

Pursuing Post-bachelor Study at a Top U.S. University

Ping Wang
Seigle Family Distinguished Professor
Washington University in St. Louis
<http://www.wustl.edu>

September 2010

Outline

- General admission guidelines in top U.S. graduate programs
- Preparation and application tips
- Academic and personal adjustments to pursuing a post-bachelor degree in a foreign country
- A new academic elite member: Washington University in St. Louis

General Admission Guidelines

- **When:** at least **one week** ahead of the deadline
- **Which:** choose schools with
 - good reputation of the specific graduate program of interest as well as of the university as a whole
 - upward trend in faculty productivity
 - private university (well endowed, with professors strong in both research and teaching)
 - comfortable location (safe + reasonable cost of living + culture)
 - 雖有都會盛，卻無喧嘩聲
- **What:** admission committees pay special attention to:
 - Adequate English proficiency (speaking/writing)
 - Strong course/test performance
 - Professional and informative recommendation from reputable scholars
 - Good sense in research
 - Sufficient knowledge in the program applied

Important Information about Yourself

■ Resume:

- personal contact
- education (high school & college)
- exchange experience related to academics (if any)
- job experience (if any)
- academic performance (GPA, major GPA, test scores)
- academic publications
- honors and awards
- leadership activities (academic only)

■ Personal Statement:

- your background
- your qualification (don't be shy about your quality, but never exaggerate)
- your plan for graduate study that builds on your strength and matches the specific school you are applying
- your post-graduation plan

Test Score needed

- **GRE:** for general program
 - 3 parts: Verbal, Quantitative and Writing
 - Application:
 - China: <http://cbt.etest.net.cn>
 - Hong Kong: <http://www.prometric.com/GRE/default.htm>
 - Test format changes in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korean from September, 2007
- **GMAT:** for business school
 - Similar to GRE structure
 - Application: <http://www.mba.com/mba/TaketheGMAT>

Test Score needed

- LSAT/MCAT: for law/medical school
- TOEFL:
 - iBT since 2006
 - Application: <http://www.toefl.org>
 - required for non-native English speaker
 - Some school accept IELTS as substitute to TOEFL

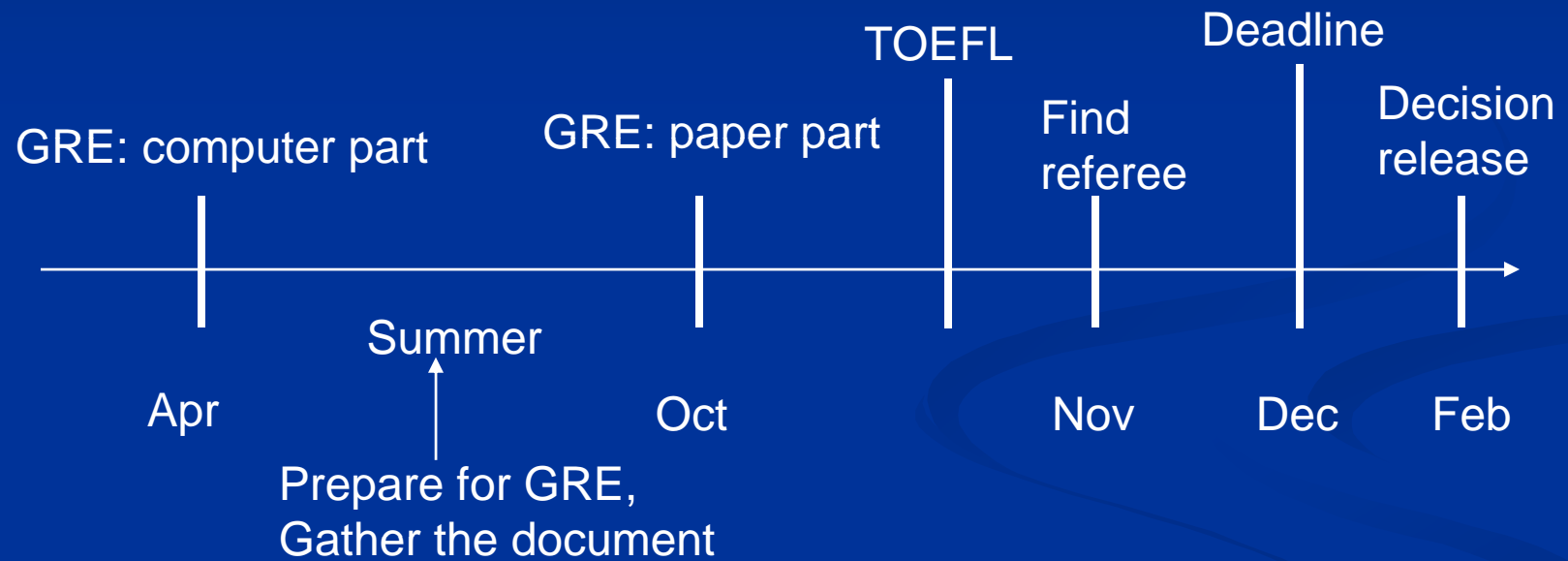
Recommendation

- 2 or 3 letters of recommendation
- Referees: reputation VS recognition
- Provide your CV and personal statements/statement of purpose
- Left about 2 weeks time for referees
- In fact online submission is NOT convenient to most of the referees
- In case of paper recommendation, provide with envelopes and correct address labels (at least correct postal/zip code)

Personal Statement

- 1 to 1.5 page length
- Explain your shortcoming shown in material, eg GPA, year of absence
- Elaborate the material to differentiate yourself with other applicants
- Write a specific personal statement for your favorite schools and safety schools
- Give information the ad-com needed to justify recommending your enrollment under any challenge

Timeline



Personal Adjustment

■ Language Barrier

- English study groups, English conversion classes
- Host family program
- Do not worried about your accent

■ Loneliness

- **Make friends** by all kinds of means, i.e., participate in different activities

■ Active VS passive attitude

- Contact professors instead of waiting professors to contact you

■ Culture Differences

- Be more confident, not to be too modest

■ Get out of your comfort zone

- Do not always stay in a small group of people with similar cultures or speaking the same language

Academic Adjustment

- **Decide early** which direction you would like to go
 - Academic or Industry
- **Sufficient preparation** of choosing the right advisor
 - Laboratory rotations/join professor-led study groups
 - Talking with different professors to know their specialty
 - The personality of the professors, the efficiency of supervision, funds raising capability
- **Your preference**
 - Small or big research groups
 - Independent researcher or need more guidance from your advisor
- **Interest** is the most important

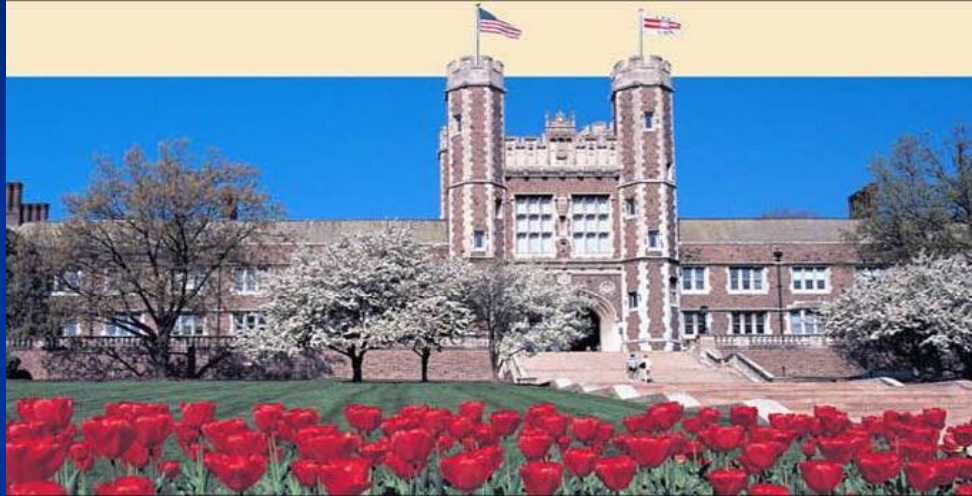
A new academic elite member: Washington University in St. Louis

- Founded in 1853
- Medium-sized:
 - 3,000+ instructional faculty
 - 6,500+ undergraduates
 - 5,500+ graduate/professional
 - 1,300+ part-time
 - students from 120 countries
 - 90+ programs, 1,500 courses
- Set in St. Louis
 - suburb of a 2.6 million MSA
 - adjacent to Forest Park
 - 169-acre main campus

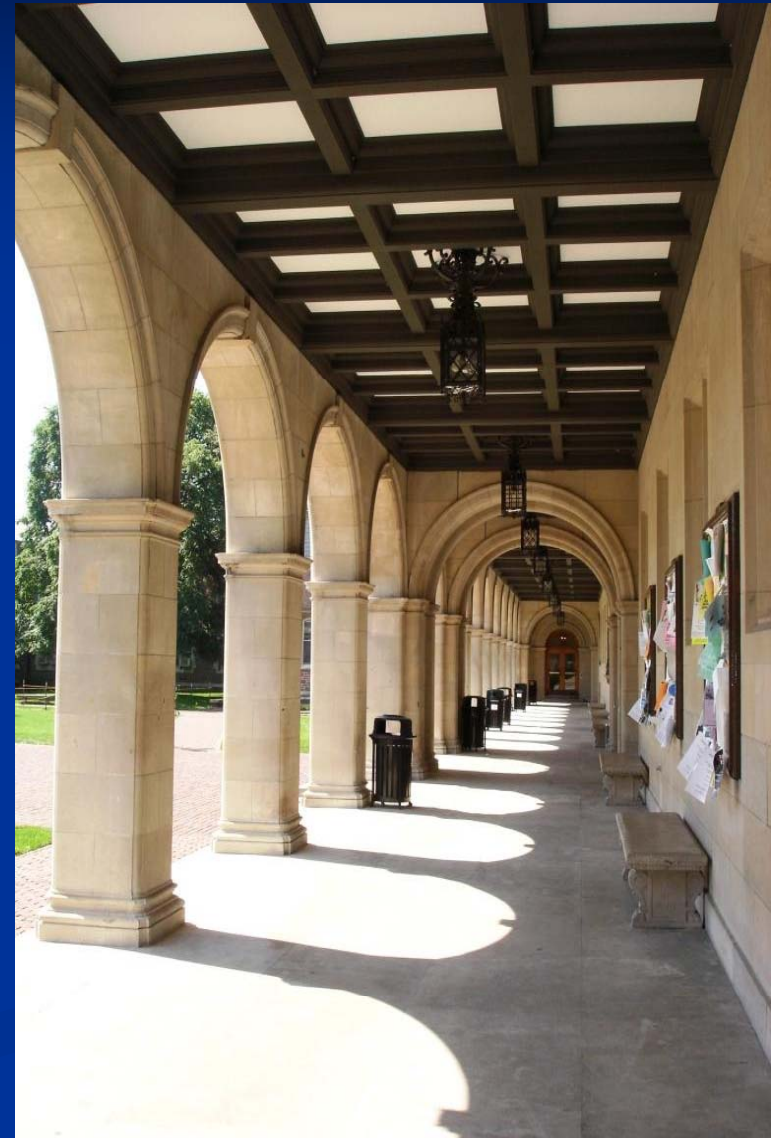


Brookings Hall

Landmark of Danforth Campus



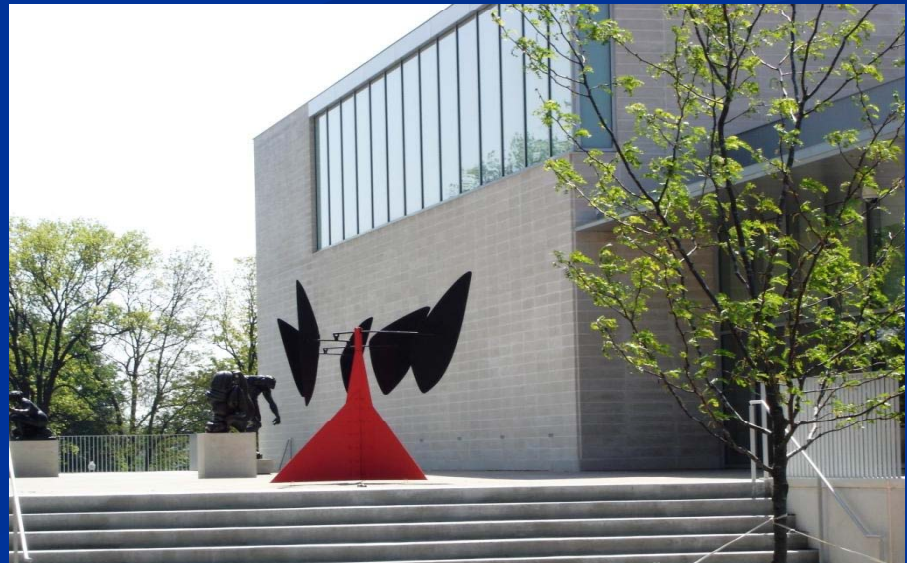
The Quad



Gothic Buildings



Arts & Greens



The Gateway Arch - St. Louis

Mock Photograph
© 2001 Ed Rahe

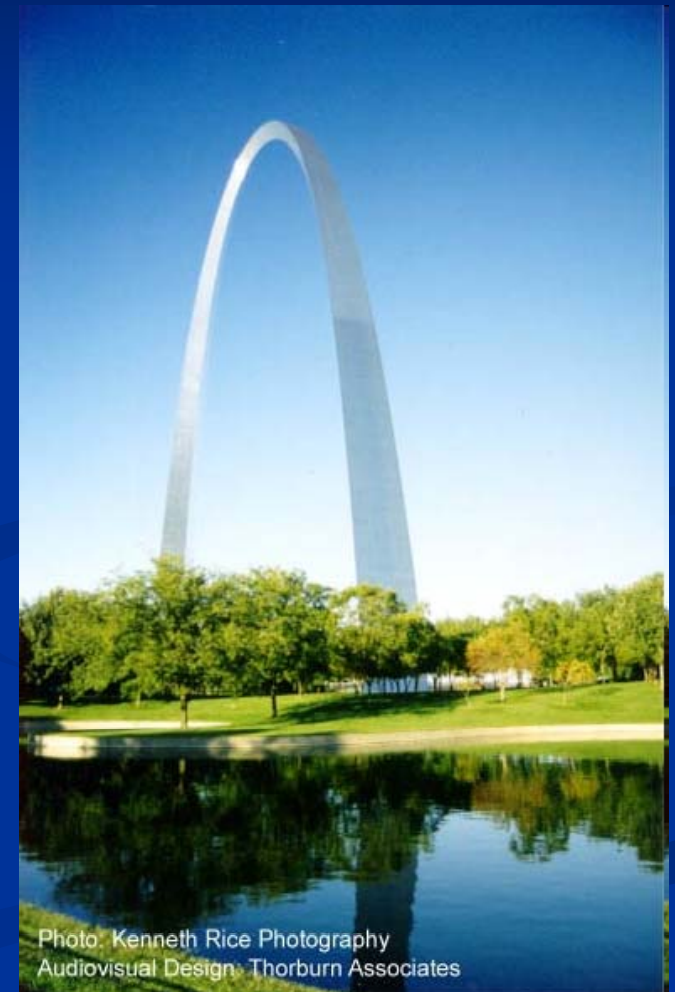


Photo: Kenneth Rice Photography
Audiovisual Design: Thorburn Associates

Forest Park – the Extended Campus



A New Ivy League University

- USA & World Report rankings:
 - undergraduate: 12
 - 20 graduate/professional programs in top-10
- Top 10 in endowment funds
- Top 5 in Federal grants/awards
- Many prestigious winners/fellows:
 - 22 Nobel Prize Winners
 - 7 Pulitzer Prize
 - 2 National Medal of Arts
 - 12 National Medal of Science
 - 72 National Academy of Sciences
 - 5 National Academy of Engineering
 - 4 American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
 - 31 American Academy of Arts and Sciences
 - 11 American Institute of Architects
 - 15 American Law Institute



International Connections

- Study abroad program (undergraduate level)
 - 89 programs in 44 different countries
 - 34% of WU graduating seniors report having participated in a study abroad program for a semester, a summer or a year
 - Approximately 500 Arts and Sciences students study abroad each year, roughly 320 during the semester and academic year and 180 during the summer
- McDonnell International Scholars Academy (graduate level)
 - 39 scholars from 21 of 25 partner universities
 - 23 ambassadors to 25 partner universities

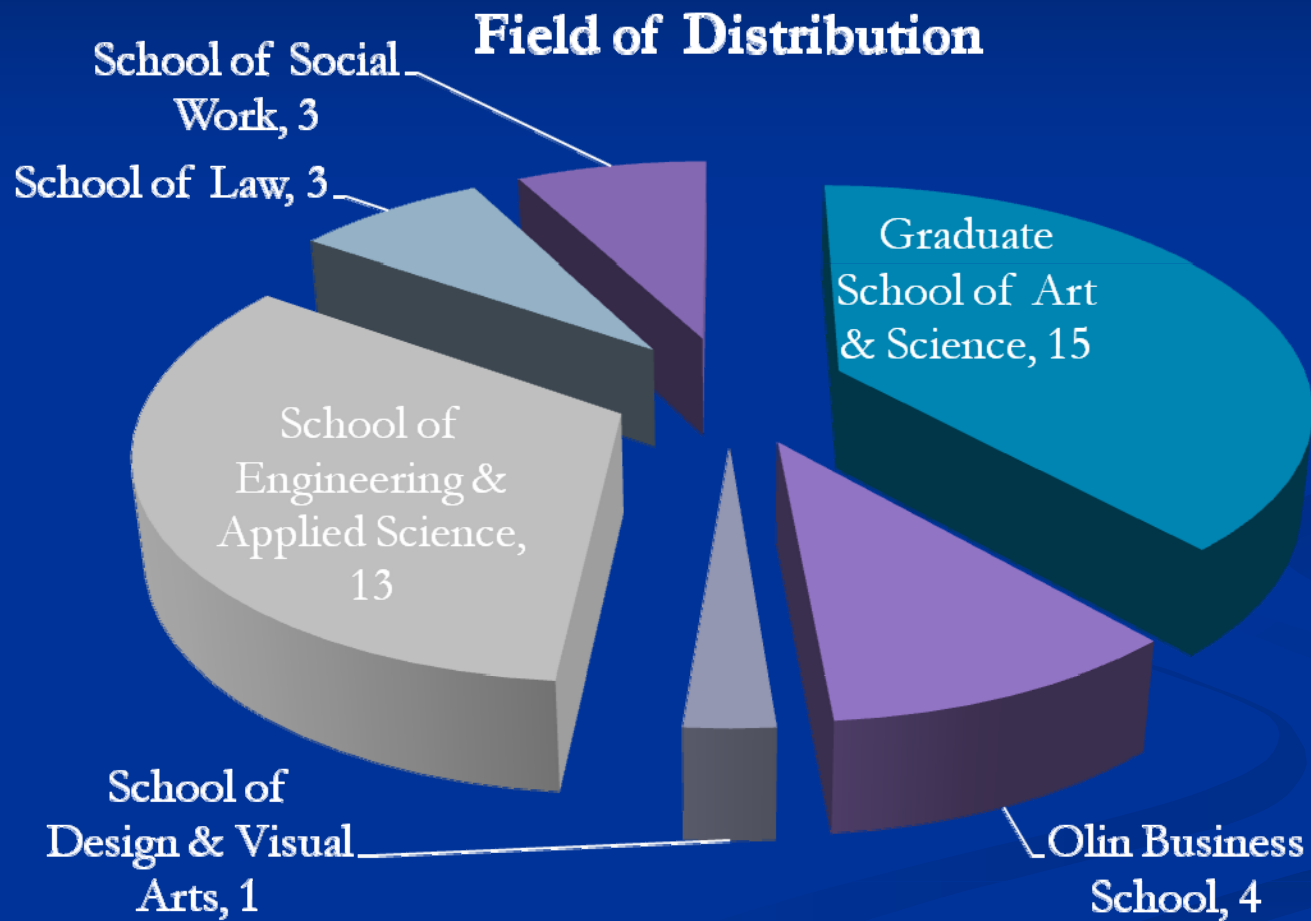
McDonnell Scholars

- Class of 2006: 18
 - one CUHK (Juanyi Yu)
- Class of 2007: 13
 - one CUHK (Tsz Nga Wong)
- Class of 2008: 12
- Class of 2009: 11
- Steady-state:
 - 70-100 scholars
 - 30-35 partner universities
 - more international corporate sponsors
- Application Procedures
 - **Submit a regular application** to one of our graduate or professional degree programs
 - Applicants should request the financial aid that they would request even if not applying to the Academy
 - **Apply separately to the McDonnell Academy by Feb. 1**
 - If admitted to a degree program but not to the Academy, a student will receive whatever financial aid the degree program would have otherwise offered
 - If a student is admitted to a degree program and to the Academy, the Academy's financial package will apply

McDonnell Scholars

- Scholars in residence: 39 Scholars
 - Represent 21 of 25 partner universities
 - 13 are Corporate or Foundation Fellows
- Location Distributions
 - 20 from Greater China (Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan)
 - 5 from South Korea
 - 3 from Singapore
 - 3 from India
 - 2 from Israel
 - 1 from Japan
 - 1 from Thailand
 - 1 from Chile
 - 1 from Netherlands
 - 1 from Hungary
 - 1 from Turkey

McDonnell Scholars



Partner Universities



Bogazici University



Budapest University of Technology and Economics



China Agricultural University



Chulalongkorn University



Fudan University



Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay



Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya



Jawaharlal Nehru University



Korea University



Middle East Technical University



National Taiwan University



National University of Singapore



Peking University



Seoul National University



UNICAMP State University of Campinas



Tata Institute of Social Sciences



Technion—Israel Institute of Technology



The Chinese University of Hong Kong



Tsinghua University



University of Chile



University of Hong Kong

Academy Sponsors

■ Corporate Sponsors

- **Ameren**
St. Louis, MO
- **Arch Coal, Inc.**
St. Louis, MO
- **Boeing Company**
St. Louis, MO
- **Brown Shoe**
St. Louis, MO
- **Cabot Corporation**
Boston, MA
- **Charoen Pokphand Indonesia**
Jakarta, Indonesia
- **Corning Inc.**
Corning, NY
- **Covidien**
St. Louis, MO
- **DuPont**
Wilmington, DE
- **EERG**
Ames, IA
- **Emerson**
St. Louis, MO

- **FILA Korea**
Seoul, South Korea
- **Monsanto Company**
St. Louis, MO
- **Nestlé Purina PetCare**
St. Louis, MO
- **Peabody Energy**
St. Louis, MO
- **Risun Coal Chem. Group Ltd.**
Beijing, PRC
- **Rohm and Haas**
Philadelphia, PA

■ Foundation Sponsors

- **Lee Foundation**
Singapore

■ Individual Sponsors

- **Carol and Jon Epstein**
St. Louis, MO
- **Cho-Yee and Patricia To**
Ann Arbor, MI

Annual Routine Activities

- Welcome Week
 - Chancellor's reception
- Academy Monthly Luncheon with Invited Speakers
- Eisenhower Fellows & McDonnell Academy Event
- Global Leadership Visions for 2nd-year Scholars
- Trip to Washington DC/NYC for 1st and 2nd-year Scholars during Spring Break
- McDonnell Academy Reception & Thanksgiving Dinner @ Wertsch's Residence
- McDonnell Academy Graduation Celebratory
- Etiquette Training Session
- Shakespeare Festival in Forest Park
- International Symposium on Energy & Environment (May 2007, Dec 2008, Oct 2010)

Other Activities (2006-2008)

■ 2006-2007

- British Petroleum Presentation by BP Energy and Biosciences Institute
- Presentation on American Culture and Religion
- Performance of Lou Donaldson at Jazz at the Bistro
- St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Performance and Reception
- Eliot Society Dinner
- Meeting with John Balkema of Caterpillar

■ 2007-2008

- Performance of Othello at St. Louis Black Repertory Theater
- Holiday Open House

- Public Lecture on the Knowledge Commission and their priorities in higher education by Sam Pitroda, Chairman of India's Knowledge Commission
- Meeting with Cho-Yee To, Almu of WUSTL, faculty member of University of Michigan and CUHK, Individual Sponsor of McDonnell Academy
- Meeting with Wenzhong Zhou, Chinese Ambassador to the United States
- Citizen of the Year Award Celebration: Chancellor Wrighton
- Fourth of July Dinner/Fair St. Louis

Other Activities (2008-2010)

■ 2008-2009

- International Conference on Globalization: Cultures, Institutions and Socioeconomics at CUHK
- U.S. Vice Presidential Debate Reception
- McDonnell Academy @ St. Louis Art Museum
- CUHK Pro VC Jack Cheng's visit to WUSTL
- The Great Nuclear Debate Panel led by Dingli Shen, Professor of Fudan University
- Citizen of the Year Award Celebration: John McDonnell
- Trip to Chicago for 3rd-yr Scholars in June

■ 2009-2010

- Cards vs Cubs Baseball Game
- Black Rep Ragtime @ Edison Theatre
- Trip to Federal Reserve Bank in St. Louis

- St. Louis Symphony: Beethoven's Fifth
- Breakfast with Amnon Rubinstein, Leading Scholar on Constitutional Law in Israel
- Breakfast with Professor Renjie Dong - Chinese Agricultural University
- Charles Freeman lecture, "2010 in Sino-American Relations"
- India Research Consortium, Networking Event and Symposium
- Dinner with Mr. Albert Ip, Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Ltd
- Lunch with Mr. James Tsien, Managing Director of HPH
- Tea Tasting with McDonnell Ambassador Linda Cottler

2nd International Symposium on Energy and Environment

- Dec 8-10, 2008 in Hong Kong
- Participants
 - 16 Partner University CEO's
 - 61 Academic Leaders from Partner Universities
 - 28 Corporation Representatives
 - WUSTL Ambassadors, Steering Committee, Interested Faculty, McDonnell Scholars, Students
 - Speakers: Steven Chu and others
 - Corporate Sponsors



- Roll-out of Consortium on Clean Coal Utilization
- Multi-University Aerosol Network formed by faculty from 14 universities

International Conference on “Globalization: Cultures, Institutions and Socioeconomics”

- Dec 12-13, 2008 at CUHK
- On causes/consequences of globalization in related to Greater China
- Distinguished keynote and plenary-session speakers:
 - Nobel Laureate Nobel Laureate Sir James Mirrlees and Douglass North
 - Michele Boldrin/Gerald Early/Robert Hegel/Murray Weidenbaum (WU)
 - David P. Conner (OCBC, Singapore)
 - Beng-Huat Chua (Nat'l U Singapore)
 - Frank Dikotter (HKU)
 - Chang-Tai Hsien (Chicago)
 - Gordon Mathews/Shanguang Wang (CUHK)
 - Aihwa Ong (Berkeley)
 - Hsiao-Yen Peng (Academia Sinica)
 - Henry Wan (Cornell)