

Navigating Shadows: Illuminating Unauthorized Employment Among Chinese International Students at Rutgers

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IWL Policy Tracks: Art and Literature & Work

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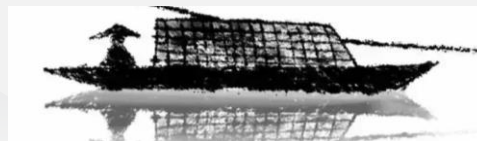


The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice* leadership *through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.



FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

Barriers to Legal Employment

International students face challenges understanding and adhering to F-1 visa employment restrictions. (Times of India, 2024)

Unauthorized work often stems from financial pressures and limited on-campus job opportunities. (Times of India, 2024)

Empowerment through Knowledge

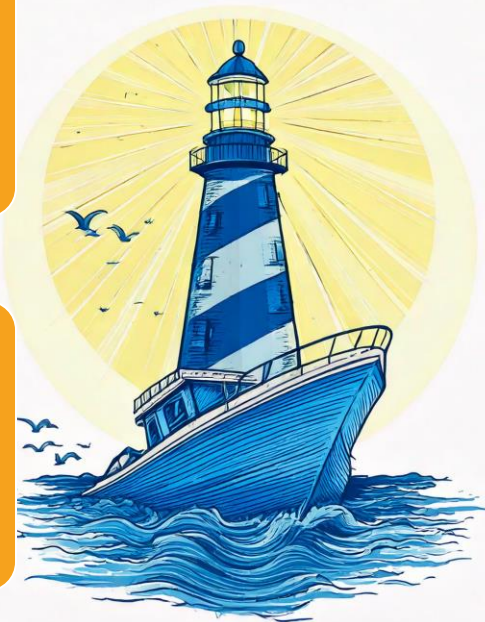
Understanding visa options like CPT and OPT can expand career opportunities legally. (Deshmukh)

Building networks within the Chinese international community fosters confidence and support. (Evenett)

Gender-Specific Vulnerabilities

Female students are at a higher risk of exploitation and unsafe working conditions in unauthorized jobs. (Quijano, Andrea)

Gender-based discrimination in the workplace further limits opportunities and impacts mental well-being. (Siocon)



Goal Statement:



The "Navigating Shadows" Project aims to address the challenges faced by Chinese international students in navigating employment opportunities at Rutgers University. It focuses on creating a supportive environment to improve the well-being and career prospects of these students.



The project serves as a guideline to provide employment resources, mentorship opportunities, and practical advice, ensuring Chinese international students are informed, supported, and confident as they navigate employment and cultural challenges in the US.



It is important for female international students to feel empowered to pursue safe and legitimate employment opportunities. This requires addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities, such as exploitation and harassment, and fostering a sense of community and security.



Mission Statement:

- Raise awareness about the challenges of unauthorized employment among Chinese international students.

Raise

- Equip students with the knowledge to navigate the U.S. job market legally and effectively.

Equip

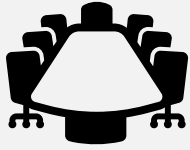
- Empower female students to address and overcome gender-specific vulnerabilities in the workplace.

Empower

- Build a supportive network and community to foster inclusivity and resilience.

Build

METHODS



Discussion Panels:

1. Hosted a discussion panel through the RU-FIT program to share resources and insights on legal employment options for international students.
2. Focused on addressing gender-specific challenges, including workplace safety and discrimination.



Career Guideline Zine:

1. Designed and distributed a zine titled "Navigating Your Career Path" to provide practical advice and resources tailored to international students' needs.
2. Included guidance on F-1 visa regulations, OPT, CPT, and safety tips for female students.



Zoom Workshops:

1. Organized virtual events--"Navigating Shadows: Illuminating Your Career Online Night," featuring HR professionals sharing career insights in Mandarin.
2. Ensured accessibility by addressing language barriers and providing culturally specific support.

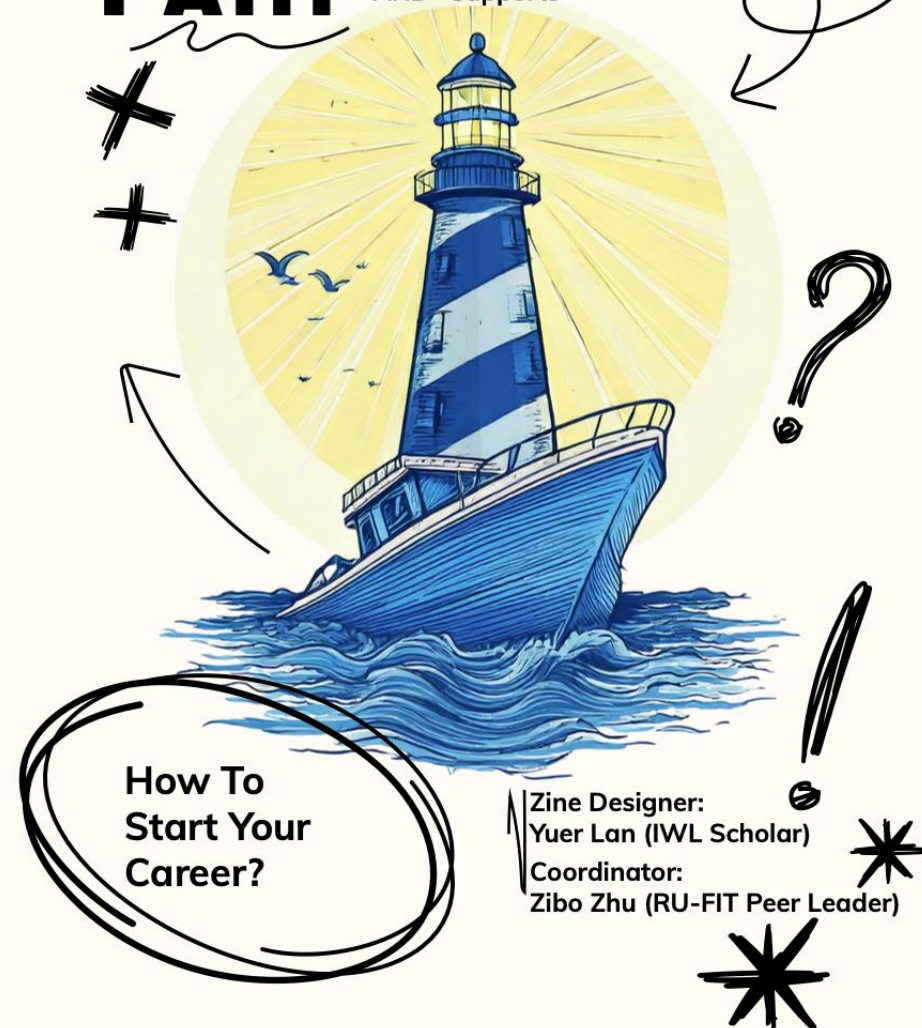


Zine: For international students Navigating Your Career Path with Challenges and Supports

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aai:d:scds:US:a7b54822-4832-4576-8dc4-30b2b85f309c>

**FOR INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS**

NAVIGATING YOUR CAREER PATH WITH Challenges AND Supports



DISCUSSION PANEL IN RU-FIT CLASS:



RU-FIT PROGRAM

NAVIGATING YOUR CAREER PATH

THIS FRIDAY @ 12:10 PM

HAVE QUESTIONS BEFORE THE PANEL?

Feel free to submit your questions
in advance using this code:



NAVIGATING SHADOWS: ILLUMINATING YOUR CAREER ONLINE NIGHT

Reflection on the Activity:

The event successfully addressed the challenges faced by first-year Chinese international students, particularly language barriers and cultural adjustments.

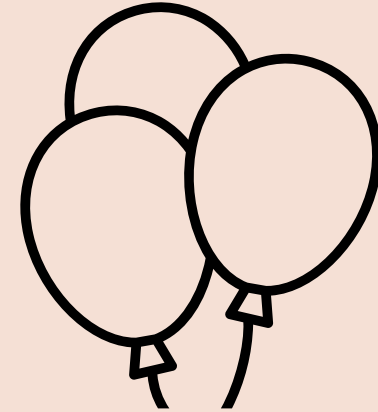
Hosting the session in Mandarin created an inclusive atmosphere, ensuring accessibility and understanding for participants.

Practical guidance on OPT/CPT, legal employment, and networking empowered students to feel more confident in navigating career paths in the U.S.



FEMINIST LEADERSHIP: GENDERED LENS IN MY SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

- **Empowerment Through Resources and Education**
- **Career Guideline Zine:** Dedicated sections for female students on:
 - Recognizing and reporting harassment.
 - Building safe networks and mentorship connections.
 - Understanding workplace rights under Title IX and U.S. labor laws.
- **Discussion Panels and Workshops:** Events highlighted gender-specific challenges and provided a safe space for female students to share concerns and seek advice.



- **Creating Safe Spaces**
- Promoted awareness of **campus resources** like the Title IX Office, CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services), and International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
- Encouraged female students to connect with peer networks and advocacy groups to navigate complex workplace scenarios confidently.

FUTURE IMPACT

Empowering International Students

The project provides tools and resources for students to navigate employment challenges legally and confidently.

Builds awareness about authorized work opportunities like OPT and CPT, ensuring students are better equipped for their career journeys.

Fostering Gender Equity

Highlights the unique challenges faced by female international students, creating safer and more equitable career pathways.

Encourages institutions to adopt gender-sensitive approaches in supporting international students..

Strengthening Community Networks

Encourages the formation of mentorship programs and peer support networks among international students.

Fosters a sense of belonging and collaboration within the international student community, building long-lasting professional relationships.

TIMELINE



Oct

**ZINE
PROJECT**

Oct

**RU-FIT
Discussion
Panel**

Nov

**Navigating
Shadows:
Illuminating
Your
Career
Online
Night**

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Work Cited

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