

The authors illustrate the contributions of international students to the creation of a diverse and multicultural campus and argue that these students are one of our most important resources for internationalizing our campuses and our profession.

Contributions of International Students and Programs to Campus Diversity

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When colleges and universities in the United States had few international students, it is unlikely that having them was considered vital by many presidents of institution. Attitudes are changing, with 457,984 international students enrolled for U.S. degrees in 1996-97, a 1,200 percent increase since 1954 (Davis, 1997). In the February 1997 American Council on Education meeting, Harvard president Neil Rudenstine told his presidential colleagues: "We really have to sustain our commitment to international students and faculty exchange programs. We need those international students, and we need our students to be out there [studying abroad]. There is simply no substitute for direct contact with talented people from other countries and cultures. We benefit from international students; they drive research and teaching in new directions that are very fruitful" (Rudenstine, 1997).

The Role of Student Affairs

Rudenstine's comments relate to important themes for U.S. higher education- to recruit international students for educational, cultural, and financial reasons; and the corollary obligation, which is to welcome, serve, retain, and involve them in mutual intercultural learning with Americans. For this to happen, student affairs leaders must nurture support for international programs and services, persuade others that international and domestic diversity is a necessity, and work closely with academic affairs leaders irrespective of the reporting lines of the international student office and study abroad office.

Benefits of International Students

Student affairs administrators, who understand that a wider recruiting pool means many more qualified students, need to articulate the benefits of international students to many publics. Presidents, provosts, faculty, staff, American students, parents, university governing boards, alumni, and (for state institutions) governors, legislatures, and taxpayers need to appreciate the vast and various contributions that international students make to U.S. higher education. For example, if not for international teaching assistants, many courses required by U.S. students would be in short supply, delaying their graduations. Americans are scarce as teaching assistants in many fields, because they often choose lucrative jobs in industry instead of advanced studies.

International students are also very important for the economic vitality of U.S. higher education institutions and their communities, spending \$7 billion dollars annually for tuition and living expenses (Davis, 1997). Their economic impact continues upon their return home with their purchases of U.S. goods and services, which create many new American jobs annually. The American government and U.S. citizens benefit from thousands of former Fulbright grantees and millions of United States--educated international alumni. Many are political and economic leaders, with fond memories of Americans and their alma maters.

The British example is a cautionary tale for U.S. higher education of the international economic consequences of a cavalier treatment of international students. In 1981, British higher education institutions, virtually overnight, significantly raised tuition and fees for international students. The Malaysian government quickly protested and announced they would no longer purchase British products. The policy was quickly modified and tuition reduced.

Procedures, Programs, and Services for International Students

If student and academic affairs leaders are to recruit and retain more international students, they must be sensitive to the perceptions, needs, and concerns of prospective and enrolled international students. During self-studies and external reviews of international programs and services, the following questions need to be addressed: Are prospective students properly screened for English language ability through a reliable standardized test? Have their previous academic work and ability to pay been adequately evaluated? Are quality initial and continuing orientation programs available for international students? Are there programs promoting mutual intercultural learning and respect between international and American students? Are international office staff knowledgeable about basic visa law and new regulations of the U.S. Information Agency, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Department of State, and Department of Labor? Are university staff in appropriate departments trained to intervene in crisis situations involving international students and

their families? Is there widespread cooperation-not only within student affairs but also with the president, provost, deans, department heads, faculty, and others-to make international students' classroom and co-curricular experiences the best possible?

Many international graduate students could not pursue U.S. degrees without teaching and research assistantships. However, receiving such appointments does not guarantee a successful university experience. One way to increase their chances for success is to test the spoken English of potential teaching assistants and to require courses for those unable to meet the standard. Many of the best U.S. universities have had good testing and training programs for international teaching assistants for years. As student affairs professionals develop programs serving international students, they need to be involved in discussions about teaching assistants not communicating satisfactorily with the undergraduates they instruct. This does not mean English testing, placement, and remedial courses must be directed by student affairs. However, ignoring this problem could generate strong public criticism, erode financial support, and reduce American enrollment.

The internationalizing student life coordinator at Michigan State University (MSU) developed a successful program titled *Going from Oh, No to Okay: Communicating with Your International Teaching Assistant*. Designed for freshmen and sophomores in residence halls, it includes discussions around a video of American students sharing positive experiences with persons from different cultural and educational backgrounds. Key administrators use new-student orientation programs and parent meetings to promote many international opportunities, including courses taught by trained international teaching assistants, study abroad programs, international components in the curriculum, and intercultural learning programs with international students. Admissions personnel also promote these international opportunities during recruiting trips.

Competition in Recruiting International Students

American higher education institutions that take international students for granted, as "cash cows," do so at their peril. Formerly, the international student grapevine widely circulated information on campus in a matter of days. As the Internet means virtually instantaneous communication, weak programs and services for international students could be known worldwide in hours, if not minutes. To successfully recruit international students, U.S. colleges and universities need well-run, international programs with ethical, professional staff. They now compete with universities in Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and other countries in the European Union. Every year, more institutions, often in cooperation with their governments, heavily recruit international students, so they can internationalize their campuses and bring needed revenue to balance budgets. The financial upheaval in Asia, which started in 1997, radically devalued the currencies of Indonesia, Korea,

Malaysia, and Thailand. The loss of students from these nations, major exporters of students to the U.S. and other countries, has made recruiting competition even more intense.

Providing a Welcoming Environment for International Students

International student office staff, in cooperation with other student affairs professionals, faculty, American students, and community volunteers, must work together to create a welcoming environment for international students and their families. Providing quality programs and services for international students is the cornerstone of any initiative to increase the numbers of international students and to retain those presently enrolled. Colleges and universities with good academic programs and well-trained staff who provide courteous, accurate, timely service, and informative programs to international students will reap great benefits from their investments. Satisfied international students and alumni recruit relatives, friends, coworkers, and others to U.S. schools. There is no quick fix for international success. All faculty and staff must work together on behalf of all students, including international students. Without this commitment, they could incorrectly assume that international students with problems are mainly the responsibility of the international student office.

Importance of international Experiences for Student Affairs Staff

Iowa State University has a long-standing professional development program in conjunction with the University of Glasgow. Personnel from the offices of registrar, student financial aid, study abroad, orientation and campus visits, honors program, adult learner and commuter student programs, department of residence, institutional research, and many academic departments have visited Scotland for periods ranging from a month to an academic year. They experience firsthand the excitement, learning, and disorientation similar to that experienced by international students arriving in Ames, Iowa. Having the shoe on the other foot has been helpful in developing staff empathy and improving service to international students. Staff who are unable to travel to Glasgow (or to Dresden, Germany, another exchange site) learn from their counterparts who journey to Iowa State University

Model Intercultural Learning Programs

International students who are satisfied with the academics and the general living conditions on American campuses are more likely to participate in classes and programs that educate Americans about intercultural issues. The groundbreaking study *Needs of Foreign Students from Developing Nations at U.S. Colleges*

and Universities (Lee, Abd-Ella, and Burks, 1981) discovered that important issues for international students were a lack of respect and a general lack of awareness on the part of Americans about the culture, history, and geography of their countries. Questions such as: Do you live in a tree? What is the capital of Africa? and Do you have electricity in New Zealand? demonstrate great ignorance to international students. The Learning with Foreign Students Program, an early intercultural learning program developed at the University of Minnesota, vividly demonstrated the tremendous value of international students for the education of Americans (Mestenhauer, 1976). It also encouraged international student advisers nationwide to view themselves as educators, not simply as visa specialists and social workers for international students. This new self-image helped spawn the Internationalizing Student Life Project at MSU (Mark, 1994), the Culture Corps Program at Iowa State University (Dreasher and Sapolis, 1997), and the International Cultural Service Program in the state university system in Oregon (Campbell, 1987). These programs and others less formal enable Americans to learn about cultures, histories, and global issues from international students; to participate in environments where differences are acknowledged and respected, reducing stereotypical thinking; and to see beyond city and state borders to understand U.S. interdependence with the world.

Meaningful interaction between domestic and international students requires planning and programs. International ghettos may develop if comfort and friendship are found solely with others sharing the common experience of adjusting to American behavior. Depending on campus size, types of residence facilities, and numbers of international students, varied approaches are possible by professional staff and student assistants focusing on either the international or the domestic student. MSU's Raising Awareness by Internationalizing Students' Education program utilizes international students and U.S. students with study abroad experience. There is a speakers' bureau, study abroad predeparture and reentry programs, and the Intercultural Communications Workshop (ICW) organized by the Intercultural Communication Institute of the Office for international Students and Scholars. One ICW involve eighty students, half international and half American, in a two-day overnight workshop that included role plays, skits, mini-lectures, and small-group discussions. Another, a one-day workshop for university support staff, was designed for improving their understanding of international students. The ICW enables persons to consider how culture influences behavior and expectations of common human experiences. Participants are trained to describe behaviors without negative interpretation and evaluation. Everyday issues such as friendship, male-female relationships, and classroom expectations are discussed. Participants relate personal experiences and are not spokespersons for their ethnic or nationality groups. They learn to see themselves through the eyes of others. The workshop provides a structure for developing long-term international-American interactions. A student from India, during an ICW at Iowa State University, said Americans often spoke to him for only fifteen minutes to learn

about India. "With thousands of languages, religions, ethnic groups, and my ^{ONNM} limited experience, there is no way I could accurately characterize India. However, if Americans take the time to know me, they may also learn something about India."

The challenge for international student affairs professionals is to promote intercultural, interdisciplinary, experiential learning in an academic environment where the main emphasis is cognitive and discipline-based education. With increasing interest in residential learning communities, service learning, internships, and intercultural co-curricular opportunities, student and academic affairs cooperation may yield significant successes. However, often international student advisers have difficulty organizing intercultural learning programs because responding to students' visa and other concerns is so labor-intensive. One approach is funding faculty and student affairs staff to develop and administer international classes and co-curricular programs through grants to international students and U.S. students with overseas experience. Since 1995, the Culture Corps Program, coordinated by Iowa State University's Office of International Students and Scholars with financial support from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, has helped achieve internationalization goals in the university's strategic plan (1995-2000). International students in the culture corps have been employed as undergraduate cultural informants in agriculture, engineering, drama, and many other courses; as translators in a victimization-prevention campaign directed by the Department of Public Safety; and as peer assistants helping orient new international students and recruiting Americans to study abroad. Although not experts in all aspects of life in their country of origin, with proper coaching, they augment course modules and training programs with vivid personal examples. Many students have held responsible positions back home, and their testimony makes their world real for Americans and increases their cross-cultural sensitivity. In an honors course on revolutions, a student who had served both in the parliament of Cyprus and three years in jail for his part in the war for independence against the British explained his conversion to pacifism. He believed current animosity between Greek and Turkish Cypriots was related to the violent means used to obtain independence.

Oregon's Long-Term Commitment to Intercultural Learning

Oregon's International Cultural Service Program (ICSP) involves seven public universities granting resident tuition to selected international students to teach aspects of their culture to thousands of Oregonians in public schools and other global education programs. The program began in 1982 when Oregon's economy was suffering and international student scholarships were perceived as a "giveaway." Administrators supportive of international students created a program with a cultural service requirement as a condition for a limited number of international students to be classified as "residents by exception." Partici-

pants greatly benefit not only from the financial aid but also from the leadership and teaching experiences. The program creates opportunities for international students to reach new audiences they would never find on their own. A University of Oregon student from Senegal spoke to a class at a rural high school. A gifted speaker, proud of his heritage, he emphasized how everyone in his village looked out for one another rather than experience life alone through the strong individualism emphasized in the United States. Following his presentation, a student who was a self-described skinhead was moved to say he could no longer be a racist. The Oregon program should be widely emulated, because continuing contact by paid international students with Americans is more educational than are volunteer, one-shot programs. More than twenty thousand Oregonians had contacts with international students from the University of Oregon in 1997-98 through the ICSP. An important key to the program's success at the University of Oregon has been the cosponsorship of the Lane Education Service, which has K-12 links with all sixteen school districts in Lane County. They coordinate the school visits, print and distribute a catalogue and poster of participating international students to public school teachers, and host annual events in which teachers meet the students before they invite them into their classrooms.

A powerful example of the unforeseen and fortuitous effects of the ICSP was the impact of a graduate student from Swaziland on the dean of students at the University of Oregon. A midcareer educator in his country, the student was recruited to the University of Oregon with ICSP financial aid. He worked with the dean during his master's program in education and completed his cultural service hours by leading workshops and programs on campus. The dean, already supportive of international students but lacking significant overseas experience, was inspired to pursue a Fulbright grant to Swaziland. She received the award, and her year in southern Africa was a transformative experience, personally and professionally. She made contacts that resulted in foreign consultancies, and on her return, became an even stronger champion of international students and overseas experiences for students and faculty. Her new insights on community, which had been learned abroad, culminated in a grant from the U.S. Fund for the improvement of Secondary Education. The three-year grant, for a pilot freshman orientation course, focused on what binds and divides communities. The course continues, with many students and faculty working together on issues of diversity and community.

How to Make Tomorrow Better Than Today: Advice for International Student Office Staff

In today's higher education, there are more priorities than resources to address them. The creation of a stronger campus visibility and an advocacy for internationalization is the key to obtaining more resources. If your institution's mission statement and strategic plan have supportive language, you are on your way. If they do not, you need to include such language in the institution's basic

educational, administrative, and policy statements wherever possible. If your institution is embarking on a self-study and external review by a regional accrediting agency, this is an important opportunity to make your case. You need to recruit allies as you provide critical programs and services campuswide. The international student office is generally responsible for the orientation of international students, visa advising, crisis intervention with international students (in cooperation with the student counseling center), and programs improving relationships between international and American students. International student advisers must provide excellent service in these areas before launching into more sophisticated intercultural teaming programs for mutual understanding. Your immediate supervisor is probably the most important potential ally. What are your supervisor's most important priorities? Is one of them the recruitment and retention of students? Is the supervisor responsible for involving faculty and residence hall staff in "learning communities"? Although your supervisor may not increase your budget, protecting your office from budget cuts over an extended period may provide opportunities for innovation.

Let Us Begin

It may be possible to begin a pilot intercultural learning project before additional staff and operating budget are available. Would former Peace Corps volunteers or community volunteers active in your host family program coordinate a program? Are there funds for improving undergraduate teaching or for innovative programs? Would international students request activity fees from the student government? Are federal college work-study funds available to hire Americans who studied overseas? Could scholarships be redirected to employ international students? Would department or residence staff establish an international house and sponsor an intercultural outreach project? Would alumni contribute to a new program, or would faculty offer credit to students engaged in this project? Others not from traditional academic disciplines are possible campus collaborators. Those coming late to the table need to join hands on projects truly important for everyone. Experiential education, service learning, environmental studies, peace studies, ethnic studies, minority student office, multicultural and women's centers are all potential allies. Federally funded foreign-area studies centers, mandated to have outreach programs, may have funds for intercultural learning for international students and Americans who have studied abroad.

Powerful Learning Abroad

The most powerful intercultural learning often takes place overseas, when Americans experience other cultures around the clock, which profoundly affects their attitudes and knowledge of other countries. MSU has a most ambitious goal—40 percent of all undergraduates for a semester overseas at the cost

of a semester on campus. Over a five-year period, 1993-1997, the number of MSU students increased 73 percent (from 844 to 1,456). Other institutions are committed to at least 10 percent of their students abroad by the year 2000. Even schools with more modest aims find that it takes additional scholarships and more faculty-led group programs to entice students overseas.

Iowa State University increased students abroad from 315 in 1995-96 to 569 in 1996-97 and 643 in 1997-98. It is anticipated that 750 students will be abroad in 1998-99. The growth is attributable to a shared commitment by the central administration (providing additional funds for scholarships, faculty site visits, and Study Abroad Center staff), academic departments (encouraging faculty to lead short-term group programs and paying their salaries), and students who pay their own expenses and those of faculty leaders. Study Abroad Center staff partner with faculty under Project Assist to plan initial site visits; develop budgets; arrange group flights and accommodations; promote programs on campus and nationwide; and provide predeparture orientation on cultural awareness, health, and safety. Additional funds for Study Abroad Center staff and scholarships became available when sending more students overseas became a presidential goal in the university strategic plan. The commitment by the central administration and academic departments ensures the affordability of the programs, making them more attractive to students.

Diversity and the Twenty-First Century

On some American campuses, international education and minority and multicultural affairs staff carefully circle each other, competing for pieces of a shrinking educational pie. Colleges and universities should not merge these offices in mistaken attempts to save money. The imagined efficiencies are not worth seriously damaging both the international student and U.S. ethnic diversity programs. It is far better for these offices to forge new partnerships to recruit more minority students to study abroad and to orient new international students to diversity in American life. If institutions commit to increasing international programs and services through closer student affairs-academic affairs cooperation, new resources are more likely. Iowa State University's Council on International Programs, with a grant from the Office of the Provost, funded twelve academic advisers to visit Costa Rica to encourage study abroad among their advisees. Most were traveling abroad for the first time. The advisers are now promoting overseas programs with greater vigor, and three new short-term programs were developed—one to Costa Rica and two to Mexico. Two advisers, also minority liaison staff in their colleges, led a racially diverse group to Yucatan. The program will be offered again, as students were enthusiastic about Mexico and the intercultural learning within their group. Another new adviser-led program for minority and majority students is slated for Trinidad and Tobago.

When asked if it was better for international student offices to report to student or academic affairs, an international educator answered, "It does not

matter which bus you take, but you must know who is driving and where it is going." Reporting to either student or academic affairs does not guarantee increased staff or operating budget. There are campuses Where the international student office reports to the vice president for student affairs, and the provost augments their budget for visa advising and other services for inter- national faculty and staff on j- I (exchange visitor), H- I (international worker), and immigrant visas.

Student affairs and academic affairs leaders who promote intercultural learning on campus and abroad encourage Americans and international students to appreciate diversity This does not mean they must adopt ideas and practices hostile to their values; however, being open to an intercultural dialogue expands minds. Stereotypes of international students as problems to be solved and foreign countries as places to be avoided will be reduced by these initiatives. Intercultural learning could be a beacon, illuminating a world of cultural differences and a common global humanity, building blocks for a just and peaceful world.

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