The Integration Challenge: Friendships Between International and Domestic Students in Canada

NAFSA: Association of International Educators
Boston, Massachusetts
May 2015
Outline:

• The extent to which friendships are formed between international students and Canadian students

• Barriers that impede the formation of friendships among students

• Case studies: How three Canadian institutions have sought to address the issue of lack of friendships
Presenters:

- Janine Knight-Grofe, Research Manager, Canadian Bureau for International Education
- Caroline Rueckert, Associate Director, Student Success and Retention, Queensland University of Technology, Australia
- Pauline L’Écuyer, Director of International Student Services, McGill University, Canada
- Virginia Macchiavello, Director of International Development, Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology, Canada
Background - Canada:

In 2013, there were 293,500 international students in Canada, up 50% in the last five years.
Benefits International Students bring:

- Contribute billions of dollars to the economy
- Diverse set of experiences to the campus and community
- Create a culture of global understanding
Are International Students integrating?

2014 survey of 3,000 post-secondary international students at 25 universities and colleges indicate:

• 56% of respondents have no Canadian students as friends

• One third (36.6%) find it difficult to get to know Canadian students

• One in every two students say it is difficult to meet Canadians outside of the university/college context

• Students from the US were most likely to have Canadian friends (84%), followed by students from Europe (53%)

• Almost all interviewees felt close with their fellow international students

• We are missing out on one of the strategic advantages of internationalization
Percentage of international students with Canadian friends: by region

- USA: 84%
- Europe: 53%
- Latin America and Caribbean: 50%
- Africa: 49%
- South Asia: 44%
- East Asia: 31%
- Middle East and Northern Africa: 28%
Barriers to friendship: internal, institutional and domestic students

Internal:

• One-third (30%) prefer to “mix with (their) own culture”

• Too shy to participate in activities organized by institution

• Language or accent contributed to lack of confidence and challenge of navigating Canadian cultural nuances

Institutional:

• Diversity activities on-campus promoted to and attended by international students

• Imbalance of international students to domestic students
Barriers to friendship: internal, institutional and domestic students

Domestic Students:

• Negative social experiences with Canadian students
• Relationships with Canadians superficial
• Canadian students avoid doing group work with international students because of lower level of English/French
What about in other countries?

- **United States**: 40% of international students indicate they have no close American friends and would like to have more meaningful interaction with Americans.

- **Australia**: 87% of international students at the school level, 80% of post-secondary international students and 91% of international students studying English language courses would like to have more Australian friends.

- **United Kingdom**: Nearly 60% of international students said that their friends were other international students only, including students from their home country; 32% said they have a mix of UK and international friends; and only 7% of international students said that the majority of their friends were British.
CBIE’s Code of Ethical Practice

“Promote the interests of international students in the institutional community, and provide meaningful opportunities for interaction that promotes intercultural and mutual understanding between international students and other members of the institutional community and, to the extent possible, the surrounding community.”
EAIE International Student Mobility Charter

“When admitted to an education institution, international students are automatically also admitted to a country, a new community and its different culture. International students’ integration and interaction with the academic as well as the wider community needs to be actively facilitated to maximize the value for all stakeholders.”
What is Jump Start?

Integrated first-year transition program designed to set students up for success in all aspects of their lives at UBC, by helping them foster:

- A sense of connectedness
- A sense of capability
- A sense of resourcefulness
- A sense of purpose

Lizzo, 2006
Who do we expect to participate in Jump Start?

**International students**
- Coming to UBC from abroad or from within Canada

**Aboriginal students**
- Recently graduated from high school

**Canadian students**
- Educated overseas
Connectedness

Peer-to-peer relationships
- Academic coaches, residence advisors

Student-to-staff relationships
- Academic advisors, International Student Advisors, First Nations House of Learning

Student-to-Faculty relationships
- Faculty Fellows

Student-to-institution relationship
- Institution identity building
Resourcefulness

Helping students navigate:

- The physical environment (campus, city, surrounding area)
- The cultural environment
- Key campus and Faculty-specific resources
- Key relationships
Capability

Create an environment where students can:

- Be active participants
- Be self-directed learners
- Know what’s expected of them
Purpose

Create a space where students can:

- Develop their own identity in their chosen discipline
- Be introduced the opportunities available to them
- Be empowered to make informed choices
- Have permission to try, fail and try again
How we involve Faculty

**Faculty Fellows: Scholars welcoming new scholars to the University**

- Scholarship and academic expectations
- Academic identity within the UBC and Canadian context
- Inspiration and mentorship
Is it working?

Percentage of students who registered in 2013 by participation in Jumpstart 2012: Overall and by Country of Citizenship

Overall | China | USA | Other
---|---|---|---
Participated in Jumpstart | 86% | 89% | 86%
Did not participate in Jumpstart | 89% | 96% | 84%

Overall China USA Other

Participated in Jumpstart Did not participate in Jumpstart
“I made friends and got to know UBC through Jump Start and now I feel more confident going into my classes”

“I love the idea of starting UBC knowing professors and other students in my classes”

“Jump Start brings us closer together so we know we're not alone in our university experience”

“Without Jump Start, I would have been lost in every way”
JUMP START THE SMART START TO LIFE AT UBC
A Montreal perspective

Pauline L’Ecuyer,
Director, International Student Services
McGill university
Montréal – “Ville du Savoir”

- In 2015, QS World University Rankings ranked Montreal the 8th-best place in the world to be a university student.
- Highest concentration of post-secondary students of all major cities in North America
- Total student population: approx. 250,000
- Total international student population: 27,000
A collaborative approach

BCI – Bureau de la coopération interuniversitaire

Montreal International

Regional Conference of Elected Montreal

The Quebec Ministry of Immigration Diversity and Inclusion – MIDI

La Vitrine Culturelle
Benefits

- Building bridges between French and English communities
- Cost-effective projects
- More brains = more creativity
- Better access and support for Government support
Acceuil PLUS

- **Target audience:** New international students landing in Montreal
- **Budget:** $75K
- **Funding:**
  - Quebec Colleges and Universities
  - CRÉ
  - Private sponsor: Caisses Desjardins
- **Partners:**
  - Canada Border Services Agency
  - MIDI
  - Aéroports de Montréal
- **Coordination:** BCI
Accueil Plus

- On-line registration
- Streamlined services with Canada Border Services
- MIDI provides useful information for their stay in Quebec.
- Initial contact with a local or international student in Montreal
- 2013 CBIE Panorama Award for Outstanding International Education Program
Montréal welcomes the world

The Museum Pass

La Fête des Étudiants Étrangers

Study in Montréal
Vitrine Culturelle project

- $50 cultural credit
- Networking activities
- Mentorship program
- Scholarship program for international students/artists
Thank you!

“We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now.”

Martin Luther King Jr.
International Student Engagement

Virginia Macchiavello, Executive Director
Centennial College
Toronto, Canada
Top 8 Countries Host 64% of Global Mobile Students
Global Workforce Development

- Shortage of 40 million workers with post secondary education.

- Shortage of 45 million workers with secondary education in developing economies.

- An oversupply (95 million workers without college training in advanced economies or without even secondary education in developing countries).

- Federal & Provincial / State Governments have interest in increasing international student numbers. PM Harper announced Canada’s International Education Strategy January 15, 2014
Education facts 2012

- Canada hosted 265,377 long-term international students.

- Estimated that these students contributed approx. $8.4 billion to local economies across the country for tuition, accommodation, transportation and other expenditures.

- 86,000 Canadian jobs were sustained in every region of the country thanks to international students.
Centennial, Where The World Meets!

134 Countries
Top 10 Sending Countries For Centennial

- India 2923
- China 2036
- Korea 359
- Venezuela 297
- Nigeria 230
- Jamaica 148
- Brazil 144
- Vietnam 106
- Ukraine 103
- Russia 61
Enrolment Growth - International

International Post Secondary Enrolment

RetentionPolicy (Market Analysis Model, Diversity, Customer Service Model)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Down 8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>Up 5%</td>
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<td>Other Regions, 102 countries</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Up 3%</td>
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* Goal is $\frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{3}$
International Student Barometer - Measuring Student Satisfaction

Arrival Average
“Digital / Social Media” for International Student Engagement

Strategic Initiatives
"Digital / Social Media" for International Student Engagement

Key Takeaways

Redefine “experts” to include student voices

Integrate Digital and Traditional Strategies

Don’t save your ISS team for Orientation!

Build Communities and Relationships

Help students take the next step
A Running Start towards “Resourcefulness”
Live Chat and our Strategic Plan

1) Student Engagement
2) International Student Diversification
3) Student Advising
4) Use of IT to Increase Productivity/Reduce costs

Not just the message – but who delivers it!

• Current Students & Grads
• Student Services Representatives
• Admissions Team Members

Live Chat Tools

• Virtual College Fairs
• Google Hangouts On Air
• Skype, Wechat, Whatsapp, Twitter
“Capability”
Active Ambassadors Help build Personal Relationships

Kimberly Fraser
Hi everyone! I am a Centennial College student that was born and raised in Toronto! I am looking to make some friends that are from Japan because I am studying Japanese. So, if you would like to practice your English or make a new friend please contact me.

Tomoko Torii
Hi Kimberly Fraser I contacted with my Japanese friend who is studying at progress campus and she would like to meet you too! I am going to see her tomorrow after work. I know you will not be on campus tomorrow, so I will arrange next meeting;)

Gagan Aulakh
Mizuho Okuda contact!!
Like · June 26 at 7:20pm

Kimberly Fraser
Thank you! I am Canadian looking to make friends from Japan because I am learning Japanese. Thank you for your suggestion.
Like · June 26 at 7:22pm

Mizuho Okuda
こんにちは。 私、日本人です。よかったら、連絡取りましょう☆
Like · June 29 at 9:58am
**Incoming International Students**

Comprehensive transition programming is the key to success for our international students:

### Pre- Arrival
- Email Newsletter
- Integration into Social Media Communities/Groups
- Live Chats
- **NEW**: Pre-Arrival App & Portal

### Arrival
- International Student Welcome Program with the City of Toronto
- Centennial Welcomes Orientation
- International Student Ambassador Program

### Transition Programs
- **NEW**: International Student Connect Program
- 1-Month Check-in Calling Campaign
- International Education Week
Study, Work & Live in Canada

Integrating international student into the Centennial community upon arrival ensures their personal, academic and professional success; programs include:

- International Student Ambassador Program
- Student Leadership
- Signature Learning Experience
- Signature Industry Experience
- Post-Grad Work Experience
Internationally-Minded Students

• Centennial helps Students develop skills that are in demand by employers in Canada and around the world.

• Mobility programs are an important piece of this strategy.
Internationally-Minded Students

- Integrity, problem solving, vision, initiative, enterprise
- Foreign languages, communicating across cultures, mediation
- Cultural understanding, adapting to new environments, respect for values
- Relationship building, teamwork, flexibility
- Leadership, initiative, vision, enterprise
- Interpersonal, relationship building, teamwork, flexibility
- Intercultural, understanding, adapting, respect
- Communication, languages, cultures, mediation
Internationally-Minded Students

Centennial Offers a wide range of mobility opportunities that helps students internationalize their college experience; initiatives include:

- Internationally Minded Students
- Language & Culture
- GCELEs
- Internships
- Study Abroad

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

INTERNSHIPS

STUDY ABROAD
#experiencecentennial

David Clarke: #experiencecentennial!

Libraries

mr_dilip:

So thankful for all the volunteers who made the Centennial College National Engineering Month Event a huge success! We won first prize from OACETT!

#centennialcollege #experiencecentennial #NEM2015 #oacett #win

Christine Bustamante:

United Nations at Centennial College #toronto #international #students #ukraine #nigeria #india #philippines #canada #experiencecentennial

y.kabanov:

Celebrating Divali with my Canadian and International Friends at Centennial Rez #experiencecentennial

Genevieve Robinson:

Friends from across the world! #experiencecentennial #centennialcollege @CentennialIE #experiencecentennial

“Academic Culture”

International Education Experiences are Domestic & International
Thank you - Questions?

For more information:

www.cbie-bcei.ca

www.qut.edu.au

www.mcgill.ca

www.centennialcollege.ca