

“Strategies for Assisting International and/or ESL Students Enrolled in Your Courses”

Workshop sponsored by The Committee for the Support of Teaching – October 14, 2010

Components presented by David C. Elwell, Director, International Students and Scholars Office

Seeking Help

- How is seeking out help viewed in the student’s culture
 - perceived as “Weak”
 - Responsibility is shown by solving issues on one’s own
- Resources at Brandeis
 - On the Academic Side
 - professor, teaching assistant,
 - Academic Services (www.brandeis.edu/acserv)
 - Academic Services Class Advisor, Roosevelt Fellow, ESL, ISSO, Brandeis University Group Study (BUGS), peer tutors
 - Academic Accommodations for Student with Disabilities – Beth Rodgers-Kay in Academic Services (<http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/disabilities/index.html>)
 - or international students who may have a disability that can affect their academic performance, they may not have been diagnosed before or they may not have had proper support in high school to identify/provide needed accommodations (stigma attached may have prevented student in seeking help; there may have not been resources available)
 - Student Life – Deans, Office of Community Living
 - ESL Program
 - Counseling Center – increased focus on support for international students
 - Plethora of resources (the “web” of advising) is a Brandeis strength, but may be seen as overwhelming by some students not used to having such a support network

STRATEGY -- provide contact information in the syllabus that outlines these resources and easy ways to contact them (email, phone, open office hours if possible). Have a student share a positive experience in utilizing these resources, or have the resource come in to say a few words at the beginning of a class meeting.

Is Attending a U.S. High School a Key to Success?

- International Students who attended high school in the U.S. are not necessarily prepared in reading level or writing proficiency when they arrive at Brandeis
 - with competition for top schools in home country, families view attending high school in the U.S. (tend to be private boarding schools) as providing students with best opportunity for admission to top U.S. colleges/universities
 - we actually see a lot of adjustment struggles for students who went to high school in U.S.
 - while we assume that they have adjusted to the American-style classroom structure, that has shown not always to be the case (class participation, connection with faculty member)
 - may struggle going from a small class environment (around a Harkness table) to a comparatively larger class environment (even 30 students in a class may seem large)
 - feel that writing, English, or composition courses are a waste of time – “I’ve already done this”

STRATEGY – important to reach out to students early, as you see performance concerns (writing, testing), to utilize support resources available, and that unexpected challenges are faced by American and International students alike (e.g. Composition courses) – for example, writing a research paper for a university professor.

Parents

- increased involvement in many aspects (similar to American families)
- demand for high performance, specific major/career track

International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)

The International Students and Scholars Office assists international undergraduate and graduate students, international faculty, researchers and visitors, and their families, throughout their entire stay at Brandeis University – from prior to their arrival, to their adjustment on campus and to U.S. culture, as well as after they have completed their programs. The ISSO provides advice, counsel, and programming on academic, visa/immigration, financial, and personal issues that may impact their stay at Brandeis and in the U.S. Advising occurs with individual meetings with ISSO staff, weekly workshop or orientation sessions, as well as through web resources.

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ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010

Undergraduate International Students:	319
Graduate International Students:	704
Graduated students on Practical/Academic Training	228
International Scholars (Faculty, Researchers, Staff):	225
Total Countries Represented (Students & Scholars):	116
Total Countries Represented (Undergraduate Only):	53

TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS: 1,476

Top 10 Countries (Undergraduate Students)

Republic of Korea	72
P.R. China	54
India	27
France	18
Turkey	15
Israel	13
Japan	7
United Kingdom	6
Thailand	6
Pakistan	5

Top 11 Countries (Graduate Students)

P.R. China	149
India	62
Taiwan	32
France	24
Turkey	22
Korea	20
Israel	20
Canada	19
Vietnam	16
Kenya	15
Nepal	15

Brandeis International Student Enrollment (statistical comparison – Fall 1999-Fall 2009)

Academic Year	2009-2010	UG = 317	GR = 693
	2008-2009	UG = 248	GR = 636
	2007-2008	UG = 243	GR = 580
	2003-2004	UG = 216	GR = 466
	1999-2000	UG = 157	GR = 385