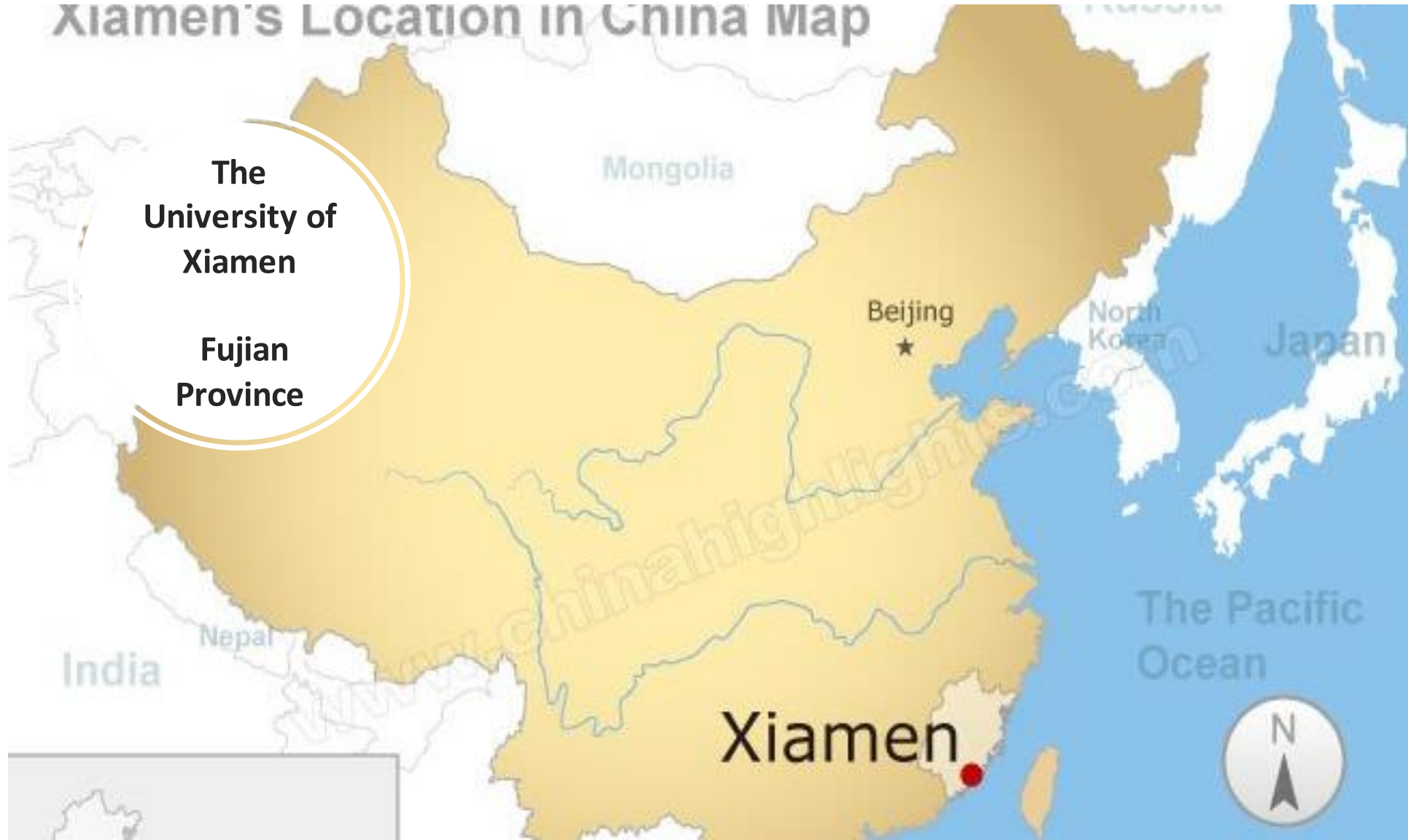




UNIVERSITIES
AUSTRALIA

Xiamen's Location in China Map



- What students may be expecting when they arrive in Australia
- Why some students may feel more or less challenged by life in an Australian university
- Where some of the gaps may lie in the provision of student services

University life in China



The university
campus



Student services



Accommodation



Communication

University life is secure

Entrance gates with
security check for
everyone



University life is communal

Students live,
study and
socialize
together
throughout their
degree



University life is scheduled

ALL students
AND staff
have the
same lunch
break –
allowing them
to eat and
talk together



University life includes compulsory 'service' to the nation

- Mandatory army drills and training are seen as part of student 'team building'
- These requirements are usually dreaded by students but they also form a sense of belonging – even if to complain together!



How are international student services delivered?

All international students are admitted into a single Faculty of International Education

International students are not considered to know where the admin office or careers office is – they have nothing to do with these

International students may study alongside Chinese students, but they are enrolled under a separate faculty and all student services are provided separately

How are domestic
student services
delivered in China?



The class-cohort based student support system

- At the beginning of studies students are put into a “class”
- Each class has a stable cohort of students studying within the same faculty of department for the entirety of their program
- There may be between 12 or 20 students in each class
- Each class selects a leader called a ‘monitor’
- There may also be several associate leaders

The “Fu Dao Yuan” or counsellor

- Each class reports to a staff member in the department called the “Fu Dao Yuan” or counsellor.
- Each Fu Dao Yuan is responsible for several classes
- Fu Dao Yuans are responsible for a spectrum of work including mental health, career advice and moral education.
- The Fu Dao Yuan is the 24/7 one-stop student services point of contact
- They may be responsible for up to 150 students



Associate Party Secretary in Charge of Student Affairs

- All Fu Dao Yuans Report to an Associate Party Secretary.
- There is at least one party secretary in each faculty dedicated to dealing with student affairs.
- The Associate Faculty Party Secretary reports to both the Faculty Party Secretary and to the Director of the Central Students Office.



What does all this mean?

Student services in China is vertical

Director of the Central Students

Faculty Party Secretary

Associate Faculty Party Secretary

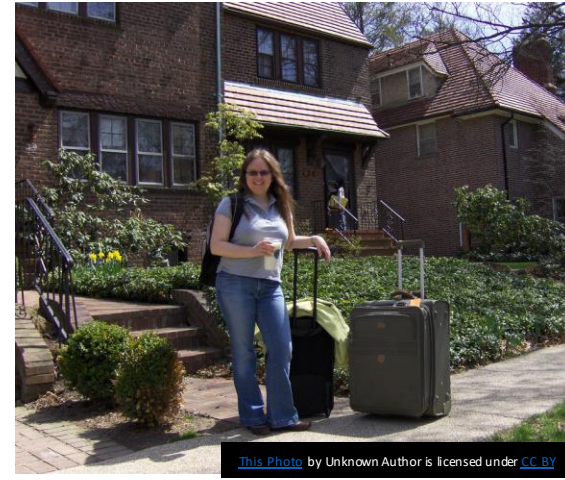
Fu Dao Yuan

Class leader

Student



Student
accommodation
is the starting
point to this
chain of support



When does adulthood begin?



Cultural differences in using email

In 1999 we all started using the internet and sending emails for the first time.

PCs were fairly common in the West – 50.5 computers to every 100 people in the USA.

Most first-time internet users were working adults or university students.

Email became the primary mode of office communications

The first step to using the internet was to set up an email address



Why don't Chinese students use email?

- In 1999 there were only 1.2 computers per 100 people in China
- Household computers were not common, much less being connected to the internet
- In university dorms there wasn't much space for a desktop PC
- Internet cafes emerged in the 2000s as entertainment
- Most users were chatting on a PC program called QQ
- Instant messaging became the first form of internet based communication
- This has evolved into Wechat

Conclusions

- Chinese university life is communal and highly structured
- Chinese university support is vertical and student accommodation is central
- Chinese definitions of adulthood may be different. The University is expected to play a 'parental' role
- Email is an unfamiliar form of communication for many Chinese university students. Emails may not always reach them and students may be hesitant to respond