

Program Applied: Public Administration (MPA)

"The best way to learn is to learn from the best." This is the motivation underlying my present application for a MPA program in the United States. As a doctoral student specializing in sociology at one of China's most prestigious universities—XX University, with fruitful research achievements, I am bent on pursuing greater academic excellence that will facilitate my personal development. I believe that, based on my firm academic foundation in sociology, I can venture into the related field of Public Administration and achieve equally encouraging results. I believe my decision is well-considered as it originates spontaneously from my personal and academic backgrounds.

I was born into a small mountain village on the rugged XX Plateau in Southwestern China, almost completely sealed off from the rest of the world. Since my childhood, I had a real taste of poverty and backwardness. In that



village inhabited mostly by ethnic minorities, I witnessed how the locals depended on primitive means to wring a life from unproductive lands. When I came to the country's eastern region to pursue my education, I was shocked at the striking social and economic discrepancies between China's eastern and western regions. Through my education, I came to realize that such discrepancies, apart from historical and geographical factors, have much to do with the central government's public administration. An effective way to change this situation is to introduce advanced mechanisms of public administration.

A strong sense of mission was thus bred inside me. Having developed adequate knowledge of Chinese society through my sociology programs, I know this is the prime time to acquire an academic foundation for fulfilling my mission of changing the east-west disequilibrium, which coincides with the government's campaign to develop the western region. The University of XX 's MPA program will give me this academic foundation and I believe that my academic aptitudes, research potential and rich practical experience will enable me to acquit myself satisfactorily in my proposed degree program.

In 1991, I entered the Department of XX University as top student in my school district during that year's competitive National College Entrance Examination. For nearly a decade, my immersion in sociology has not only provided me with insights into Chinese society but also helped me command quantitative and qualitative analysis, two important methodologies for sociological, economic and public administrative studies. In addition, I have developed a sound theoretical framework to make in-depth interpretations of social phenomena.

So far I have completed the first two years of my 3-year doctoral program and have co-authored and published two books on the migration of China's farm workers and on urban development and management. The first is entitled Urban Space and Interpersonal Relations—Comparative studies of Social Development in Cities both at Home and Abroad and the second Service Renovations in Estate Management: Interaction between Property Management and Community Services. Additionally, I have published two research papers in the core journals— On the Relationship Between City and City Market and From Work Units to Community—The Transition of Social



Structures in China. I have also made important contributions in three research projects of the Institute for Urban Sciences at XX University. Currently, requested by the XX University Press, I am translating Cities And Privatization: Prospects for The New Century, a book on public administration by Prof. Jeffrey D. Green from the University of Montana. Meanwhile I am working on my dissertation Village in Transition— A Case Study of the Immigrant Farm Workers of XX Village in Urbanization. I have conducted extensive surveys and data-collection. By focusing on the flow of surplus rural labor at the intersections of urban and suburban areas, the research will be a typical case study of considerable significance, both theoretical and practical, to the study of China's surplus labor as a whole in the on-going urbanization process. It will also provide important references for relevant government departments in their public administration and policy-making.

Although coursework is a major part of my academic life, I have also made conscious efforts to accumulate practical experience. Even though a sophomore in my undergraduate program, I spent summer vacation doing independent field trips to rural areas and townships in Sichuan Province to investigate the migration of surplus labors. My thesis based on those field trips captured the attention of the sociological scholars of my university. Ever since then, performing social studies has become habitual for me, a practice vitally important for a student of sociology.

Compared with other applicants, I have another unique asset—my 5-year full-time work experience. For two years I worked at a grass-root local civil administration department, engaged in laborforce training and development. I spent another two years at the Employment Information Center attached to the Labor and Social Security Bureau of Sichuan Province. Another year was devoted to the project research and development and to market research in a state-owned enterprise XX Provincial Railroad Development Co. Ltd. In those five years, I traveled to most parts of China and collected large quantities of first-hand information about China's social and economic conditions. This definitely constitutes an important part of my qualifications for an MPA program.



Aware of the regional imbalance, a mistake committed as a result of unscientific public administration, the Chinese government is promoting with unprecedented momentum its strategic campaign of western development. Major investment and talent development programs have been formulated, which will be an immense input to the campaign. The already developed eastern regions are also offering their helping hands and it is a tremendous comfort to see my hometown undergoing gradual yet unmistaken changes socially and economically. However, there is still a long way to go before China's western regions rid themselves completely of poverty and backwardness. I can feel my responsibilities.

The MPA program at the University of XX enjoys leading academic reputation in the United States. With the merging of its first-rate School of Public Administration and its equally renowned School of Urban Planning and Development in 1998, the School of Policy, Planning and Development was established, with close links with the government, business, and communities. It has become the leader in public administration, which fits perfectly with my background and my research interests. I expect that through your MPA program, I can learn advanced knowledge, experience and methodologies of public administration and ultimately introduce into China effective mechanisms of public administration to facilitate China's social and economic development. In particular, I wish to offer my knowledge to the policy-making processes regarding the country's western regions. In my future career, I will commit myself to the reduction and ultimate elimination of regional imbalance involving different ethnic groups.

"The world can be changed by man's endeavor, and that this endeavor can lead to something new and better. No man can sever the bonds that unite him to his society simply by averting his eyes. He must ever be receptive and sensitive to the new; and have sufficient courage and skill to face novel facts and to deal with them." Former US President Roosevelt's words will keep ringing in my mind, spurring me to pursue my academic and career objectives. Knowledge and talents are what I can contribute to my hometown and to my country.



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