

INTERNATIONALIZATION IN ACTION

INTERNATIONALIZING THE CO-CURRICULUM

Part One: Integrating International Students

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As part of the efforts of the American Council on Education (ACE) Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE) to provide guidance to institutions engaged in internationalization, *Internationalization in Action* features institutional strategies and good practices gathered from participants in CIGE programs and other experts in the field. Topics rotate regularly, and each installment includes examples, sample documents, and advice from a variety of institutions.

We welcome your contributions! To suggest a topic or submit materials from your institution, please email cige@acenet.edu.

INTERNATIONALIZING THE CO-CURRICULUM: A THREE-PART SERIES

Co-curriculum, together with curriculum and learning outcomes, forms one of the six dimensions of **CIGE Model for Comprehensive Internationalization**. Co-curriculum can encompass a wide range of programs and services separate from, but complementary to, the curriculum. Student development, learning, and interaction occur both inside and outside the classroom. Internationalizing the co-curriculum, therefore, is critical to a comprehensive approach.

“Comprehensive internationalization,” as defined by ACE, is a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate international policies, programs, and initiatives, and positions colleges and universities as more globally oriented and internationally connected.

“It is the obligation of colleges and universities to prepare people for a globalized world, including developing the ability to compete economically, to operate effectively in other cultures and settings, to use knowledge to improve their own lives and their communities, and to better comprehend the realities of the contemporary world so that they can better meet their responsibilities as citizens.” (American Council on Education 2011)

Internationalization is gaining momentum at more than 80 percent of U.S. colleges and universities, and a majority have articulated international or global student learning outcomes, according to ACE’s *Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2012 Edition*. While education abroad is a deeply transformative experience that can increase students’ global awareness, IIE’s 2014 *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange* indicates that only 9.4 percent of U.S. undergraduates who complete a four-year degree will have that experience, and for associate, master’s, and doctoral degree students the participation rate is much lower. Therefore, the responsibility “to prepare people for a globalized world,” cited in ACE’s Blue Ribbon Panel Report, is increasingly borne by educators *on campus*.

Ideally, co-curriculum should align with institution-wide learning outcomes, mission, and strategic goals. Strategies for co-curricular internationalization depend on factors unique to each college or university, such as institution type (community college, liberal arts, research), composition and size of the student population, availability of resources, history, location, and others.

Introducing new, globally oriented co-curricular programs—or reorienting existing ones—can be daunting and complex. The co-curriculum, relative to other aspects of comprehensive internationalization, presents distinct challenges:

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- Co-curricular programs often influence, and are influenced by, institutional culture, which is deeply engrained and can be slow to transform.
- The co-curriculum encompasses a wide range of services and programs, making it difficult to identify where and how to direct internationalization efforts.
- Student participation in co-curricular activities is almost always voluntary, and levels of engagement vary.
- Without attendance records, academic credit, or grades, it can be difficult to assess student learning as a result of participation in co-curricular programs.

Despite these challenges, focusing internationalization efforts on the co-curriculum is essential for the kind of deep, transformational learning that international education promises. While students may sit for 12–18 hours per week in the classroom, the remainder of their time (particularly for residential students) is spent on campus interacting with peers, accessing services, and attending student events. The **experiential nature of the co-curriculum**—where students encounter cultural “others,” navigate shared space, learn to manage conflict, calibrate their moral compasses, and test their leadership skills—can offer some of the richest opportunities for students to encounter cultural differences that test their beliefs and assumptions.

Previous installments of *Internationalization in Action* focused on curriculum—individual courses, program components, degree programs, and disciplines. This installment is the first of a three-part series exploring internationalization of the co-curriculum, student learning that takes place outside the classroom, with a focus on three topics:

1. **Integrating International Students**
2. **Global and Intercultural Education in the Co-curriculum**
3. **Internationalization and Student Affairs**

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PART ONE: INTEGRATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Nearly half of U.S. colleges and universities now have strategic international student recruitment plans that include specific enrollment targets, a finding from ACE's *Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2012 Edition*. Enrolling international students is a key strategy—and sometimes driver—of comprehensive internationalization, with important benefits for both revenue and student learning. At many U.S. institutions, it has proven an effective strategy, with enrollment steadily rising: Between 2012–13 and 2013–14, the number of international students at U.S. colleges and universities increased 8.1 percent, according to IIE's *Open Doors 2014*.

ACE Publication on International Students

International Students: Strengthening a Critical Resource, edited by Maureen S. Andrade and Norman W. Evans, 2009 (Rowman & Littlefield), is a collection of articles by scholars and practitioners on various aspects of academic and cultural support for international students, offering a wide variety of creative, practical solutions and programs.

Institutions seeking to attract and retain international students are adapting student services and programming to meet the needs of this population, to benefit from the global perspective they bring, and to cultivate an inclusive climate that supports the academic and personal growth of all students. Recruiting international students, these institutions are finding, is only one of many steps to becoming more internationalized. This installment of *Internationalization in Action* highlights a range of innovative practices at institutions committed to serving and integrating international students.

“It is imperative that [U.S.] institutions devote more attention (and perhaps also more resources) to this surprisingly neglected, though powerful, student demographic. Universities have grown accustomed to investing large sums of money in recruitment agents. These efforts should now be matched by more earnest and concentrated efforts to strengthen institutional capacities to better serve the large international student population upon which U.S. institutions increasingly rely.” (Glass, Buus, and Braskamp 2013)

To realize the full benefit of international students' presence, and to provide the best possible experience for them, ACE recommends focusing on four key areas: **welcoming international students, adjusting services and programs to meet their needs, facilitating interaction between international and other students, and assessing students' experiences.**



I. WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

SETTING THE STAGE. Creating an environment in which international students can thrive requires much more than approval of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) of Immigration and Customs Enforcement—although that is certainly an important step. Despite the prevailing forces of globalization—including the worldwide availability of U.S. goods, fashion, and media for consumption—there remain substantial **barriers for international students** on nearly any campus: language, culture, academic preparation, income level, homesickness, visa requirements, discrimination, and many others. However enthusiastic administrators may be to receive international students, no amount of good will can alone surmount these barriers—but thoughtful planning, training, and accommodation can. In addition to SEVP approval, a good first step is to assess campus climate.

Campus Climate and International Students

According to Kenneth T. Wang, associate professor at Fuller Theological Seminary (CA), and co-creator of the **International Friendly Campus Scale**, overall campus climate is often defined and measured in the following ways:

- Based on interpersonal interaction between members of the campus community
- A combination of the “attitudes, behaviors, standards, and practice” of both students and employees
- A multidimensional concept that includes “historical legacy, structural diversity, psychological climate, and behavioral dimensions”
- Based on cultural identity domains (gender, race, ethnicity, religion)

Wang et al. find international students largely absent from the available data on campus climate. They argue that using climate as a frame for international students’ experience can help administrators focus on the environmental factors in their control, rather than the students’ individual characteristics that can be interpreted as “different,” or worse, deficient. A friendly campus climate can enhance international students’ sense of well-being and connectedness, and can support their successful cultural adjustment and academic performance (Wang et al. 2014).

Climate affects every member of the campus community, but responsibility for monitoring it—and for creating programs and interventions aimed at adjusting it—typically rests with the division of student affairs or student life. Some institutions begin their efforts to create an international student-friendly campus with training and support for student affairs administrators. In 2013, **Michigan State University (MSU)** began organizing **spring break study tours for residence life staff** to learn about higher education in China, in order to better serve MSU’s growing Chinese student population. When traveling to students’ home countries is not possible, the institution’s own center for diversity or multicultural education can be a valuable resource for cross-cultural learning and professional development. (*Professional development opportunities will be discussed further in part three of this series, Internationalization and Student Affairs.*)

PRE-ARRIVAL SERVICES. Adjusting to college can be difficult for any new student, but international students face the additional hurdles of navigating complex transactions—tuition payment, course registration, housing—in a new culture and often a different language. Some institutions have introduced programs to help international students and their families prepare for success even before they leave home, through **pre-arrival outreach and services**. International students can typically expect to receive email communication from their international student advisors, but increasingly pre-departure orientation can also include live “chats,” Google Hangouts, Facebook groups, and online orientation courses.

Models from the Field

Online pre-arrival orientation

George Mason University (VA) (<http://icenter.gmu.edu/>)

Santa Monica College (CA) (<http://www.smc.edu/EnrollmentDevelopment/IEC/Pages/Orientation.aspx>)

University of California, Los Angeles (<http://www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu/home/istart/11/12/overview>)

EducationUSA

EducationUSA is a U.S. Department of State network of over 400 international student advising centers in more than 170 countries. The network promotes U.S. higher education to students around the world by offering accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities to study at accredited postsecondary institutions in the United States. EducationUSA also provides services to the U.S. higher education community to help institutional leaders meet their recruitment and campus internationalization goals. EducationUSA Centers are located in an array of venues, including U.S. embassies and consulates, Fulbright commissions, bi-national centers, universities, and non-profit organizations. For more information, contact an advising center or visit the [EducationUSA website](#).

Several universities with large international student enrollment have begun holding **pre-departure orientation programs** for new international students and their parents in their home countries. Ohio State University organizes pre-departure orientations through its Global Gateway offices—administrative units that also support international student recruiting, institutional partnerships, and student exchange—in Brazil, China, and India.

Models from the Field

Pre-departure orientation programs in the home countries of new international students

Michigan State University (<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/news/?id=1587>)

Ohio State University (<http://oia.osu.edu/international-students/3496-pre-departure-orientation-begins-in-china.html>)

Purdue University (IN) (<http://www.purdue.edu/globalaffairs/gold/spring/international/globalpartners.html>)

ARRIVAL SERVICES. Landing in a new country and navigating public transportation can be disorienting. But because a good start can be crucial to students' **sense of belonging**, many U.S. colleges and universities provide airport pick-up for international students. Depending on the number of students, this service can be costly and time consuming, and there may be liability considerations, particularly when staff or volunteers use personal vehicles. Some institutions have identified voluntary agencies, commercial shuttle services, or international student organizations to help give students a warm welcome and a ride to their new homes.

Models from the Field

Airport pick-up services for international students

Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ) (<http://view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=2986>)

Ohio State University (in partnership with Port Columbus International Airport and community volunteers) (<http://oia.osu.edu/pre-arrival-and-orientation/orientation/airport-transportation.html>)

San José State University (CA) (in partnership with SuperShuttle) (<http://igateways.sjsu.edu/SanJose/Housing/appick-up.htm>)

Western Oregon University (<http://www.wou.edu/provost/international/airport.php>)

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ON-CAMPUS ORIENTATION. Institutions typically offer separate orientation programs for new international and domestic students. On one hand, this allows staff to address each group’s specific needs and concerns and inform students in F or J visa status of their legal responsibilities and benefits. However, separate welcome programs can prevent international and domestic students from **making personal connections** to one another at a critical time, when both are new to the institution.

Arnd Wächter, founder and CEO of Crossing Borders Education, is the director of documentary films that bring together students from different cultural backgrounds for deep explorations of their own and each other’s identities, communication styles, assumptions, and biases. Wächter envisions a new approach to campus orientation that would unite international and domestic students in the common, emotionally vulnerable experience of being away from home. With facilitation and staff support, both groups would benefit: The “native” students would offer expert guidance to the newcomers, while gaining leadership skills and increased global awareness, and the international students would feel less isolated and be able to share their home culture. Given the vast amount of material covered in a short time during orientation, it could help institutions, too: “Students are more involved when they’re emotionally engaged,” Wächter says, “and can take in more information.”

When planning arrival services and orientation for new international students, the importance of helping students find ways to **meet their basic needs** cannot be underestimated. One international student described the initial adjustment phase in terms of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: Students can’t be expected to purchase textbooks or complete assignments, according to this argument, until they have safe, comfortable housing; clothing appropriate to the climate; access to cash or a credit card; a means of transportation; and a stable, nutritious diet. Helping students meet their basic needs, therefore, can be critical to their academic success.

There is no question that the transition for new international students can be resource-intensive for host institutions and staff, and resource allocations may not change with enrollment levels. Many institutions have discovered **cost-neutral methods** of strengthening their services. For example, returning international students are an often underutilized resource, but they can help welcome and serve as peer advisors to new international students. The returning students gain leadership experience, cross-cultural skills, and may even earn a stipend. For new international students, they can be a lifeline.

Models from the Field

Student leader programs for international student orientation

Georgia State University: Volunteer International Student Assistant (VISA) Leaders (<http://isss.gsu.edu/current-students/campus-community-involvement/v-i-s-a-leader-program/>) (See Housley 2009.)

James Madison University (VA): Leader for International Networking and Knowledge (LINK) program (<http://www.jmu.edu/international/isss/students/get-involved/link/index.shtml>)

Purdue University: Multinational Integration Xchange (<http://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2014/Q1/new-international-purdue-students-to-mix-at-winter-welcome.html>)

The length of on-campus orientation programs can range from a few hours to several days. After multiple icebreakers, scavenger hunts, and PowerPoint presentations, few students can absorb the information squeezed into the typical orientation—especially those struggling with jetlag or a second language. To reinforce orientation, and provide “just-in-time” information and support, some colleges and universities deliver **ongoing orientation programs or courses** (non-credit or credit-bearing) during the first semester or academic year. In some cases, they simply designate a special international student section of the regular first-year experience (e.g., “University 100”) course.

Models from the Field

Ongoing orientation for new international students

College of Southern Nevada: Foundations of Success for International Students (<https://www.csn.edu/PDFFiles/InternationalCenter/FSIS%20Class%20Material/Intro.%20Lesson.pdf>)

Michigan State University: Life in the United States dialogue series (<http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/feature/series.htm>)

Old Dominion University (VA): Discover America Program (<https://www.odu.edu/life/culture/celebrations/experience-america>)

Purdue University: Perspectives dialogue series (<https://www.iss.purdue.edu/Programs/Perspectives/>)

The Recruit-Integrate-Retain Cycle

International students' experience of a U.S. college or university begins with recruitment. From their first encounter with an admissions counselor or agent, students and their families form expectations about the quality of the academic program and student services critical to students' cultural and social well-being. It is a relationship built and sustained by trust.

To strengthen that relationship, Kent State University (OH) has experimented with involving the international student advisor in the recruiting and admissions process, which provides continuity and a single point of contact for the student and family. Based on early results, the program has yielded increased international student enrollment (Andrade and Evans 2009).

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) offers an annual Executive Virtual Forum (EVF) series. EVFs provide critical information on international topics that impact the jobs of admission deans, directors, and enrollment managers at postsecondary educational institutions. In spring 2015, the **webinar series** will focus on international student retention, integration, graduation, and overall student success.

"There is no question that greater international student numbers can enhance the experience for all students, as well as the bottom line; but in a high-growth environment, without careful planning, "internationalization" can backfire, undermining the academic experience and social integration. Institutions that fail to heed these lessons risk a negative spiral of low satisfaction, weak referrals and ambivalent word-of-mouth, driving up recruitment costs and tarnishing brand." (Garrett 2014)

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II. ADJUSTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO MEET INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' NEEDS

The international student and scholar (ISS) services office is often a “one-stop shop,” covering a full range of programs and services especially for international students. ISS advisors help students maintain legal status, but they also offer guidance on a range of other issues—from transportation and shopping to religious worship. As the number of international students on campus increases, ISS units can become overwhelmed and, given their federal regulatory obligations, the cultural and social dimensions of international student advising may become secondary. Some institutions split the ISS regulatory advising and cultural programming functions into two teams. Others try to distribute international student services more evenly across traditional student affairs or student services units. (*The third installment of this series will examine the role of student affairs in comprehensive internationalization.*)

“While efforts to recruit international students are on the rise, the data do not show a commensurate increase in support services for these students, or activities that facilitate interaction and mutual learning with American peers.” (American Council on Education 2012)

A Campus Action Team for International Student Success: San José State University

San José State has seen a rapid growth in international student enrollment in recent years, although the university initially “did not have the infrastructure to meet international students’ needs,” says Karen O’Neill, director of the Office of Global Education and Initiatives. Tasked by the associate vice provost, representatives from a range of student services units formed a committee to assess the needs of all out-of-state students (not just those from overseas).

At first, the 12-person committee included staff from the offices of housing, health services, admissions, academic advising, testing, international programs, career services, and student accounts. To evaluate services for international students, they began by asking a simple question: What would it be like for someone who’s just arrived in the United States to come into this office? The group divided into three subcommittees, organized from international students’ perspective: pre-arrival needs, arrival needs, and ongoing needs.

O’Neill observes that “having this group to discuss the issues was a tremendous bringing together of resources.” Rather than passing on the responsibility for helping international students, members of the team saw how each one contributes. International students, O’Neill observes, are no longer the sole responsibility of the international programs people. “Now you have a group championing the international students and asking, ‘How do we address their problems?’ If we’re going to bring them here and charge them out-of-state tuition, then we need to be able to do something.”

It was particularly helpful that the team included staff from China and India, O’Neill notes, who themselves had been international students and were able to identify common points of misunderstanding.

Outcomes of San José State’s Campus Action Team include:

- A single “landing page” on the website for international students, which then directs them to offices and services they are most likely to access
- Social media outreach to connect students to each other and to help them find housing
- Pre-arrival services to help students begin the transition to the university before they leave home, including testing for academic placement to speed course registration
- Airport pick-up through an arrangement with SuperShuttle
- Early residence hall check-in for an additional fee

The team continues to identify areas of need and meets regularly to improve and refine services for international students.

“I am standing on one side of the river waving and calling for help, and on the other side of the river the American people are standing and cannot hear me, but clearly they are waving and giving me a signal to come over!”—Habib Karbasian, PhD student in computer science, George Mason University (VA), from Iran

It is important to consider that **international students may not necessarily require more services**, but that they may access services in a different way from other students. One example is mental health services. International students are subject to the same stressors as domestic students, and perhaps more, with the added pressures of cultural adjustment. But, due to differences in perceptions of mental health and stigma often associated with treatment, international students may not necessarily turn to the counseling center for help. Some mental health service providers try to reach international students by organizing social events, study skills workshops, or mentoring programs, which can feel less clinical but still offer support.

Use **social media to communicate with international students**—even when they are on campus. In their presentation *The Impact of Social Media on International Students’ Satisfaction with Life and Academic Performance*, researchers Neete Saha and Aryn C. Karpinski found almost 90 percent of the 415 international students surveyed said they were active on Facebook (most of them daily), and 85.4 percent said they used Skype as the main way to contact friends and family (Straumsheim 2014).

It is equally important not to assume that a service or program is irrelevant to international students because of their cultural background or immigration status. An example is career counseling. Although students in F and J visa status are eligible to work on campus, they and their potential employers are not always clear on the regulations governing employment. A 2014 study by David L. Di Maria and C.K. Kwai found that campus employment is one of three main factors that positively influence undergraduate international student persistence from the first to second year, along with number of credit hours attempted and grade point average. Working on campus can be a way to meet other students, experience U.S. culture, and strengthen a resume. The career office can play a critical role helping international students find and apply for jobs and educating potential employers.

Figuring out the best way to meet international students’ needs isn’t an easy process. There is no formula or checklist for institutions to follow, and adapting services is far more complex than knowing whether to “kiss, bow, or shake hands.” International students are different at each institution and can represent a wide mix of countries and backgrounds, as well as academic strengths and interests. **Even among international students at any single institution there is often tremendous diversity.** This holds true even for students from the same country. Take India, for example, where there are more than 20 recognized languages, multiple religions and ethnic groups, and distinct regional cultures. Getting to know individual students on a particular campus, and listening closely to their experiences, is the only sure way to assess their needs.

Looking for New Programming Ideas?

The Center for Global Education maintains an [online listing of innovative international student support programming](#) at a variety of U.S. colleges and universities.

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Advisors in international student and scholar services who see international students regularly can communicate their concerns to other units, informally or through formal channels, such as an international student task force or campus climate committee. Because the advisors are skilled at working with international populations (and may themselves have a multicultural background or international interests), they can often help colleagues in other units deepen their cross-cultural understanding and adapt services. Another potential resource is the office of diversity or multicultural education.

“[T]he perception that their institution honored diversity had the largest effect on sense of belongingness for both domestic and international students, and it had a comparatively larger effect for international students. Given the benefits of belongingness on academic success and cross-cultural interaction, the sizeable combined effect of these two factors cannot be [overstated].” (Glass and Westmont 2014)

ACE's At Home in the World Online Toolkit

Resources to support collaboration between international and diversity programs are available at ACE's **At Home in the World Online Toolkit**. The toolkit is a distillation of experiences, lessons, and research developed by colleges and universities that participated in the ACE At Home in the World initiative (2006-13), supported by the Henry Luce Foundation.

According to the toolkit, working at the intersection of internationalization and diversity/multicultural education provides creative opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators to:

- Help students understand multiculturalism and social justice in a global context
- Develop intercultural skills
- Broaden attitudes to appreciate the complexity of the world
- Examine values, attitudes, and responsibilities for local/global citizenship
- Disrupt silence and make visible hidden issues not explicit in networks of relationships
- See how power and privilege are shifting in the local/global context
- Experience conflicts and develop skills to work together

Models from the Field

Collaborations between international/global and diversity/multicultural education units

Alliant University (CA) (<http://www.alliant.edu/about-alliant/multiculturalism-diversity/i-merit/diversity-plan.php>)

North Carolina State (<http://ncsu.edu/sa/ahitw/index.html>)

North Dakota State (<http://www.ndsu.edu/vpedgo/>)

Wagner College (NY) (<http://wagner.edu/intercultural/>)

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. Any campus that enrolls international students typically has an international student organization or club, if not several. There may be one collective group or, at institutions with large numbers of international students, clubs may break down along national, linguistic, religious, or ethnic lines. These organizations can provide members with a **sense of belonging** and a strong support network. Some even organize services such as airport pick-ups and temporary housing for new students, and members often use social media to connect with newly admitted international students before they leave home. It's important for international students to know that they can create their own club, if they don't find one where they feel at home. Sometimes these groups are formed out of common interests, rather than cultural identity, like the cricket club at Green River Community College (WA).

“Increased engagement in co-curricular activities greatly affects international students’ sense of belonging and in turn enhances their desire for and degree of cross-cultural engagement.” (Glass and Wongtrirat 2014)

CULTURAL EVENTS. Thoughtfully conceived, well-planned, experiential, and inclusive cultural events can support institutional goals for student learning. For international members of the campus community, cultural events can help educate others and provide an opportunity for **full expression of their cultural identities**. When events are not inclusive, it can magnify the perception that cultural groups on campus prefer not to mingle with others.

“International students surveyed who participated in events celebrating both their own culture and other cultures, including American culture, were less likely to report feeling threatened.” (Glass, Buus, and Braskamp 2013)

When planning cultural events on campus, it is important to consider the following:

- Is the event **inclusive**? Would all members of the campus community feel welcome, regardless of nationality, religion, race, or other aspects of their identities?
- Does the event **facilitate interaction** between different groups?
- Does the event align with a **global or intercultural learning outcome** defined by the institution?

Cultural events organized for or by international students should be listed on the main calendar of student events. Otherwise, they are invisible to the rest of the community and attended only by other international students, which only hinders their integration into the mainstream of campus life. Likewise, international students should be encouraged to **participate in campus-wide events**, although they may not at first understand the purpose or feel a sense of “school spirit.”

ISS offices can help international students understand the value of campus traditions and find ways of participating. For example, Old Dominion University (ODU) organizes an international homecoming parade and tailgate party. Rachawan Wongtrirat, assistant director for International Initiatives in the Office of Intercultural Relations, says at first international students “don’t know what homecoming is,” but the office brings them together as *ODU students* during the homecoming festivities, not as Chinese or Indian or Korean students.

Integrating English Language and Pathway Program Students

A growing number of U.S. colleges and universities are increasing their international student enrollment by partnering with English language and pathway programs. These programs typically recruit international students into one- or two-year intensive English programs, or a combination of English and academic preparation courses, with guaranteed admission to the host institution upon successful completion. Enrollment in English language and pathway programs is on the rise. According to IIE’s 2014 Open Doors report, 4.9 percent of international students were enrolled in intensive English programs in the 2013-14 academic year, up 8.7 percent from the previous year. Pathway enrollment is not tracked in the same way, but the number of U.S. institutions partnering with pathway providers has increased sharply in recent years.

English language programs prepare international students to meet the academic program admissions requirement for English proficiency and to then study successfully in English. Some institutions run their own English language programs, but many contract with a for-profit provider such as ELS Educational Service, Inc. or Kaplan International English. **Pathway programs**, such as INTO University Partnerships, Navitas, or Study Group, operate similarly to English language programs, with the exception that pathway students enroll in special academic courses, for which they can earn credit toward their degrees, and receive additional academic support. Both English language and pathway program providers recruit international students on behalf of their partner institutions.

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Integrating English Language and Pathway Program Students *(continued)*

English language and pathway students can present **additional challenges to student services and campus integration**. Their ability to communicate effectively in English is typically weaker than other international students, and—because these students are usually new to the United States—they may struggle more with cultural adjustment. Unlike degree-seeking international students, those in English language programs usually take no courses with the general student population, and pathway students may only have one or two classes with students of other programs. What steps can institutions take to welcome English language and pathway students, adjust services to meet their needs, and facilitate interaction with other students? Administrators from several U.S. universities recommend the following strategies:

- **Provide important information in writing in students' primary languages.**

Karyn Mallett, associate director of English Language Programs at the INTO Mason Global Center at George Mason University, notes that websites, forms, and correspondence—particularly communication about important rules, deadlines, and fees—should be provided in writing and in familiar languages. Charley Pride, director of student activities and organizations at Western Kentucky University (WKU), which hosts a Navitas program, enlisted pathway students to create outreach materials in terms their peers would be likely to understand. Blanche Hughes, vice president for student affairs at Colorado State University (CSU), which formed a joint venture with INTO University Partnerships in 2012, says that “health is the biggest issue,” when it comes to language difference. CSU’s health center found it helpful to translate medical forms and line up a telephone interpreting service.

- **Treat English language and pathway students like “our students.”**

Kim Howard, director of international education at the University of Vermont (UVM), host to a Study Group pathway program, says the philosophy at UVM is that “pathway students on campus are to be treated and served like any matriculated student. Our message to them is, “You are an integral part of campus.” Howard’s words are echoed by WKU’s Charley Pride: “In the end,” he says, because most pathway students matriculate at the host institution, “they all become your students.”

- **Don’t duplicate services.**

CSU’s Hughes advises directing pathway students to university resources at the outset—including recreation, health services, dining, and housing—rather than providing separate services. Avoiding duplication, she advises, increases pathway students’ interactions with the rest of campus and strengthens their identity as university students. It may require making some adjustments, she cautions, like opening residence halls year-round, but the affiliations students form early on will stay with them after matriculation. Hughes adds, “We know how to take care of our students better than anyone else.”

- **Structure interaction with degree-seeking students.**

Because English language and pathway students rarely take courses alongside students outside of their program, increasing their interaction may require facilitation by staff and faculty. “Getting our international and domestic students together is the job of everyone on campus,” says UVM’s Kim Howard. “The main barrier between international and domestic students is not language,” she notes, but “fear of taking risks or making mistakes” when encountering another culture. Knowledgeable staff and faculty can help students overcome that fear and negotiate difference. Programs that promote interaction include mixed residence halls, peer mentoring, English conversation partners, and cultural events. Howard notes that physical spaces where students study and live can encourage or inhibit interaction. She says UVM determined it was important for pathway students to attend class “all over campus, not at the edge.”

- **Prepare students, faculty, and staff.**

Growing enrollment in these programs is evidence of their recruiting success, and some host campuses have seen dramatic jumps in their international student populations. Administrators warn that a sudden, large influx can create confusion or even resentment: Is she an English language student or a university student? Are all international students in a pathway? Why do they get a new building and we don’t? Educating the campus community about these programs, why the institution wants to attract international students, and the potential benefit to all students is worthwhile, according to CSU’s Hughes. Faculty and staff may need additional training or support to work with English language and pathway students effectively. George Mason’s Karyn Mallett recommends, for example, that mental health counselors and other direct student service-providers should have the skills needed to work with students at lower levels of language proficiency.

INTERNATIONALIZING THE CO-CURRICULUM Part One: Integrating International Students

by Heather H. Ward
Senior Program Specialist

III. FACILITATING INTERACTION BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER STUDENTS

“[A] campus cannot simply recruit a critical mass of international students; it must also intentionally arrange its resources so that international and American students benefit in desired ways from one another’s presence.” (Zhao, Kuh, and Carini 2005)

As noted in a **June 14, 2012 article by Scott Jaschik in *Inside Higher Ed***, a 2012 study by Elisabeth Gareis at Baruch College (NY) found that “nearly 40 percent of international students report having no close American friends and say that they wish they had more meaningful interaction with those born in the United States.” Gareis says relationships with host country nationals is a key factor in international student’s academic success. Increased interaction can contribute to all students’ cultural competency, although it may create some discomfort and prompt them to question long-held beliefs and values. Ultimately, that questioning can lead to **cognitive growth and enhance critical thinking**. Because of the discomfort involved, both international and domestic students may avoid interaction with students outside their own cultural group. A **2013 study by Jiali Luo and David Jamieson-Drake** found that “22–25 percent of U.S. students indicate having none or little international interaction.”

It is widely acknowledged that enrolling groups of diverse students does not ensure their interaction, particularly interaction that is meaningful and educational, and that leads to greater mutual understanding. Higher education institutions can provide the structure and support—both in and out of the classroom—to **help students make meaning from their encounters with cultural “others.”** Evidence suggests that interaction between domestic and international students can benefit both groups, but it may not occur (or have positive results) without facilitation by skilled faculty or staff.

“U.S. students are far less likely to intentionally involve people from other cultural backgrounds in their lives. This confirms perceptions among many international educators, as well as empirical research that highlights a lack of interest in cross-cultural engagement among U.S. students. This reinforces our belief that it must be the responsibility, not only of individual students, but also of the institutions serving them, to create environments that deliver on the promises made in term of the benefits of campus diversity and internationalization.” (Glass, Buus, and Braskamp 2013)

Integrating International Students at Purdue University

Administrators at Purdue University, with the second-highest international student enrollment among U.S. institutions (9,000, of which 4,300 are from China), are concerned by students’ **tendency to self-segregate**, particularly given the importance of cross-cultural interaction to their professional and personal development. Joe Potts, associate dean for international programs and director of the international students and scholars program, says he and colleagues are looking to address a question familiar on many campuses: “How do we stimulate students to take the risk of getting involved with people from different cultural backgrounds in a way that may result in friendship?”

To start, David Ayers, Purdue’s associate dean for international programs, looked at friendship patterns among students in the four colleges with highest international enrollment. He found only 5 percent of Chinese students, 15 percent of Korean students, and 13 percent of Indian students reported having a friendship with a student from the United States. Nevertheless, 80 percent or more said they were satisfied with how they related to other students.

(continued on following page)

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Integrating International Students at Purdue University *(continued)*

Potts says Purdue is determined not to let students miss out on the chance to learn from each other and cites research showing that **friendship across cultures** “will move the needle most on intercultural sensitivity.” As a result, Purdue has initiated a variety of orientation, student leadership, and volunteer programs that bring international and domestic students together (see program descriptions and links in other sections of this report).

PHYSICAL SPACE ON CAMPUS. The design and use of physical spaces can be as effective as cultural programming in bringing international and domestic students together. The built environment is a tangible, outward sign of an institution’s priorities. A dedicated space for international students, or for the interaction of students from different backgrounds, signals to international students, scholars, staff, faculty, and visitors that they are welcome. The location of that space—in the heart of campus or at the periphery—can also be telling.

Many campuses have a dedicated international center, where students can congregate informally. Mesa Community College (AZ), for example, created an international student lounge. Annique Nestmann, director of international education, says that it may seem small, but the results have been great. “The lounge broadcasts satellite television programs in five languages,” she says, “which facilitates interaction between students of different backgrounds. They give each other mutual support and can help each other answer questions.”

“International” vs. “Domestic”

The phenomenon of globalization increases connectivity between—and mobility of—people, ideas, trade, and knowledge. In this dynamic landscape, it can be difficult to fit students into neat categories. “International students” are typically defined as those present in the U.S. on non-immigrant student visas (usually F or J), and “domestic students” are often categorized as U.S. citizens, based on their state residency or federal aid eligibility. Yet, these are inadequate categories when it comes to cross-cultural interaction. Some “domestic” students may be relative newcomers to the United States, even if they are citizens or permanent residents; they may be present legally in another visa category, or they may be undocumented. “International” students may be citizens because they were born in the United States, but returned to their parents’ homes as babies. In addition, many students have multiple citizenships and operate fluently in two or more cultures and languages. When planning programs to bring “international” and “domestic” students together, it’s important to recognize the high degree of diversity—and the range of global experience—that students may represent.

PEER PROGRAMS. Perhaps the most direct way to facilitate interaction between students is simply to assign them into pairs, through one-on-one peer, ambassador, or “buddy” programs. These programs are a structured way to promote friendship, share helpful information, and offer a reliable first point of contact for new international students. Some peer programs involve staff and faculty, in addition to returning students.

Some important **considerations for an international student peer program are:**

- How does the institution recruit and screen those who serve as peers? Are returning international and domestic students both eligible to serve as peers? Staff and faculty?
- Are peers compensated? Are other student leadership positions on campus compensated? If yes, how is that perceived by international students?
- What training is offered to peers? Do they have international experience, and are they equipped to navigate cultural differences? Are they familiar with campus resources?
- What benefits do peers gain from participating in the program? Does the program help them meet goals for cross-cultural learning? How is that learning recognized by the institution?

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- What are the expectations and needs of each group (peers and new students), and how can they be met? Are the expectations from both sides realistic?

Models from the Field

International student peer programs

Old Dominion University: Global Monarch Club (<http://www.odu.edu/life/gettinginvolved/mentoring>)

Oklahoma University: OU Cousins Program: (<http://www.ou.edu/oucousins.html>)

University of Utah: Ambassador Program (<http://internationalcenter.utah.edu/students/leadership-opportunities/ambassadors.php>)

University of Wisconsin–Madison: BRIDGE Program (<http://www.iss.wisc.edu/bridge>)

FRIENDSHIP AND HOMESTAY PROGRAMS. Involving local residents in programs to support international students can augment the university’s services (usually at low or no cost) and **enhance students’ experience of the United States.** It can also increase global understanding in the local community, particularly in rural areas where fewer immigrant groups are likely to settle. Ross Jennings, executive director of international programs at Green River Community College (WA), notes that international students’ relationship to the local host is often the most important one they form. For Green River’s international students, many of whom reside with local families, it means they have a place to stay when they first arrive.

Local friendship and homestay programs are organized with varying levels of activity and structure. The college or university may organize events on campus (e.g., ice cream socials, game nights, and Thanksgiving dinners), or the host and student may be matched and then arrange their own activities together. Some, but not all, involve an overnight homestay, and some may provide housing for the student throughout their course of study.

If the institution makes the match between student and host, then it bears some legal responsibility for both parties’ safety, health, and overall experience. Institutions with community friendship programs typically require a criminal background check for volunteers and a thorough questionnaire about preferences related to diet, gender, children, alcohol, pets, smoking, hobbies, and other subjects that can help them make a good match. Before creating a host program, it is important to check with legal counsel.

Models from the Field

Local friendship or homestay programs

Langara College (Canada): Langara Homestay Program (<http://www.langara.bc.ca/international-education/homestay/hosts.html>)

University of Southern Illinois: International Hospitality Program (<http://www.siu.edu/internationalstudents/int-hospitality-program.shtml>)

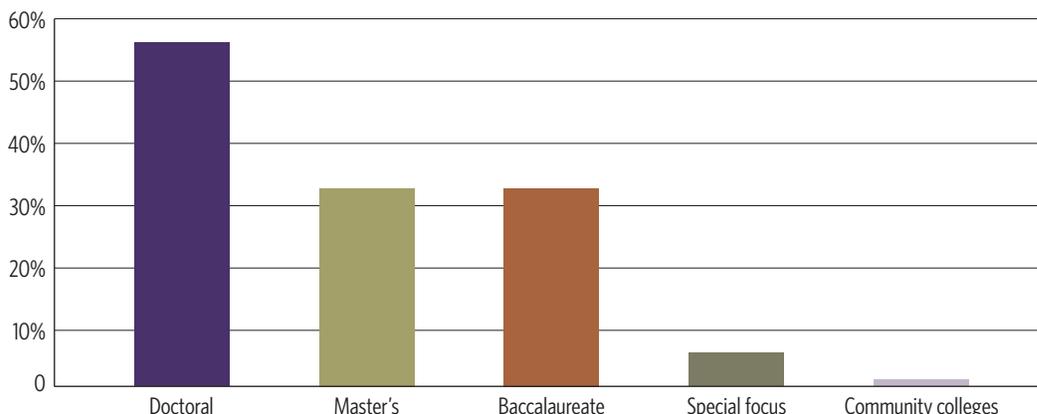
University of Montana: Missoula International Friendship Program (<http://www.mifp.org/>)

Purdue University: International Friendship Program (<https://www.iss.purdue.edu/Programs/IFP/>)

International students may have spouses, domestic partners, children, or other dependents. Approximately 10 percent of international students in the United States are married, and 85 percent of these students’ spouses reside in the United States, according to Rajika Bhandari and Patricia Chow, authors of IIE’s 2007 report, *Open Doors: Report on International Education Exchange*. The University of Florida has **pre-arrival, orientation, cultural, and support programming** especially for spouses of international students.

INTERNATIONAL LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITIES. Various models of internationally focused residence hall programs bring students of different backgrounds together as roommates, housemates, or hall-mates. At one time, a university’s “international house” was likely to be a dedicated residence for international students only. Today, the models focus on integrating students from different national and cultural backgrounds, including the host country.

Residence Hall Programs to Facilitate Integration between U.S. and International Students



Source: American Council on Education, Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2012 Edition

Some international living-learning communities require residents to **enroll together in a credit-bearing course**, where they share readings, assignments, and discussion. The structure of a course can provide the conceptual foundation and cultural skills to help them get the most from, and contribute to, the learning environment. While some learning communities center on a shared interest in international relations or cultures, others may focus on language or a particular global issue. Residents may be required to participate in, or organize, programs in the learning community, such as films, holiday celebrations, dinners, or voluntary service.

A spacious, accessible, well-equipped **kitchen** can contribute to international students' satisfaction in the living-learning community, because it allows them to cook familiar foods and can promote social interaction (“Want a bite?”). A few have experimented with **community gardens**, where residents plant and harvest favorite ingredients from home.

Models from the Field

International living-learning communities

Georgia Tech: I-House (<http://oie.gatech.edu/content/i-house-application>)

Indiana University: Global Village (<http://college.indiana.edu/global/home/>)

Northern Arizona University: International House (<http://nau.edu/cie/international-house/>)

University of Illinois: Global Crossroads (<http://www.housing.illinois.edu/Current/Living-Learning/Global%20Crossroads.aspx>)

Virginia Commonwealth University: The Globe (<http://global.vcu.edu/vcuglobe/>)

LANGUAGE EXCHANGE /CONVERSATION PARTNERS. One way institutions can facilitate interaction between international and domestic students is to match them by their **shared interest in learning a language**. While not every student will find a conversation partner to help with his or her target language, an advantage of this arrangement is that it offers **mutual benefit to participants**: instead of one student “helping” or “mentoring” the other, both students simultaneously teach and learn from one another.

Creating a language exchange seems relatively simple and may only require a clipboard and pen, but maintaining the exchange may present administrative challenges. Some points to consider:

- Even if participants arrange their own exchange with other language learners, keeping the list of interested participants up to date and publicizing the exchange will take time and resources.
- Publicity will require involvement of the international student and scholar services office, intensive English program, world languages department, and possibly other offices.
- Finding a good match may take time and multiple attempts. Participants are likely to have different levels of language ability. Plus, without a curriculum or instructor, the burden of conversation is on the participants and may depend on their “chemistry.”
- It may be easier to find a suitable language exchange partner just about anywhere in the world through the Internet, so the benefits of in-person interaction should be clear.

Models from the Field

Language exchange programs:

Central Wyoming College (<https://www.cwc.edu/what/outreachcenters/jackson/jacksones/language-exchange-program>)

East Carolina University (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/intlaffairs/eculanguageexchange.cfm>)

Georgetown University (DC) (<http://internationalservices.georgetown.edu/get-involved/lep>)

University of Washington (<http://www.ielp.uw.edu/student-life/activities/language-exchange/>)

University of Pennsylvania (https://www.sas.upenn.edu/elp/conversation_partners)

EXCURSIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENTS. International student and scholar services offices typically organize excursions off-campus, which can be a welcome chance to leave the library, learn about U.S. society, and mingle with other students. Often, domestic or local students are invited to come along, and can act as guides and offer explanation. Through the eyes of international students, local students may come to see their surroundings in a different light. Some excursions may be for an hour or two to a nearby site of interest; others may explore a region of the United States or special topic for a week or more.

Models from the Field

Excursion programs for international and domestic students

Baylor University (TX) (<http://www.baylor.edu/cie/index.php?id=85655>)

Green River Community College: Explore America (<http://www.greenriver.edu/international/activities/index.shtm>)

Mesa Community College (<http://www.mesacc.edu/international-education>)

University of Arkansas at Little Rock (<http://ualr.edu/international/>)

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS. Educators at U.S. colleges and universities often encourage students to gain leadership experience through student government, clubs, sports teams, and other extracurricular activities, with the understanding that the experience will help them become better citizens and professionals. Outside the United States, however, it may be unusual for institutions to delegate leadership responsibility, much less some aspects of institutional governance, to students. Often international students are not aware of leadership positions, or the fact that they are eligible to hold them. Leigh Poole, former director of international student life at the University of Georgia, now director of the International Center at Winthrop University (SC), notes, “International students may find it particularly challenging to adapt to leadership roles within U.S. higher education institutions

due to language and cultural barriers and U.S. leadership styles” (Andrade and Evans 2009). But in fact, leadership can both contribute to international students’ **sense of belonging** on campus and help institutions understand and respond to their concerns.

“Leadership programs that stress collaboration, and engaging in events and activities sponsored by their own culture, enhance international students’ sense of community.”
(Glass, Buss, and Braskamp 2013)

A **global leadership conference** can bring together international and domestic students to explore different cultural conceptions of leadership, strengthen leadership skills, and explore shared interests in global issues.

Models from the Field

International student leadership conferences

James Madison University: International Student Leadership Conference (<http://www.jmu.edu/international/islc/>)

University of Georgia: Global Leadership Institute (<http://calendar.uga.edu/index.php/detail/global-leadership-institute-seminar-3>)

Mesa Community College: Global Leadership Retreat (<http://www.mesacc.edu/international-education/current-f-1-students/student-clubs-activities>)

International student advisory boards (or international student councils) provide a leadership opportunity to students and potentially strengthen programs offered by the ISS office (such as orientation or special events). Members are also a great source of information about which university services work well and not so well for international students. There are several models, which vary according to the composition of members (international, domestic, graduate, undergraduate, etc.), responsibilities, training, and the application and selection process. Some have direct links to student government, such as a designated student government chair position for an international student; some boards have decision-making authority or programming responsibilities; and others may be purely advisory. While larger campuses typically have individual associations for various national groups, the advisory board can offer a unified voice on behalf of international students.

Models from the Field

International student advisory boards

College of William & Mary (VA) (<http://www.wm.edu/offices/reescenter/ispp/programs/isab/>)

Old Dominion University (<http://www.odu.edu/life/gettinginvolved/leadership/isab>)

University of Southern Illinois Edwardsville (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Student-Council/15115783361>)

International student leaders are recognized with annual awards at both **Michigan State University** and **Purdue University**.

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS. As community engagement and service learning opportunities have expanded in recent years at U.S. colleges and universities, several institutions have observed the considerable benefits they afford international students. Through volunteering, international students have a chance to contribute to their campus and local communities (which can be a welcome change from being a newcomer and depending on others’ assistance). Plus, the interaction with residents can contribute to global understanding in the local community.

When community service away from campus is possible, international students experience aspects of U.S. life they might otherwise miss—like visiting a home with children or a nursing home for the elderly. For those who have not spent significant time in the United States previously, their impressions may be based on scenes of American life portrayed on television and in movies; spending time at a community agency can provide a more realistic picture.

Some service opportunities are primarily physical, like weeding a community garden, and may be well suited for English language learners. Others take advantage of international students' strengths, such as multilingualism. International students at New York's Wagner College, for example, volunteer to translate for an immigrant service agency in Staten Island. Perhaps the most important benefit of international students engaging in community service is the chance to work alongside others and make **personal connections with Americans** based on their progress toward a shared goal.

Models from the Field

Community service opportunities especially for international students

Green River Community College (<http://www.greenriver.edu/international/activities/index.shtml>)

Wagner College (<http://wagner.edu/cle/>)

North Carolina State University (www.ncsu.edu/oiss/programs/isserv.htm)

Purdue University (<http://www.iss.purdue.edu/Events/BoilerOut.cfm>)

Integrating International Students at Community Colleges

It's no secret that engaging community college students outside of class can be challenging, particularly since few have residence halls on campus. Community college students often work or have family responsibilities, contributing to a "parking lot to class to parking lot" dynamic. One might assume it's especially challenging for community colleges to create a welcoming environment for international students. And according to ACE's Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2012 Edition, associate-level institutions are the least likely to offer "opportunities for international and domestic student interaction—such as buddy programs or language partner programs."

Nevertheless, some community colleges are finding **innovative ways to use their community ties and mission** to support international students. "For certain international students," says Maria Hesse, vice provost for academic partnerships at Arizona State University and president emeritus of Chandler-Gilbert Community College (AZ), "the community college can be a great way to start out in U.S. higher education. It can be intimate, supportive, and really help them to understand American life."

Community colleges can serve as a **pathway for international students into four-year degree programs**. In two or three years, international students are able to improve their language skills, strengthen their academic preparation, adjust to U.S. classroom expectations, and adapt to U.S. culture before landing at a large four-year institution. Under the guidance of academic advisors, international community college students learn that extracurricular activities are part of the U.S. college admissions process, which can motivate them to participate in activities such as student government or community service. Community colleges with strong international student enrollment are often sought out by four-year institutions desiring articulation agreements.

Because of community colleges' mission to serve local residents, they often have close ties with local civic organizations, service agencies, houses of worship, and immigrant groups, which offer international students the chance to **volunteer or participate in cultural events with community members**. The presence of international students, particularly in rural areas, Hesse observes, "can provide other students and local community members with a global frame of reference" they might not have otherwise.

Because most community colleges are smaller than four-year public institutions, staff and faculty often know students personally. For international students, a **personal connection** can be critical to their social and academic success.

Green River Community College near Seattle has been building its program to support international students for over 20 years and now enrolls more than 1,700, who benefit from a homestay program (serving 500–600 international students annually), on-campus housing for 340 students (both domestic and international), volunteer and leadership opportunities, and international-friendly clubs.

INTERNATIONALIZING THE CO-CURRICULUM

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by Heather H. Ward
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IV. ASSESSING THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

At the end of the day, each college or university is unique, with its own culture, climate, student composition, local resources, and array of programs and services. The degree to which international students feel welcome and included depends on many factors. Institutions seeking to integrate international students are well-served by systematic, periodic assessment of the international student experience. A comprehensive picture can best form when institutions employ multiple assessment approaches (e.g., focus groups, one-on-one interviews, surveys, retention and completion records, and feedback from staff and faculty). The results can strengthen administrators' case for new or improved programs and services; they can also show changes over time or comparison to other colleges and universities. Below are examples of how several U.S. institutions have approached assessment.

- Ohio State University's Office of International Affairs and Office of Student Life collaborated to conduct a three-pronged assessment of international students' experience: The first consisted of focus groups and individual interviews with international students, university faculty, and staff. The second was an online survey completed by international students that examined areas related to academic preparedness, use of programs and services, and perception of campus climate. The third part involved data from the university's previous administration of the **International Student Barometer** (see below), an instrument used by numerous colleges and universities worldwide, developed by the International Graduate Insight Group, or **i-graduate** (Butto, Ako-Adounvo, Edwards, and Wang 2014).
- Researchers at **Old Dominion University** conducted focus groups and interviews to collect first-person narratives of 40 international students across multiple universities, which they compared with some 1,900 international students' responses to the **Global Perspectives Inventory**. The researchers conclude the following factors most affect international students' academic success and social adjustment: the campus commitment to international students; cultural diversity in the classroom; international student involvement in campus leadership; friends, peers, and social networks; family relationships; technology and social media; and campus contexts that foster a sense of belonging (Glass and Wongtrirat 2014).
- Grinnell College (IA) measures the experience of international students compared with their domestic peers through annual surveys of all first-year students. The survey asks about their experience pre-arrival, during orientation, and through the period of transition to campus. Over time, administrators can compare the experiences of new students. In addition to the survey, Grinnell collects information from the Office of International Student Affairs, student focus groups, host families, and staff (Butto, Ako-Adounvo, Edwards, and Wang 2014).
- Scholars at the University of Missouri have developed the **International Friendly Campus Scale** (IFCS), mentioned earlier in this report (Campus Climate and International Students), to measure environmental factors associated with international student adjustment. This approach, the authors believe, shifts the responsibility for factors that affect the climate for international students to university administrators, rather than expecting students to be solely responsible for their adjustment to a new culture. Results from the scale so far indicate that discrimination has a negative impact on international students' adjustment, and that positive indicators are: sense of belongingness, social

connection, academic support, and international student and scholar services. The International Friendly Campus Scale is available at: www.ISPlaza.org (Butto, Ako-Adounvo, Edwards, and Wang 2014).

Measuring International Student Satisfaction

An August 2014 report, *Explaining International Student Satisfaction*, by Richard Garrett, analyzes the 2013 responses of 60,000 international students at some 50 comprehensive universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia to the **International Student Barometer**, an online instrument developed by **i-graduate**.

Overall, the study finds that most international students are “satisfied” with their experiences, though Garrett acknowledges the high degree of subjectivity in how students define satisfaction. Variations in student satisfaction depend mainly on country of origin and level of parent education. The most significant barrier to international student integration, Garrett found, is the concentration of international students from a single country.

Key findings of the report were summarized by Elizabeth Redden in the August 20, 2014 edition of *Inside Higher Ed*.

ONGOING CHALLENGES. While patterns and numbers of international students enrolled at U.S. institutions will vary over time, several administrators interviewed for this report identified some common and enduring challenges to greater integration of international students on their campuses, even as they worked hard to create a welcoming environment and provide high quality programs and services for international students:

- **A preponderance of students from one country**

In a survey of Chinese students at Purdue University (noted earlier in this report), some 95 percent reported not having a single American friend, according to Charles Calahan of Purdue University’s Center for Instructional Excellence. At Michigan State University, an overwhelming three-fourths of international students are from China. The difficulty of integrating a large group is often attributed to Chinese students, but can occur any time students from one country significantly outnumber others. In addition to challenges related to social integration, enrolling a large group from one country also presents financial risk to the institution, a phenomenon Rahul Choudaha, director of research and strategic development at World Education Services, identifies as “unsustainable overdependence” (American Council on Education 2014).

- **Rapid growth**

A sudden increase in international student enrollment can seem like a windfall in terms of revenue, but it can overwhelm student services providers, who may not have the resources or training to accommodate differences related to language, culture, or changes in the demand for student services. An abrupt change also presents issues related to campus climate, affecting many different campus constituencies. The result may not only hinder integration, but may provoke hostility or discrimination between different cultural groups.

- **Social media**

International students—like other students today—keep in close touch with friends and family through social media. While regular contact with home helps maintain important emotional connections, it can prevent them from building new relationships and accessing campus resources in the host country.

Stay tuned for more on internationalizing the co-curriculum in the next two installments of Internationalization in Action!

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**INTERNATIONALIZING
THE CO-CURRICULUM**
**Part One: Integrating
International
Students**

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