

“Learn to Embrace Cultural Relativism”

**The 2010 Sino-American Joint Program Commencement Ceremony at
The Ningbo Institute of Technology (NIT), Zhejiang, China
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President Jin, Party Secretary Xu, Vice President Yang, distinguished faculty and staff, proud parents, and especially, the graduates of the University of Indianapolis-Ningbo Institute of Technology Joint Program cohort 6 (class of 2010). I am deeply honored to bring greetings today on behalf of the president of the University of Indianapolis, Dr. Beverley Pitts, and on behalf of the University's faculty. President Pitts offers her best wishes for a wonderful commencement ceremony and expresses her eagerness to visit you again soon. I am also honored to stand here next to my respected and dearest colleague, Dr. Mary Moore, Vice President for Research, Planning, and International Partnerships. Dr. Moore and I have been working closely at the University of Indianapolis (UIndy) for more than 20 years. She is my supervisor, co-author, co-researcher, and best friend. On behalf of all of us, I would like to express our gratitude for her countless contributions and endless support since the inception of the UIndy-NIT joint program in 2004. Let's give her a round of applause.

It is with great pride and a sense of privilege that I participate in this ceremony at NIT on this day of celebration. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to work closely with NIT leaders, faculty, and staff over the last few years for the pursuit of a common goal: making our Sino-American joint program one of the best in China. If you may forgive my non-humble Chinese expression this morning, I am proud to say aloud that, indeed, our program is one of the best in China. Being the best does not mean that we have already climbed to the top of the hill. It simply means that we have overcome many insurmountable challenges that we were able to deal with and conquer, even with frustration at times. Being the best also means we need to work even harder and smarter so that we can sustain our success and accomplishments in the long run. Sustaining a good program takes courage, mutual understanding, vision, and resilience. There is no such a thing as "perfection." There are only opportunities for us to make improvements and progress. Together, we will make great things happen on this campus and at the University of Indianapolis. Not long ago, the retired Party Secretary Sun Jinquain whispered to me, "Do you know that our joint program is becoming very well-known in Zhejiang Province and many employers will hire graduates from this program with quality assurance and pleasure?" It was quite an encouraging message to receive. As you all know, the job competition for college graduates

is pretty stiff in China nowadays. We are so proud to announce that the last two cohorts' employment rate was almost 100% and many of Cohort 6 graduates here have already lined up good job prospects. Congratulations!

Many of our faculty who came to NIT to teach and those who teach NIT students on the University of Indianapolis campus have told me, "Phylis, thus far, this is the best group." Yes, Class of Cohort 6, you are the best. Congratulations for your academic achievements and successes in many endeavors, including the number of students who own cars, the number of students who have girlfriends and boyfriends, the number of students who have travelled extensively into many parts of America, the number of students who have been accepted by graduate schools, the number of students who have participated in social activities on and off campus—the list goes on. It is my great comfort to see your growth and maturity. Standing here, I am reminded of the time when we went to the Shanghai Embassy for your visa interviews two years ago. It was an amazing moment to see your cheerful faces when you walked out of the embassy. You looked as if you had already made it. You did not realize that the next two years would be a hard journey for you to take. Many of you have said to me, "Professor Lan, I never thought that I would have to study this hard in America. I have never thought that I would have to write so many papers and take so many quizzes." Well, you have really made it this morning. Congratulations for overcoming the challenges in both academic and social lives in America. For those of you who stayed at NIT to finish the degree requirements, your challenges are just as great as those who went to America. You have made it too.

While celebrating your achievements, we must remember that there are many people who are behind you and beside you. They work with you and they support you. We must express our deepest gratitude to your parents, teachers, and close friends. Without their assistance, caring, and encouragement, you would not have accomplished what you have accomplished today. Let's give your parents, professors, and friends three big bows (ketou).

Recently, we conducted an NIT Students American Experiences Survey. Most of you participated in this study. The purpose of the study was to understand NIT students' social/cultural academic experiences at the University of Indianapolis (UIndy) and in America. I am pleased to report to you that a great majority (86%) of the NIT students who participated in the survey felt UIndy had met their learning goals and 91% of them felt they had received a good education at UIndy. Moreover, close to 90% of the students indicated that they had a clear understanding of goals and requirements for the Sino-American program. Clear goals and objectives are essential to realize one's educational aspiration and career plans. We are very pleased with these positive findings. We have definitely made progress in managing and administering the Sino-American Program in the last few years because just a handful of students in the previous two cohorts appeared to have only a vague idea about the goals and requirements of our Sino-American program. However, your cohort appears to have a very good grasp of the full scope of the program. We have learned a lot from this survey. My hope is to be able to use the survey findings to identify key factors that have challenged our students and try to find ways to assist our students to overcome these challenges. The survey showed that there were four key factors that have been attributed to the success of the program. These are (1) a clear understanding of the goals and requirements of the program, (2) close interpersonal relationships with professors and good social relations with the campus community, (3) ample opportunities to seek assistance for language skill improvements, and (4) a sense of belonging at UIndy. Apparently, the NIT students who studied at UIndy seemed to have a relatively positive

experience in America in general and at UIndy in particular. Over three quarters (84%) would recommend NIT students to study at UIndy. These are very positive findings from the survey. However, in spite of the 83% of the students surveyed who felt they were welcome and accepted at UIndy, the research findings also told us that about one-third of our NIT students have encountered unpleasant experiences. Students did not identify what the specific “unpleasant experiences” they had encountered were. Later, I asked them about it. They mentioned that, mostly, they were related to cultural misunderstandings or lack of understanding of each other’s culture. We plan to address this and provide more cultural training for future cohorts and the UIndy community (students, faculty, and staff). We were amused to learn from the survey that almost all the NIT students felt Chinese food was far better than American food, and they wished to eat Chinese food every day while studying in America. And most of them would like to have more opportunities to communicate with American students.

These unexpected findings have prompted me to speak on a relevant topic—Learn to Embrace Cultural Relativism—to you all on this graduation day. It is my view that culture includes attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, ideas, norms, things we have created, communication styles, clothing, and, definitely, food. In a broad sense, all communication is cultural. We communicate within our cultural framework, and we interpret the communication with our social context. The point I am trying to make here is not to discuss or define culture per se, but to stress the importance of good communication, which must start with an understanding of cultural attitudes; that is, cultural relativism. Because culture varies from one setting to another, the meaning of communication must be interpreted from the speaker’s cultural context. In sociology and anthropology, we define “cultural relativism” as “the idea that something can be understood and judged only in relationship to the cultural context in which it appears” (Anderson & Taylor, 2008, p. 57).

When we embrace the concept of cultural relativism, we are bound to become more objective in understanding the nature of our interactions with others, and we will become less ethnocentric—the attitude where one tends to think his or her cultural practice is the best among all. People who were raised in a culture with both a long history and superb technological advancement tend to be more ethnocentric. I think both Chinese and Americans are relatively ethnocentric. Although ethnocentrism can enhance patriotism and group loyalty, by and large, individuals with ethnocentric orientation tend to be less objective and more inclined to stereotype people of other cultures. Ethnocentrism, an opposite of cultural relativism, will hinder communication of all kinds. It can become a stumbling block for interpersonal relationships and, at a macro level, for international relations. Effective communication must start with an attitude that embraces cultural relativism.

My dear graduates, you are about ready to step onto your new life path. Whether you will engage in interpersonal relations, business transactions at work, or even in international politics, your culture and cultural beliefs will affect your behavior and decision-making process. You have received two years of American education at the University of Indianapolis or with American professors at NIT. Our educational goals have been to educate you to embrace creativity, critical thinking, performance, and social responsibility. I would like to add one more; namely, cultural relativism.

Let me share with you an excerpt from an essay written by a student from NIT. “I met some unpleasant things during my residence life in the dorm. One day, my RA (Residence Hall Assistant) came to me and told me that someone was upset with me that I

have a terrible smelly bottle stored in the kitchen. They want me to put it away. I was puzzled. It turned out to be that it was a bottle of soy sauce. I felt so strange about that. Now I understand the differences between American and Chinese cultures.” Speaking of food, one of the Japanese students wrote, “having friends from other cultural backgrounds makes you find new perspectives, which are another essential part of global awareness. For example, one of the NIT students always tried to take us to Japanese and Chinese restaurants. One day, I asked her why. The Chinese student simply said that she thought that Japanese people would prefer Asian food because American food is unhealthy. It was a new perspective, because she spoke from her own stereotype.” I have received many interesting questions from NIT students about America and Americans. I must admit that I cannot find answers to many of the questions they have raised. Here are some of them:

“Why do most Americans take a shower in the morning instead of at night?” “I think English is a very difficult language to learn. Why is there a ‘LIE’ in Believe? Why is there an ‘Over’ in Lover?” “Why do Americans drink ice water with their meals? Why do Chinese serve soup at the end of the meal whereas Americans serve soup at the beginning of the meal?”

You are a very privileged group for having the opportunity to receive both Chinese and American education. In fact, in our survey, 78% of you said, “I feel a sense of pride for having been able to study at UIndy.” Now that you are back in China, you will be the best student ambassadors for the University of Indianapolis, and even for the United States. China is the new superpower economically and politically. The world is watching where China is going. China depends on your generation to become a functional player on the world stage. As I have mentioned, China and America are two relatively ethnocentric countries, especially when it comes to issues of international relations. Joshua Cooper Ramo, the managing director of Kissinger Associates and author of *The Age of the Unthinkable*, wrote in a recent article, “How to Think about China” (*Time*, April 19, 2010, pp. 26-31):

So working with China in a way that can protect our interests is less about direct confrontation of the sort we remember from the Cold War—when the U.S. knew it faced a very dangerous enemy—and more about what we might call co-evolution. The phrase comes from biology and describes how some species work together to become stronger over time (p. 31).

The truth is, whether the two nations are dealing with issues of currency, the environment, trade, public health, or even human rights, to be able to work together (co-evolution) and to be able to become true partners, both nations must start from mutual trust and understanding. Any interpretation of the other side’s behavior without taking into account the so-called cultural relativism—trying to understand a culture on its own terms—the dialogue will become in vain or even create tension and detrimental confrontation. Cultural relativism means looking at how the elements of a culture fit together, without judging those elements as superior or inferior, right or wrong (Henslin, 2009, p.39). Since you have had the opportunity to experience both cultures, I hope you will keep this sociological/anthropological concept in mind whenever you are working with an individual, a group of people, or even a nation that might have a different culture or subculture than yours. The principle of cultural relativism is the foundation of all harmonious human relations, at a micro or macro level.

Just like you, I had the opportunity to receive both Chinese and American education. I was born in Taiwan and came to America after I finished my college. I became an American citizen in 1975, but I identify myself as Chinese-American. I am proud to be Chinese and I am also proud to be an American. My Chinese heritage cultivates my Confucian values (humanism and humility) and moral teachings (work ethic, filial piety, and royalty), and my assimilation to American culture cultivates my scientific mind (critical thinking and research skills) and democratic ideology. However, my service orientation seems to come from both Chinese and American teachings. I am happy and content because I am able to grasp the best of two worlds and keep an integrated yet balanced framework between East and West. I am blessed to have been socialized in both cultures, and I am not biased toward either Chinese or American culture. I know I still have a long way to go, but I try my best to absorb both cultures and see the goodness of both. I hope someday I can find my inner resilience to lead me to take charge in life; upholding self confidence and being assertive, yet not aggressive; exercising intelligence, yet remaining eager to learn; indulging in cutting-edge knowledge and skills, yet remembering to practice old traditions; maintaining strong Chinese heritage, yet adapting to the mainstream American modern society, abiding to my principles yet being able to agree to disagree. For those of us who have received both Chinese and American education, we shall embrace the best of the two cultures and see neither culture as better or worse than the other. Learn to embrace cultural relativism in your daily encounters. You may be surprised to learn that by respecting different cultures, we may enrich our own lives as well. I have witnessed that understanding and respecting different cultures can make us better people. Just like you, when I first came to America, I refused to try American food. But now, I think American food is just as good as Chinese food, although it tastes very different. Yes, different, but not better or worse! My mom used to tell me, "If everybody enjoys tasting something and you refuse to taste it, you lose one happiness." So, I tasted everything, Chinese and American, and I am happy.

Today, I am not giving you advice but presenting a perspective that I have cherished when I interact with people from different parts of the world. I am seeing that we have something in common, hoping to use the concept of cultural relativism as a motto to encourage each other to enhance mutual understanding and self-cultivation in a global economy and the multicultural world where we reside.

Once again, what a great joy it is to be here with all of you, celebrating the great achievements of those who are graduating on this occasion. You will be the movers and shakers and the promising leaders in a society where you will encounter many cultures. We have high hopes for you. As I have told many of you, we will plan a class reunion when I turn 80, which will be only a few years from now. When that time comes, you will share with me that you have embraced the best of two cultures and you have put your knowledge to work. I am longing for that day to come.

Best wishes and warm congratulations to you all.

Thank you



沟通与文化相对论

(Learn to Embrace Cultural Relativism)

2010年中国浙江宁波理工学院中美联合班毕业典礼上的致辞演讲

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尊敬的金院长、许书记、杨院长，尊敬的各位老师、各位家长、中美联合班06级的毕业生们，你们好：

今天，我荣幸地带来印第安纳波利斯大学校长，碧薇莉·碧慈博士最诚挚的问候，她祝愿我们的毕业典礼圆满成功，并表达了她渴望再次访问NIT的心愿。我也带来了印第安纳波利斯大学全体教职员工的问候和祝福。我还要荣幸地介绍我身旁的这位女士——印第安纳波利斯大学副校长，玛丽摩尔博士。我和摩尔博士一起在印第安纳波利斯大学 (UIndy) 工作20多年。她负责科研、规划和国际合作，是我的上司，计划合作者与学术研究出版合著者，同时也是我最要好的朋友之一。在这里，我提议，让我们用热烈的掌声对她自2004年中美联合项目创建至今所做出的不懈努力、巨大贡献和鼎力支持表示衷心的感谢！

今天参加你们的毕业典礼，我感到非常自豪和荣幸。我庆幸有机会与NIT的领导，教师以及许多部门同仁密切合作。过去几年里我们合力追求一个共同的目标：使我们的中美联合班成为中国联合办学的最佳范例之一。今天请你们原谅我这位毫不谦虚的华人自豪地说，“尽管有时未免会遇到沮丧和挫折感。总体而言，我们的中美合作项目的确是中国最好的联合办学项目之一。”做得好并不意味着我们已经爬到了山顶。它只是仅仅意味着我们已经克服许多挑战。已经爬到山顶也意味着我们需要更加努力，更加明智。一个好方案的可持续性需要勇气、相互理解，以及远见和坚韧。世上没有“最好的”只有“更好的”。我们要共同努力，不断地改善和进步，在宁波理工学院与印第安纳波利斯大学的校园里继续创造更加成功的合作办学计划。

不久前，NIT退休的党委书记孙桂铨对我说，“我们的联合办学在浙江很有名气，很多用人单位愿意录用我们培养出来的毕业生，因为学生素质高，他们很满意。这个消息，你听说了吗？”这个消息的确振奋人心。众所周知，当今高校毕业生就业竞争是相当激烈的。我可以很自豪地宣布，过去两届中美联合班毕业生的就业率几乎是100%，而许多06级的毕业生现在已拥有良好的就业前景。可喜可贺。

无论是从UIIndy来NIT教学的，还是在UIIndy教NIT学生的老师都这样对我说，“菲利斯，我们对这一届的毕业生功课表现非常得满意。”是的，你们是最优秀的。祝贺你们通过自己的多方努力，在学业方面有了好成就，在其他方面也令人兴奋，这些包括：许多同学拥有了私家车，有了女朋友和男朋友，假期游览了美国的名山大川，不少人也被研究生院录取，还有许多人参加了社会活动，许许多多的留美经验，不胜枚举。看到你们的成长和成熟，是我莫大的安慰。看着你们，我想起两年前我们去上海办签证时，你们快乐地走出使馆的样子，好像你已经大功告成。你没有意识到，未来两年要面临人生一段艰难的旅程。后来你们中许多人对我说，“藍教授，我从来没有想到在美国要如此努力地学习。我从来没有想到我要写那么多文章，要参加那么多的考试。”今天我肯定你们已战胜了在美国学习和生活上所遇到的各种挑战，我祝贺你们的成功。对于那些留在NIT完成学业并拿到学位的同学，我也祝贺你们的成功，因为你们所经历的旅程同样充满艰辛和挑战。

今天在庆祝你们毕业的时候，我们必须饮水思源。首先要感谢你们的父母，老师和朋友们。没有他们的帮助、照顾，和鼓励，你们就不可能获得今天取得的成就。让我们一起给你们的父母，老师，朋友们三鞠躬。

最近，我们进行了一项关于“NIT学生的美国经验”的调查。你们中的大多数人参加了这项研究。研究的目的是了解NIT学生在印第安纳波利斯（UIIndy）大学和在美国学习生活所获得的社会、文化方面的感受和体验。我很高兴向大家报告，大部分（86%）参与调查的学生非常满意他们在UIIndy的经历达到了他们所期待的学习目标。91%的学生认为他们在UIIndy受到了良好的教育。此外，接近90%的学生表示，他们非常清楚中美联合班的教学目标和要求。因为明确的目标是实现人生愿望和职业规划的必要条件。我们很高兴看到这些积极的结果。

我们从调查中了解到许多信息。可以肯定地讲，过去几年里我们在经营和管理中美联合班的过程中，积累了经验、取得了进步。因为在前两届毕业生中有一小部分的学生对中美联合班的目标和要求还存在模糊的认识。而你们这一届对联合班的培养目标和要求已有全盘的了解。我们从这次调查了解到了许多。显然，在UIIndy学习的NIT学生似乎已对美国、特别是对UIIndy有了积极的经验体会。超过四分之三（84%）被调查的学生们表示将极力推荐NIT学生来UIIndy学习。这些是非常积极的调查结果。但是，虽然83%的受访学生认为他们受到了UIIndy的接受和欢迎，研究结果也告诉我们，大约三分之一NIT的学生表示曾经遭遇过不愉快的经历。学生并没有说明具体的“不愉快的经历”。后来，我问了学生们，我了解到，这些所谓不愉快的经历大多数情况下是文化上的误解造成的。让我与你们分享一段NIT学生的文章摘录“在住校期间，我在寝室里遇到了一些不愉快的事情。有一天，学生宿舍的管理员来找我，说这里有人埋怨

我在厨房中存放了气味难闻的瓶子。他们要我把它扔掉。我迷惑不解，结果我发现原来他们指的是一个酱油瓶子。这件事使我明白了一件小事也能反映出美国和中国之间的文化差异。”这的确是我们需要解决的问题。我们计划对将来来UIndy学习的学生，教师和工作人员提供更多的跨文化方面的培训。调查中最有趣的发现之一是，几乎所有的NIT学生都感到中国的食物远比美国食物好吃，他们希望在美国学习期间每天都能吃上中国的食物。说到食品，一位日本学生写道：“具有不同文化背景的朋友能使你视野拓宽，这种视野是全球意识的重要组成部分。例如，一位NIT的学生总是说服我们去日本和中国餐馆用餐。一天，我问她为什么？这位中国学生随口就说，日本人比较喜欢吃亚洲食物，因为美国食物对健康不利。对我而言，这是一个新的观点，因为她是从她自己已有的观念看待问题的。”

大多数学生表示希望有更多的机会与美国学生交流。我从NIT学生那里得到许多关于美国和美国人的有趣问题。我必须承认，我对他们所提出的许多问题还不能完全找出答案。例如：学生问我：“为什么大多数的美国人是在‘早上’淋浴而不是在‘晚上’？”“我认为英语学起来很困难。为什么在‘相信’(believe)这个单词中还存在‘谎言’(lie)这个单词？为什么在情人(lover)这个单词中还存在结束(over)这个单词？”为什么美国人在用餐时喜欢喝冰水？为什么中国人在餐后用汤而美国人是在饭前？”

从这些调查结果，以及平日与NIT同学的密切接触，还有我在美国40多年来的片面生活经验，促使我有了我今天想以“沟通与文化相对论”的主题发言。我认为文化包括态度、信仰、行为、价值观、理念、规范，所有我们创造的东西、我们沟通的风格、我们的服饰和食品。广义上讲，所有的沟通都是文化层面上的。我们常以文化模式沟通，以我们社会背景理解我们的交流。我并非在这里讨论或定义文化本身，而是要强调良好的沟通是源于客观的文化态度，即，文化相对论。由于不同环境存在不同文化，要寻求沟通必须要了解说话人的文化背景。在社会学和人类学范畴内，我们将“文化相对论”界定为“表述的观点能被理解和仅从呈现的文化背景关系方面进行判断”（《安德森&泰勒》，2008，第57页）。

当我们拥有了“文化相对论”的观点，我们会更加客观地了解与别人互动的实质，我们会变得不那么种族优越感。态度决定一切。一个在历史悠久、技术精湛，文化进步的国度中生活的人往往更容易产生种族优越感。我认为中国人和美国人都相对具有种族优越感。虽然民族优越感可以加强爱国主义精神和个人对团队的尽忠，但总体上看，有种族中心主义倾向的人往往不那么客观，更倾向于对其他文化排斥或鄙视。“种族中心主义”是“文化相对论”的对立面，它妨碍各种沟通，成为人际关系的绊脚石。在宏观层面上，不利于良好的国际关系的建立。有效的沟通来源于文化相对论，必须抱此态度。我亲爱的同学们，你们即将踏上新生活的征途。无论你们是处理人际关系，还是进行商业交易，甚至是与国际政治打交道，你们的文化和文化信仰会影响你们的行为和决策。你们已接受在印第安纳波利斯大学(UIndy)的美国教育及在宁波理工学院(NIT)的中国教育。Uindy的教育目标是：鼓励学生有创造力，批判性思维，良好的表现和社会责任。我想NIT的教育理念也同样是如此。我想再补充一个，即，接纳文化相对论。

你们是一群很幸运的人，有机会获得中美两国的教育。事实上，在我们的调查结果中，78%的同学说：“能够在UIndy学习，我感到自豪”。现在你们回到中国，你们就是印第安纳波利斯大学的校友，也是印第安纳波利斯大学的“学生代表”。中国现在是经济上和政治上的新的超级大国。世界都在注视着中国的发展方向。中国依靠你们这一代在世界舞台上发挥作用。中国也依靠你们这一批学生作为中美双方友好邦交的桥梁。

正如我刚才已说过，中国和美国是两个相对拥有种族优越感的国家，特别是当涉及到有关国际关系的问题时，就会显现更加明显。约书亚·库勃·拉模——基辛格协会的管理主任以及《不可思议的时代》的作者——在最近的一篇文章名为“如何思考中国”（4月19日，2010年，26-31页）的文章中写道，“……所以，以一种方式与中国合作，这种方式可以使我们的利益少受到直接的对抗，冷战时期的教训我们记忆犹新，美国明白了那种做法非常危险。我们要多一些‘共同演变进化（Co-evolution）’，这个来自生物学的词汇告诉我们：一些不同物种如何通过共同努力，并随着时间的推移变得更强盛”（第31页）。

事实上，不管是处理涉及货币、环境、贸易、公共卫生问题，还是人权问题，两国应该携手共同演变进化（Co-evolution），成为真正的伙伴。两国都应该从相互信任和相互了解开始。如果没有考虑所谓的文化相对论（任何企图用自己的标准去理解对方文化行为），其结果都必将是徒劳的，甚至会导致紧张局势和不利双方的互相抗衡。文化相对性意味着应该观察各种文化因素的相互融合，而不是根据我们自己的生活方式判断这些文化因素的孰优孰劣，孰是孰非（哈斯林，2009，第39页）。既然你们有机会体验了两种文化，那么我希望不管你们是与具有不同文化或次文化背景的个人、团体，乃至国家进行交往的时候，你们一定要时刻铭记这个社会学的/人类学的思想观念。无论是从微观还是宏观层面来讲，文化相对论是构建人际和谐关系的基石。

像你们一样，我有机会同时接受中国和美国教育。我出生在台湾，大学毕业后到美国，于1975年成为美国公民，但我认为自己是一位美籍华人（Chinese-American）。我既为自己是一位中国人自豪，也为我的美国身份感到幸运。中华文化，培养了我的儒家价值观（谦逊为本）和道德礼教（伦理、孝道、忠义）。美国文化，培养了我的科学头脑（批判性思维和研究能力）和民主思想。可是我觉得我强烈的为人服务及以人为本的观念是来自中国文化和美国文化共同陶冶和教诲的结果。我不断的尝试如何去掌握中美文化最优美的一面。我很高兴并满足，因为我获取了两个世界最好的东西并将二者融合；我很幸运，因为我在两种文化之间保持了平衡，我努力不怀偏见，从容地参与两种文化的社交活动。我知道前边路还很长，但我会尽我所能汲取两种文化的熏陶，学习两种文化的优点。

我真诚地希望有一天我能够运作我的内在毅力，能真正的做到自信但不自傲；热衷创新但不忘传统，保留中华文化也融入美国主流社会；坚持原则，也学会让步。对于各位已经接收了中美两种教育的学生应树立这样的观念——中美文化只有差异之别，没有优劣之分。学会接受“文化相对论”，你可能会惊讶地发现，兼容不同的文化，可以丰富我们的生活。当我第一次来到美国，像你们一样我拒绝了美国食品。但现在，我认为美国食品和中国食品一样好，

只是味道很不同。我母亲曾经告诉我：“大家都喜欢品尝的东西，你却拒绝，你就失去了一个口福。”今天，我同时接受了中美两种食品。我多了份口福。

今天，我不给你们提出任何建议，只是提出我的一个观点与你们共勉：在经济全球化、文化多元化的当今世界，人们都希望以“文化相对论”为座右铭，彼此欣赏，加强相互理解与自身修养。毕业不是学业的终点。今天我们将告别学生生涯、走向社会。作为时代的精英，大家都有独善其身、兼济天下的胸怀，在追求个人事业发展与成功时，还要承担相应的社会责任。我对你们寄予厚望。有一件事我已经告诉很多同学了，我希望在我80岁的时候能够在美国或中国参加你们的同学会，这个日子从现在算起来也不过几年时间而已。届时，请你们与我一起分享你们事业上和家庭上的各种成就。我盼望这一天的到来。再次向你们表示热烈祝贺，我的祝福将永远陪伴着你们！我会经常在美国想念你们。祝你们健康和愉快。

谢谢大家。

(<http://www.uindy.edu/asianprograms/articles>)

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