



China and the Risk to Our Daily Lives

Discussion Guide

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room.

And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so listen and be prepared to hear a different point of view. Remember, you do not need to share your political affiliation; this is a discussion and exchange of ideas, not politics.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic, but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

- Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-three minute reaction** to the brief:
 - Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
 - What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief? What matters?

Spread the Word: Some Facts to Share with the Group During Your Discussion

- The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has governed the People's Republic of China since 1949, following the [Chinese Civil War](#), in which the Communists, led by Mao Zedong, defeated the Nationalists.
- China is the U.S.'s 3rd largest export partner (7% of exports) and our biggest import partner (17% of imports). China owns \$981 billion of U.S. debt and is the world's largest creditor, loaning \$1.5 trillion to 150+ countries.

- The CCP has infiltrated U.S. soil, holding 384,000 acres of U.S. farmland, buying more than [\\$6 billion of U.S. real estate](#) between March 2021 and March 2022, establishing Illegal Chinese Overseas Police Stations across major U.S. cities, investing billions of dollars in [American pensions](#), and supplying copious amounts of [precursor fentanyl products](#) to Americans.
- Between fiscal years 2019 and 2021, the United States sold \$17 billion in potential arms sales to Taiwan, including fighter jets, tanks, drones, and missiles.
- In December 2022, Congress introduced bipartisan legislation, the Anti-Social CCP Act, to combat foreign influence and banned the popular social media platform TikTok, on federal government devices.
- According to the FBI, “The annual cost to the U.S. economy of counterfeit goods, pirated software, and theft of trade secrets is between \$225 billion and \$600 billion.”
- According to the Council of Foreign Relations, “China has spent more over the past six years—\$280 million—to influence U.S. politics than any other foreign country.”
- China is a large supplier of illicit synthetic fentanyl. [Fentanyl](#) contributed to the dramatic rise in drug overdose deaths in the U.S., which topped [100,000](#) in 2021.

Let's discuss

Pick 2 or 3 questions that resonate with the group and discuss them, or choose your own.

- **Community:** What do you see as the number one issue Americans should be worried about when it comes to China? What does a new framework of U.S.-China relations mean for everyday Americans?
- **Local, State or Federal Government:** What role does exporting democratic values play in the American relationship with China? How can the U.S. begin economic decoupling from China while minimizing financial impacts for Americans?
- **Technology:** How can we protect our intellectual property from China? Are there steps you have taken or believe others should take to maintain privacy?

Let's act

1. **Farmland Risk:** [Identify](#) if your state is allowing foreign purchase of U.S. farmland. Do you have any sensitive military or government properties near you? Find out what your state is doing to vet foreign purchases of U.S. properties.
2. **TikTok Risk:** Is your state one of the 27 that bans TikTok on government-issued devices? What are your state's rules on Tiktok?
3. **Financial Risk:** Are you investing in foreign companies? If you are a government employee, [is your pension fund](#) invested in foreign companies?
4. **Academic Risk:** Does your local university have a research arm with technical applications? Are government-funded research projects properly safeguarded? Inquire about your college/university ties with foreign governments. Review the foreign adversary techniques [detailed](#) by the FBI. Ensure your university is adequately prepared to thwart insider threats. Develop strong risk management procedures with local schools and school leadership in your communities.

5. **Business Risk:** Do you have access or connections that would make you a target for foreign adversaries? Ensure your company has a robust security strategy. Review the FBI's recommended steps to safeguard your company [here](#), including what to look for. If you think economic espionage has occurred, contact the FBI, and review their reporting checklist [here](#).
6. **Personal Risk:** What are the signs you might be targeted by a foreign adversary? See the FBI's list [here](#).
7. **Establish a relationship with your legislators.** It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).
8. **Consider writing a letter to the editor or an op-ed on your stance on new innovative practices in education in your local paper.** Learn how on [The Policy Circle website](#).

Next Steps for Your Circle

- **Post a Recap:** Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present, and share planned actions from group members. Designate who will post a meeting recap on your circle page.
- **Decide your next meeting topic.** Want to discuss a related brief at your next meeting? Suggestions include:
 - [Crime & Safety](#)
 - [Literacy in America](#)
 - [Foster Care](#)
- **Dive Deeper into the issues.** If this is an area you would like to pursue further, consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources for [developing a message about your issue](#) and [organizing a petition](#) to amplify your voice and raise awareness.