

Support and Retention of International Students, an At-Risk Group: Partnering Across Campus





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Kansas State University English Language Program



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Presentation Outline

- **Research of international students as an at-risk group**
- **English Language Program Student Services**
 - **In House Advising**
 - **Partnerships**
- **Audience sharing ideas in small groups**
- **Q&A**

Research

Why should International Students be considered as At-Risk Students?

What defines an at risk student?

- *Socio-economic status*
- *Unrealistic goals*
- *Adult returners after long hiatus*
- *Cultural barriers*
- *Language barriers*
- *Access to student support services*
- *Travel time and costs*
- *Weak self concept*

1. Performance

- “[...] International students are not achieving as well as their local counterparts, in fact are failing much more readily, seemingly because of lack of the requisite English language skills” (Paton, pg. 20).

2. Adaptation

- “International students come from a vast range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. While it is easy to document the first language and country of origin of overseas students, what is not so obvious is the nature of their previous educational experience; in particular the culture of learning to which they were accustomed in their home countries” (Baird & Dooley, 2012, pg. 102,)

3. Stress Management

- “In addition to adjusting to a new educational system and a new social environment, international students face unique sources of stress such as homesickness, culture shock, language barrier, financial difficulties, immigration requirements, racial discrimination, and strenuous academics (Xuesong Han, Xuemei Han, Luo, Jacobs, and Jean-Baptiste, 2013, pg. 1).”

ELP History

- *Growth of program: Number of students*

1986	2005	2009	2015
38	70	485	297

- *Faculty: 2 full time and 2 part time in 1986
47 full time in 2015*

Demographics

- *Chinese and Saudi*
- *Ecuadorian and Brazilian (special programs)*
- *80% of our students come admitted to the university*
- *10% come for English only, then get admission*
- *10% are on exchange or are spouses, etc.*

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Phillips-Zee**
Instructor/Advisor



ELP Student Services Team

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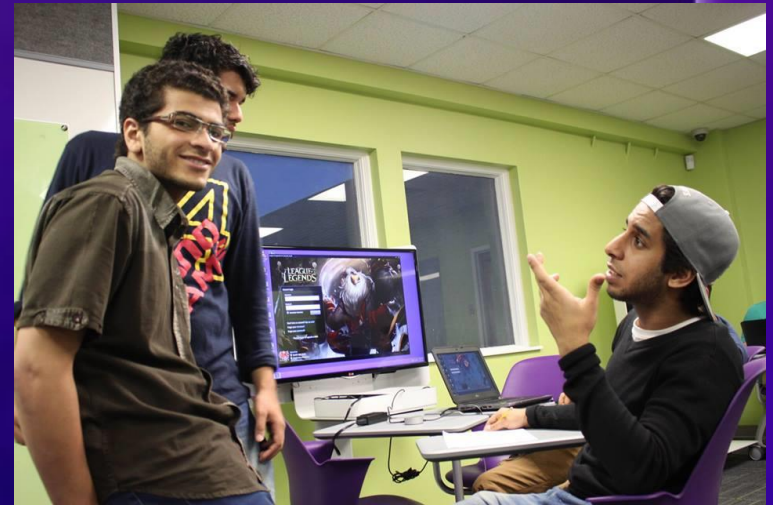


**Simone
Willert**
Office Manager



In House Advising

- Orientation Classes
- Advising Appointments
- TOWARD class
- Social Hangout
- Awards Ceremony



Orientation Class Rationale

- Both orientation classes are semester long courses
- Many programs provide a week-long orientation
- We have developed these two orientation classes to aide in the transition that students have to make when coming to the United States.

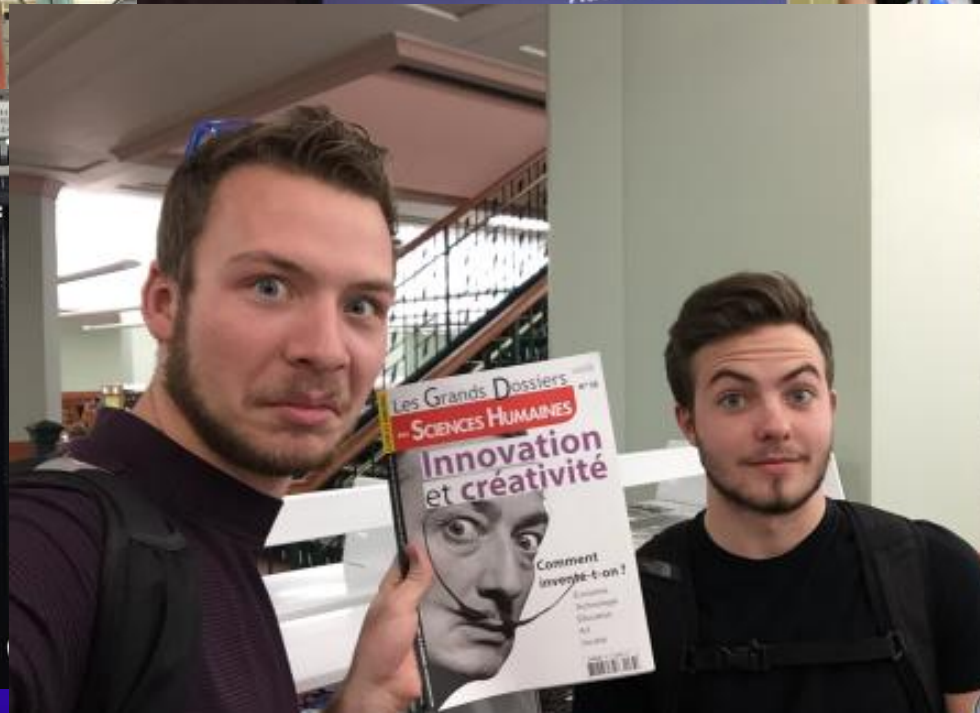
Basic ELP Orientation

- High beginning through low intermediate international students
- Basic information such as ELP grading process and scheduling information
- ELP faculty present on plagiarism, motivation, and organizational skills.

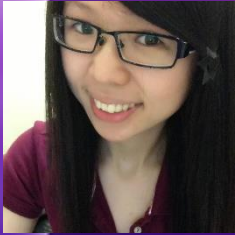


Student Worker Contribution

- Take attendance
- Assist students on an individual basis
- Individual lessons with students for make-up classes
- Presentations on sports in the USA and a digital library tour
- They build relationships with the students



Student Workers (Contd)



Jia Li: Mandarin, Malay, Cantonese
China, Singapore, Cambodia, and Japan



Julie: Portuguese
Traveled to and studied in Brazil
Putnam Scholarship, Kansas Music Scholarship



Mauricio: Spanish
Vice President of International Buddies

Student Workers (Contd)



Nick: Portuguese, Spanish

Brazil, Philippines, study abroad in Australia

Presidential award for study abroad



Ronnie: Spanish

Study abroad in Spain, Japan, and Taiwan, taught English in Mexico

Truman Scholarship Nominee, Cargill Global Scholar, College of Agriculture Scholarships, McKelvie Public Service Scholarship

ELP Student Services



Orientation to Higher Education

- Emphasize cultural and academic understanding
- Develop effective academic and life skills
- Provide student-instructor and student-student interaction in English

Orientation to Higher Education

- Cover an array of topics that students will need to understand while at KSU.
- Topics include:
 - GPA and grades
 - Academic Integrity
 - Legal Issues
 - Career Services
 - Stress Management
 - I-20s and Travel

Travel Project for Orientation to Higher Education

- Students get into groups and sign up for a destination of their choice.
- Each person in the group is responsible for one of the following:
 - Travel (airfare and/or car rental)
 - Research (historical importance, facts, etc)
 - Places to see and things to do (monuments, sights, etc)
 - Food and hotel (find local restaurants)
- The PowerPoint is worth 20 points.
- The purpose of the project is to expose students to group work , money management, safety, and to practice citing sources.

Advising Appointments

- Connected to Orientation classes
- Every new student at all levels meets with an advisor during their first semester
- They will meet with an advisor again in higher levels when they take upper level orientation

Advising Appointments (contd.)

- Gather information about student's well-being
- Early intervention
- Check on grades
- Offer support
- Each student will have a face in the ELP that they can relate to

TOWARD Class for Reinstated Students

- Students who are reinstated have had three semesters of nonperformance
- Training in organization, wellness, academics, responsibility and discipline
- Twice a week, 2 credit hours, graded class
- Students from all levels (beginning to advanced)
- Taught at the ITC – individual computer access and printing work

TOWARD - Organization

- **Calendar –input test dates and major assignments**
- **Checking K-State Email**
- **Help students stay on track**

TOWARD - Wellness

- Physical/mental wellness - includes exercise classes and Social Hangout participation
- Visiting speaker from Lafene Health Center to talk about wellness topics such as importance of sleeping, medicines and vaccinations.



TOWARD - Academics

- 24 study skills classes in a semester
- They are not learning anything new, but reviewing material
- Self-motivated students – general monitoring
- Less-motivated students – more supervision

TOWARD – Responsibility & Discipline

- ACIC - Academic and Career Information Center
– students do a StrengthsQuest assessment –
matches your academics and interests to a career
- Group Challenge course at the Rec Center
- Responsibility to the group/team

Social Hangout

- Meet once every two weeks for two hours
- Practice English in a social setting and opportunity for social involvement
- Make new friends
- Learn about American culture and the culture of classmates
- Started in Fall of 2013
- Student worker participation

Social Hangout Activities



Awards Ceremony

- Faculty nominate students who they think show exceptional achievement in the ELP
- Winners are chosen from each level
- Certificates and gift bags are presented to the winners



Awards Ceremony Contd.

- Associate Provost and directors of International Programs, provosts and deans from different colleges, and ELP faculty are invited to ceremony.
- We rent a large theatre hall in student union for this event.



Partnerships

- University class audit – list of large lecture classes for students to visit
- Housing and Dining, Counseling Services, Office of Student Life and the Student Health Center
- Missing Student Protocol in tandem with the Office of Student Life
- Pre-enrollment – deans and student advisors to pre-enroll

Group Activity

- *Get into small groups*
- *Discuss one creative and successful thing that your program does for student support*
- *Share ideas with everyone*

Q & A

http://www.k-state.edu/elp/professional_presentations/

Resources

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