      48.0     13        44.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 130)</td>
<td>82    53.6  19      45.2    13      52.0     16        55.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 47

More Research after the NUTLE by Years Worked at Current Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>5-10 yrs (n =154)</th>
<th>11-15 yrs (n = 42)</th>
<th>16- 20 yrs (n = 27)</th>
<th>more than 20 yrs (n = 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f     %   f       %      f   %      f       %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More research (n =252)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (f = 176)</td>
<td>104   67.5  32      76.2    21      77.8   19          65.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (f = 76)</td>
<td>50    32.5  10      23.8    6       22.2   10         34.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

than half of those respondents who were affiliated with 985 or 211 institutions, who were associate or full professors, who had doctorate degrees, and who worked for eleven to fifteen years at their current institution reported an increase in teaching requirements.

Non-Teaching Influence on Undergraduate Student Learning

How has the 2003-2008 NUTLE influenced undergraduate student learning from the perspective of faculty? To answer the last research question and its sub-question, the researcher
conducted frequency and cross-tabulation analyses. In the same way as the researcher did to conduct cross-tabulation analysis for the previous questions, the researcher collapsed some variables because the number in the cell would violate the assumptions if kept as original variables. By collapsing the original ones, new variables were created for cross-tabulation to see if there were relations between whether efforts were made to improve undergraduate student learning by institution type, year of evaluation, and NUTLE grade.

The findings indicated that institution type seemed to make a difference in terms of whether institutions had made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes. Specifically, more than half of the respondents affiliated with 985 or 211 project institutions (56%) agreed that their institutions had made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning, and more than half of the respondents serving at ordinary or newly established institutions (56%) did not agree that their institutions had made such efforts (see Table 48).

Table 48

| Efforts Made to Improve Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes by Institution Type |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables                       | 985/211 (n = 48) | Ordinary/ Newly established (n = 204) |
| Efforts made (n = 252)          |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Very much agree/Agree           | 27              | 56.3            | 90              | 44.1            |                 |
| (f = 117)                       |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Disagree/Very much disagree     | 21              | 43.7            | 114             | 55.9            |                 |
| (f = 135)                       |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
However, the majority of respondents disagreed that their institutions had made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes, regardless of the year of evaluation. Nearly 60% of the respondents whose institutions were evaluated from 2003 to 2005, and 53% of those whose institutions were evaluated from 2006 to 2008 did not agree that their institutions had made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes (see Table 49). Similarly, the majority of respondents, regardless of the NUTLE grade that their institution received, did not agree that their institutions had made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes. Specifically, those respondents whose institutions received “Pass” (67%), those whose institutions received “Fair” (56%), and those whose institutions received “Excellent” (52%) disagreed that their institutions made such efforts (see Table 50).

Table 49

*Efforts Made to Improve Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes by Year of Evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efforts made (n = 247)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much agree/Agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 113)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree/Very much disagree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f = 134)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up, more than half of the respondents disagreed that after the NUTLE, their institutions made efforts to improve undergraduate learning outcomes regardless of the year the institution was evaluated and their NUTLE grades. However, more than half of the respondents
affiliated with 985 or 211 project institutions did agree that their institutions made significant efforts to improve undergraduate student learning, but not those with ordinary or newly established institutions after 1995.

Table 50

**Efforts Made to Improve Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes by NUTLE Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Excellent (n=165)</th>
<th>Fair (n=64)</th>
<th>Pass (n=21)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efforts made (n=250)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much agree/Agree</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f=115)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree/Very much disagree</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f=135)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty Suggestions to Improve the NUTLE**

The qualitative data yielded from the survey were consistent with the quantitative data, and the findings indicated that many faculty members were concerned about the NUTLE implementation. Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for better NUTLE implementation. One hundred forty-nine out of 279 respondents (53%) provided answers to the question that asked for suggestions to improve the NUTLE. The response rate was 53%, meaning more than half of the respondents provided feedback to this question. A sample of original feedback was listed for the richness of the data (see Table 51).
Table 51

Suggestions Regarding Improving the NUTLE

1. The 2003-2008 NUTLE implementation was just formalism with false content (rehearsed classes, made-up teaching documents, re-graded examination papers).
2. This type of NUTLE should be stopped or abandoned (meaningless, a waste of time, money, resources, and human labor, pointless to redo what had been done before).
3. Academic freedom should be given to teacher (faculty under control of administrators).
4. Administrative interference should be reduced in teaching evaluation.
5. Faculty professional development should be emphasized.
6. The focus of the NUTLE should be on student learning outcomes.
7. More faculty members should be on the NUTLE expert teams.
8. More emphasis should be given to teaching for faculty working at institutions not oriented for research.
9. Different criteria should be applied to different disciplines.
10. Do not standardize everything; teaching should not be standardized.
11. More effective methods should be applied.
12. Evaluation and assessment should be conducted on a daily basis.
13. Third party should be responsible for the results, not the government.
14. More practical methods should be provided from expert teams in terms of teaching and student learning outcomes.
15. Do not look at only test scores to evaluate student learning outcomes; listen to teachers about it.
16. Too much time was wasted in reviewing and improving past teaching documents (which was hated and complained).
17. Evaluation should not disturb normal teaching and learning.
18. Let professors/teachers have their say.
19. The NUTLE was with positive intention but was not with positive results.
20. Experts should encourage more than criticize.
Four themes stood out. The first outstanding theme was “formalism,” described by 38 respondents (approximately 26% of those who answered the open-ended question) as one of the main characteristics of the NUTLE. Formalism, in this sense, means that institutions paid a great deal of attention to how they could satisfy the standards required in the NUTLE and experts’ expectations by (a) creating documents based on the NUTLE requirements, (b) having faculty re-grade students’ test papers to meet the NUTLE standards, (c) having faculty create teaching documents to be stored in the teaching archives based on the NUTLE requirements, and (d) having faculty and students rehearse classes for experts to observe at their site visits.

The second theme that stood out was that the NUTLE should be stopped, described by 11 respondents (about 7%). Typical responses reflected respondents’ negative attitude towards the NUTLE implementation. For example, one said it was “a waste of human and physical resources” to conduct the NUTLE; one suggested canceling the NUTLE because “too much time was wasted on reviewing, improving past teaching documents, which is hated and complained by most faculty members;” and one did not see the point in having experts “observe repeatedly rehearsed classes to evaluate teaching and student learning” on their site visits. Another respondent regarded it a waste of time and resources “to spend time and energy reworking on students’ old test papers.”

The third outstanding theme was related to teaching, faculty professional development, and faculty’s voice in the NUTLE. Respondents suggested that evaluation and faculty professional development should be combined so that faculty could be empowered in self-evaluation. One held that professional development is a must “to insure higher education quality.” One said that “more emphasis should be given to teaching,” and another said that
“teachers’ voice should be heard.” In terms of expert teams, they suggested that faculty should be included and said, “Let professors/teachers have their say in teaching.”

The fourth theme was related to administrative interference. Faculty members called for “less administrative interference.” They thought it important that “more faculty members should be involved in the evaluation process, not just administrative leaders” because the main result of the NUTLE was that the administrators had more power over teaching and teachers were simply under their control. They also suggested that experts encourage teachers more than criticize them during their site visits.

This chapter presented research findings from a web-based survey. The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents were affiliated with ordinary institutions (77%), were lecturers (66%), had master’s degrees (79%), had taught undergraduate classes before the NUTLE (98%), had worked in their current institutions for five to 10 years (62%), and were informed of the NUTLE at formal meetings (89%). In addition, in preparation for the NUTLE, most of the respondents received a brochure (68%), were required to re-grade students’ examination papers (52%) and/or create missing or deficient documents for teaching archives (78%). Most respondents had some knowledge of the standards and index about teaching evaluation (61%) and of how student learning outcomes would be evaluated (74%) before the NUTLE implementation. Most respondent reported their institutions were evaluated between 2006 and 2008 (80%) and received a grade of “Excellent” (66%). No institution was reported to be given a “No Pass.”

The vast majority of respondents felt their job stress was intensified because of the NUTLE (89%) and reported that they were required to do more research than they had been before the NUTLE (70%). More than half of the respondents regarded the teaching evaluation as
not comprehensive or somewhat comprehensive and did not believe their institutions made efforts to improve student learning outcomes (54%). Most respondents agreed that the NUTLE was a waste of money, time, and human labor (72%), and 54% of the respondents agreed that the focus of the NUTLE was on teaching while 41% on student learning outcomes; nonetheless, their overall perception of the NUTLE was somewhat more positive than negative.

Regardless of institution types and professional ranks, most respondents reported that they were asked to re-grade students’ examination papers (52%) and/or to create documents for teaching archives (78%) in preparation for the NUTLE. Similarly, regardless of institution types and professional ranks, more than half of the respondents believed that the main purpose was to insure higher education quality (55%), whereas only about 7% of the respondents felt that the main purpose of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes. However, respondents with doctorate degrees were more likely than those with master’s and bachelor’s degrees to believe that the main purpose was to exercise government’s control over higher education in funding allocation.

While the majority of the respondents regarded it untrue or somewhat untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching (56%), regardless of institution types, professional ranks, highest educational degree, and number of years they had worked at their current institutions, the majority of those affiliated with research-oriented institutions (i.e., 211 and 985 project institutions) were required to do more teaching after than before the NUTLE, and a majority of respondents were required to do more research, regardless of institution types, professional ranks, highest education degree, and number of years worked at their current institutions.
The majority of respondents disagreed or very much disagreed that their institutions made efforts to improve student learning outcomes (56%), regardless of the year of evaluation and the NUTLE grades that their institutions received. Although most respondents had a positive or very positive perception of the NUTLE (60%), their suggestions/opinions to improve the NUTLE included a call to stop “formalism” and to hear faculty voices. They called for “less administrative interference” and asked to get more faculty involved in the evaluation process.

The next chapter presents discussions of the research findings, implications for policy and practice, limitations of this research, and suggestions for future research on this topic.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore faculty perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) from 2003 to 2008 at four-year regular higher education institutions in Northwest China. The research aimed to paint a picture of faculty perceptions regarding the NUTLE by institutional and individual demographic characteristics. This chapter is divided into four sections, beginning with a discussion of these findings in relation to the research questions. The second section addresses implications for policy and practice. In the third section, limitations of the study are addressed, followed by recommendations for future research.

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

To understand the findings in relation to the research questions, it is important to have a picture of the respondents and respondent institutions involved in the study. Based on the self-reported information of the respondents, the following findings are important to notice. Most respondents in the study were lecturers with master’s degrees, had worked at their current institutions for five to 10 years, and had taught undergraduate classes only before the NUTLE. Compared with the data provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in terms of professional ranks and highest education degrees earned by faculty at regular higher education institutions, percentages of these two demographic data obtained in this study are significantly higher than those provided by the MOE. According to the MOE data, lecturers account for 39%, and those with a master’s degree account for 35% of all faculty members at regular higher education institutions in China (MOE, 2012); however, more than 66% of the respondents in this study reported to be lecturers and more than 78% of them had master’s degrees. This result may be due to the fact that regular higher education institutions include some that offer both associate
and bachelor’s degree programs. The difference should lie in demographic information of those who work at regular higher education institutions that only offer associate degree programs.

The majority of respondents reported to have worked at their current institutions for five to 10 years. It is reasonable to conclude that these respondents are more likely to be lecturers than those who worked for more than 10 years at their current institutions because in China, faculty working at regular higher education institutions can apply to be a lecturer after having been a teaching assistant for five years with adequate proof of teaching and research qualifications. Most respondent institutions were reported as ordinary institutions, with four-year undergraduate programs funded by the government. Nearly 80% of the respondents reported that their institutions were evaluated sometime between 2006 and 2008, and 66% of the respondents reported that their institutions received “Excellent” grades, whereas no respondent reported “No Pass” grade for their institutions in the NUTLE. To understand the highly skewed NUTLE grades without any institutions given “No Pass,” taking into consideration institutional efforts to prepare for a good grade, the following factors should be reviewed.

First, the year of evaluation is important. Since the NUTLE is the first large-scale, nation-wide evaluation conducted in China’s higher education, institutions evaluated in the first few years would provide valuable experience for those that would be evaluated later. Since the NUTLE policy required that institutions should apply to be evaluated at the time they were prepared, it was customary that institutions would wait until they understood better how they could meet all the requirements for better grades. This observation explains why nearly 80% of the institutions were evaluated between 2006 and 2008, with only about 20% evaluated from 2003 to 2005.
Second, the perception of grades in the Chinese culture may be different from that in American culture. Typically, in the case of the NUTLE, since it is closely related to funding allocation from the MOE and public acknowledgement, an “Excellent” would mean success in receiving funding and more high school student applications in the future. “Fair” would mean acceptable but not good enough, and a “Pass” would mean just meeting the minimum requirements of the NUTLE, which in some people’s eyes, would equal a failure. Third, the MOE may not want to accept “No Pass” of any institutions in the NUTLE because the MOE oversees higher education and is responsible for providing quality higher education. Giving any institution a “No Pass” would mean that the MOE has not successfully carried out its responsibilities in regular higher education to some extent, and as a government organization, the MOE may not want to fail.

**Preparation for the NUTLE**

In relation to research question one that addressed faculty preparation for the NUTLE, the following findings were obtained in respondents’ preparation for the NUTLE. For one thing, nearly 90% of the institutions informed their faculty members of the NUTLE at formal meetings, either department or institution meetings. This is a very common occurrence since departments usually have meetings on a weekly basis, to inform all faculty and staff of the upcoming agenda for both the institution and the department. Secondly, most of the respondents received a brochure with questions and answers regarding the NUTLE. This customary practice, popular in most institutions, showed that institutions attached great importance to the NUTLE, because everyone needed to be prepared for experts’ site visits when experts might ask any faculty, staff, or students questions about the NUTLE. In addition, the expert teams could use knowledge of the NUTLE to decide whether participant institutions took the NUTLE seriously.
In terms of respondent preparation for the NUTLE, regardless of institution types or professional ranks, two important findings should be noted. One is that more than half of the respondents were asked to re-grade students’ old examination papers; the other one is that nearly 80% of the respondents were asked to create documents that were either missing or deficient in relation to the standards required in the NUTLE. In addition to their teaching and research tasks, one year before the NUTLE, faculty started to devote a lot of time to such preparation. To re-grade students’ examination papers was to give different scores to students’ examination papers to show students’ grasp of knowledge in the classes as required by the NUTLE. To create documents for the teaching archives means that required teaching documents required by the NUTLE should have been archived, but for some reason, some required documents were either missing or deficient; therefore, faculty were asked to address the issues for the experts site visits.

Re-grading students’ examination papers may be considered inappropriate and creating documents for the teaching archive may also be considered dishonest; however, faculty members still did what they were asked to do in preparation for the NUTLE, possibly after prioritizing group interest over personal interest (i.e., individualism versus collectivism). They may have realized the importance for their institutions to receive an “Excellent” grade. Faculty members’ such efforts demonstrated collective cooperation because no individual could afford to be responsible for the institution’s possible low grade in the NUTLE if they did not help. A low grade would adversely influence the institution’s financial resources, which would, in turn, adversely influence employees’ financial benefits. Although some respondents may have questioned the appropriateness of doing so to prepare for the NUTLE (See Table 51), they still helped by fulfilling the tasks.
Among respondents who re-graded students’ examination papers and those who addressed the issue of missing or deficient documents for the teaching archives, respondents with master’s degrees were more likely than those with bachelor’s degrees to be assigned the job of re-grading examination papers, and respondents with bachelor’s degrees were more likely than those with master’s degrees to be assigned the task of creating documents. In addition, respondents who taught graduate classes were more likely than respondents who taught undergraduate classes to be asked to re-grade examination papers and those who taught undergraduate classes only were slightly more likely than those who taught graduate classes only to be asked to create documents for the teaching archives. This practice may be because re-grading students’ examination papers was regarded as more academic, and creating documents for the teaching archives more administrative in nature. Therefore, respondents with master’s degree who taught graduate classes were regarded slightly more qualified than those respondents with bachelor’s degrees who taught undergraduate classes to re-grade the examination papers and those with bachelor’s degree who taught undergraduate classes only were considered more suitable than those with master’s degrees who taught graduate classes for creating documents.

In terms of the degree of respondents’ knowledge regarding NUTLE teaching evaluation and student learning outcomes evaluation, those who reported to have a higher degree of knowledge were with higher professional ranks and higher education degrees, even though most respondents had some knowledge. It is reasonable to conclude that most of the respondents had some knowledge regarding both teaching evaluation and student learning outcomes evaluation, because of the brochure issued to them with all information needed for the NUTLE preparation. The findings that those with higher professional ranks and higher education degrees tended to be more knowledgeable about the NUTLE may be due to the possibility that their institutions called
their attention to be prepared especially for the NUTLE. This may also be due to the possibility that these faculty members have more opportunities than the rest of the faculty members to familiarize themselves with the NUTLE and are more likely to be in leading teaching positions because of their higher professional ranks and higher education degrees.

**Perceptions of the NUTLE**

Research question number two explored faculty perceptions of the NUTLE. Firstly, most respondents believed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality. Since higher education quality includes almost everything practiced in higher education (Chen, 2004), it is reasonable to believe that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality in that the NUTLE was considered to have standardized teaching administration (Chen, 2009), improved academic atmospheres and standardized personnel training (Ji, 2009). Secondly, respondents believed the way they had prepared for the NUTLE meant, in some way, to insure higher education quality. Faculty’s involvement in and knowledge of the NUTLE implementation at their own institutions may be limited to their own preparation for the NUTLE and experts’ classroom visits as described in this study; therefore, the whole NUTLE implementation may be a complicated evaluation practice to them. Thus, most respondents did think that the main purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality, as intended by the MOE. This finding supports Hofstede’s (1984) uncertainty avoidance dimension when applied in the Chinese culture (i.e., higher degree of nervousness in complex situation and conformity to the authority would be expected). Since faculty members were not sure of what exactly the main purpose was, to avoid uncertainty to be safe, they accepted and believed the official statement of the main purpose of the NUTLE. Faculty members may have different opinions; however, they would rather believe the official document.
In addition, more of the respondents with a doctoral degree believed that the main purpose of the NUTLE was for the government to exercise control over higher education in funding allocation. These respondents were more likely the ones who would hold leading teaching and research positions. As faculty members with doctorate degrees nationally account for less than 15% (MOE, 2012), there are fewer faculty with doctorate degree in higher education institutions in Northwest China. Therefore, these faculty members’ opinions usually carry more weight. That is why it is also very important to know how the faculty population perceived the NUTLE. Although small in number, these faculty members do wield more influence in both teaching and research because of China’s attention to status consciousness.

Moreover, these respondents were also more likely to be those who taught graduate classes, and none of these respondents thought the purpose of the NUTLE was to enhance student learning. For all subgroups examined in this study (see Tables 20-23), enhancing student learning was least likely to be regarded as the main purpose of the NUTLE. Simply stated, enhancing student learning was not regarded as an important intended outcome of the NUTLE from the faculty perspective. Supposedly, enhancing student learning would improve higher education quality of which student learning is one aspect. However, in the NUTLE scheme indices, student learning outcomes came as the last one of the seven in total to be measured, given higher education quality being an inclusive and abstract concept in China. Therefore, even though enhancing student learning was least regarded as the main purpose of the NUTLE, most respondents had positive perceptions of the NUTLE.

The next important finding dealt with the focus of the NUTLE. The majority of the respondents thought that the focus was on undergraduate teaching, but did not think that the focus was on student learning outcomes. Since quality education cannot separate student
learning outcomes from faculty teaching, this finding is difficult to understand because, since the NUTLE was designed as both a teaching and learning evaluation, how could student learning outcomes not have been perceived as a focus? One possible explanation may be that the NUTLE attempted to do too much by assessing multiple aspects of higher education, and as a result, the foci were shifted. Another possibility may be that student learning outcomes were vaguely imbedded in the evaluation of teaching.

Regardless of different demographic and other independent variables, the overall perceptions of the NUTLE by the majority of the respondent were positive, except for those who taught graduate classes before the NUTLE. It is interesting to note that although the majority of the respondents did not believe that the main purpose or the focus of the NUTLE was to enhance student learning, they still had positive perceptions of the NUTLE. Given these findings, it seems difficult to account for their positive perception of the NUTLE because faculty are more likely than any other internal stakeholders at higher education institutions to honor the importance of enhancing student learning and the assessment of student learning outcomes because of their job responsibilities. A possible explanation could be inferred from the Chinese culture of “face issue;” that is, reporting their overall negative perception of the NUTLE would mean that the MOE failed in conducting the NUTLE, which had consumed of a huge amount of time, money, and human resources. Another possible explanation could be that the respondents were trying to be culturally and socially acceptable, consistent with the Hofstede’s uncertainty avoidance dimension in that faculty members tended to agree with the MOE to avoid uncertainty. Since the government officials concluded that the NUTLE had a positive impact on undergraduate teaching and learning (Gao, 2009), it would be wise to agree rather than disagree.
with government officials. In addition, culturally and socially, it is expected that there be one voice about the government action.

**NUTLE Impact on Teaching and Research**

In terms of NUTLE’s impact on teaching, an important finding showed that most respondents thought it untrue that the NUTLE had little impact on their teaching practice after the evaluation. This finding could mean (a) that the NUTLE has had little impact on their teaching, (b) that the NUTLE has had somewhat of an impact on their teaching, and (c) that the NUTLE has had significant impact on their teaching. The impact, though, could be either positive or negative. Some respondents may think the NUTLE impacted their teaching positively, while it might be possible that other respondents think the NUTLE impacted their teaching negatively. It is possible for those whose classes were observed with feedback after class to feel a positive impact because they received expert feedback on their teaching after class; however, it is possible for those who reported that no expert observed their classes during their site visits to feel the negative impact because they did not get any guidance from experts. These respondents might get discouraged because of lack of faculty-expert communication regarding their teaching. Positive or negative, the majority of respondents believed that the NUTLE impacted their teaching practice after the evaluation.

Another important finding was that more than half of the respondents affiliated with research-oriented institutions (i.e., 985 and 211 project institutions), reported to be required to do more teaching after than before the NUTLE. It is important to know that these respondents were mostly associate or full professors, and they were more likely to have advanced degrees. According to the government policy in Chinese higher education development, these institutions have been more favorably funded with the goal to become competitive in international higher
education in terms of research projects. In comparison to those at research-oriented institutions, respondents affiliated with ordinary institutions did not report to be required to do more teaching after the NUTLE, perhaps because this was their primary function before the NUTLE.

Another important finding related to research requirement was that there was a universal requirement that all faculty do more research after the NUTLE, regardless of institution types or professional ranks. Was this an attempt to make all faculty members commit themselves to more research, regardless of institutional missions? Did the respondents affiliated with research-oriented institutions need to do not only more teaching but also more research because they did not have adequate teaching tasks? Did the respondents affiliated with ordinary institutions not have adequate research projects in addition to their teaching responsibilities? Did the additional research requirement create more workloads for faculty members who had already been required to work more after the enrollment expansion since 1995? Although it is not possible to answer these questions with data from this study, it seems reasonable to suggest that the additional research requirement for all faculty members may lead to homogeneity rather than diversity in higher education.

**NUTLE Influence on Student Learning**

Regarding the NUTLE influence on student learning, more than half of the respondents affiliated with research-oriented institutions agreed that their institutions made some efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes, but fewer than half of those at ordinary or newly established institutions after the expansion agreed. The implication was that either 985 and 211 project institutions really made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning or those respondents just followed the cultural norm that group interest comes first to give credit to their institutions. Overall, the majority of the respondents in the total sample disagreed that their
institutions made efforts to improve undergraduate student learning outcomes, regardless of the year of evaluation or the NUTLE grades received. It could be hypothesized that student learning outcomes were not at the top of the agenda for regular higher education institutions when they participated in the NUTLE. Rather, what was most important was an “Excellent” NUTLE grade (Li, Zhu, & Liu, 2010a), which could bring institutions not only more funding but also a better reputation to attract more prospective students. As long as institutions could be graded “Excellent” in the NUTLE, they could market themselves as competitive for prospective students; however, this kind of competition may have a negative impact on educational goals if the government or the institutions do not value student learning outcomes. Although they could still be competitive for some time in China because of the hierarchy in the Chinese higher education system, they would not succeed, in the long run, if they sacrifice students and their learning outcomes as institutional priorities.

The results of this study have reinforced some of the findings in the existing literature. First, the NUTLE had positive impacts on regular higher education in terms of education quality (Liu, 2009a). It may be difficult to understand why faculty’s overall perceptions of the NUTLE were positive when they were required to help prepare for it by re-grading examination papers and/or creating documents for teaching archives, both of which aimed to receive better NUTLE grades for their institutions. It might be easier to understand these preparations as a learning process in education evaluation since there was a lack of training among the faculty regarding higher education evaluation. Actually, all experts, chosen from higher education institutions by the MOE, had to be trained before they conducted the evaluation. Training meant acquiring the necessary knowledge about undergraduate teaching and learning evaluation. Also, this training conforms to the idea of the 20-character principle of the NUTLE, yi ping cu jian, yi ping cu gai,
yi ping cu guan, ping jian ji he (that is, by means of evaluation, to promote development, reform, and administration). If the NUTLE’s standards encourage all internal constituents to learn what higher education should be, faculty respondents’ positive perceptions can be reasonably understood, as they learned what would be expected in grading students’ examination papers and what documents should be included in the teaching archives.

The importance of faculty professional development is also consistent with Zhan’s (2000) conclusion that teaching pedagogy should be included in professional development training. In his study, many faculty members asked to be given more professional development opportunities in teaching pedagogy as well as evaluation theory and practice. Since higher education evaluation was introduced to the Chinese higher education in the 1980s, not only faculty but also administrators need opportunities to learn about evaluation in higher education.

A very important finding, consistent with the one reported by Bai and Millwater (2011), is that faculty felt increasing pressure to conduct research; however, increased research requirements may be less a result of the NUTLE than a response to international influences. Faculty members in most or all countries have been pressured to publish. In accordance with the popular saying “publish or perish” regarding faculty promotion or tenure in US higher education institutions, there has developed in Chinese higher education institutions a system similar to the tenure system in the US. It is after the number of publications in certain levels of journals that decides whether a promotion is possible. That is why faculty have complained that they have to pay to publish articles that “no one would read,” only for the purpose of getting promoted in their professional ranks.

The lack of focus of the NUTLE on undergraduate student learning outcomes and evaluated institutions’ lack of effort in promoting undergraduate learning outcomes, as reported
in this study, were not found in the existing literature; however, findings in this present study may help education practitioners to reflect quality in higher education. Were these findings linked to neoliberal policies of higher education in China? Students used to be beneficiaries of public higher education in China and they were provided with everything needed for their studies, from tuition and textbooks to food and lodging, all free. The expectation for students was to develop their academic competencies; however, nowadays, students have to pay high tuition fees for their university education, and yet their learning practices and learning outcomes are not considered by the faculty participants in this study to be a focus of the country’s largest national evaluation. Even the neoliberal ideology would value student learning outcomes, because if everything in the higher education “business” were put to market for sale, students and their learning outcomes would be higher education’s “products.” Since increasing quality of these products is needed in the global society, no theoretical or practical support a lack of focus on student learning outcomes in Chinese higher education evaluation.

Looking at the findings of this study through Hofstede’s (1984) framework of cultural dimensions related to China, a country with higher rankings on power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance, we can have a better understanding of participant responses to the survey questions regarding the educational issue of the NUTLE. In applying Hofstede’s cultural difference dimensions, one may hypothesize that respondents in this study would tolerate a higher degree of inequalities in the education setting and give priority to group interests over personal interests. In addition, respondents may experience a higher degree of nervousness in complex situations (e.g., the NUTLE) and more strict speech codes, which may result in respondents’ inclination to conform to the authority. Perhaps these cultural characteristics affected faculty perceptions of the NUTLE. More specifically, individuals are expected to agree
with and consent to authorities to avoid uncertainty. Since government officials concluded that
the purpose of the NUTLE was to insure higher education quality and that the NUTLE had been
successful in doing so, respondents may have felt they were supposed to believe so, even though
some of them would definitely have had doubts about whether re-grading students examination
papers or creating documents were ways to insure higher education quality. Specifically, in the
case of the NUTLE, the cultural norm would be that critical voices would not have been
expected among faculty working in higher education.

Change in higher education in China has always started with policy from the central
government, a top-down mechanism to oversee and guide its development. In the policy
implementation process, the government leads and the people follow, regardless of
demographics; however, with more foreign-trained scholars returning to China’s higher
education, their influence is more observed. In this study, the respondents who were most
critical about the NUTLE tended to be those with the highest levels of education degree, those
who taught graduate students, and those who were more advanced in their careers. It is highly
possible that many of these respondents were also foreign-trained or educated, thus
demonstrating some differences that Chinese scholars without foreign educational experience
would not be likely to have, specifically to be critical about government projects.

Implications for Policy and Practice

With the important findings from both quantitative data and qualitative data, this study
has broad implications for policymaking and higher education evaluation in the future. It is
important that the NUTLE be thoroughly studied and reviewed, from different perspectives of all
constituents. Giving faculty and students some say in this process would greatly benefit higher
education in China since they are very important internal constituents. Based on the findings
from this study, the government has played multifaceted roles in the NUTLE, which could have adversely impacted higher education because formalism, cheating, and bribery were noticed in the process (Liu, 2009a). Reduced government administration and intervention are, therefore, expected; accordingly, the government should step back and empower evaluation organizations. Higher education evaluation could be delegated to some independent organizations that could do more objective, transparent evaluations. Also, the government could empower higher education institutions by providing them training opportunities in how higher education evaluation should be conducted based on the Chinese higher education context. Such training should be conducted to train evaluation personnel at higher education institutions for better and more effective evaluations.

On the institutional level, data should be collected on a regular basis and such data should be open to the Chinese public to avoid what was experienced in the NUTLE, such as creating documents for the teaching archive that should have existed before the NUTLE. The quality of higher education should not only be the concern of the government but more a concern for higher education institutions themselves; therefore, higher education institutions should be proactive in their educational assessment and evaluation to do a better job for society. Most higher education institutions are, however, responsive to the government’s call for data collection and do not have offices or personnel to collect data for future use. Organizations or offices (e.g., office of institutional research) should be set up to start collecting useful data. Since more foreign educated Chinese have returned to Chinese higher education institutions, they should introduce what they think would benefit Chinese higher education evaluations.

On the faculty level, more training opportunities should be given to faculty to better understand Chinese higher education, international higher education, higher education evaluation
philosophy and practice so that they can empowered in the evaluation process. Also in the policy making process, faculty’s voices should be heard because they play a very important role in the assurance of obtaining and maintaining quality in higher education.

This study on faculty perception of the NUTLE is positive, which is consistent with Ji’s (2009) remarks that the NUTLE intended to raise higher education quality, to standardize teaching and teaching administration, and to improve academic atmospheres. Most faculty members’ teaching practice has been impacted by the NUTLE. Faculty, an internal stakeholder in higher education, want to be empowered from professional development so that they can be more involved in the designing and implementation of higher education evaluations like the NUTLE to contribute to the quality assurance in China’s higher education.

Limitations of the Study

This study investigated faculty perceptions of the NUTLE and its impact on faculty teaching and student learning outcomes. Several limitations existed regarding this study. First of all, while this descriptive study collected statistical information about the participants and participant institutions regarding the NUTLE, as well as qualitative data regarding suggestions for improvement of the NUTLE, survey questions designed by the researcher were predetermined and prescriptive, which may be a result of what the researcher chose to ask with some data ignored due to the researcher’s limited experience with or knowledge of the NUTLE.

Second, the survey did not have a representative sample. Participants in this study were not selected at random because of the researcher’s limited access to all faculty members at target institutions. Rather, respondents were only faculty affiliated with four-year regular higher education institution in Northwest China. This population, although not expected to be a lot different from the general population in the area, does not adequately represent a full picture of
faculty due to the small number selected. Although the response rate was comparatively high (47%) and it provided quantitative and qualitative data insight to perceptions, opinions, and suggestions about the NUTLE, it does provide a full picture of the NUTLE. It would be ideal if the sample could have included faculty affiliated with all participant institutions in the NUTLE.

Thirdly, this study utilized a self-administered online survey to collect data. The data were collected at a time when participants were asked to respond to the event several years ago. The data collected could be inaccurate because of some respondents’ poor memory or selective memory. Respondents may not answer truthfully in the Chinese cultural and societal context, in which people are usually trained to seek conformity with government organizations or government officials. It takes a lot of courage to have a different voice, especially different from that of the government; therefore, although the response rate was high, participants may have given culturally and socially acceptable answers to some of the questions, which may have skewed the results. Also, because faculty, usually uninvolved in decision-making process, are not used to being asked about their perceptions of government projects, their perceptions could be greatly influenced by their personalities, their institutional cultures, and their level of safety in voicing their opinions, which may also have led to inaccurate, skewed, or artificial results.

The last limitation is from the survey instrumentation the researcher designed. Although the researcher worked very hard to have a carefully designed questionnaire to enhance the quality of data obtained for objective analysis, the researcher did not feel the way some questions were asked actually inhibited thorough data analysis until after the interpretation of the findings was completed. The researcher regretted not having asked the questions in other ways. For example, “The NUTLE has had little impact on my teaching” was a multiple-choice question for respondents to choose from “Very true,” “True,” “Somewhat Untrue,” and “Untrue.” With the
findings, the researcher wished that the question had been asked more explicitly about the impact of the NUTLE on faculty teaching. The question could have been asked in this way: “Has the NUTLE positively impacted your teaching afterwards?” or “How has the NUTLE impacted your teaching afterwards?” Then more explicit information could have been obtained for more thorough data analysis and interpretation.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The researcher hopes that this study can serve as a place to begin more explicit discussion concerning faculty perceptions regarding the NUTLE in regular higher education in China. This study utilized a survey design to explore faculty perceptions of the NUTLE and has obtained very valuable information in faculty’s preparation for the NUTLE, the administration of the NUTLE, and faculty’s perception of the NUTLE. However, considering the findings and limitations of this study, more research should be conducted to have in-depth understanding of faculty’s perceptions of the NUTLE and their suggestions to improve the NUTLE for future evaluation practice.

For a quantitative study, a representative sample with random selection would ensure the representativeness of faculty in general for a quantitative study. The questionnaire could include more demographic information such as gender and study abroad experience to see to if there are group differences and if foreign trained faculty perceive the NUTLE differently. More questions that are explicit (i.e., questions asking how the NUTLE was implemented at their institutions, and questions asking why they perceived the NUTLE certain ways) could collect more quality data to have a more complete picture about how the NUTLE was perceived and the cause of the perceptions.
To provide more nuanced understanding of faculty perceptions of the NUTLE, a qualitative research design could help obtain more in-depth responses from faculty through interviews. Furthermore, it is important to hear students’ voices about the NUTLE to see if higher education quality can be insured through the NUTLE.

Since a picture is presented from the perspective of faculty, more research is needed to explore what caused the formation of the picture present in this study. For example, more in-depth conversations are needed with top leaders of universities and colleges in terms of the lack of focus on student learning outcomes. What were the considerations offered from the perspective of government officials? Was there was a lack of experience in higher education evaluation or were student learning outcomes considered unimportant in higher education evaluation? Such exploration would enhance understanding of the NUTLE.

Because studies of faculty perspectives are scarce, it is important for faculty to voice their opinions about whether the NUTLE has influenced teaching and teaching administration. This study obtained valuable data to understand how faculty perceived the NUTLE. The findings of this study can begin to inform policy makers of the necessity to listen to faculty’s voices and improve higher education evaluation in the future.
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APPENDIX A

Recruitment Email and Participant Informed Consent (Chinese Version)

Subject: 安菊梅的网上调查

Body: 参与者知情同意书
尊敬的老师，

您好！我是安菊梅，正在 Bowling Green State University 攻读高等教育管理博士学位。现在我的论文“高校教师视角下的全国普通高等院校教学水平评估（2003-2008）”中问卷调查的部分需要您的参与，特在此请求您的帮助。如果您能抽出宝贵的 10-15 分钟左右时间来做这个网上调查，我将不胜感激。

2003-2008 年教育部首次大规模对普通高等教育本科教学进行了评估，这份问卷是调研作为高校教师的您如何看待这次评估（基于您个人的经历来调研您所在高校参与的高教评估对本科教学的影响）。整个网上调查由 30 题组成，请您根据自己在接受评估过程中的经历来回答。通过此项研究希望能够给政策制定者提供教学组织者——高校教师的视角，使其能在将来更好地设计高等教育本科评估。

重要信息：

参与这份问卷调查不会带给您任何超出日常生活中的风险，您的参与是完全自愿的。作为高校教师，您的观点对中国未来的高校教育评估的设计和研发起着举足轻重的作用。无论您决定参加与否，都不会因此受到任何负面影响，也不会影响您和您所在院校的关系，因为调研结果将是所有参与问卷者回答的总和。如果您中途决定退出这个课题的研究，您只需要离开调查题目的网页即可。

这个网络问卷调查是完全保密的：任何老师对问卷调查的回答都是绝对保密的，并且在问卷中不会有任何问题涉及到您所在院校的名字。任何人也不可能根据您的参与辨别您的身份。所有的电邮信息和网上调研结果是完全分开的，且保存在有密码保护的电脑中。您的电邮信息仅仅被用来给您发送网上调查的链接以
及调研结果（如果您感兴趣，想要知道结果的话）。完成和提交这份调查问卷将代表您同意参与这项研究。提交的调查问卷将通过问卷统计软件（SurveyMonkey）来进行处理。如果您使用公用计算机来参与，请不要在没有做完问卷前离开电脑。为了保护您的隐私，提交完问卷之后，请记得清除您的浏览记录和页面历史。

关于这项研究，如果您有什么问题，可以直接电话（+1-419-575-5486）或者电邮我（anjume@bgsu.edu）；

您也可以联系我的导师及论文辨委主席:
Patricia K. Kubow, Professor
School of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Policy (EFLP)
College of Education and Human Development
Bowling Green State University
562 Education Building
Bowling Green, OH 43403
Phone: +1-419-372-7380
Email: pkubow@bgsu.edu

如果您想进一步了解您作为参与者的权利，请联系
Chair, Human Subjects Review Board
Phone: +1-419-372-7716

下面是该网上调查的链接，做完后请点击Done提交您的答案。
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message（此调查链接与您的邮箱绑定，请不要转发）。

非常感谢您同意参与这项研究！感激您所付出的宝贵时间！

安菊梅
Doctoral Student
Higher Education Administration Program,
Bowling Green State University
Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx
APPENDIX B

HSRB LETTER OF APPROVAL

DATE: November 18, 2011
TO: Jumei An
FROM: Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
PROJECT TITLE: [283280-1] Faculty Perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation at Regular Higher Education Institutions from 2003 to 2008 in China
SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision
ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: November 16, 2011
EXPIRATION DATE: October 24, 2012
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category #7

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is available as a published Board Document in the Review Details page. You must use the approved version of the consent document when obtaining consent from participants. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

You have been approved to enroll 900 participants. If you wish to enroll additional participants you must seek approval from the HSRB.
All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and Unexpected adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office. This approval expires on October 24, 2012. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Good luck with your work. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 419-372-7716 or hsr@bgsu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence regarding this project.
APPENDIX C

TEXT FORMAT OF WEB-BASED SURVEY

Dear Teacher,
I am seeking your help with my doctoral dissertation that focuses on faculty perceptions about the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) conducted from 2003 to 2008 at regular higher education institutions in China. I would greatly appreciate if you could provide approximately 10 -15 minutes of your time to participate in a survey for my dissertation.

The survey asks approximately 29 questions based on your own experience regarding the NUTLE. As the NUTLE is the largest scale higher education evaluation in China, I hope this research provides policy makers a critical perspective to design better evaluation in higher education in the future.

Explanation of Study
This research study, titled Faculty Perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) at Regular Higher Education Institutions in China from 2003 to 2008 is designed to investigate how you as a faculty member perceive the NUTLE that was implemented at regular higher education institutions from 2003 to 2008 in China. Specifically, the research is to examine what influence the NUTLE has had on undergraduate teaching and learning based on your own personal experience in both the NUTLE that your institutions underwent and your own teaching afterwards.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your voice as a faculty member is important for future undergraduate teaching and learning evaluation design in China. The anticipated risks to you are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. Whether you decide to participate or not will not impact your relationship to your institution as the results will be used aggregately. However, if you decide to withdraw your participation, you may do so at any time by simply leaving the website.

This survey is confidential; no individual responses will be disclosed at any time, and no naming of individual institutions will be asked anywhere in the survey. All e-mail contact information will be kept on a password protected computer separate from survey data. Your e-mail contact information will only be used for the purpose of notifying survey access and distributing completed dissertation results.

The survey software (SurveyMonkey) will safeguard the confidentiality of information you provide. The responses will be kept on a password protected flash drive dedicated only for this
project and will be kept in a locked box to ensure confidentiality. The results will be presented only in summary and will not be connected to your demographic information. You may want to complete the survey in your personal computer. Do not leave the survey open if you use a public computer or a computer others may have access to. Clear your browsing history after completing the survey to protect your privacy.

This study is part of a doctoral dissertation in the Higher Education Administration program at Bowling Green State University. If you have any questions about the study, you may contact me at 419-575-5486 or by e-mail at anjume@bgsu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation chair Dr. Patricia Kubow, School of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Policy (EFLP), Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7380 (pkubow@bgsu.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

The link below will take you to the survey. By clicking the link, you are confirming that you are at least 18 years old and you are giving your informed consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I sincerely appreciate your time,

Jumei An
Doctoral Student
Higher Education Administration Program,
Bowling Green State University

Follow this link to the Survey:

http://www.surveymonkey.com...

Survey Questions for Faculty Perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) at Regular Higher Education Institutions in China from 2003 to 2008

Demographic Information

1. My university/college is a ______.
   a. 985 project institution
   b. 211 project institution
   c. Ordinary institution
   d. Newly established institution after 1995
2. My professional rank is ______.
   a. Teaching assistant
   b. Lecturer
   c. Associate professor
   d. Full professor
APPENDIX D

EMAIL TO THE CULTURAL INFORMANT

Subject line: Recruit Teaching Faculty Participants for My Survey

Dear Professor <Name>,

How are you?

I am seeking your help with my doctoral dissertation that focuses on faculty perceptions about the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) conducted from 2003 to 2008 at regular higher education institutions in China. Specifically, this research is to examine what influence the NULE has had on undergraduate teaching and learning from faculty’s perspective. I need to recruit approximately 900 faculty members to participate in my survey. Targeted faculty members will be from 15 of the regular higher education institutions in Northwest China that underwent the NUTLE. Specifically, I need to recruit 60 faculty members from each institution. I know you have done a lot of research in higher education and have the respect of faculty in Northwest Administrative Region. I would like you to help me recruit faculty members from evaluated higher education institutions. Subjects to be recruited should be teaching faculty who taught undergraduate or graduate courses before the NUTLE and still teach undergraduate or graduate courses after it.

Please inform faculty members that their voice is important regarding the NUTLE and their participation is greatly appreciated. The survey will take them approximately 10-15 minutes. Please also notify them that their participation is completely voluntary and if they want to withdraw, they can just leave the website. There is no risk in participating in the survey and their confidentiality is well protected.

Really appreciate your help!

Best,

Jumei An
Doctoral student
Higher Education Administration Program
Bowling Green State University
Dear Teacher,

I hope this email finds you well. I would like to ask you to help with recruiting 60 faculty members from your institution to participate in a survey for a doctoral dissertation. The doctoral dissertation is a research to explore faculty perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) conducted from 2003 to 2008 at regular higher education institutions in China. Specifically, the research is to examine what influence the NULE has had on undergraduate teaching and learning from faculty’s perspective. Subjects to be recruited should be teaching faculty who taught undergraduate or graduate courses before the NUTLE and still teach undergraduate or graduate courses after it.

Please inform faculty members that their voice is important regarding the NUTLE and their participation is greatly appreciated. The survey will take them approximately 10-15 minutes. Please also notify them that their participation is completely voluntary and if they want to withdraw, they can just leave the website. There is no risk in participating in the survey and their confidentiality is well protected.

Really appreciate your help!

Best,

Name (culture informant)
Dear Teacher,

I hope this email finds you well. I want to invite you to participate in a survey for a doctoral dissertation. The doctoral student is currently in the Higher Education Administration program at Bowling Green State University, USA. She needs faculty members to help her with the survey for her research regarding faculty perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation (NUTLE) conducted from 2003 to 2008 at regular higher education institutions in China. It will take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the survey.

As a faculty member, your voice is important. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you want to withdraw, you can simply leave the website. There is no risk in participating in the survey. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

If you taught undergraduate or graduate courses before the NUTLE and still teach undergraduate or graduate courses after it, please respond to this email.

Really appreciate your help!

Best,

Name (institutional representative)
APPENDIX G

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

[This information appeared on the welcome screen for the survey. Respondents were informed that submitting their completed survey would constitute their consent to participate.]

参与者知情同意书

尊敬的老师，
您好！我是安菊梅，正在 Bowling Green State University 攻读高等教育管理博士学位。现在我的论文“高校教师视角下的全国普通高等院校教学水平评估 (2003-2008)”中问卷调查的部分需要您的参与，特在此请求您的帮助。如果您能抽出宝贵的 10 - 15 分钟左右时间来做这个网上调查，我将不胜感激。

2003-2008 年教育部首次大规模对普通高等教育本科教学进行了评估，这份问卷是调研作为高校教师的您如何看待这次评估（基于您个人的经历来调研您所在高校参与的高教评估对本科教学的影响）。整个网上调查由 29 题组成，请您根据自己在接受评估过程中的经历来回答。通过此项研究希望能够给政策制定者提供教学组织者——高校教师的视角，使其能在将来更好地设计高等教育本科评估。

重要信息：
参与这份问卷调查不会带给您任何超出日常生活中的风险，您的参与是完全自愿的。作为高校教师，您的观点对中国未来的高校教育评估的设计和研发起着举足轻重的作用。无论您决定参加与否，都不会因此受到任何负面影响，也不会影响您和您所在院校的关系，因为调研结果将是所有参与问卷者回答的总和。如果您中途决定退出这个课题的研究，您只需要离开调查题目的网页即可。

这个网络问卷调查是完全保密的：任何老师对问卷调查的回答都是绝对保密的，并且在问卷中不会有任何问题涉及到您所在院校的名字。任何人也不可能根据您的参与辨别您的身份。所有的电邮信息和网上调研结果是完全分开的，且保存在有密码保护的电脑中。您的电邮信息仅仅被用来给您发送网上调查的链接以及调研结果（如果您感兴趣，想要知道结果的话）。完成和提交这份调查问卷将代表您同意参与这项研究。提交的调查问卷将通过问卷统计软件（SurveyMonkey）来进行处理。如果您使用公用计算机来参与，请不要
在没有做完问卷前离开电脑。为了保护您的隐私，提交完问卷之后，请记得清除您的浏览记录和页面历史。

关于这项研究，如果您有什么问题，可以直接电话 (+1-419-575-5486) 或者电邮我 (anjume@bgsu.edu)；

您也可以联系我的导师及论文辨委主席:
Patricia K. Kubow, Professor
School of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Policy (EFLP)
College of Education and Human Development
Bowling Green State University
562 Education Building
Bowling Green, OH 43403
Phone: +1-419-372-7380
Email: pkubow@bgsu.edu

如果您想进一步了解您作为参与者的权利，请联系
Chair, Human Subjects Review Board
Phone: +1-419-372-7716

非常感谢您同意参与这项研究！感激您所付出的宝贵时间！

安菊梅
Doctoral Student
Higher Education Administration Program,
Bowling Green State University

Faculty Perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation
Please choose English or Chinese to complete the survey (required).
请选择英语或汉语来完成问卷（必选）。

a) English (英语)
b) Chinese (汉语)

Demographic Information

1. My university/college is a ______.
a) 985 project institution
b) 211 project institution
c) Ordinary institution
d) Newly established institution after 1995
2. My professional rank is _____.
   a) Teaching assistant
   b) Lecturer
   c) Associate professor
   d) Full professor

3. My highest degree is _____.
   a) Bachelor’s
   b) Master’s
   c) Doctorate

4. How long have you worked in the current institution?
   a) 5-10 years
   b) 11-15 years
   c) 16-20 years
   d) More than 20 years

5. Which is true in your case?
   a) I taught only undergraduate classes before the NUTLE.
   b) I taught both undergraduate and graduate classes before the NUTLE.
   c) I taught only graduate classes before the NUTLE.

6. How were you informed of the evaluation that your institution was to undergo?
   a) At out institution meeting.
   b) At our department meeting.
   c) My colleagues told me.
   d) Other (please specify)

7. In which year was your institution evaluated?
   a) 2003
   b) 2004
   c) 2005
   d) 2006
   e) 2007
   f) 2008
Pre-NUTLE Preparation

8. My institution gave faculty members a brochure with questions and answers in preparation for the NUTLE.
   a) Yes
   b) No

9. I was asked to re-grade students’ examination papers in preparation for the NUTLE.
   a) Yes
   b) No

10. I was assigned the task of making up for the omissions and deficiencies in teaching achievements in preparation for the NUTLE.
    a) Yes
    b) No

11. How much did you know about the standards and index in terms of teaching evaluation?
    a) To a great extent
    b) Somewhat
    c) Very little
    d) Not at all

12. How much did you know about how student learning outcomes would be evaluated?
    a) To a great extent
    b) Somewhat
    c) Very little
    d) Not at all

During the NUTLE Implementation

13. Based on your knowledge and experience, how were student learning outcomes evaluated? Please check all that apply.
    a) Students’ reflection after class.
    b) Survey conducted in the classroom by the experts.
    c) Talk between students and experts.
    d) Talk among students, experts, and instructors.

14. Please check all that apply in terms of teaching evaluation conducted at the NUTLE expert’s site visit.
    a) Experts came to observe my classroom teaching.
    b) Experts gave me feedback.
    c) Experts talked with my students after class.
    d) No experts came to my class.
Post-NUTLE Implementation

15. What is your overall perception of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation?
   a) Very positive
   b) Positive
   c) Negative
   d) Very negative

16. I think the MAIN purpose of the NUTLE is for _____.
    a) Exercising government’s control over higher education for funding allocation
    b) Standardizing teaching and teaching administration
    c) Insuring quality of higher education
    d) Enhancing student learning

17. Based on your knowledge and experience with the NUTLE at your institution, how comprehensive was the evaluation of teaching?
    a) Very comprehensive
    b) Comprehensive
    c) Somewhat incomprehensive
    d) Incomprehensive

18. My job stress was intensified because of the NUTLE.
    a) Yes
    b) No

19. The focus of the NUTLE was on teaching.
    a) Yes
    b) No

20. The focus of the NUTLE was on student learning outcomes.
    a) Yes
    b) No

21. I am ____ with how the evaluation of faculty teaching was conducted at my institution during the NUTLE.
    a) very satisfied
    b) satisfied
    c) dissatisfied
    d) very dissatisfied
22. My institution was graded _____ in the NUTLE.
   a) Excellent
   b) Fair
   c) Pass
   d) No Pass

23. The NUTLE has had little impact on my teaching.
   a) Very true
   b) True
   c) Somewhat untrue
   d) Untrue

24. The NUTLE was a waste of money, time, and human labor.
   a) Very much agree
   b) Agree
   c) Disagree
   d) Very much disagree

25. After the NUTLE, faculty members in my department/institution are required to do more teaching than before the NUTLE.
   a) Yes
   b) No

26. After the NUTLE, faculty members in my department/institution are required to do more research than before the NUTLE.
   a) Yes
   b) No

27. My institution has put a lot of effort to further reform undergraduate teaching based on experts’ suggestions given during the NUTLE.
   a) Very much agree
   b) Agree
   c) Disagree
   d) Very much disagree

28. My institution has put a lot of effort to further reform undergraduate students’ learning based on experts’ suggestions given during the NUTLE.
   a) Very much agree
   b) Agree
   c) Disagree
   d) Very much agree
29. What suggestions would you give to improve the NUTLE at regular higher education institutions in China?
Faculty Perceptions of the National Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Evaluation
(Chinese Version)

高校教师视角下的全国普通高等院校本科教学评估调查问卷

院校及个人信息

1. 我们学校属于__________。
   a) 985 工程院校
   b) 211 工程院校
   c) 普通院校
   d) 1995 年后新建院校

2. 我的职称是__________。
   a) 助教
   b) 讲师
   c) 副教授
   d) 教授

3. 我的最高学位是__________。
   a) 学士学位
   b) 硕士学位
   c) 博士学位

4. 您在目前所在院校工作了多少年？
   a) 5 - 10 年
   b) 11 - 15 年
   c) 16 - 20 年
   d) 20 年以上

5. 下面那一项符合您的情况？
   a) 评估前，我只教授本科课程
   b) 评估前，我教授本科和研究生课程
   c) 评估前，我只教授研究生课程
6. 您是如何得知您所在院校要进行评估的？
   a) 学院大会
   b) 系上会议
   c) 同事告知
   d) 其它（请注明）

7. 您所在的院校是哪一年接受评估的？
   a) 2003
   b) 2004
   c) 2005
   d) 2006
   e) 2007
   f) 2008

评估前的准备

8. 我们学校给每个教职工发了迎评问答手册。
   a) 是
   b) 否

9. 我得重新批阅一些学生试卷。
   a) 是
   b) 否

10. 为了迎接本科教学评估，我被要求创建教学档案或补充其中的缺漏及不足。
    a) 是
    b) 否
11. 有关本科教学评估的标准及指标，评估前您了解多少？
   a) 基本上全部了解
   b) 有些了解
   c) 几乎不了解
   d) 一点也不了解

12. 对于如何评估学生的学习成果，您了解多少？
   a) 很了解
   b) 有些了解
   c) 没什么了解
   d) 一点也不了解

评估期间

13. 基于您对本科教学评估的了解和经历，学生的学习成果是如何被评估的？请选择所有符合情况的选项（多选题）。
   a) 课后学生反思及感想。
   b) 专家发给学生的调查问卷。
   c) 专家与学生交谈。
   d) 专家与学生、任课教师交谈

14. 基于您自己的经历，关于专家亲临学校教学现场的检查评估，请选择所有符合实际情况的选项（多选题）。
   a) 专家亲临我的教学现场听课。
   b) 专家给了我反馈意见。
   c) 课后专家和我的学生进行了交谈。
   d) 没有专家来到我得教学现场。
15. 您对本科教学评估的总体看法是__________。
   a) 有非常积极的影响
   b) 有积极的影响
   c) 有消极的影响
   d) 有非常消极的影响

16. 我认为本科教学评估的主要目的是__________。
   a) 政府行使分配其投入高效资金的权力
   b) 使教学及教学管理标准化
   c) 保证高等教育教学质量
   d) 促进本科生学习

17. 基于您多本科教学评估的料及您自己的经历，这次评估对教师教学的评估__________。
   a) 非常全面
   b) 全面
   c) 不太全面
   d) 不全面

18. 因为本科教学评估，我的工作压力增加了。
   a) 是
   b) 否

19. 本科教学评估的重点在教学本身。
   a) 是
   b) 否

20. 本科教学评估的重点在学生的学习成果。
   a) 是
   b) 否
21. 对本科教学评估中教师教学的评估方法，我________。
   a) 非常满意
   b) 满意
   c) 不满意
   d) 非常不满意

22. 我们学校的评估结果为________。
   a) 优秀
   b) 良好
   c) 合格
   d) 不合格

23. “本科教学评估对我的教学没什么影响”的说法________。
   a) 非常正确
   b) 正确
   c) 不太正确
   d) 不正确

24. 本科教学评估浪费人力、时间和金钱。
   a) 非常同意
   b) 同意
   c) 不同意
   d) 非常不同意

25. 本科教学评估后，我们学院/系老师的教学任务增加了。
   a) 是
   b) 否

26. 本科教学评估后，我们学院/系老师的科研任务增加了。
   a) 是
   b) 否
27. 根据专家亲临学校评估是给我们学校的建议，我们学校已经花大力气对教学本身进行了改革。
   a) 非常同意
   b) 同意
   c) 不同意
   d) 非常不同意

28. 根据专家在本科教学评估中给我校的建议，我们学校已花大力气改革本科生的学习现状。
   a) 非常同意
   b) 同意
   c) 不同意
   d) 非常不同意

29. 为了改进普通高等学校本科教学评估的设计与实施，请您给出您宝贵的意见和建议。
## RESEARCH QUESTIONS, VARIABLES, AND STATISTICAL ANALYSES

### APPENDIX H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>IVs</th>
<th>DVs</th>
<th>Statistical analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. How did faculty perceive the NUTLE implementation and in what ways did they prepare for it? | • Institution type  
• Professional rank  
• Highest degree  
• Years worked in current institution  
• Courses taught before the NUTLE  
• Preparation for the NUTLE  
• Degree informed of the NUTLE | • Overall perception the main purpose  
• Job stress  
• focus of the NUTLE  
• satisfaction  
• impact on teaching | Frequency  
Cross tabulation |
| 2. What were the perceptions of faculty members regarding the 2003-2008 NUTLE? | • Institution type  
• Professional rank  
• Highest degree  
• Course taught before the NUTLE  
• Preparation for the NUTLE  
• Job stress  
• Degree informed of the NUTLE | • Impact on teaching  
• Impact on research  
• Resource commitment  
• Job stress | Frequency  
Cross tabulation |
| 3. Did the NUTLE impact faculty’s teaching and research practice afterwards? | • Institution type  
• Professional rank  
• Highest degree  
• Years worked in the current institution | • Reform in undergraduate teaching  
• Focus of the NULTE  
• | Frequency  
Cross tabulation |
| 4. How did faculty perceive the 2003-2008 BUTLE influence on student learning outcomes? | • Institution type  
• Year evaluated  
• NUTLE grade | • Enhance student learning  
• Focus of the NUTLE  
• | Frequency  
Cross tabulation |
Subject: 安菊梅的网上调查

Body: 尊敬的老师，

您好！大约一周前您收到了我的网上调查问卷“高校教师视角下的全国普通高等院校教学水平评估（2003-2008）”。参与这份问卷调查不会带给您任何超出日常生活中的风险，您的参与是完全自愿的。如果您还没有做该问卷，特请求您抽出宝贵的10-15分钟左右时间来做这个网上调查，对您的帮助，我不胜感激。

下面是该网上调查的链接，做完后请点击Done提交您的答案：
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message（此调查链接与您的邮箱绑定，请不要转发）。

非常感谢您同意参与这项研究！感激您所付出的宝贵时间！

安菊梅
Doctoral Student
Higher Education Administration Program,
Bowling Green State University

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.（如果您不愿意再接收到我的后续邮件，您可以点下面的链接来自动清除您的邮件地址）.
http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx
Subject: 安菊梅的网上调查

Body: 尊敬的老师，

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