Enhancing the International Student Experience: The importance of International Student Groups and peer support at Edith Cowan University.

Cassandra Colvin and Fozzil Jaffar
ECU International
Edith Cowan University

Abstract

Edith Cowan University's International Student Support Team (ISS) considers strong International Student Groups' activity to be an important underpinning of its strategy to support international students.

International Student Groups perform many valuable functions:

1. They provide a vehicle through which an international student's home culture can be validated and celebrated.
2. They contribute to ECU International's (ECUI) campus life through the social programs they organise.
3. They play a pivotal role in the organisation of ECU International's International student Orientation Volunteer program.
4. They inform ECUI's planning for international activity through their attendance in meetings, planning forums and other channels.

Their role in the retention of international students and their contribution to enhanced teaching and learning outcomes cannot be overstated.

ISS believes strongly in the importance of International Student Groups and has worked strategically to grow the numbers of International Student Groups on campus. Experience has found that activities 'owned' by International Student Groups have greater success than those managed entirely by ISS. ISS endeavours to work in partnership with the International Student Groups on campus and to facilitate their needs. It is also premised upon literature that demonstrates the benefit of peer-mentoring support of international students.

The number of International Student Groups has grown from three in 2002 to approximately thirteen in 2006. This is, in part, due to a decision to devote one student adviser to student group liaison as a core activity in their position description.

This paper will provide an overview of ECUI's approach to international student group activity and link it to literature that demonstrates the benefits that this approach has. Assumptions underpinning this approach will then be compared with actual ECU international student experience as evident through survey and focus group feedback.

Introduction

"If you want to treat me equally, you may have to be prepared to treat me differently"
(Department of the Premier and Cabinet, nd)

The purpose of this paper is to explore the benefits of ethnic student groups as an effective support tool for international students studying on Australian campuses, particularly those in transition.

In order to achieve this, the authors will focus primarily on the role and profile of international student groups at Edith Cowan University, review literature detailing to development and role of ethnic groups in the support of ethnic communities (both internal and external to the university sector) and then test the assumptions underpinning this strategy with a random sample of international students.

For the purpose of this paper, international student groups will refer to organisations servicing a specific cohort of international students, typically identified by the group themselves. Many groups represent particular nations, and the different ethnicities inherent in these, although some groups choose to represent a more diverse body of students. African Students Association is one such organisation, choosing to represent all students from African nations.

Context

Edith Cowan University is a multi-campus university hosting approximately 2,600 onshore international students from approximately 85 countries. ECU International plays a leading role in developing mechanisms for identifying and meeting the support and transition needs of these students and has organized a suite of programs and initiatives to assist with this task.

Staff in ECUI have placed much value on the contribution of international student groups to its campus life and have strategically incorporated this commitment in its planning. In 2003, the position description for one of the international student advisers was re-written to reflect this commitment:

> *the position will take a leading role in the organisation and management of the University's extensive volunteer program and other transition programs as well as coordinating and designing relevant workshops and training sessions for these.*

The key driver for this commitment to supporting international student groups was a belief by staff in ECU International that these groups would provide much benefit to the institution. Staff in ECUI considered the following to be valuable contributions by international student groups:

1. They function as an accessible and relevant form of support for the student community that they represent
2. They provide a vehicle through which an international student's home culture can be validated and celebrated.
3. They contribute to ECU's campus life through the social programs they organise.

4. They play a pivotal role in the organisation of ECU International's International Student Orientation Volunteer program.
5. They inform ECUI's planning for international activity through their attendance in meetings, planning forums and other channels.

These assumptions were largely informed by anecdotal feedback from students and student groups and literature, although the authors had not engaged in a comprehensive literature review.

Concurrent with the appointment of the International Student Adviser (Student Liaison) was the adoption of a collaborative and cooperative relationship between the University and the student groups. This was consistent with other reforms occurring in the section at that time that reflected the department's belief in student-informed planning. ECUI saw its role with international student groups as one of facilitation and empowerment. ECUI encouraged the student groups to define their own roles and parameters and to also determine their needs. ECUI would then assist the groups as appropriate to meet these needs. Customer Relationship principles underpinned this strategy: it was imperative that ECUI build and maintain strong, trusting relationships with the student groups.

The impressive growth in student organisations at ECU in recent years, and a parallel increase in the participation rates of these organisations, indicates that the strategy did meet a need. The numbers of student groups grew from 3 to 13 in two years. Organisations representing each of the institution's top ten source countries were established. Most impressive was the connection of these student groups to their respective student cohorts, with each organisation consistently attracting 20-50% of its population at their functions.

The contribution of the international student organisations to the university's campus life has been marked, with the organisations hosting approximately 50 different functions in 2005. Such events include national day celebrations, welcome functions and social events reflecting the needs of the particular ethnic group that the organisation services. Notable contributions include the Orientation Steering Committee, the University's Multicultural Week festival and the now annual Cup of Nations Soccer Tournament. Each of these events is significant in scope and involves international student groups working together. One organisation successfully established its own social mentoring program, Karibu, in response to an identified need in its population.

In addition to organising an extensive array of social activities, international student groups at ECU represent the needs of their cohorts in planning forums throughout the university, often advocating on behalf of their group – or individuals within it. Staff in ECU International encourage this role and organise quarterly planning forums between its staff and key representatives of each of the student groups.

The momentum generated by international student group presence on ECU's campuses has recently been challenged by the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism in 2006; this having profound financial implications for the student groups. Since the peak of activity in 2005, student group numbers have started to decline and the effectiveness of existing groups has been curtailed.

A number of organisations are also choosing to operate outside of the University and Guild structures, and the potential synergy arising from the relationship between them and the University is not being realised. Further, the need for international student groups at ECU has also been challenged by some within the University as being a vehicle that may not be in the best interests of ECU's students.

Literature Review

Literature highlights the need for support strategies for international students to consider all aspects of an individual's engagement with their new environment (Tinto, nd.; Howells, 2003). Best outcomes will be achieved through strategies and programs that address all dimensions of student engagement with the host culture, including the social realm (Beasley & Watts, 2002; Guilfoyle, 2004). There are particular challenges designing effective strategies for international students on Australian campuses. First, the students come from an array of countries, representing a multitude of cultural and religious identities. The students come from diverse academic traditions, and can be postgraduate, undergraduate, school leaving or possibly even have family. Determining the needs of these students is therefore complex. Communication is also challenging: messages are often interpreted through the filter of a student's home culture and it is important that communication is therefore clear, appropriate and unambiguous. Finally, international students have different notions of seeking help when compared with domestic students (Guilfoyle, 2004; Burns, 1991). Many international students are reticent to seek help for a number of reasons, these often inextricably linked to a student's home culture.

In order to appreciate the impact of international student groups on international student adjustment, it is necessary to understand the sojourn of an international student, the cultural transition inherent within this and the profound impact of this cultural dislocation on the international student.

Cultures are based on common values, rules and conventions that bind people together (Moss & Faux, 2006; Pincas, 2001). Culture informs one's approach to interaction, relationships, learning and consequences (Babacan, 2003): it defines who we are and how we understand ourselves (Pincas, 2001, p. 31). When transported to a new culture, many behaviours and conventions appropriate in the home culture are no longer valid. The individual will need to negotiate new rules and standards of engagement, and learn to apply them (Burnapp, 2006; Pincas, 2001; Ye, 2006). Such a process can be tremendously stressful and the impact of this on a person's sense of identity, self-efficacy and adjustment is profound (Ye, 2006; Burns, 1991).

Analysis and labelling of cultural dimensions is often referred to when exploring cultural difference. Of particular relevance for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are the following cultural dimensions: collectivist versus individualistic orientation; affirmative versus deferential politeness and high context versus low context cultures (Hofstede, nd; Hall, nd). The significance of this analysis lies not in the terminology employed, but in the recognition that people from different cultures will engage with each others, authority, and tasks in very different ways, and that this is often a product of our cultural conditioning.

Although all students entering a tertiary environment for the first time undergo a period of transition, this experience is heightened for international students (Guilfoyle, 2004; Burns, 1991). In addition to having to adjust to a new social, academic and cultural environment, many international students find that previously successful methods of communication and problem-solving skills are no longer effective in their new context (Borland & Pearce, 2002). This will impact significantly on a student's engagement with an Australian teaching and learning environment. For instance, many international students come from a culture that reinforces respect for authority. Such students can find it difficult to adjust to an educational system that encourages questioning of and debate with lecturers. Further, many will find it difficult to seek help from authority figures, preferring instead to resolve difficulties within their family unit.

The challenge for Australian universities is to assist international students with their transition, and to equip them with the skills, knowledge and connections that they will need to succeed in their new environment. To do this, the information provided must be appropriate, relevant, and accessible to the diverse student population that it is intended for.

An orientation is a key support strategy in Australian universities to assist students with their adjustment to a new culture. These programs endeavour to provide skills and information that the student will need in their new context. A focus of these programs is typically academic information, although the importance of social adjustment to a new student's transition is well-documented in the literature (Guilfoyle, 2004; Borland & Pearce, 2002).

The effectiveness of these programs can be restricted by their mode of delivery and by philosophical positions vis-à-vis acculturation underpinning their design. Much of the essential information required by a new international student is often imparted in a formal, structured learning environment or through printed or electronic papers. There is formality and hierarchy in this approach that will have implications for the new student's level of engagement with the learning experience.

Many transition programs are informed by the standard U-Curve model of adjustment which presents an individual's adjustment to a new culture as a simple trajectory with a defined endpoint – typically that of adaptation (Burnapp, 2006). However, there is much research (Ye, 2006; Burnapp, 2006; Pires, Stanton & Ostenfeld, 2006) noting that adjustment to a new culture is a very individual phenomenon. Its manifestation can range from total assimilation or immersion in the host culture to a very detached approach whereby the individual observes and learns important behaviours in the new culture and applies these as needed – while still maintaining a strong identity in their home culture (Burnapp, 2006, 85). Indeed the importance of retaining home culture identity in a new culture is further explored by Pincas (2001), who asserts that students need to achieve a balance between adjusting to a new and different cultural tradition "…while maintaining a secure sense of self as a member of their national culture" (Pires, et al., 2006, makes similar observations). This is an important point. People often identify so strongly with a certain culture that to discard values and behaviours inherent in this to adopt new, yet unfamiliar ones, can lead to what is termed acculturative stress (Ye, 2006).

The importance of social structures in the minimisation of acculturative stress is well documented (Guilfoyle, 2004; Ye, 2006; Jiang, 2005; Beasley & Pearson, 2002). Ye considers social support to be "…verbal and non-verbal communication between recipients and providers that help manage uncertainty about the situation, the self, and the other or the relationship and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience" (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987, p. 19 in Ye, 2006, p. 4). It is embedded in social relationships and includes giving or receiving assistance, information or empathy (Ye, 2006, p. 4).

Pires, et al. (2006) link the themes of social support and cultural identity in their research, concluding that ethnic communities in a host culture play a valuable role in aiding the transition experience. The value of the ethnic communities rests on two key principles. First, they are able to bridge the home and host culture. Often new migrants can be overwhelmed by the cultural difference between them and the new host culture. Migrant communities are often closer in difference to the new migrant, yet still effective vehicles for introducing the new culture. In effect, migrant communities can act as conduits for the migrant, helping them to translate and digest the new environment (Pires, et al.,2006).

Other benefits of ethnic communities include their ability to engage with their cohort, and their proximity and accessibility to the community they service. They are able to impart information that is relevant and needed in a culturally-appropriate fashion: often information coming from different sources will not be embraced as readily. Pather (2004) posed the question why orientations failed to include what was often critical information in their content. Typically this is owing to the sensitivity surrounding the content involved (for instance it could be connected with sexual health, violence and attitudes to drinking and driving) although often it can arise from a failure of the provider to even recognise the need for the information, as they may not have insight into the cultural context for this need.

International student groups share many of the characteristics of migrant ethnic communities. Their identity and role is driven by a strong cultural imperative. Their benefit also rests in the peer-mentoring structure inherent within them. Such a structure has obvious cultural benefits, as students find these structures more accessible and less-threatening than other formal support structures. However, these structures can also produce more meaningful learning outcomes for the new international student. Often, the new student groups impart information to new international students through informal means and relationships. However, the outcome is a meaningful and personal learning experience for the new student. Devereux (2004) notes that peer support can come in many forms and structures and cites increased achievement of those involved and reduced stress as outcomes of the strategy. Ye (2006) also links strong support networks (including on-line peer-support programs) with reduced acculturative stress in a study of the transition of Chinese students to a Western University. Muldoon and Goodwin (2003) note that peer mentoring is also an effective vehicle for connecting a student with their institution, and observe that such engagement is an important factor in student retention.

At its essence, though, it could be argued that the support of international student groups is grounded in equity and diversity principles. International student groups ensure that minority student interests are heard, identified and serviced. Literature

advocates that protecting minority voice and involving it in planning is essential if truly inclusive and equitable campus experience is to be achieved (Johnson, 2003; Jiang, 2005; Clegg, Parr & Wan, 2003).

Further, their benefit for international student transition is grounded in the very essence of the international student as a sojourner from a different culture, and the implications of this cultural difference or engagement, connection, help-seeking and functioning in the new culture. They are students with unique needs requiring specialised service solutions.

Research

Staff in ECUI conducted individual interviews with a random sample of students and student leaders. Interview questions were designed to explore international student perception of the cultural challenge inherent in relocating to life in Australia, and if they believed that international student groups could contribute to this. Nineteen students participated in the research: 8 identified as a 'student leader' (that is, a member of the organising committee for one of ECU's international student groups) and 11 identified as a student – that is not involved in the management of any international student group activity on campus.

Questions asked of international student groups focussed on their perceptions of the roles of their international student organisations, and how and why they believed themselves to be of benefit to the cohort that they were servicing. Student Groups interviewed included organisations representing students from Bangladesh, Malaysia, Singapore, China and African nations.

All student group leaders interviewed believed that their organisation was important to new students in transition. They all identified major differences between their home culture and Australia, and believed that the support of people from their home country was valuable in assisting students to overcome these differences.

Cultural differences identified tended to focus on social-cultural and linguistic dimensions. Interestingly, all organisations interviewed represented societies that typically have a collectivist orientation and this theme was present in all responses:

> *"Australians are laid back and do things differently...Australians are more individualistic" (Singapore)*
>
> *"...the African culture basically is one that is based on the extended family. We are talking about friends and family. When they come here they come to an environment which is more individualistic and that is where the problem starts...individualist versus collectivist..." (Karibu Mentoring Program)*

Further all organisations representing countries for which English is a second-language noted the impact of this on their student cohort:

> *"Language is a problem. Many Bangladeshis are not very good at English. If they don't know anyone who can guide them, it becomes a problem"*
>
> *"Language (is a difficulty for Chinese students)...students from China find it difficult to live with other nationalities in the village due to language and cultural barriers"*

Another theme that presented was that of faith, particularly the needs of ECU's Moslem students:

> *"Transition for many students difficult especially for Moslems when it comes to food" (Malaysia)*

The student groups all identified ways in which they felt that they enhanced the experience of their student cohort. A focus of these comments was their role in assisting the adjustment of new students and integrating them into the Australian culture. When asked how they support their students, every organisation cited the merits of social programs, both for a sense of connection with their new environment as well as for future help-seeking.

> *Question: Purpose of Organisation:*
>
> *"To provide more social support for members...we help develop networks through social events" (Malaysia)*
>
> *"Social activities...we organise the usual bbqs and get together events...social interaction is very important for new students" (Singapore)*

Culturally-specific social structures were identified as being beneficial particularly for help-seeking behaviours in international students. The student groups all cited difficulties for new students seeking help, this typically owing to language or cultural barriers, and felt that their organisation was a more relevant and accessible vehicle for this. They all saw their role as a conduit between the student and the university, encouraging the student to refer to the university where appropriate:

> *"(Karibu) bring(s) African students together who share a common African culture...We believe that although they are in a new environment, the underlying African traditions that they have been brought up in is important and it is important that once in a while they come together... we believe for our association an African student would rather talk to someone from the same culture"*
>
> *"there are also students who are too shy to speak up or get help about their problems...we try to help these students by directing them to the right channel for help" (Bangladesh)*
>
> *"We are here to support the Singapore students...you tend to feel more comfortable talking to a Singaporean...we help give them (the students) a sense of identity"*

The role of student groups in the provision of generic information came through strongly in responses, even though this was often not identified by the groups directly as one of their objectives. Such information included how to use public transport, help with getting work, mobile phones and shopping in Perth. The student groups employed multiple channels to communicate with their students, from word-of mouth to electronic forums such as blogs and chat. Four student groups agreed to the need for a voice for their student cohort and believed that their organisation was appropriate to provide this:

> *"SABECU representations for the Bangladeshi students are critical in the uni"*
>
> *"If student communicates on their own there is very little voice. Representatives of the students like us can help collecting the power and put issues together to make it a big power" (China)*
>
> *"The role of ASA is to represent African students at ECU. We facilitate activities between the uni and students...we speak on behalf of the students in the problems that they have" (African Students Association)*

All international student group leaders saw the potential of their organisation as transcending their current functions, yet noted funding and a lack of designated space as a major impediment to this. All student groups interviewed received funds from the university for their participation in the orientation volunteer program.

Only one of the organisations surveyed had affiliated with the University's student guild and had received funding through this body: all other organisations chose not to approach the Guild, even though it was a likely source of funds. A small number of organisations had started to consider ways of fundraising and were starting to implement these strategies. A majority of groups still saw funding as being a university responsibility and seemed disappointed that they were not supported more directly by the university.

> *"We get some funding from the university but now funding is less and it becomes difficult to organise activities... It is hard to apply for funding from the Guild because of the conditions they have...Uni is like the mother taking care of its child so we expect the uni to take care of us this way" (Chinese Students Association)*

> *"Funding...this is quite a big issue at times...MSC have not proceeded with funding request through the Guild as there are too many restrictions. This is due to VSU which results with accreditation and affiliation with them." (Malaysian Students Council)*

Eleven individual students not affiliated with student groups also took part in interviews that explored themes of support, adjustment, identity and the role of international student groups. Countries represented in the cohort were Cambodia, India, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Kenya, Indonesia, Sweden and Austria. Students interviewed represented all years of study: four were in their first year, three were in their second year and the remainder had studied at ECU for three or more years. Adjustment challenges identified by the students included cultural, logistical and linguistic issues. All students reported feeling settled, although this occurred after a period of time and most stated that they felt that they belonged to Perth. Friends were identified as the most common support structure for students and aid to this adjustment process. When asked about their cultural identity ten students noted that their values were influenced by their experience in Australia, yet still valued their home culture. Responses gleaned varying levels of engagement with Australian culture. One student, though, stated that he refused to embrace Australian values, and was resolute that he would retain his Indian identity.

> *"In Sweden, it is not very open, and they want you to sound like Swedish. But here in Australia, I can be Swedish and nobody bothers me. It helps me to feel more Australian when I can practice my Swedish culture."*

> *"I'm both. I'm not pure Austrian anymore. But I'm not troubled by it, its ok for me not to be entirely belonging to a country."*

> *"I still see myself as an Indian. I don't see myself adopting the Australian culture, identity and way of life"*

The researchers also explored students' perceptions of their identity within ECU. All students identified themselves as an international student.

> *"I definitely consider myself being an international student. I pay full fee without grants or sponsorship. I have this disadvantage of culture and language integration. So I feel I'm not getting enough for all this. I don't feel really understood by the uni, and if my needs are really met."*

> *"There is a big difference between an international student and a domestic student. Even when lecturer treats you the same, you still feel you are an international student, and different from the domestic student."*

Friends were cited as a major form of support for the students interviewed. The majority of students cited international students as their main source of friends. A small number of friends had Australian friends, but they also cited friendships with international students as well.

> *"My friends are from Malaysia and Singapore. Only a few Australians. The environment I live in, I find it easier to communicate with Asians, due to similar perceptions."*
>
> *"I Have many Australian friends, and other nationalities too. But I spend lots of time with Singaporeans and Malaysians."*

Eight students have attended functions organised by international student groups and three have not – two because they were not aware of them and one because "I see myself as an individualist and narcissist" These eight students stated that they enjoyed these functions and believed them to be important to international students.

> *"It is important to have student group representation at the uni."*
>
> *"I feel they are important, but they should do more than just social events. They have to be the voice for students. And they have to act as ambassadors for their country of origin."*
>
> *"It is useful to talk to someone from the same cultural background as you, to find a common ground better. If there was an Austrian group, I would join."*
>
> *"If there is an Indian student group, I will not be interested to join, as there are too many different sects and dialects in Indian culture."*

Conclusion

The authors believe that ethnic, international student groups can play an important role in supporting on-shore international students. They believe that there are three imperatives that underlie their operation:

1. Cultural Imperative

The sojourn of an international student defines their difference from domestic students. International students have relocated to a new academic and social culture. They are removed from their traditional support structures and often have to negotiate unfamiliar forms of support and help-seeking. International student groups can assist transitioning international students in a number of ways:

- The international student group is often closer in cultural distance to the new student than the host culture is. The student group 'bridges the gap' between the home and host culture and assist students to negotiate and understand their new host culture.
- International Student Groups are relevant and proximate to their cohort. Communication is appropriate, effective and understood.
- International Student Groups are accessible to the new student. They are not seen as figures of authority.
- International Student Groups provide many international students with a vehicle through which a student's home culture can be validated and celebrated,

2. Teaching and Learning Imperative

The authors believe that there is evidence that student groups can contribute to more effective and meaningful learning outcomes for the new students than that provided by traditional support programs. They play an important role in assisting adjustment through the provision of information – and also through peer support (such as Karibu Mentoring and the Volunteer program at Orientation). They also make valuable contributions to campus life.

3. Equity Imperative

The authors consider the greatest driver to be that of equity. While Australia institutions celebrate the cultural richness and diversity international students bring to their campuses, they are challenged as to how best to embrace these students in order to maximise teaching and learning outcomes for all students. In essence, there is confusion and debate as to what is best practice vis-à-vis inclusive or pluralistic teaching and servicing of not just international students, but in fact all the ethnic, religious and cultural minority cohorts on campuses. While there has been uniformity in recognising that the difference inherent in the international student population needs to be accommodated, there is much debate as to how best to achieve this. (Refer to Jiang (2005) and Kinchloe and Steinberg (1997) who both detail the varying dimensions of current multicultural and intercultural thinking, ranging from a conservative, mono-cultural perspective, to a liberal, critical perspective that recognises not just difference and multiple layers of identity, but is also cognisant of power dynamics in cultural exchange.)

A commitment to equity and inclusiveness underpins the content, design and implementation of ECU International's international student support strategies, including the support and growth of international student groups. Its programs recognise that ECU's 2400 on-shore international students are a distinct yet diverse cohort of students within the larger university student population with unique needs. Further, the planning frameworks underpinning the student groups (such as the Orientation Steering Committee and the Quarterly Planning Forums) ensure that the needs of these students are appropriately and effectively heard, serviced and monitored, and not lost against the dominant culture.

The authors also make the following observations:

1. Student groups alone are not an adequate support strategy. They need to be supplemented by specialist staff.
2. Institutions need to supplement the activity of international student groups with targeted strategies to assist with the engagement of international and domestic students. The focus of international student groups on ethnic difference is not exclusive to a separate strategy to bring international and domestic students together. Rather, they should complement each other. It is possible, though, that international student groups may be able to contribute to such initiatives, although this would need to be within a whole of university approach.
3. International student groups are not going to be embraced by all international students. Some students may prefer to distance themselves from their home culture.

Notwithstanding, the literature and short survey completed in this paper suggest that they do provide benefit to sections of the student population. This paper suggests that more research be conducted into this area.

References

Babacan, H. (2003). Cultural Diversity and Community development in Australia. *New Community Quarterly,* 1, 15-20.

Beasley, C. J., & Pearson, C. A. L. (1998). Facilitating the learning of transitional students: Strategies for success. Paper presented at the *3rd Pacific Rim Conference, First Year in Higher Education: Strategies for Success in Transition*, Auckland Institute of Technology and Queensland University of Technology, Auckland , NZ.

Beasley, C.J. & Watts, J. (2002). "A Trouble Shared…": Conversations for Survival. *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, 44-52.* Retrieved November 16, 2006, from http://www.ecu.edu.au/conferences/herdsa/main/papers/ref/pdf/Beasley.pdf

Beasley, C. J. (1997). Students as teachers: the benefits of peer tutoring. In Pospisil, R. and Willcoxson, L. (Eds), Learning Through Teaching, p21-30. *Proceedings of the 6th Annual Teaching and Learning Forum,* Murdoch University, February 1997. Perth: Murdoch University. Retrieved 16 June, 2007, from http://lsn.curtin.edu.au/tlf/tlf1997/beasley.html

Borland, H. & Pearce, A. (2002). Identifying Key Dimensions of Language and Cultural Disadvantage at University. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics,* 25, 101-113.

Burnapp, D.(2006). Trajectories of Adjustment of International Students: U-curve, Learning Curve, or Third Space [Electronic journal]. *Intercultural Education,* 17, 81-93.

Burns, R. B. (1991). Study and stress among first year overseas students in an Australian university. *Higher Education Research and Development,* 10 (1), p61-77.

Clegg, S., Parr, S. & Wan, S.(2003). Racialising Discourses in Higher Education [Electronic journal]. *Teaching in Higher Education,* 8, 155-168.

Cohen, Erez. (2004). I am My Own Culture: the 'Individual Migrant' and the 'Migrant Community', a Latin American Case Study in Australia [Electronic journal]. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 25, 123-141.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Equal Opportunity Commission (n.d.). *The Policy Framework for Substantive Equality.* 1-15. Retrieved November 16, 2006, from http://www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au/pdf/framework.pdf

Devereux, L. (2004). When Harry Met Sarita: Using a Peer-Mentoring Program to Develop Intercultural Wisdom in Students. *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.* Retrieved November 17, 2006, from http://www.herdsa.org.au/conference2004/Contributions/RPapers/P072-jt.pdf

Gong, Y. (2003). Goal orientations and cross-cultural adjustment: an exploratory study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 27 (3), p*297-305.

Guilfoyle, A.M. (2004). Exploring the Spaces in-between Institutional Services Provided and International Postgraduate Student Experiences. *18ᵗʰ IDP Australian International Education Conference.* Sydney, 1-11. Retrieved November 16, 2006, from http://www.cdesign.com.au/proceedings_aiec2004/papers%20(pdf)/fri%20-%20Andrew%20Guilfoyle.pdf

Hall, E. (nd.). Culture at Work: *Communicating across Cultures.* Retrieved 19 June, 2007, from http://www.culture-at-work.com/highlow.html.

Henderson, G., Milhouse, V., & Cao, L. (1993). Crossing the gap: An analysis of Chinese students' cultural shock in an American university. *The College Student Journal, 27 (3)*, p380 – 389

Hofstede, G. (nd.). itim International: *Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions.* Retrieved 19 June, 2007, from http://www.geert-hofstede.com/.

Howells, Kerry. (2003) The First Year Experience: Starting with the Student. *7ᵗʰ Pacific Rim, First Year in Higher Education Conference.* Queensland. Retrieved 30 March 2007, http://www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/past_papers/FYE-program-2-2003.htm

Jiang, X. (2005). Interculturalisation for New Zealand Universities in a Global Context [Electronic journal]. *Policy Futures in Education.* Vol. 3, no.2, 223-232.

Johnson, L.S. (2003). The Diversity Imperative: Building a Culturally Responsive School Ethos [Electronic journal]. *Intercultural Education,* Vol. 14, No.1, 17-30.

Levy, S., Osborn, M. & Plunkett, M. (2003). An Investigation of International Students Academic and Social Transition Requirements. First Year in Higher Education 2003 Conference. 1-10. Retrieved November 17, 2006, from http://www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/FYHE_Previous/papers03/Refereed%20Papers/Student%20Pop.%20&%20Div/Levy,Osborn&Plunkett_ab.doc

Moss, K. & Faux, W.V.II. (2006). The Enactment of Cultural Identity in Student Conversations on Intercultural Topics [Electronic journal]. *The Howard Journal of Communications,* 21-37.

Muldoon, R. & Godwin, J. (2003). The Faculty Mentor Program in the Sciences: an Innovative Approach to Supporting Student Learning. *First Year in Higher Education Conference*, Queensland University Technology. 1-9. Retrieved November 17, 2006, from http://www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/FYHE_Previous/papers03/Refereed%20Papers/Student%20Pop.%20&%20Div/Godwin&Muldoon_ab.doc

Pather, T. (2004). Orientation by Omission. *IDP Australian International Education Conference*, Sydney, 1-4. Retrieved November 17, 2006, from http://www.idp.com/aiec/pastpapers/wed%20-%20Thevi%20Pather.pdf

Pincas, A. (2001). Culture, Cognition and Communication in Global Education [Electronic journal]. *Distance Education*, Vol 1.30-51.

Pires, G., Stanton, J. & Ostenfeld, S. (2006). Improving Expatriate Adjustment and Effectiveness in Ethnically Diverse Countries: Marketing Insights [Electronic journal]. *Cross Cultural Management. An International Journal*, Vol 13, No.2 156-170.

Tinto, V. (n.d.). Student Success and the Building of Involving Educational Communities. Promoting Student Success in a College, 1-11. Retrieved November 17, 2006, from http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/fsd/c2006/docs/promotingstudentsuccess.pdf

Ye, J. (2006). An Examination of Acculturative Stress, Interpersonal Social Support, and Use of Online Ethnic Social Groups Among Chinese International Students [Electronic journal]. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 17, 1-20.