

## GLOBAL WISCONSIN IDEA PROGRAM

A summer course for advanced Chinese and American high school students to explore the future of environmental sustainability, social robotics, and digital games

### Lesson on social robotics: Arduino (July 12)

We sit down as a group with Chris Meyer, founder of Sector67, laptops in hand and circuit boards, wires, sensors, and servo motors all over the tables. Nobody knows what a microcontroller was or what the rest of the parts they had sitting in front of them are for.

However, after a quick introduction and a long download, everyone had a circuit board kit and the right software, complete with Chinese language interfaces that helped solve configurations a bit of a challenge! After everything was ready to go, both the Chinese and American students were already learning another new language – *electronics*.



The lesson is based on the Arduino platform, an engaging, easy to use introduction to the world of electronics. Its core is a programmable microcontroller, a simple device we use to explore numerous examples in the development environment.

Students were shown how to produce a functioning machine and to work from there to create interactive and engaging attributes. In a few short hours, the students went from figuring out how to hook components together to using the provided parts to compose songs, attack each other with servo motors, and generally had a good time figuring things out and exploring the possibilities.

See also this [illustrated introduction to Arduino](#)

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