Fast-track teacher training programs have received increasing and more widespread support over the past twenty years. For example, while Teacher for America (TFA) only assists in preparing a comparatively small number of the teachers certified each year (Donaldson & Johnson, 2010), it has managed to establish itself as perhaps one of the most prominent franchised brands of educational reform in the United States. In cooperation with Teach First, a similarly focused social enterprise based in the United Kingdom, the two organizations established Teach For All, a globally networked consortium of organizations unified under the belief that placing short-term teachers in under-served schools will be a catalyst for longer term educational change.

Specifically focusing on China, this paper considers the impact of the increasingly globalized effort to reform teacher education through "alternative" teacher training programs. This research is designed as analytic study that seeks to address critical issues within the changing field of contemporary education policy and globalization, with specific focus on challenges to university-based teacher education. As theoretical/conceptual research, the methods of data analysis are based upon a thorough review of peer-reviewed studies on teacher education policy in both western countries and China, in addition to the collection and review of primary sources, including documents published by non-governmental organizations, policy briefs from political advocacy groups/think tanks, and materials from the "alternative" certification programs themselves.

Given the social and political changes China has been undertaking since the mid 1980s, as it has shifted from a "socialist, planned society" to one driven by a market economy and global competition, the traditional teacher education system in China has not withstood pressures to transform itself. Consequently, the system of higher education has found itself under both national and international pressures to change (Shi & Englert, 2008). Teachers colleges, as they existed for over half a century, are being challenged to change and increasingly required to operate within an open and multi-institutional framework (Yuan, 2004).

Considering Chinese political contexts and the ongoing work of two specific organizations, Teach For China and Teach Future China, these fast-track certification programs represent a curious example of neoliberalism with "Chinese characteristics" (Harvey, 2005). Both organizations seek to place young teachers in under-resourced schools located in rural areas. However, while the agendas of these two organizations may on the surface seem to challenge longstanding models of teacher preparation, in practice both largely work to support existing state-driven approaches to educational reform.