



AIEA GRADUATE STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

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1. Tell us a little about yourself, including your current degree program and hometown.

I'm Yukun Chen, and I am originally from China. My academic journey began in 2009 as an international student. I earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Georgia Southwestern State University and pursued an MBA there. Later, I completed my master of science degree in finance at George Washington University, USA. Presently, I'm engaged in a Ph.D. program in finance at Universiti Putra Malaysia, continuing my passion for academia and finance.

2. What was the most important reason for choosing your current degree program?

My decision to pursue a Ph.D. in finance was primarily driven by career aspirations. I aim to secure an academic faculty position, and obtaining a Ph.D. is a requisite step towards this goal. The program provides the necessary academic rigor and research opportunities that align with my professional objectives. It's an essential step in achieving my ambition of contributing to academia as a faculty member, with a chance to influence future generations of students in the field of finance.

3. Internationalization looks different on each campus. What does "internationalization" mean to you? How does it manifest on your campus?

To me, "internationalization" encompasses a broad spectrum of elements: a diverse international student body, myriad international study programs, dedicated support services for international students (like visa assistance and internship opportunities), and the availability of international visitation programs. It also includes faculty exchanges and global collaborations with overseas institutions. At Universiti Putra Malaysia, these aspects are excellently implemented, as evidenced by the presence of over 7,000 international students and various opportunities for global engagement facilitated by the university.





4. What has been the most transformative and rewarding international or intercultural experience for you during your current course of study?

My most transformative experience at Universiti Putra Malaysia has been witnessing the emphasis on international collaboration and research. The School of Business and Economics, my academic home, strives for excellence, reflected in its AACSB and EQUIS accreditations. The university's significant investment in achieving these accreditations has greatly benefited us, the students. We regularly interact with international faculty members and participate in workshops led by experts from renowned institutions. This exposure has been invaluable, bringing a global perspective right to our doorstep.

5. What are some of the biggest challenges facing internationalization at university campuses as seen through the lens of graduate students? What solutions might you offer to these challenges?

A major challenge in internationalization at the university level is the varying degrees of emphasis placed on it by university leadership. Often, internationalization isn't prioritized alongside other developmental aspects of the institution. This lack of focus can hinder the execution of complex international initiatives, as they require substantial support from the leadership. My suggestion is for university leaders to value internationalization as an integral part of their strategic planning, ensuring that it receives the necessary attention and resources for significant developments in international engagement.

6. What are some key ways that higher education administrators or faculty members might increase international and intercultural experiences on campuses?

One effective strategy for enhancing international experiences on campus is increasing the international student body. This direct approach fosters a diverse and globally minded campus environment. Additionally, inviting international visiting scholars can enrich the academic experience. Establishing international collaboration channels is another key method, allowing for the exchange of students and faculty members, even if only for short-term engagements. University administrators should recognize that the rewards of international collaboration





often manifest in the long term, and thus, they should be prepared to invest in and prioritize these initiatives without expecting immediate returns. Encouraging faculty to engage in international research and partnerships can also play a crucial role in this endeavor. These efforts not only broaden the university's global footprint but also provide students with a more comprehensive and diverse educational experience.

7. Any additional comments??

In conclusion, internationalization is a multifaceted and dynamic process that requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders within the university community. From fostering a diverse student body to encouraging faculty-led global initiatives, each aspect plays a crucial role in creating an enriching and globally inclusive academic environment. It's imperative that universities continue to evolve and adapt their strategies to meet the ever-changing demands of our interconnected world.

