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Professor Schulte

Writing 50

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Part 1

An open letter to the US embassy

Dear U.S. Embassy and Consulates in China,

I am currently a second-year student at UCI. Today I am representing Chinese students who study in the United States to write this letter to you. I implore you to lift the visa restrictions for Chinese students in STEM.

Every year around July, I see crowds of Chinese students who want to pursue higher education in America waiting to apply for their visas at the U.S. embassy in Beijing. While Chinese students account for one-third of all international students studying in America, the visa policy toward us become stricter. Students who major in STEM subjects are targeted, and they are more likely to be rejected compared to students who major in art history. Most of my friends in computer science majors who were limited to one-year visas chose not to go back to China until they got their degrees. The unreasonable policy not only impedes millions of students from reuniting with their families, but it harms this country itself in a long run. As more and more Chinese researchers choose to conduct their research in China or other countries due to the strict visa policy, America is losing the scientific and financial contributions of them.

As the saying goes, “Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Please imagine how would you feel if the Chinese government introduced the same policy and banned U.S. scholars from visiting and learning. No one would like to see that.

Banning Chinese students from studying in the U.S. is not a good way to maintain competitiveness, which will even lead America to lose the race faster. Instead, accepting them is the only way to promote development for both countries. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I sincerely hope you consider lifting the visa restrictions on Chinese students.

Sincerely,

Zhenze Zhang

Part 2

A Letter to my best friend Jasmine

Hi Jasmine,

How’s everything going? I went to the Universal Studio with Tian the other day, and I wish you could have come with us. We talked about a lot of things, and Tian said he was a bit lonely. I know he doesn't have many friends here as a transfer student from Zhejiang.

I noticed that Tian was always invisible when we had group discussions in class and always sat quietly and alone in his seat. And the last time when he tried to join our conversation, you were a little upset and didn't talk much. I know that you might think, "We’ve known each other for six years, who the hell is this transfer student?”

Even though Tian shares different cultures and dialects with us, I think maybe we should take the initiative and hang out with him. Do you remember the first day of junior high school? We were the only two in our class who came from different districts, and the rest of the class was in the same elementary school and knew each other. I bet both of us remember the feelings of awkwardness and strangeness. We got to know them and eventually became good friends only because Jiexi invited us to hang out together on the second day of school. Let’s treat Tian just like Jiexi treated us, and I believe eventually we will become good friends.

Lots of love and kisses,

Zhenze

Part 3

Reflection

Since two letters were written to different audiences, I used different rhetorical devices to persuade them. The first one is an open letter, so following its conventions I chose to write in a serious tone and use formal words. In contrast, the reader of my second letter is a good friend of mine so my wording is less formal. In the first letter, I adopt logos, trying to use rational analysis to tell the embassy that 1/3 of international students are Chinese and denying Chinese student visas is harmful to the United States itself since they will lose students who have proved to make tremendous economic and scientific contributions to America. Pathos is a rhetorical device that I used in the second letter because I wanted to create emotional connections with Jasmine. For example, I tried to evoke Jasmine’s feelings by reminding her how she felt when she came to school knowing nobody to show that we should not make Tian feel the same way.

There is a clear difference between the end of the two letters. I used “sincerely” to show my respect to the embassy, while I used “lots of love and kisses” to create a sense of intimacy, which can also ease the tension if she does not like what I say in the letter.