

Internationalization Circle

Recommendations

There are many challenges confronting our society. Perhaps the most important challenge is learning how to co-operate and understand one another because only by creating environments of cultural appreciation and interest will we be able to solve the problems of war and peace, poverty and want or environmental integrity. UBC Okanagan, along with educators around the world, shares a responsibility to engender global understanding and intercultural competencies in the education experience of students, faculty and staff, and the broader community by providing an atmosphere that encourages the internationalization of learning and research.

The attached recommendations of the Internationalization Circle are intended to address critical issues in regards to the short-term transition of international students and programs to UBC Okanagan (UBCO) in the Fall of 2005. International students currently enrolled at OUC are anxious and concerned about the proposed changes. Successful retention of international students is dependent on clear and timely resolution of uncertainties.

The Circle will meet again in September 2004 to provide input on vision, values and academic programs for internationalization at the new UBCO for Trek 2010.

The recommendations below were developed with a student perspective and were seen as especially important to ensure international student success in the transition from OUC to UBCO.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TRANSITION:

We recommend the following points.

1. Credit Transferability and the following Linkages between OUC and UBCO

- Students in ESL courses are permitted to enrol in university courses simultaneously.
- Students who complete level 6 ESL with 70% or higher are admissible to full time university programs at UBCO without further English language training.
- Students who complete the first two years of university transfer at the new college and attain the required grade point average can transfer their credits to UBCO.
- Priority admission of ESL students to university programs if they meet the admission requirements.

Rationale:

Providing a wide range of choices will ensure that we offer exciting opportunities for existing and prospective international students and assist with marketing endeavours of both the new college and UBCO.

Until university transfer courses are available at the Kelowna campus of the new college, it is crucial to maintain the simultaneous enrolment in ESL and university courses so current students can continue their studies during the transitional phase.

Assists UBCO in reaching its international student enrolment targets.

2. Tuition

- Grandfather current OUC international tuition fees for international students who are registered at OUC as of September 2004 to prevent financial hardship for those students whose long range financial planning did not include a doubling (\$16,680 at UBC and \$8,240 at OUC) of tuition fees.
- Provide more opportunities for international students to work on campus.

Rationale:

In a recent survey, 75% of the international students stated that they chose OUC because of the low tuition.

International students chose OUC because of the lower tuition and it will be a hardship for them to be faced with an unexpected fee increase.

Recruiting of international students for UBCO may take some time and this will ensure that international students currently enrolled continue to study at OUC.

3. Recruitment and Retention of International students

Retain joint international recruitment and retention office that serves both the college and UBCO until the international student numbers at both campuses warrant separate offices.

Retention:

- Retain a “one stop shopping” approach to international student recruitment and retention centre for international students.
- Provide additional space at the UBCO campus for student support offices.
- In the proposed 1000 new bed expansion of the residence, build an international living centre that includes a residence for internationally minded Canadian students and international students and is designed to promote internationalization, global awareness and appreciation, and opportunities for additional language learning. Include furnished apartments to accommodate visiting faculty and dignitaries. A

recreational area similar to the PIT that is good for international activities would be an excellent addition.

- Continue development of “conversation partners” programming.
- Provide opportunities for domestic and international students and staff to develop intercultural competencies, e.g. Peer Mentors program
- Provide cultural and language support for international students in academic programs (e.g., learning centres with ESL support).
- Increase access to language-capable computers, providing one language capable computer for every 25 international students.
- Work with other faculties and departments to promote internationalization and diversity awareness within UBCO.
- If program laddering from college, ensure continuity of academic advising.
- Provide recreational opportunities for international students such as snow boarding trips, hikes, BBQ’s, Karaoke nights, etc.
- Continue special events to celebrate international students’ cultures, e.g., Chinese New Years Celebration, Korean Culture night, International Expo, etc.

Recruitment:

- Develop a joint marketing strategy for both the college and UBCO
- Increase number and diversification of international students at college and UBCO

Rationale:

Ensure international student success at UBCO

International student retention rate at OUC is currently at 70%, in part, due to the current “one stop shopping” approach in which all international services are provided by the same office with staff who are trained in international student settlement issues.

Co-ordinated services and joint marketing between both institutions will provide economies of scale and serve a wider target market.

Some services such as homestay accommodation must be co-ordinated or the college and UBCO will be in competition with each other.

There is only one small office at the current NK campus for international staff. As international student numbers have been growing dramatically, additional offices at the North Kelowna campus have been required for some time.

Co-ordinated marketing efforts such as “two institutions campuses, one great location” will be advantageous to both OUC and UBC.

Ensure effective cross-cultural communication between domestic and international student and staff population.

4. Scholarships for International Students

- Continue to provide scholarships for international students

Rationale:

Scholarships provide a means of diversifying the student population and assisting scholars who require financial assistance.

5. Study Abroad and Exchange (Student and Faculty) Institutional Partnership

- Make available UBC Point Grey exchanges to UBCO students and vice versa. (Caution: ensure that this does not make it more difficult for UBCO and OC students to have exchange opportunities)
- Permit domestic and international college students to participate in UBCO exchanges.
- Incorporate existing OUC exchanges into UBCO existing exchange program.
- Provide offices and designated staff members at UBCO for exchange services.
- Promote faculty exchange
- Identify and pursue appropriate institutions for new partnerships.

Rationale:

Broadens student and faculty global awareness and intercultural competencies. Students are exposed to faculty from different parts of the world, thereby providing another means of internationalization at UBCO.

GROUPS WE WOULD LIKE TO MEET:

- UBC International Office
- UBC Study Abroad Office
- UBC International House
- English Language Institute

University Circle Members

Wes Schmitt (OUC domestic student going on exchange to France in 2004)

Michelle Reimer (OUC student who was on exchange with Nagoya Gakuin University Japan)

Megan Foster (recent UBC graduate student now working at OUC)

Undram Bataa (current international business student)

Cynthia Garcia Hernandez (current international business student)

Dan Luo (current international arts student)

Marietta Stanley (Business faculty)

Margery Heuser (Business faculty)

Yunke He (Business faculty)

David Cram (Business faculty)

Nina Langton (Arts Faculty: Modern Languages)

Jane Smith (FACE Faculty: ESL)

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