

## **Trump Administration Continues Its Persecution of Chinese Scholars with the Help of Indiana University**

**For Immediate Release:**

April 7th, 2026

**Contact:** Prof. Roger Innes

[rogerinnes@icloud.com](mailto:rogerinnes@icloud.com)

812-361-8770

Bloomington, Indiana—Dr. Youhuang Xiang from Indiana University Bloomington is a Chinese national and researcher in biology who was arrested by the FBI in November on charges of smuggling. He has been in detention for over four months. Dr. Xiang is a well-respected scholar making important scientific contributions, fully vested in the advancement of science in the U.S. and internationally. Colleagues of Dr. Xiang note that the charges against him reflect a troubling mischaracterization of a common and routine method of obtaining research samples. Nevertheless, he was sentenced on April 7th, 2026 on charges of smuggling a biological agent.

Dr. Xiang's is the third conviction of a Chinese postdoctoral scholar on false and overblown charges of "bioterrorism." The [first conviction](#) was of Dr. Yunqing Jian and the [second](#) was of Dr. Chengxuan Han, both at University of Michigan. In all three cases there was no evidence of any ill will toward the U.S., and character witnesses attested to the strong contributions that these scholars have made to U.S. science. The assistant U.S. Attorney in the Jian case admitted that "[I don't have evidence that she had evil intent.](#)"

This latest example of targeting Chinese scholars in the U.S. continues an unfortunate pattern established during the first Trump Administration, when over 200 faculty and staff of Chinese descent at multiple U.S. universities were arrested under the so-called "[China Initiative](#)." Although the Justice Department tried to link these scholars to espionage, no such evidence was uncovered. The few resulting convictions were based on mild infractions, such as a failure to properly disclose research funding from Chinese sources on grant applications.

These latest arrests by the current Trump Administration reveal a change in tactics, charging postdoctoral scholars here on J1 visas, which can be revoked upon a mere charge of wrongdoing. Once their visas are revoked, these scholars are effectively denied bail in that they are turned over to an ICE detention facility if released on bail. With no other option, they sit in jail, waiting months for their cases to proceed, no matter their guilt or innocence. In all three cases above, the defendants reached a plea deal with the government, to be released for time served (4-5 months) and immediate deportation to China, effectively ending their careers and robbing the U.S. of talent that was being devoted to the advancement of science and technology.

Once again, Indiana University has shown itself a willing participant in the harms done to its students and faculty by the FBI and other Trump Administration agencies. This assistance includes immediate firing of scholars without due process, as Indiana University did when firing [Xiaofeng Wang](#), a Professor in cybersecurity, as well as his wife, Nianli Ma, an analyst with IU Libraries. No charges have been filed against Wang or Ma, yet both have lost their jobs and possibly their careers, a permanent shadow of doubt cast over their integrity.

We call on the Indiana University upper administration to protect all IU scholars from Trump Administration harassment: for moral reasons, for the betterment of U.S. technological leadership, and for academic freedom. The responsibility of the President, Board of Trustees, and General Counsel is to protect the integrity of the mission of higher education, and that includes protection against abuses by over-zealous ICE and FBI agents against faculty members and visiting scholars. When false allegations are raised, it is the responsibility of university administration to defend the reputation of those wrongly accused, as MIT did in support of a [faculty](#) member from China similarly targeted by the Trump Administration. It is time for all universities, including Indiana University, to step up and protect their faculty and staff so they can continue to perform their contractual duties and advance knowledge.

*After the sentencing (April 7th, 2026, Federal Courthouse, Room 202, 46 E Ohio St., Indianapolis), Distinguished Professor Roger Innes, Dr. Xiang's laboratory mentor, will be available to answer questions from the press.*

*IUB-AAUP Executive Committee*

[iubaaup.org](http://iubaaup.org)

*Indiana State Conference AAUP Executive Board*

[inaaup.wordpress.com](http://inaaup.wordpress.com)