Supporting Chinese International Students

International Student Services
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Framing Inclusion

Working assumptions
- All teachers & learners
- “Neutral” can feel negative
- Goal: opening up spaces for engagement

In this space
- Privacy and levels of disclosure
- Permission to be unpolished
- Space for all levels of learning
Agenda

• Why Chinese students
• Educational background of Chinese students
• Challenges Chinese students face
• Tips for working with Chinese students
• Case study
# UW-Madison Enrollment Report
## Fall 2017-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Total (including specials and professionals)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UW-Madison</td>
<td>29,931</td>
<td>8,952</td>
<td>43,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students</td>
<td>3,107</td>
<td>2,827</td>
<td>6,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese students</td>
<td>1,661</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>3,028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian Students</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FAMILY GROUP ROLE

OUTSIDE FORCES

POSITION

FACE

EDUCATION

POLITICAL SOCIAL CHAOS

NATURAL SCARCITY

STABILITY

GUANXI
A Typical Day

- Teacher centered
- Students expect teachers to initiate communication
- Students expect teachers to outline paths
- Students only speak up when called on by the teacher
Chinese International Student Challenges

Academic

Linguistic

Sociocultural

Psychological
Academic Issues

- Academic Performance
- Working with Peers
- Interacting with Professors
- Plagiarism
Lack of Skills?

- Lack of ability to express thoughts verbally in English
- Reluctant to:
  - Ask questions/Not having questions
  - Express opinion/Not having an opinion
  - Ask for help/Not thinking one needs help
- Fear of making mistakes
- Misunderstanding of common academic/administrative terms
- Different dynamic of professor/student relationship

Lack of Support?
Lack of understanding of academic integrity guidelines
Lack of knowledge regarding the utilization of support services available
Lack of understanding of plagiarism consequences

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fv4U_ApEi6w
Linguistic Issues

• Insufficient language skills
• Lack of understanding of the cultural context
• Lack of understanding of colloquialisms
• Lack of understanding of rapid English, accented English, intonations
• Negative impact on confidence in interacting with professors, staff, and peers
Psychological Issues

Internal
- Homesickness
- “Family withdrawals”
- Self-authorship/Identity issues
- Stress
- Feeling of incompetence
- Mental health issues

External
- Prejudice
- Lack of social interaction
- Pressure from parents
- Financial pressure
- Culture adjustment
Sociocultural Issues

• Cultural differences and expectations
• Prejudice
• Self-segregation
• Fear of being misunderstood/making mistakes
• Lack of ability to build meaningful connections
Chinese International Student Challenges

Group discussion:

1. Where do you see these challenges coming up in your work with Chinese students?

2. Knowing these challenges, what ideas do you have for supporting your advisees?
Interacting Effectively with Chinese Students

Basic Guidelines

1. Structure stable, Roles clear, Source credible, Relationships strong
2. Visual (chart, drawing, diagram, photograph)
3. Concrete, hands-on, situation specific
4. Real time, real life experience. Repetition
5. Metaphor
6. Example, story (especially personal)
7. Provide model (role model, mock-up, prototype)
8. Plan for discussion in Mandarin (to clarify, “anchor”)
9. 仁 = 2 people, Basic value in Confucianism. Rapport and personal relationship is significant.

Prepared by George Renwick, Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication, 2017

NOT:
- Abstract concepts
- Written explanations, instructions
- Manuals
- Statements of standards
- Lists of requirements
- Contracts
Powerful Advising Phrases

1. How are you feeling today?
2. It is a common concern.
3. …is hard. (Studying abroad is hard. UW-Madison is hard.)
4. You are doing the right thing.
   You are asking the right questions.
5. I encourage you to...
6. Can you tell me your next steps?

Adapted from Kaitlin Loomis’ presentation at NAFSA Region V, 2017
Case Study

A Chinese sophomore attended his chemistry class for 3 weeks. After the first exam, the student stopped coming to class for two weeks. The professor reached out to the student. The student did not respond. The professor then reached out to you, the advisor.

How would you reach out to support the student?

What cultural considerations would you make?

When the student comes in to meet with you, he shares the semester has been difficult. Student would like to switch majors, but feels pressure to continue on same path from his family. Student fears he will not do well in his chemistry class.

How would you respond?
“I’VE LEARNED THAT PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU SAID, PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU DID, BUT PEOPLE WILL NEVER FORGET HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.”

-Maya Angelou