SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS

12/6/2017

Presented by:
Student Success Office
Centre for Career Action
Renison University College
Agenda

- International Students at UW
- Supporting Transition
- Supporting Academic Success
- Supporting English Language Learners
- Supporting Job Readiness
WHO ARE OUR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
Who are International Students?

...Students who study at educational institutions outside of their home country.

...Come from diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds; and have varied life experiences and reasons for attending post-secondary institutions abroad.
International Students at UWaterloo
What Faculties are they in?

- AHS: 3
- Arts: 17
- Eng: 16
- Env: 7
- Math: 46
- Sci: 10
WHAT DO YOU PERCEIVE TO BE THE NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?
Common Needs and Challenges

Psychological

Academic

Socio-cultural

Source: Fitzgerald R., Understanding Students in Transition, Presentation, 2015
Top Concerns of international students

- Academic Success
- Belongingness
- Employability
- Immigration
- Finances
SUPPORTING STUDENT TRANSITION
International Support Services Offered

New Students

- China Send-Off Event
- Targeted Pre-Arrival Communications

- International Student Orientation
- First Year Orientation

- International Student Newsletter
- International Peer Community
- International Student Advising
International Support Services Offered

Current Students

- The Writing Centre’s English Conversation Circles
- Renison’s Conversation Partner Program

- UW Culture and Language Exchange Club
- Peer Success Coaching
- UWinterloo

- International and Canadian Student Network
- International Student Advising
International Support Services Offered

Get Ready for UWaterloo

Description

• “Send-off” events in China (2017: Beijing and Shanghai)
  • Close to 200 students and over 100 of their family members attended

Purpose

• Opportunity to meet with newly admitted students and their family members in the month of July

Goals

• Support early relationship-building
• Establish institutional presence
• Develop an early understanding of on-campus supports and services for students
International Support Services Offered

International Orientation

- Sessions to support:
  - Academic
  - Socio-cultural
  - Personal Development

- Students can visit the International Student Guide website for content missed during orientation

- https://uwaterloo.ca/international-students/
International Support Services Offered

UWinterloo

- Self-registration care package program
- Includes invitation to Facebook page
- Coupons from community partners
- E-news every week in the month of December
International Support Services Offered

International Peer Community

- For international students who want to:
  - Build a peer support network
  - Learn about Canadian culture and UW campus
  - Improve conversational English

- 6-8 students per group with 2 upper-year UW student mentors

- New students are welcome to join IPC throughout the term (no application deadline)
International Support Services Offered

Airport Bus Pick-Up

- January 1, 2018
  - 12pm
  - 6pm

- Free service for:
  - International undergraduate students
  - International graduate students
  - Out of province undergraduate students
  - Out of province graduate students
  - All exchange students
International Support Services Offered

International Canadian Student Network (ICSN)

- Feds student-run service on campus.

- Strives to make all local, international and exchange students feel welcome here at the University, and in the Waterloo community.

- Number of events each term so that students can explore the area and make meaningful connections with people from around the world!
International Support Services Offered

ICSN
Babble Cafe
This is a safe space to practice conversational English and meet new people from all around the world! Each week there are special topics/themes!

Cultural Connection
This is a time for students to get together, converse, and participate in various activities both indoor and out!
Academic Integrity – Cultural Considerations

Interdependence or supporting their friends/community rather than ‘competing’ for their own benefit

Instructor’s expectations may change depending on their assessments and may vary from class to class

Differences in the perceptions of rules (flexibility/adherence)

Misunderstandings around the penalties for academic misconduct
Academic Integrity – *What can you do/say?*

**Understand rules and flexibility**

- Which rules are non-negotiable (i.e. *cheating and plagiarism*)
- How to gather information for rules that may be flexible
  - i.e. *discussing assignment deadlines with an instructor if the student is dealing with a family illness/death or personal illness*
- Reiterate consequences if these rules/expectations are not met

**Application of academic integrity principles**

- Explain the cultural implications of academic integrity outside of the university
- Emphasize as skills and habits necessary to excel in the North American workplace
Academic Resources/Supports

Academic Integrity Tutorials
Academic Tutorials, Brochure and Fact Sheet

Writing Centre Drop-ins in the Library

Writing Centre Paraphrasing & Summarizing Workshop

Writing Centre English Practice Community
Read and write on a weekly topic. Submit and get feedback

Library liaisons
Meet with a liaison to help with library databases and RefWorks

SSO Online resources
Address time management issues and learn important skills
  - Backwards planning
Asking for Help—Cultural Considerations

- Emphasis on hierarchies creates perceived power imbalance
- Challenging ideas, asking questions, or expressing a lack of understanding can be perceived as disrespectful
- Students may not be used to Socratic approach to teaching
- Students may question the instructor or TA's knowledge or professionalism
Asking for Help in Academics — What can you do?

Asking for help/explanation is encouraged at university!

- Be mindful of students who are intimidated by revealing academic challenges
  - Familial/social pressures may create a block
- Encourage students to bring a friend for support
- Students may want help to understand appropriate/expected communications
  - Instructors most often want to chat about the course and answer questions
  - Socratic questioning supports learning
- Help students to understand professional communication
  - Emailing an instructor
  - Developing direct questions
Refer students to peer programs and TAs

**Faculty Specific Resources**
- 66 different student groups/societies across campus
- [https://uwaterloo.ca/feds/student-bodies/student-societies](https://uwaterloo.ca/feds/student-bodies/student-societies)

**Course specific help**

**General academic skills and strategies**
- Peer coaching
- Academic Workshops
- SSO Online resources
SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Supporting English Language Learners

Writing & Communication Centre’s English Conversation Circles
UW Culture & Language Exchange Club (UWCLEAC)
Feds International & Canadian Student Network
Renison’s Conversation Partner Program
  • Can support students learning more than just English!

English for Multilingual Speakers (EMLS) credit courses
Non-credit programs in the English Language Institute
  • English For Academic Success (EFAS)
  • General English at Renison (GEAR)
Supporting English Language Learners

English for Multilingual Speakers (EMLS)
Offered by Renison’s Culture & Language Studies Department
- Undergraduate and graduate credit courses available for students across all 6 Faculties.
- Students can select courses to improve pronunciation and presentation skills; reading and listening comprehension; academic writing skills at the undergrad level; thesis and article writing as well as research presentations and oral defenses at the graduate level.

English For Academic Success (EFAS)
Offered by the Renison English Language Institute
- An intensive full-term, non-credit program offered in 4 levels, designed for students interested in meeting UWaterloo’s English language requirements.
- Can be a suitable option for a student who may need to withdraw from the University but could use additional English language support.

General English at Renison (GEAR)
- A four-week English program designed to enhance general English skills.
- Classes in reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar & Canadian culture.
The Centre for Career Action

Lauren Broderick, Career Advisor
International Student Employment Concerns

• Will employers value experience that I have from back home?
• What do I do if I don’t have any experience to put on my résumé?
• How can I find my first Canadian job or volunteer experience?
• Will employers hire me if my English isn’t perfect?
• What is networking and how can I network if I don’t currently have any family and friends in Canada?
• What can I do to prepare for an interview?
• How can I learn about the Canadian business culture?
“What topics are you most interested in learning about”…
International Student Employment Needs

- Canadian résumé standards
- Interview process and expectations
- Importance of soft skills
- Skills identification and articulation
- Self-promotion and marketing
- Networking and its value
- Business etiquette and professionalism
Supporting International Student Job Readiness

- BASE Interview skills workshop and mock interview drop-ins
- IPC Orientation, Interview skills workshop and senior student Q&A
- 2+2 WeChat Orientation, Intro to Networking and Applying to Grad school
- Résumé Writing Tutorial *Open to all first year engineering students*
- MyWorldAbroad: Career Boosting Strategies for International Students
- IEW Working in Canada as an international student panels
  - Undergraduate Student Panel
  - Graduate Student Panel
Services/Resources

- CareerHub
- Appointments
- Drop-ins
- Workshops
- Employer information sessions
- Job Fair bus service & Career Advisor booth

*We work with students, employees and alumni in-person, by phone, or via Skype*
Supporting International Student Job Readiness

2016/2017

- Resume
- Job Mock Interview
- Job Search
- Career Planning
- All Other support

Appointments, Workshops, Drop-ins
Question and Answer Period
Contacts

- Candace Brown- candace.brown@uwaterloo.ca
- Edita Gatchene- edita.gatchene@uwaterloo.ca
- Erin Jobidon- ejobidon@uwaterloo.ca
- Lauren Broderick- lauren.Broderick@uwaterloo.ca
- Ryan Connell- ryan.Connell@uwaterloo.ca