Helping Chinese Students be Successful at ISU

Learning Communities Institute
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Presentation Overview

- ISU Context
- Issues international students face
- Programs at ISU to help students
- How to help these students be successful
- What I learned from teaching in Shanghai
### International Student Numbers at ISU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>-17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>-14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Top Countries for Sending Students to ISU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China, People's Republic of</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, South</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China, Taiwan</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China, People's Republic of</td>
<td>1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, South</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China, Taiwan</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ISU Chinese Student Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergrad</th>
<th>% Change per year</th>
<th>Grad</th>
<th>% Change per year</th>
<th>Total Chinese Students</th>
<th>Total Intl Students</th>
<th>% of Intl Students</th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>% of Total Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>554</td>
<td></td>
<td>609</td>
<td>2113</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>24923</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>130.9%</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>2244</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>26160</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>232.3%</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>1043</td>
<td>2497</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>26856</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>107.6%</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>1540</td>
<td>3017</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>27945</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>1104</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td>1764</td>
<td>3327</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>28682</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>3424</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>29887</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>1270</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>3510</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>31040</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Issues International Students Face at ISU

- Separation and loss
  - Family, friends, culture/customs, social status
- Language barriers*
  - Feeling less intelligent
  - Drop in performance
  - Not understanding/not being understood
- Cognitive stress
  - Information overload
- Loneliness and social isolation
Issues Continued...

• Confusing local norms
  • Relationship with authority
  • Communication
• Identity and value confusion
  • Sense of self is not endorsed by familiar setting
• Discrimination and prejudice
  • First experience as member of minority group
Issues Continued...

• Difference in educational system
  • Self directed
  • Grading
  • Communication with professors and classmates
*Limited English Proficiency*

- Speed of lectures
- Accents/enunciation
- Slurred and Slang
  - “jeet”
  - “hereortogo”
- Irony or sarcasm
  - “We had a marvelously wet summer this year, didn’t we?”
Dealing with American Values

- Achievement Mentality
- Directness
- Equality
- Individualism
- Informality
- Privacy
- Rule of Law
- Strong Time Orientation
What US Students Already Know...

- American English
- US educational system
  - Grades
  - Research requirements
  - Testing requirements
- Classroom norms and etiquette
  - Syllabi
  - Interacting with faculty
  - Group work
Chinese Students at ISU

- Fall 2008: Departments noticed change
- Academic issues
  - Many Chinese undergrads had failing GPAs
  - Reports of poor language skills in classes
  - Not participating in classroom discussions & activities
Chinese Students at ISU

• Behavioral Issues
  • Residence halls- roommate and cleanliness issues
  • Students indicating “too cold to go to class”
  • Not understanding/following US laws
    • Driving, privacy, etc.
ISU Response: Spring 2009

• Undergraduate Taskforce
  • Admissions
  • Counseling Center
  • Intensive English and Orientation Program (IEOP)
  • ISU Police
  • Department of Residence
  • Academic Colleges
  • Chinese graduate students and faculty
ISU Response

- Admissions
  - Stopped allowing conditional admission
  - Required TOEFL [Test of English as a Foreign Language] exam with minimum speaking and writing scores
ISU Response (cont.)

- ISSO
  - Modify orientation
    - Smaller groups
    - Focus on adapting to living in the US
      - culture, academics, etc.
    - Services available to students
  - Coordinate with academic advisors
ISU Response (cont.)

- Mentoring program
- Academic writing and plagiarism programs
- New Chinese student organization
- Capitalize on Chinese graduate student and faculty member support
Key Ways to Help Students

• How to communicate with professors
• Understanding a syllabus
  • Prerequisites
  • Course requirements
  • Explain how numbers on a test correspond to letter grades (in some countries a 70 is an A!)
• Class attendance policy
Key Ways to Help Students

• How to prepare for US exams
  • In China
    • Infrequent
    • Not multiple choice
    • Not timed
Key Ways to Help Students

• What is Academic Misconduct
  – The many forms of plagiarism
  – Use campus resources
    • Student Affairs
    • Writing and Media Center
Key Ways to Help Students

- How to access campus resources
  - Writing Center
  - Understanding American culture
  - Health services
  - ISSO
- De-stigmatize using these resources
Shanghai Urban Management College
brick and water, grass, guns, guns
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACER</th>
<th>PLANT NAME</th>
<th>QTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>SWEET CAMPHOR</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BW</td>
<td>BOXWOOD</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>SAHINA CHINESIS</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP</td>
<td>HEMP PALM</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLOWER</td>
<td>LOT OF</td>
<td></td>
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Questions

Acknowledgements:
James Dorsett, Director
ISU International Students & Scholars Office