

## **Ad Hoc Graduate Student Success Committee Report March 2015**

### **Committee Mission and Responsibilities**

The Ad Hoc Graduate Student Success Committee shall

1. plan, develop, provide ongoing evaluation and recommend improvements to assess and enable graduate student success
2. plan and develop special support and remediation programs for international students who may experience significant difficulties transitioning into the Wright State environment
3. develop plans and programs to assimilate and counsel students who may be novice to the culture and requirements of higher education

### **Membership (Dec 2014)**

BSOM: Terry Oroszi  
CECS: Caroline Cao (chair)  
CEHS: Maggie Veres  
COLA: Laura Luehrmann  
CONH: Rosemary Eustace  
COSM: Gregory Kozlowski  
RSCOB: Riad Ajami  
SOPP: Chris Modica

Undergraduate Student Success Committee: Doug Petkie (co-chair)

Graduate School: Bill Ayres, Erika Gilles (scribe)

Institutional Research: Craig This

Centre for Urban & Public Affairs: Carol Murray

The Ad Hoc “Graduate Student Success” committee met in four sessions over the months from December 2014 to March 2015, and discussed issues related to graduate student success at WSU. The committee sought input from the Undergraduate Student Success Committee, the Graduate School, the UCIE, as well as graduate program directors and faculty in all colleges. The latter was accomplished by a sending out a short questionnaire by email to all faculty and graduate program directors.

The data and resources considered included the following:

1. Survey of master’s students in their final term in STEM and MBA programs at WSU in F2011, W2012, S2012, regarding their graduate school experience, conducted by the Graduate School
2. Survey of graduate program directors and faculty regarding their perception of issues with international graduate students and possible solutions
3. Dr. Rosemary Eustace’s dissertation “Factors influencing acculturative stress among international students in the United States” (Appendix I)
4. White paper on Principles of Graduate Advising by Bill Ayres (Appendix II)
5. Proposed policy document “Graduate Student Advising Initiative: Student Success at the Graduate Level” by Bill Ayres (Appendix III)
6. CECS International Collaborations and Graduate Programs: International Student Success Issues and Proposed Solutions (Appendix IV)
7. Program of activities for the CECS International Graduate Student Reception Fall 2014 (Appendix V)
8. Outline of Content for International CECS Graduate Student Success Modules (Appendix VI)

Based on the data gathered, the committee has identified the following points as issues that prevent graduate students, in particular, international students, from succeeding at WSU. The following information was derived from a consensus of the survey and experience from the committee members, all engaged in some form of international education at Wright State University.

This initial report to the Faculty Senate presents our consensus of the most prevalent issues in graduate student success. While the issues listed are discussed in the context of international students, most are equally applicable to our diverse domestic graduate students. We propose immediate actions and recommend continuing efforts to address these issues at the unit level as well as the university level. The committee is aware that the Graduate Policies Committee, UCIE and the International Gateway are currently considering issues that may overlap with those listed below, and their solutions may in part or in whole ameliorate the situation in question.

**Issues:**

**1. English proficiency language (reading and writing skills)**

Many international students do not have the language skills for academic work and quotidian communication despite meeting the minimum English proficiency requirements for admission.

**2. Program-specific skills**

Many students and particularly international students exhibit gaps in discipline specific knowledge ranging from applied skills and prerequisite concepts to more advanced skills required for graduate education. Many students also lack a fundamental understanding of appropriate research methods and sourcing practices and standards. This often leads to a misperception that students lack academic integrity. For example, students work together on quizzes/homework and may not understand the full aspects of cheating vs. collaboration. Often faculty contribute to this problem by not providing clear instructions.

**3. Unfamiliarity with academic practices for graduate education**

Students are unfamiliar with classroom etiquette and professional behavior. This includes attendance policies, cell phone/lap top etiquette, seminar/discussion formats and the Socratic approach of many graduate level courses. Certain groups of international students may also have additional struggles with American cultural expectations.

**4. Clarity of information**

Students are unfamiliar with campus resources, and are not culturalised to access these resources (library, health services, counselling and wellness, tutoring, food bank, career services for on campus employment, etc)

They are also unfamiliar with the structure of advising, policies and procedures in graduate programs at WSU.

**5. Staff and faculty “customer service and cultural competence”**

Some staff and faculty may not be accustomed to dealing with students from a different cultural background and thus appear to not welcome international students.

Some faculty and staff may not know what is considered appropriate/inappropriate contact, conversation for specific cultural groups. At the same time, some groups of international students are reluctant to adapt to the American-style educational norms.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### University-wide implementation:

**1. English proficiency Language (reading and writing skills)** – International students whose undergraduate degree was not obtained from an institution where instruction was conducted in English should be required to pass one semester of LEAP Level 4 courses and a Technical Writing course before beginning their programs of study.

**2. Program-specific skills** – Program faculty should specify the admission criteria for their graduate programs, **which may be above the university-wide minimum graduate admissions standards**. The program directors should implement these admission criteria and communicate clearly said criteria to internal and external recruiters. Additional course work to address deficiencies in preparation such as pre-requisite courses should be imposed as part of condition for admission/graduation as needed. The additional requirement should be clearly communicated at time of offer to admit.

**3. Provide a formal structure for students to communicate** with program directors, Graduate School, and other graduate students. To this end, the Graduate Student Assembly, advised by the Graduate School, should be funded and charged with the mandate to serve graduate students through peer mentoring, in addition to funding travel to conferences or research expenses. The Graduate Student Assembly should have representation (of both domestic and international students) from each college. Professional development workshops such as career planning, networking skills, time management skills, etc. should be student-directed, with support from the Graduate School.

***Program-specific implementation:*** Postdoc fellows or senior graduate students should be hired to serve as peer mentors/buddies to help new graduate students navigate the formal and informal aspects of graduate school, such as course selection, student-advisor relationships, networking, accessing university resources such as the library, health services, UCIE, student clubs, Student Success Center, Career Services, Internship office, etc., as well as life in Dayton (shopping, pubs, museums, getting a driver's license, renting off-campus housing, etc.) This will also create a sense of community for graduate students, enriching their grad school experience.

**4 Adopt a standard advising structure for all incoming graduate students**, following the plan outlined in the attached document “Graduate Student Advising Initiative: Student Success at the Graduate Level” (Appendix III). In particular, students will follow a prescribed timeline for program completion, with specific milestones for timely progression to be met and regular meetings with advisor documented. This over-arching structure should be adopted as a university-wide policy and administered by the Graduate School. Finally, assessment of the effectiveness of resources and new initiatives to support graduate student success should be conducted. Survey questionnaires of graduate students at every stage of their graduate career should be designed and administered by Institutional Research and/or the Center for Urban and Public Affairs, and repeated at regular intervals throughout the year. Ongoing data collection will allow us to address issues as they arise.

***Program-specific implementation:*** Individual colleges and programs will make adjustments to suit their specific program features, including part-time vs full-time, master's vs Ph.D., etc. Additionally, individual programs are responsible for ensuring that each incoming student has an academic and/or research advisor. In addition, an orientation/refresher training workshops should be conducted for all graduate students every semester to discuss academic integrity issues and coping

strategies for success in graduate school. These mandatory orientation / workshops can be designed to suit the needs of individual programs, such as being piloted by the CECS (see Appendix IV, V, VI). Support for faculty and staff to conduct workshops should be provided to maintain a high level of commitment and quality.

**5. Launch a communication campaign** to create awareness in the WSU community to support our diverse student population. Program directors and advisors should receive initial and refresher training on the Principles of Advising from the Graduate School, on cultural awareness from the UCIE, as well as on “Diversity Training” (a workshop conducted by Dr. Tamera Schneider) from the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Community Engagement. A campus-wide awareness campaign should include posters, announcements, cultural events, and special invited speakers on diversity issues.

***Program-specific implementation:*** within each college or department, open conversation and respectful behavior, similar to “safe-space”, should be cultivated. Other activities to enhance faculty/staff/student rapport could include cultural events such as Chinese New Year celebration or Martin Luther King Day where students and faculty are invited to participate (see Appendix IV, CECS International Collaborations and Graduate Programs).

**Appendix I**

**FACTORS INFLUENCING ACCULTURATIVE STRESS AMONG INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES**

by

**ROSEMARY WILLIAMEUSTACE**

B.Sc. (Nursing), University of Dar-Es-Salaam, 1994  
M.S., Kansas State University, 2003

**AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION**

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

School of Family Studies and Human Services  
College of Human Ecology

**KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Manhattan, Kansas

2007

## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors influencing acculturative stress among international students from the international student perspective. This study explored how acculturative stressors, social support and stress are related. In addition the study examined the significant socio-cultural and demographic predictors of acculturative stress. The Berry's acculturation stress research framework and Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective were used to guide this study.

Data was collected using an online survey from international students across a cohort of eleven U.S universities. Of the 986 students who took the survey, only complete data from 606 students were included in the current study. Descriptive statistics, univariate and multivariate statistical analyses were employed to summarize and test the proposed hypotheses.

The findings indicated that students who were experiencing increased levels of difficulty with the acculturative stressors were more likely to experience higher levels of stress. In addition international students who reported high levels of collective social support were more likely to display less impact of acculturative stressors on acculturative stress. However, the unique moderating influences of various types of social support (family, friends and important others) on the relationship between acculturative stressor and stress was not supported. The findings on the socio-cultural and demographic predictors of acculturative stress suggested that using the assimilation mode and identifying marital status in the "others" category was indicative of lower stress. Lower income and self identified lower social class prior and during acculturation were predictive of higher acculturative stress levels.

Findings highlight the fundamental role of the international student's social context and its impact on his/her acculturation process and outcomes. The findings have implications for professionals and scholars who work with international students in practice, education and policy. Suggestions for future research are also included.

## *Principles of Graduate Advising*

DRAFT – for discussion

January 28, 2015

Graduate advising systems at Wright State vary widely, just as the graduate students and graduate programs they serve differ from each other. The range of graduate programs at Wright State – well over 70 graduate degree programs in all, across seven different colleges and schools – makes the creation of a single, unified graduate advising system impossible. Moreover, the close relationship between graduate student and faculty make such standardization undesirable. We want to leave room for the development of advising and mentoring relationships suitable to many different fields of study.

Within that diversity, however, we can and should expect some commonality. While advising may be organized and structured in different ways across different programs, the functions of advising don't change very much and the overall goal of advising remains the same: to facilitate the success of each graduate student in their chosen field of endeavor.

To this end, while the graduate faculty as a whole cannot (and should not) mandate *how* graduate programs advise their students, they should be able to agree on a set of standards to which all graduate programs should be accountable. This draft is meant primarily to introduce a set of ideas about what those standards could be, to help move that conversation along towards a conclusion.

### *The Advisor-Advisee Relationship*

- A graduate advisor is an individual (faculty or staff) affiliated with a graduate program and assigned to a graduate student who has primary responsibility for providing every opportunity for that student to succeed within that program.
- Graduate students should all be assigned an advisor no later than the beginning of their first semester. This assignment should be communicated to the student at the earliest possible opportunity, along with the advisor's contact information. The advisor assignment should be recorded in the student's Banner record by the graduate program.
- Graduate students should expect to meet with their advisor as near the beginning of their studies as practicable, and at regular intervals thereafter – certainly not less than once per semester of active study.
- Students and advisors together should draw up and sign a Program of Study as early in a student's career as can be arranged, preferably within the first semester of a student's studies. Advisors should be responsible for updating Programs of Study (with the student's agreement) and notifying the Graduate School in a timely fashion.

- Thesis/dissertation/research project advisors should register grades for the relevant courses in a timely fashion, especially for students who have applied to graduate and are at the end of their program.
- Advisors should have access to all of the tools (electronic admissions files, advisor functions in WINGS, advisee unofficial transcripts, etc.) necessary to do their jobs. Advisors are also expected to understand the relevant rules and policies, both within their own program and contained within the Graduate School Policies & Procedures Manual, and to advise their students accordingly. Where needed, training and workshops should be offered by the Graduate School and other units on campus to make sure advisors have the tools they need to do their job well.

### ***Program-Level Expectations***

- Graduate programs should keep track of the progress of students on a regular basis (including term-by-term registration), should monitor that progress for issues and concerns, and should work with advisors to actively reach out to students where needed.
- Programs should maintain a Handbook or other Guidelines document (paper, electronic, or both) that contains information about the nature and expectations of the program, important milestones or requirements, and standards for progress and success. Both advisors and students should have access to this document; ideally, its use should become part of the culture of the program.
- Programs should assign advisors to students and should keep track of those assignments.
- Programs should insure that faculty assigned to advising duties have appropriate Graduate Faculty Status.
- Programs should regularly communicate with graduate students, both about the expectations of the program and about any issues or concerns that may have arisen. These should include communications as the beginning of students' time of study (as with program orientations or similar experiences) as well as regular, ongoing dialogues which all graduate students in the program have access to.



**Graduate Student Advising Initiative:**

**Student Success at the Graduate Level**

**December 2014**

**Background and Introduction.**

In higher education we hear a great deal about the need to be “student-focused”. At Wright State, the leadership formulation espoused by President Hopkins and Provost Narayanan is better aligned with university and state needs, goals, and strengths, namely: we need to focus on getting students “to the finish line,” completing their degrees and graduating.

But while there is a lot of focus at the undergraduate level on retention and completion, there has been very little matching effort at the graduate level, either at Wright State or nationally. An examination of WSU graduate student data from 2006 onwards revealed an overall graduation rate of roughly 70% - much higher than the undergraduate equivalent, but with plenty of room for improvement. Moreover, completion rates varied widely by program, ranging from 40% or less to nearly 100%. Some of this is related to the varying nature of programs and the students they attract, but much is due to the wide range of attention paid to graduate student success across colleges and programs.

In this domain there is wide variation that we are only now beginning to appreciate. In the Spring of 2013 the Graduate School undertook conversations with some 35 graduate program directors and department chairs, accounting for roughly 55 graduate programs – about 2/3 of our total number of graduate degrees. This survey yielded some surprising results:

- Programs use a variety of different models to organize graduate student advising. Some have one advisor who takes care of all students; some distribute the load among multiple advisors (usually faculty); and some take a hybrid approach, starting all new students with a central advisor before handing them off to faculty for the later stages of their graduate career.
- Some programs hold an orientation for new incoming students, but not all do. Of the 55 programs surveyed, only 30 hold a mandatory orientation every year; 4 others have an optional event.
- Some programs reach out to students at the point of admission, but not all do. 28 out of 55 surveyed programs send students a letter at the point of admission to give them important information about their first steps (like who their advisor is!); the remainder do not.
- Very few programs monitor student progress systematically. Only 9 out of the 55 surveyed programs have a system in place for checking student progress on a regular basis, either annually or every semester.
- Very few programs connect registration with advising, leaving students largely on their own in registering for their classes. Out of the 55 surveyed programs, only 7 require contact with an

advisor prior to registration. Another 8 did so for certain portions of their program (usually thesis hours, or for their very first semester). The remainder had no connection at all.

- Only a few programs have written guidelines for students in the form of a handbook or course planning guide. 14 out of the 55 programs have a handbook or some other kind of written guidance given to students, although as of Spring 2013 several other programs were considering developing such materials.

In short, we have a broad range of outcomes for graduate students – some are succeeding and some are not. We also have a broad range of experiences those students encounter in their programs at Wright State, ranging from strong and well-organized mentoring and guidance to sink-or-swim apathy.

With the new emphasis by the Faculty Senate on success for all student populations, now is an excellent time to develop a campus-wide approach to graduate student advising. Such an initiative cannot provide one-size-fits-all solutions, but it should develop and uphold principles and shared expectations for all programs, as well as providing resources to help graduate programs and faculty improve their advising efforts and to help graduate students navigate the complexities of their advanced degree programs.

## **Strategic Vision: A Framework for Graduate Student Success**

### ***1. Advising: The Heart of the Graduate Student Experience***

Enormous effort and resources have gone into building and refining advising systems for undergraduates. The university has an entire unit (University College) devoted to advising, major software systems designed to provide advisors with the tools they need, and every college has a dedicated staff of undergraduate advisors. None of this is replicated at the graduate level; graduate programs have been left to their own devices to advise their students (or not) as they see fit.

But while courses and mentored research are the core of a graduate student's academic curriculum, how that curriculum is constructed and how a student moves through it can make all the difference between success and failure. The greatest classes and the most inspiring faculty will do a student little good if she takes courses out of sequence, or takes the wrong courses. Graduate programs are currently completely on their own with regards to how advising is done, when students are advised and by whom, and what the goals and standards of advising are.

Graduate students need to be advised by people who are experts in the fields they are studying, something no central advising office could replicate – in that sense, we cannot simply replicate the undergraduate

model. Moreover, many graduate programs are highly flexible and customizable, again requiring a high degree of expertise in the field and how the program works.

What can and should happen at the university-wide level is the establishment of standards and principles and the provision of resources and guidance to graduate programs to live up to those standards:

• **Setting Standards:** While no two graduate programs will be exactly alike, it makes sense for the graduate faculty as a whole to establish minimum standards for graduate advising systems. Such standards should be approved by the Graduate Council and incorporated into the Policy Manual. They should also be incorporated into the Graduate Program Directors' Handbook, a periodic publication/resource put out by the Graduate School to those who run graduate programs. Some standards could include:

- All graduate programs could be required to have a **written set of Guidelines or a Handbook** for their program. This document should be aligned with the Graduate Policies & Procedures Manual, and should be made accessible to all graduate students both through Orientation (see below) and by publication on the program or department's website.
- All graduate programs should **assign an advisor** to every graduate student upon entrance to the program. That assignment should be communicated clearly and entered into Banner.
- Graduate programs should be encouraged (or required) to offer **new student orientations** to incoming graduate students. A little over ½ of all graduate programs provide these now. The substance of these orientations will of necessity be program-specific, but the Graduate School can provide input and resources for university-wide concerns (graduate policies & procedures, research conduct expectations, etc.)
- Standard **guidelines for the conduct of advising** should be developed. These could include frequency of meetings/contacts between students and advisors, tracking expectations with regard to student progress, expectations for timely grading of ongoing thesis/dissertation/project courses, and documenting and reporting changes to a student's Program of Study. Advisors should have access to the tools in WINGS and WINGS Express (or future portals as appropriate) needed to get information about their advisees. The Graduate School should conduct periodic, mandatory training (see below) to insure that faculty advisors are appropriately equipped to the task of advising.
- Programs should have in place **systems to track the progress of all of their graduate students**, along with monitoring of registration and progress to insure that students don't "fall through the cracks".
- All students should have a **program of study signed and on file within their first one or two semesters**. At present, some programs are not filing programs of study for students until their final semester, which is problematic for a host of reasons.

• **Providing Resources and Guidance:** As the central administrative office charged with supporting graduate programs across campus, the Graduate School should work with graduate programs to help them bring their advising systems in line with standards and best practices. This can include one-on-one work with program directors and chairs, review of program-level handbooks and publications, and conducting on-campus workshops and conferences on graduate student advising. It may even be useful to bring in outside experts to participate in such conferences and bring fresh perspectives to the question of advising.

- The Graduate School should provide **periodic workshops for new and continuing graduate advisors** (faculty and staff). These should be mandatory for faculty who are going to be advisors of record, but made available more broadly to faculty and staff who will be working with graduate students. These workshops should cover the standards as developed (see above). Participation should be tracked, and faculty who have not participated may lose their privileges to serve as primary advisors to graduate students (see below).
- The Graduate School should compile a **list of faculty and staff engaged in graduate student advising**, and update this list periodically. All members of this list should have access to the necessary resources, including workshops, policy manuals and handbooks, and access to the advising functions in WINGS/WINGS Express.
- The Graduate School should insure that **every graduate student has been assigned an advisor** primarily responsible for that student's progress in the program. This information should be recorded somewhere, preferably in the Advisor field in Banner.
- Processes for developing and modifying Programs of Study should be updated. The current paper process is cumbersome and too easy to miss. The Graduate School should develop an **online Program of Study form** to feed into a database, as well as a POS Change form that advisors can use to make modifications.

• **Policy Enforcement**: Standards are only as good as the enforcement mechanisms that exist to implement them. While much of the best work around advising will be voluntary and collaborative, the university community should anticipate the need to impose consequences on programs that refuse to abide by policies and standards. This could include a reduction or loss of Graduation Tuition Scholarship (GTS) funds in future years for programs found to be out of compliance.

- Enforcement should begin with data gathering on key bottleneck behaviors (grade changes for thesis hours, for example). Where the data demonstrate a problem, the Graduate School should first alert the department to the problem and work with the departmental leadership to find a solution. Unresolved problems may need to involve the college/school Dean.
- Enforcement of advising standards for individual faculty advisors could be extended to Graduate Faculty status, which could be jeopardized for faculty who are far out of line with the criteria over time.
- Adherence to policy and advising standards for programs should extend to future allocations of GTS and other scholarship funds.

## ***2. Solving Student Problems: Filling in the Cracks***

At present the Graduate School is often (though not always) the recipient of various kinds of complaints from students. Too frequently we don't get these complaints until things have gone *very* wrong within the student's program – the student hasn't talked to his or her advisor in years (if ever), or has taken the wrong classes, or has missed a series of deadlines. Some students turn to the Graduate School because they don't know where else to go. Others, we suspect, simply fall through the cracks and wander off.

The solution to this: establish the Graduate School as *the* go-to source for graduate students encountering problems. Aim to provide top-quality problem-solving services of the kind rarely found in universities. Get out in front of problems and provide resources to students early to prevent some of the more common issues. Specific actions in this area could include:

- Organize and run a Welcome & Orientation for Graduate Students: In recent years we have gotten away from running orientations, pushing them from in-person to online formats. It is time to reconsider this direction and think of ways to reach out to new incoming graduate students “early and often” to welcome them to campus and provide them with important resources to help them navigate through their time here. Such an event should also point to orientations held by individual programs (see above) and provide general expectations for graduate students across programs.
- Advertise the Graduate School as the Problem Solving Office: Rather than remaining in the background as the “paper processors”, we need to get the message out to graduate students that the Graduate School is a resource to go to for help when they can’t get what they need from their graduate program. This would serve as a backstop to what the graduate programs are doing and help keep students from falling through the cracks at the program level.
- Research the Most Common Problems and Develop Scalable Solutions: While every student’s situation seems unique, frequently the problems they encounter run in clusters. To have the greatest impact, the Graduate School should go beyond solving problems one at a time to cataloging and researching the most common problems and developing systemic solutions or prevention efforts that can help large numbers of students.

**International Collaborations and Graduate Programs  
International Student Success Issues and Proposed Solutions  
February, 2015**

The newly expanded CECS Office of International Collaborations and Graduate Programs (ICGP) has a mandate to improve international student success. We are currently developing strategies to achieve the following objectives within CECS:

- Improve the quality of incoming international students
- Increase the diversity of incoming international students
- Improve the educational experience for all students, faculty, and staff
- Provide increased opportunities for international research collaborations

All of these objectives are dependent upon the success of current international students. Continued attention will be needed to identify problems, implement solutions, and evaluate the success of those solutions. At this time, ICGP has identified a preliminary list of issues and some proposed solutions.

The staff of ICGP, particularly Ms. Swapna Nair and Ms. Elizabeth Generas, have extensive contact with current international students. Many of the issues and proposed solutions identified herein are based on direct input from those students.

We are operating under the assumption that students are more successful when they feel they are an integral part of the student body within their own college. CECS has seen rapid increases in its international student population in recent years, and there is a perception that this population has not been fully integrated into the life of CECS. Therefore, many of the proposed solutions focus on improving that integration.

1. *Faculty/Staff/Student Rapport*

- a. **Event Attendance:** One way to improve rapport is for faculty and staff to interact with international students during cultural events on campus. Students appreciate seeing faculty at events, and they notice the faculty that get involved. Only a small time commitment is required on the faculty side, but it would increase their visibility and approachability. Recent events that have been attended by faculty include Diwali and Chinese New Year. Faculty should be encouraged to support these and other events in greater numbers.

Proposed Solutions –

- a. Have students involved in events invite faculty personally; students will increase their communication skills with professors, and faculty will feel invited and welcomed at events.
- b. Develop and promote events that will be attractive to all students, domestic as well as international, and encourage all faculty, staff, and students to attend. ICGP has been pursuing this strategy, increasing CECS participation in Raidersgiving and Chinese New Year and offering a new event for Martin Luther King Day.

## 2. *Academic Integrity*

- a. Plagiarism/cheating: Although cheating and plagiarism has always been a problem on college campuses, a number of factors seem to lead to increased cheating and plagiarism among international students. These factors include the following:
  - i. Lack of understanding of academic expectations in the U.S. college environment.
  - ii. Lack of proficiency in English, which leads some students to believe that the only way to succeed is through cheating.
  - iii. Pressure students feel from their families at home to be successful.
  - iv. Cultural differences that may leave some students confused about the line between appropriate help from peers and cheating.

### Proposed Solutions -

- a. Modules within the LEAP PILOT course to show students how to complete work correctly.
- b. Samples of real cases of cheating, including the papers turned in and the consequences.
- c. Assistance with citing sources; offering open clinics/workshops or encouraging TA office hours specifically to check citation of sources.
- d. Ms. Alysoun Taylor-Hall of the MME Department and Mr. Phil Flynn of the Dunbar Library are currently offering a workshop focused on correct integration and citation of sources. The workshop, Get Your Cite Right for Engineers, was developed with the needs of international students in mind and is currently offered to EGR 3350 students. Reviews have been very positive. The model Ms. Taylor-Hall and Mr. Flynn have developed is intended to be adaptable for different audiences with different course needs. This workshop should be adapted and offered to all students who need it.
- e. Faculty should adhere strictly to college-driven guidelines to prevent cheating. Requiring online sections to come to campus for tests does cause some difficulty for students, but it also allows a tight control of the test environment. Other steps should include general observations in class and lab, paying attention to identical submissions, and using software tools to identify plagiarism. Faculty in the college should be encouraged to use formal reporting procedures for all violations.

## 3. *Career Help*

- a. Job skills – Resumes, cover letters, applications
- b. Internships – where, when, how

### Proposed Solutions –

- a. Encourage students to use Career Services by better publicizing their events.
- b. Workshops going over ‘how to’ for CECS students – job and field specific for Engineering.
- c. Introduce students to Sheryl and Jess in the Brandeberry Career Center; give them a face and a name in a public workshop to allow them to meet students and let them know they exist as a resource.
- d. Bring back recent graduates to talk about their experience with OPT, give advice, and answer questions.

## 4. *Entertainment*

- a. Physical – not very many outdoor spaces to play
- b. Limited indoor spaces – not enough pool tables, ping pong

- c. Events- recent events were 'boring' and 'poorly planned'
- d. Student orgs - Student orgs are expansive and poorly advertised

Proposed Solutions –

- a. Ask recreation to develop clinics to help international students learn the ropes for U.S. sporting activities: short monthly instructional classes that would be structured like fitness classes but focus rules of sports: how to play basketball, American football, etc.
- b. Establish a gaming room. It could be good publicity for CECS to invest in a gaming room for computer/console games: a few TVs mounted with a few consoles for playing games. A computer lab could possibly be used on weekends for "LAN" parties playing a common game, similar to the study lounge but for relaxing and playing games. A dedicated room would be the ideal, but any attempt or space would be appreciated. Hours on weekends would be limited to avoid distracting from studies.
- c. Increased activities and events – organize events for students; involve students in the organization of events and have them take ownership.
- d. Encourage Office of Activities to publicize events more widely and encourage use of OrgSync to explore events and clubs.



## Fall 2014 CECS International Graduate Student Reception

- **Venue: 120 Medical Science Auditorium**
- **Date: 20 August 2014**
- **Time :** All CECS new international graduate students check in followed by box breakfast
- **Welcome speech introducing our speakers to students at 9 am**
- Welcome speech by Dean Dr. Nathan Klingbeil CECS, 9:15am
- Introduction by Dr. Lang Hong Executive Director WSIG, 9:30 am
- Introduction by Ms. Michelle Streeter Ferrari, Director UCIE, 9:45 am
- Introduction by Bradeberry Career Development Center: Ms. Sheryl Kent/Jessica Melita, 10am
- Academic Integrity:- CECS based on the Ethics course a technical spin to the concept of academic integrity by Mr. Dave Kender, 10:15 am
- **10:30- 12pm Departmental Orientations**

- ✚ **Computer Science and Engineering location Russ 144,**
- ✚ **Biomedical,Industrial and Humanfactors Engineering location 127 Medical Science building**
- ✚ **Mechanical and Material Engineering location 143 Medical Science building**

All arrangements will be made for every department in the classes. This session is for departments to walk their students through class registrations, GPA rules, probation, recommended credit hour load for a graduate student, class pre requisites, academic integrity policies, any other departmental rules, and policies can be covered to set the standards and expectations.

- ✚ **10:30-12pm (120 Medical Science Auditorium : Interactive session for Electrical department students and all students intending major changes):** We plan to have this optional concurrent session for any student who is undecided and is thinking of major changes. In this interactive session faculty representation from every department can talk and connect to the students. They can educate the students about their program and also cover topic like "**Are you ready for the program requirements**". This might be actually very creative way to educate our students and setting expectations in College of Engineering and Computer Science.

### **Speakers:**

- Dr. Prateek Parikh - IHE 10:30 am to 10:40 am
  - Dr. Mary Fendley,/Dr. Frank Ciarallo - HFE 10:40 am -10:50 am
  - Dr.Ping He- BME 10:40 am -10:50 am
  - Dr.Sharmila Mukhopadhyay -ME 10:50 am -11am
  - Dr.James Menart- Materials Science 11 am- 11:10 am
  - Dr. Brian Rigling-EE 11:10 am - 11:30
  - Mechanical : TBD 11:30 to 11:40 am
  - Dr.TK Prasad- 11:45 am- 12pm
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- 12pm- Lunch in Russ lobby (we also have booked adjoining class rooms **Russ 144 , 145 and 146 Russ**)
  - **1-4:30 Electrical Engineering Orientation location Oleman hall 109** and class registrations for cohort and regular. Arrangements been taken care by our EE.

**Outline of Content for International CECS Graduate Student Success Modules**

<p><b>Module 1 – Academic Success Strategies (LEAP; Catherine Crowley)</b>  <b>Approximate length: 3 hours</b></p> <p>Classroom Etiquette (classroom communication and expectations, participating in discussions, addressing instructors)                  Course Intro (including log on Pilot locate and understand classroom syllabus and policies)                  Group work (real world engineering problem; reading strategies, problem solving discussion and reporting)                  Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism                  Report writing and Peer Review (writing strategies in classroom contexts)                  Homework (strategies and requirements—students submit a short homework to Pilot)                  Assessment (self assessment; teacher assessment; discussions about grades)</p>
<p><b>Module 2 – Visa &amp; Staying in Status Issues (UCIE; Jonathon Henderson)</b>  <b>Approximate length: 1 hour</b></p> <p>F1/J1 visas – basic structure of what to do to stay in status                  RCL form (thesis hours)                  Working on campus (# of hours; not off campus)                  Travel outside the country                  Online courses versus in-class courses                  Academic probation and how it affects academic status (unlawful stay)                  Dismissed students (petition/transfer process)</p>
<p><b>Module 3 – Professional Communication &amp; Success (CECS; Swapna Nair)</b>  <b>Approximate length: 2 hours</b></p> <p>Learn and practice principles of good oral and written communication                  Pragmatic strategies in a global work environment                  Listen, speak and write effective emails, telephonic follow-ups to increase your productivity, competence and confidence in a professional environment                  Creating resumes/CVs, getting references, letters of support, etc.                  Verbal and nonverbal communication; formal collegiate etiquette                  Ownership vs Responsibility                  Fearless speaking. Unlock potential as a leader. Transform anxiety to energy with grace and humor.</p>
<p><b>Module 4 – Career/OPT/Internship Information (WSIG; Phani Kidambi)</b>  <b>Approximate length: 4 hours</b></p> <p>What is an internship? When and how to start looking.                  CPT vs OPT                  What is HIB? HIB stats over the years                  EB1 vs EB2 vs EB3                  Consulting vs full-time                  LinkedIn and other job/career forums                  What happens if you don't get H1?                  Is a PhD right for you? PhD vs MS                  Academia vs Industry trends                  Typical pays</p>