

Strategies for International Student Success: Recruitment to Alumni

Location: Knoxville, TN

Dates: April 8-9, 2015

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Hosted by the University of Tennessee and the American International Recruitment Council (AIRC)

The Forum was an intensive, interactive workshop for individuals who wish to enhance their knowledge of the theory and practice behind developing programs to provide the best possible experience for international students from the “first touch” in recruitment to after they leave and become alumni. Over 1 ½ days, the Forum engaged experienced individuals to lead a sequential set of sessions designed to follow the path of a typical international student. Participants were encouraged to participate actively in all sessions and time will be set aside for questions and discussion. Six sessions include: 1) What does the data tell us? 2) Strategies for Successful Recruitment 3) Transition Strategies (Orientation Programs) 4) Integration and Support Strategies 5) International Student Retention: Theory, Data, and Strategies 6) Successful International Alumni Strategies.

Workshop leaders include: Dr. Pia Wood, University of Tennessee (Host); Mr. Richard Garrett, i-graduate; Dr. Darla Deardorff, AIEA; Dr. David di Maria, Montana State University; Dr. Mark Bryant, University of Tennessee; and Dr. Gretchen Dobson, Global Strategist.



LOCATION

University of Tennessee
Center for International
Education

1620 Melrose Avenue
Knoxville, TN

DATES

April 8-9, 2015

AIEA FORUM

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American International Recruitment Council (AIRC)

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- 1) What does the data tell us?
- 2) Strategies for Successful Recruitment
- 3) Transition Strategies (Orientation Programs)
- 4) Integration and Support Strategies
- 5) International Student Retention: Theory, Data, and Strategies
- 6) Successful International Alumni Strategies.

WORKSHOP LEADERS

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Dr. Pia Wood (Host)
University of Tennessee | • Dr. David di Maria
Montana State University |
| • Mr. Richard Garrett
i-graduate & Observatory on
Borderless Higher Education | • Dr. Mark Bryant
Baylor University |
| • Dr. Darla Deardorff
AIEA | • Dr. Gretchen Dobson
Global Strategist |

**For more information on schedule, speakers,
sessions, and application, visit:**

<http://ihouse.utk.edu/aiea-forum-2/>

Strategies for International Student Success: Recruitment to Alumni

April 8-9, 2015

An AIEA Regional Forum



Hosted by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the American International Recruitment Council (AIRC) with sponsorship from the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA)

Strategies for International Student Success: Recruitment to Alumni

Final Report

Our Approach

In the past 5-10 years, the interest in international student recruitment has increased significantly among many US institutions of higher education. The focus has not only been on degree-seeking students but also on exchange students, dual and joint degree programs, short-term students, etc. The reasons for this shift in emphasis are manifold and include achieving greater diversity in the student body, developing and enhancing foreign partnerships, and providing more opportunities for domestic students through exchange programs. The financial incentive of attracting international students (many pay out-of-state tuition) must also be acknowledged. With the growth in international recruitment efforts and the increased flow of international students, sometimes to campuses with limited experience with international students, greater attention is being paid to the need to develop specific (and different) support and outreach programs/activities.

The focus of the Forum was to provide an intensive, interactive workshop for individuals who wish to enhance their knowledge of the theory and practice behind developing programs to provide the best possible experience for international students from the “first touch” in recruitment to after they leave and become alumni. The Forum engaged experienced individuals to lead a sequential set of sessions designed to follow the path of a typical international student. Participants were encouraged to participate actively in all sessions and time was set aside for questions and discussion.

The Forum was designed for those individuals who have responsibility for more than one area involving international students (SIOs in many cases) and wish to expand their knowledge of other areas. However, faculty and staff who work with international students in a single area (office) will also find the Forum beneficial.

Participants from 26 Institutions and organizations participated in the Forum

Bowling Green University		University of Alabama
Bryant University	Liberty University	University of California-
Carson-Newman University	Lipscomb University	University of Georgia
Clemson University	Milligan College	University of New Orleans
Colorado State University	Old Dominion University	University of Tennessee
ELS Education Services	Roane State Community	University of Utah
Florida International University	College	Versation
International English Institute	St. Ambrose University	Virginia Commonwealth
International Studies	Sullivan University	University
Association	Pellissippi State Community	Western Carolina University
	College	

Forum Program

Session I: What does the Data tell us?

Leader: Mr. Richard Garrett, Director of Performance Analytics,
North America, i-graduate

Topics include: International student numbers in U.S. higher education- by sector, level, nationality, over time and compared to other countries, why do some students choose to study abroad, and why in the U.S.? How do they select specific schools? What can we say about long-term international demand for U.S. higher education? Engagement, completion and graduation data for international students. International student satisfaction data- why do some schools outperform others? How do U.S. schools compare to those in other countries? With which aspects of the experience are international students least satisfied? Which services are most valued?

Session II: Strategies for Successful Recruitment

Leader: Dr. Pia Wood, Associate Provost, University of Tennessee

Topics include: International Student Mobility Data, AIRC Standards and Best Practices, Strategies for International Recruitment including domestic initiatives, recruitment fairs, school visits, joint/dual degree programs, Foundation/Pathway Programs, Branch campuses, Agent Based Recruitment, Sponsored student recruitment, key sending countries and tips for recruitment, and the development of a Strategic Recruitment Plan.

Session III: Transition Strategies (Orientation Programs)

Leader: Dr. Mark Bryant, Assistant Director, University of Tennessee

Topics include: Strategies for integrating international students with university-wide orientation/new student welcome programs; online vs. face-to-face communication; connecting international students to campus and community resources; peer mentoring approaches using US students; strategies for addressing basic/immediate needs in order to create a “soft landing” for new international students; developing institutional identity with new international students.

Session IV: International Student Retention: Theory, Data and Strategies

Leader: Dr. David di Maria, Director of International Programs and Services,
Kent State University

Topics include: Overview of student retention theories; Application of retention theories to International enrollment management strategy; Review of research pertaining to international student persistence; Best practices in programming for international student success; Preparing faculty and staff to work with international students.

Session V: Integration and Support Strategies

Leader: Dr. Darla Deardorff, Executive Director, AIEA

Topics include: How different educational systems and academic experiences shape international student behavior in the US classroom, differences between domestic and international students in the classroom, strategies for faculties to use in the classroom to assist international students, types of training for faculty/staff to bring inter-cultural awareness, programming/activities outside the classroom to assist with integration and retention of international students.

Session VI: Successful International Alumni Strategies

Leader: Dr. Gretchen Dobson, Global Strategist

Topics include:

Part 1) Creating Awareness of Affinity and Support - International Alumni and the International Student Experience

International admissions volunteers - recruitment cycle (alumni and international students efforts)

International alumni and student transition - building community: summer send offs/holiday socials/ liaisons to families

International alumni supporting the student experience and retention- student activities and mentoring, alumni advisors

Part 2) Successful International Alumni Strategies: Mutually Reinforcing Online and Offline Models for Sustaining Participation

The First Three Years --- international young alumni and their role in the international student experience

Developing International Alumni Chapters and Affinity Groups

International Alumni Reunions - domestic and international annual

SUMMARY OF SESSION DIALOGUES

Session I

The session began with several key questions including “How does the US compare to other countries in terms of international student enrollment”, “Where is there scope for competitive advantage?”

Richard Garrett shared extensive data to demonstrate a number of important trends.

He pointed out that international students continued to prefer cities for study destinations and most choose top research universities, liberal arts colleges or select specialist schools. While international student enrollment has increased over the past few years, most of the increase has benefited “traditional” locations and institutions. Further he pointed out that international students’ decisions about where to study depends on a variety of factors including safety, cost of education, location, ease of getting a visa, program length, cost of living, and friends and family in-country. Three of the most important information sources are the school website, parents, and rankings. He concluded the session with an overview of the data from the International Student Barometer which surveys international students about their level of satisfaction across a variety of factors.

Session II

Dr. Pia Wood led the session on “Strategies for Successful Recruitment.” She began with a discussion about recent trends in international student enrollment world-wide and in the United States. Increases are occurring at both the undergraduate and graduate levels but one important change has been the faster growth of undergraduate enrollment. After an overview of the key sending countries, she outlines numerous recruitment strategies. They included arm-chair recruitment strategies (website, advertisement, purchased leads among others), recruiting international students domestically, recruitment fairs, sponsored students, dual and joint degree programs, foundation/pathway programs and agent based recruitment. The discussion on agent-based recruitment covered selection of agents, contract management, and student

satisfaction assessments. She ended the session with a discussion of key steps in developing a strategic recruitment plan.

Session III

Dr. Mark Bryant led the session on “Creating a Soft Landing: Strategies for Helping International Students Transition to Campus”. He began with the questions “What is a soft landing and why is it important?” and followed them with a discussion about how international students have many of the same issues as domestic students but also have to deal with differences in language and culture. This may include cultural distance from home, learning a second language, new food, lack of community, and communication differences. From the theoretical, Mark moved to discuss practical programs and activities to address some of the potential transition difficulties. He presented a series of programs/activities related to immigration check-in, orientation, advising and registration, social connections, campus and community familiarity, campus culture, and cultural adjustment.

Session IV

Dr. David di Maria led the session on “International Student Retention: Theory, Data, and Strategies.” He began the session with some key questions: “Is international student retention a concern?”; “How does the international student retention rate at your institutions compare with that of domestic students?”; “How does the retention rate vary across international student groups?” After introducing these questions, David gave an overview of student retention theories and discussed how they could be applied to international student retention. This was followed by a review of the research on international student persistence and a discussion of best practices in programming for international student retention and ways to help prepare faculty and staff to work with international students.

Session V

Dr. Darla Deardorff led the session on “Integration and Support Strategies in the Intercultural Classroom.” She began the session with several key discussion questions including: “What are the benefits and key challenges of having international students in the classroom?”, “What are some strategies and lessons learned in working successfully with international students in the classroom?” and “Why is it important to address intercultural competence at our institutions?” Discussion of the Iceberg concept of culture, cross-cultural communication styles, and definitions/framework of intercultural competence followed. Darla presented the Process Model of Intercultural Competence which led from the individual to Knowledge and Comprehensive, to Desired Internal Outcomes to Interaction to Desired External Outcome to Attitudes. She then moved on to discuss interculturally competent teaching and presented the group with some reflection questions about attitudes, knowledge, skills, Internal and External Outcomes. In addition, she talked about effective instructional strategies in intercultural development and gave the group a list of cross-cultural strategies/insights from instructors.

Session VI

Gretchen Dobson led the session on “Successful International Alumni Strategies.” She began with a discussion of the lifelong Alumni Relationship and identified the 5 “I’s” of outreach and engagement: Identify, Invite, Inform, Invest, and Impact. A number of opportunities to build brand early and often were discussed including using alumni for prospective international student recruitment, asking alumni to participate in summer send-offs, holiday socials and liaison to student families. Further she stressed that it was important to assess each institution’s readiness for success in 4 key areas: Leadership Support, Budget and Resources, Staffing, and Volunteers. Finally, assessment and evaluation were discussed. Key points were: establish measurements against mission/value and strategies, establish bench-mark and assess annually, capture alumni attitudes and perceptions about the programs, and determine value creation, and “tell the story and impact often.”

Breadth of administrative, faculty and professional staff roles at the Forum

Director

International Student Advisor

Coordinator of International Recruitment

Director of Intensive English Program

Executive Director

Academic Advisor

Director of Student Enrollment and Recruitment

Assistant Director for Business Services

Student Services Specialist

Executive Director of International Relations

Admissions Counselor

President

Research Associate

Communications Coordinator

US-Asia Mobility Coordinator

Operations Coordinator/Office Manager

International Enrollment Representative

Assistant Dean of Students

Graduate & Adult Admissions Representative for International Students

International Admissions Specialist

Great Job! Wonderful food! Great Location! Awesome Forum as a whole!

Short Biographies of Session Leaders

Dr. Gretchen Dobson, Global Strategist, Gretchen Dobson LLC

With over 22 years of experience in higher education and constituent relations, Dr. Gretchen Dobson is the leading global alumni relations consultant who develops international advancement programs for educational institutions and non-profit organizations around the world. Her specialty services include international alumni relations strategy, international alumni and academic partnerships, international student-alumni programs, and volunteer management for groups of all sizes and backgrounds. Dobson also provides professional coaching for international alumni relations, development, admissions and academic officers new to global engagement practices. Dobson received her B.A. and M.A. from Boston College, and her Ed.D. in Higher Education Management from the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. David L. di Maria

Dr. di Maria is the director of international programs and services at Kent State University. In this role, he oversees education abroad, international student & scholar offices and international admissions across Kent State's eight-campus system. Additionally, Dr. di Maria provides functional direction to staff in Kent State's representative offices and academic centers abroad. Di Maria earned a doctorate in educational policy and administration from the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Richard Garrett

Richard Garrett is the North America Director for i-graduate, part of Tribal Group. i-graduate's flagship product is the International Student Barometer (ISB), the world's largest survey of international student satisfaction. Conducted in over 800 universities and colleges since inception, the ISB helps higher education institutions better understand their own strengths and weaknesses in branding, recruitment, academics and services for international students, and how they stack up against peers and competitors both nationally and globally. Richard has almost 20 years of experience in higher education, and was previously Vice President at Eduventures, focused on online education. Richard has also worked in the School of Educational Studies at University of Surrey and the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Dr. Mark Bryant

Dr. Bryant is an Assistant Director in the Center for International Education at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. His primary responsibilities include directing international student orientation programs, leading student support services for International freshmen, providing oversight for International House operations, and planning both cultural and global issue programming for the university community. His professional experience includes 20 years in student services as well as working abroad in higher education. He earned a Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Leadership and Policy from Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Pia Wood

Dr. Wood is the Associate Provost, Center for International Education at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. She is responsible for oversight of Programs Abroad, International Student and Scholar Services, International Linkages/Partnerships, International Student Recruitment, International Risk Management, the English Language Institute, and the International House. She has served in a number of elected positions including AIEA President and President of ISA-South. Her academic background includes a BA from the College of William and Mary and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Geneva in Switzerland.

Dr. Darla K. Deardorff

Dr. Deardorff is the Executive Director of AIEA, based at Duke University. Editor of The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence and co-editor of The SAGE Handbook of International Higher Education, she has published and consulted widely on international education, assessment, and cross-cultural issues. She is on the faculty of Harvard University's Future of Learning Institute and the Summer Institute of Intercultural Communication, founder of ICG Global, and has given keynotes, lectures, and workshops around the world. She holds a doctorate from North Carolina State University.

The Forum was valuable because it moved from recruitment to alumni and covered a little of everything. It emphasized that it's a process that involves everyone on campus, not just the international office.

This was a wonderful experience. Thank you.

A special thank you to the following individuals for the time and help they gave to make this Forum a success.

John Deupree, Executive Director, American International Recruitment Council (AIRC)

Lauren Longino, Coordinator for the International House, University of Tennessee, Knoxville