

Policy Sprint

Foreign Policy

Today's Agenda

1. Prompt

2. Q & A

3. Executive Summary &
Introduction

4. Breakout Rooms

5. Pitching Period



Prompt

U of T's Partnership with Alibaba

In 2021, the University of Toronto partnered with the Chinese globally recognized company Alibaba to use its Cloud Enterprise Network (CEN) services. CEN was designed to provide students studying from China with faster, reliable, and consistent access to U of T services like Quercus and Blackboard Collaborate. Due to Alibaba's recent track-record, many concerns were raised among the U of T community. Construct a policy brief critiquing how this partnership may or may not be beneficial for U of T and its major stakeholders





Q & A

Consider the following...

- Differences in attitudes towards privacy between domestic students and international students
 - How do different cultures view privacy issues?
- Chinese privacy laws and international laws
- Canada's economic ties to China
- U of T's major stakeholders
 - The importance of Chinese international students for UofT
- Potential costs, benefits and side effects/ unintended consequences

Executive Summary

The University of Toronto recently signed a contract with Alibaba for a network service in order to provide access to U of T's online resources, such as Quercus and Blackboard Collaborate, for students and others residing in mainland China. This network service provides a lower latency connection to U of T services for students connecting from mainland China. However, Chinese companies are required to operate in accordance with China's cyber security laws and there is an inherent risk of monitoring for individuals in mainland China using any network solution. Alibaba has been embroiled in privacy controversies this partnership raises many concerns and leaves many questions unanswered. Moving forward, U of T must recognize these issues and provide effective solutions.

Introduction

While there are particular challenges regarding online learning for students located in other countries, questions about privacy, surveillance, and free inquiry may arise among students who reside in countries with different laws, cultural norms, and monitoring by law enforcement. One particular concern for users of the Alibaba CEN is the Chinese cybersecurity laws that allow the government to control the kind of data that is transferred out of the country. Although Alibaba's track record is questionable, the Chinese international student population is critical to U of T, and 38% of Fortune 500 companies are still associated with Alibaba.



Breakout Rooms

- Work alone on your briefs
 - Open Space to discuss ideas
 - Refer to mini-brief template
 - Come up with 3 policy recommendations
 - Be sure to explain how these policies can help overcome the problem
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Pitching Period

