

# COLLABORATIVE WORK IN REACHING OUT TO THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THIS MILLENNIUM GENERATION

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# INTRODUCTION



# OUTLINE

- **Why Outreach to International Students**
  - **What we Know**
    - Experience Survey
    - Focus Group
  - **Outreach Services for International Students**
    - Traditional Effort
    - International Initiatives Team at UF
  - **Future Direction**
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# WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- Globalized community in US higher education institutions
    - Over 760,000 int'l students enrolled in 2011-2012 from 219 countries (IIE, 2012)
    - Opportunity for cross-national interactions
    - Help building intercultural competence for domestic students
  - Economic contribution of over \$22.7 billion
    - Over 60% personal and familial fund
  - Multi-culturally competent services (Lin & Pedersen, 2007)
    - Opportunity for service provider and administrators
  - Issues of cross-cultural adjustment (e.g., Johnson & Sandhu, 2007; Rice et al 2012; Wang et al, 2012)
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# OVERVIEW OF UF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT POPULATION

## ➤ Total number of International Students: 5,764

- Female: 2,120
- Male: 3,554

## ➤ Undergraduate Students: 317

## ➤ Graduate Students: 3,847

## ➤ Family Composition

- Married: 473
- Single: 4,521

## ➤ Main Major

- Engineering
- Business, Management, Marketing, & Related Support
- Biological & Biomedical Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Agriculture
- Operations & Related Sciences

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

- *The Experience Survey: One year after the International Student Expectations Survey, a follow-up assessment was conducted using the same students' sample*
  - *Focus Group on Outreach Needs*
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## ACTIVITY - VALUE EXERCISE

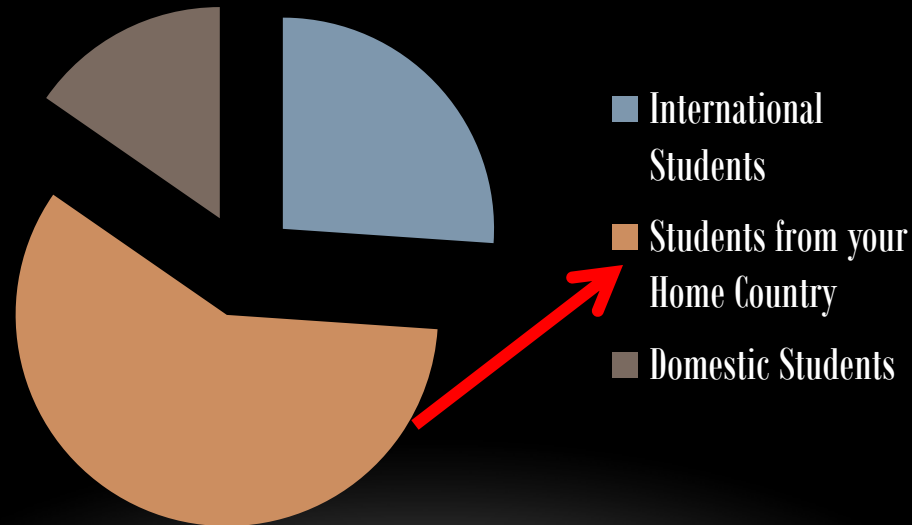
- You will be given 3 cards
- Think of three values that are most important in your life
- Write One value on One card so you'll have 3 values on 3 cards



# EXPERIENCE SURVEY FINDINGS

During your first year, with whom did you spend most of your time?

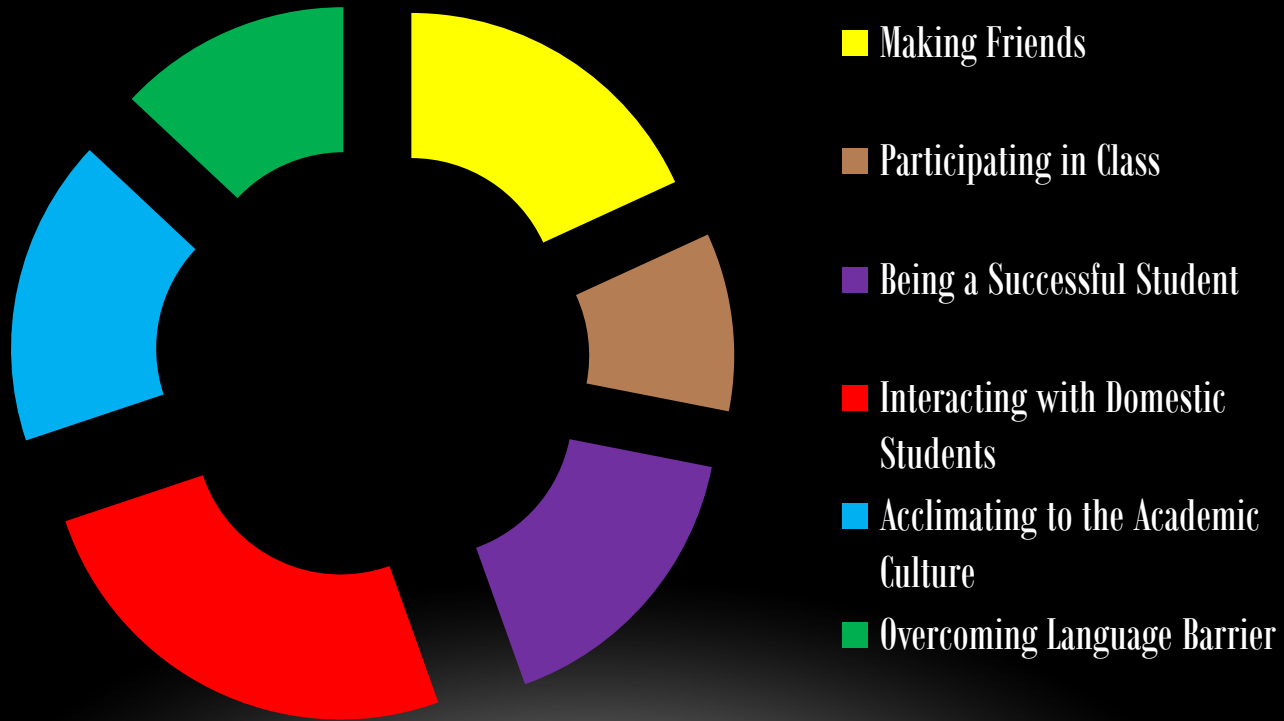
70.06% of the respondents reported to have stayed in touch with students they contacted prior to their arrival one year ago





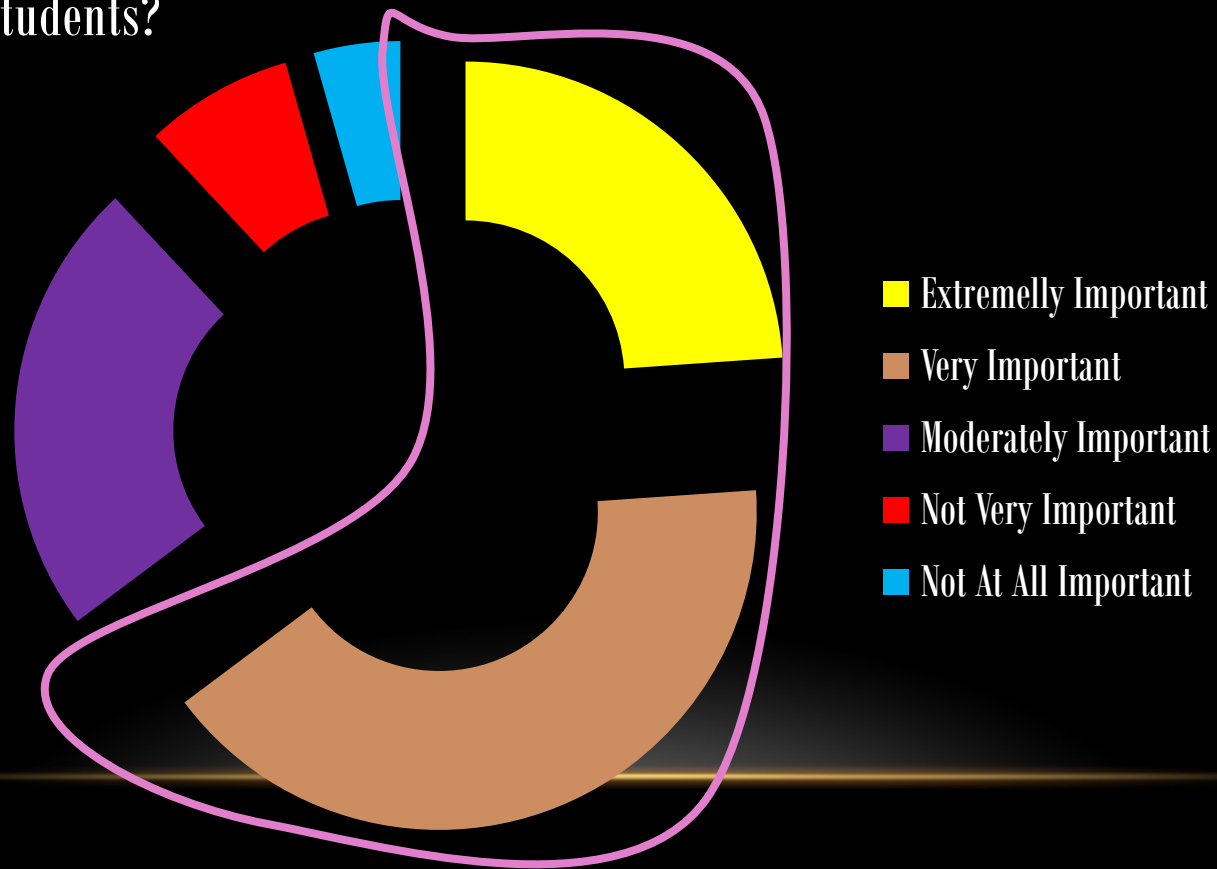
# EXPERIENCE SURVEY FINDINGS (cont.)

What were the most challenging issues during your first year at UF?



# EXPERIENCE SURVEY FINDINGS (cont.)

How important do you think spending time with domestic students is to the success of International Students?



# EXPERIENCE SURVEY FINDINGS (cont.)

- 64.97% of the respondents reported not being involved in student organizations
- 98.73% of the respondents reported, after a year, an overall grade of B or higher
- Open-ended Comments:
  - Overall very satisfied with their first year experience at UF
  - International students are relying significantly on Academic Departments
  - *From students to students - Words of wisdom for future incoming students:*
    - ✓ Get involved on campus
    - ✓ Ask questions
    - ✓ Spend as much time as you can with domestic students
    - ✓ Make friends, make friends, make friends!

# FOCUS GROUP: CULTURALLY-SENSITIVE OUTREACH EFFORTS

➤ *With what do you think international students need support? What are some challenges faced by you as international students?*

- Isolation & marginalization on campus
- Housing problems
- Financial concerns
- Safety and legal issues

➤ *From whom/where do you usually get help/support?*

- Friends from the same country or other international students
- Family in a home country
- Less utilization of support systems on campus

# FOCUS GROUP: CULTURALLY SENSITIVE OUTREACH (CONT.)

➤ *What kind of support/help do international students need on campus?*

- Support to connect to peers and the local community
  - ✓ Structured social events
  - ✓ Conversation groups
  - ✓ Online discussion forum and listserv
  - ✓ Mentorship program
  - ✓ Social lounge
- Support to connect to information and services
  - ✓ Communication channels to administration
  - ✓ Competency training for campus agencies
  - ✓ Brochures and information desk
  - ✓ Workshops across the semester

# QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE FEEDBACK ON WORKSHOP PROGRAMING

- *What kind of workshops/topics would you want for international students on this campus?*
    - Consistently voiced a lack of resources related to **social networks, immigration issues, legal consultation, housing concerns, and career information**
  
  - *What needs to be done to encourage international students to attend workshops?*
    - Advertising
    - Time & location
    - Multiple modalities in disseminating info
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# QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE FEEDBACK ON WORKSHOP PROGRAMING (cont.)

- Content analysis to open-ended questions from post-workshop evaluations:
    - *What was the most valuable aspect of the workshop?*
      - ✓ The sharing and normalization of their personal experiences
      - ✓ Handouts (obtaining info and resources)
      - ✓ Learning skills and techniques
    - *What could have been done to improve the workshop?*
      - ✓ Hearing more examples from other students (in the audience)
      - ✓ Using words that are more easily understood
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# TRADITIONAL OUTREACH SERVICES ON CAMPUS

COUNSELING & WELLNESS CENTER  
LIVE OPTIMALLY





# WHAT SERVICES DO YOU PROVIDE?



Customer service

Excellent

Poor



# HOW IT ALL STARTED

- Passion of a few...
  - Traditionally at UF: Housing, International Center, & Counseling Center not coordinated
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# INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES TEAM: WHO ARE WE?

- ❖ International Center
  - ❖ Police Department
  - ❖ College of Engineering
  - ❖ Career Resource Center
  - ❖ Student Leader Representative
  - ❖ Department of Housing and Residence  
Education, Graduate & Family Housing
  - ❖ Counseling & Wellness Center
  - ❖ College of Business
  - ❖ Student Legal Services
-

# INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES TEAMS: OUR APPROACH

## ➤ Consultation on needs of international students

- Informal assessment — a panel of experts
  - ✓ Monthly meetings
  - ✓ Constant consultation within the group
- Formal assessment — survey

## ➤ Programming for international students

- International Student Success Series
- International social event listserv
- Global Coffee House
- International Student Support Group

## ➤ Programming for domestic students and staff

- Study Aboard Program
- Counselor Exchange Program

# UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA POLICE DEPARTMENT

- Initial IIT involvement was a presentation to inform the international student community of local laws and consequences for violating the laws
- IIT involvement evolved to include
  - Educating international student community of their rights and responsibilities when encountered by law enforcement
  - Providing feedback to police department from international students about their culture to improve relationships between UFPD and the international students
  - Having a larger role in new international student orientations to welcome students to UF and put a face to UFPD



# UFPD: STUDENT COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICE EFFORT (S.C.O.P.E.)



- The Mission of the University of Florida Police Department is to provide protection and service to the University community
- With community service as the foundation, the Department is driven by goals to enhance the quality of life, investigating problems as well as incidents, seeking solutions and fostering a sense of security through programs reflecting the needs and desires of the community
- With this mission in mind, the S.C.O.P.E. program was implemented to obtain a better understanding and working relationship between the University of Florida Police Department, the University of Florida Department of Housing and Residence Education, and the resident students

## UFPD: S.C.O.P.E. (CONT.)

- S.C.O.P.E. also has a focus on the Graduate and Family Housing Villages that are traditionally family housing for international graduate students and their families
- Through S.C.O.P.E., UFPD is attending social events and community meetings, allowing the international students to get to know UFPD officers on a more personal level, and thus, opening dialogue between the communities
- Officers are becoming a more welcomed experience in the daily lives of the international students



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS SERIES

1. Academic Expectations
2. I don't want to live in the lab anymore: Finding balance between work, family and leisure in the US
3. Dating in the US
4. Traffic Laws and Law Enforcement
5. Understand American Slang
6. Communication Across Cultures
7. Do Well in Classes: What to Prepare
8. Too Much to Do, Too Little Time? Time Management
9. Too Much Pressure? Stress Management
10. Readjustment: Home Sweet Home
11. Connecting with Americans and Each Other
12. Show Me the Money: Finding Financial Resources
13. Immigration



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS SERIES: LOGISTICS

## ➤ Importance of timing:

- Lunch time (food provided)
- Scheduling based on class periods

## ➤ Importance of location:

- Central
- Familiar

## ➤ Get the experts involved - bring the resources to the students

# ACTIVE UTILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL EVENTS LISTSERV

- One important contributing factor to international students' adjustment:

**Social connectedness** (see Rice et al., 2012)

- **HOWEVER**, most international students are less familiar with social events in the US
- Agreed international students' listserv to advertise UF and community social events
  - Sent out weekly advertisements for 1,700 international students
  - Related to: sporting events, English classes, student organization activities

# **FUTURE DIRECTION: ACTIVE UTILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL EVENTS LISTSERV**

## ➤ Future directions:

- IIT's more active engagement with different organizations, clubs, and community centers to provide the most relevant, up-to-date information
- Collect feedback from students on what was the most helpful information

# **FUTURE DIRECTIONS: PROGRAMMING**

- Increase initiatives for international students and domestic students to purposefully and intentionally interact
  - Increase initiatives for international students to connect outside the classroom
  - Work more closely with academic departments to better provide support during the students' first year
  - Keep creating programmatic efforts to help students connect with UF and community resources
  - Create a holistic approach when it comes to international student adjustment by addressing/helping with the family's needs
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# FUTURE DIRECTIONS: WORKSHOP DELIVERY

- Relationship building:
    - Establish commitment
    - Coordination is critical
    - Collaboration is on-going process
    - Sense of community and support
  - Need to be highly advertised, well ahead of time
  - Time and location is key
  - Aware of the existing cultural assumptions → A variety of modalities to disseminate information and resources
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# FUTURE DIRECTIONS: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR IIT

- Improve communication
    - Content building for website
    - Continuing need assessment
  - Increase visibility and credibility
    - Branding
    - Social media campaign
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# SELECTED ARTICLES RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADJUSTMENT

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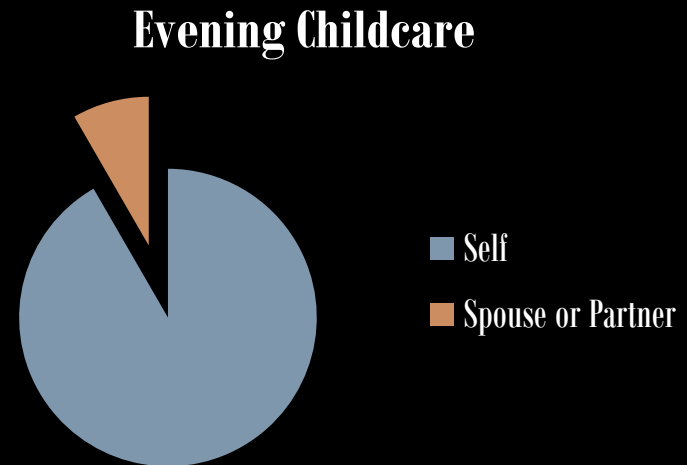
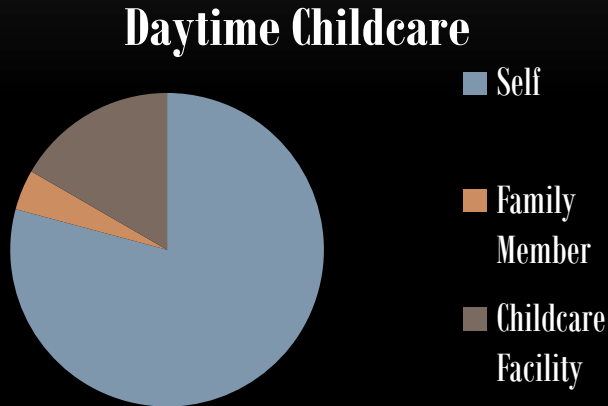
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Wei, M., Liao, K. Y., Heppner, P. P., Chao, R. C., & Ku, T.-Y. (2012). Forbearance, acculturative stress, identification with heritage culture, and psychological distress among Chinese international students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59, 97-106

# EXPERIENCE SURVEY FINDINGS: THE ROLE OF SPOUSES/PARTNERS



**Adjustment Issue:  
A Holistic Approach**