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3CS

Cross Cultural Communication

A program designed for international students.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND



- ❖ Commenced in 2006
- ❖ Developed by Piera Ibrahim in response to identified needs of international students
- ❖ **Similar needs** were noted across different areas in Student Services.
- ❖ 3Cs is a **mentoring** program for **international** students: particularly suited to 1st year students.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Mentees:

- ❖ Communication skills
- ❖ Employment – related skills
- ❖ Increased understanding of cultural differences
- ❖ Increased confidence in social and professional settings
- ❖ A connection with other mentees, mentors and the university community.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Mentors:

- Increased **cultural awareness**
 - ❖ International students' issues.
- Experience putting **theory into practice**
- **Professional experience** which leads to increased employability.
 - ❖ Competitive edge on their resume.

TARGET GROUPS



1) Students

- ❖ Mentees: international students at RMIT (particularly 1st year)
- ❖ Mentors: higher year psychology, youth work, disability studies, international studies, international business students

2) Programs

- ❖ selected as part of a targeted recruitment approach
- ❖ selected for cross-cultural component
- Practical application of theories these students encounter
- Professional development opportunity

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- ❖ Structured over a series of **six workshops** over six weeks
- ❖ Workshops are one hour during students' lunch break
- ❖ Students meet as a large group, then move into small groups
- ❖ **Social event** held after the sixth workshop to celebrate students' achievement of the program

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Each workshop has an **employment-related** focus
 1. Tell me about yourself
 2. Exploring cultural differences
 3. Body language when answering questions
 4. Interview techniques
 5. Questions in social settings
- Each workshop is **introduced by a staff member** from a different, relevant student services area.

ACCREDITATION



- ❖ **RMIT LEAD** : student leadership development, active citizenship, engagement, volunteering
- ❖ **Requirements**: 5 hours relevant training; 15 hours related voluntary service
- ❖ **Reward**: LEAD certificate signed by the Vice-Chancellor, record of voluntary contribution on academic transcript, end-of-year Student Life Awards
- ❖ **Celebrating** student contribution to university life!

MENTOR TRAINING



- ❖ LEAD provides 4 hours training, CD&E provides 1 hour training
- ❖ Learning objectives:
 - As a result of LEAD training in mentoring, student mentors will be able to:
 - Define mentoring
 - Outline the benefits of mentoring
 - Discuss the expectations and responsibilities in a mentoring relationship
 - Articulate the boundaries and ethics of a mentoring relationship
 - Develop strategies for effective communication & creating rapport within cross-cultural contexts
 - Facilitate groups being sensitive to varying group dynamics
 - Work effectively in a team
 - Harness different learning tools for various learning styles
- ❖ Training experiential in nature. Action learning emphasised
- ❖ Training delivered by staff of the Study & Learning Centre at RMIT University

EVALUATED OUTCOMES

- ❖ Increased connectedness and friendships
- ❖ Exchanging of information and cultural experiences
- ❖ Enhanced communication skills
- ❖ Confidence
- ❖ Reciprocal learning
- ❖ Networking, interview techniques, understanding of workplace expectations.
- ❖ Increased cultural fit
- ❖ Sense of responsibility
- ❖ Reflective learning
- ❖ Increased retention at university

PROGRAM BENEFITS TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

- ❖ Low financial cost
- ❖ Very adaptable across courses, campuses, work places
- ❖ Links closely with other services
- ❖ Provides education in a social setting
- ❖ Very popular with students



SILENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Without speaking, write down the answers to the following questions about your partner:

- ❖ County of origin
- ❖ Personal qualities
- ❖ Skills that they may have
- ❖ Hobbies
- ❖ Brothers and sisters, youngest – eldest
- ❖ Star sign
- ❖ Favourite food
- ❖ Favourite TV show



Discussion Questions

- 1) Discuss the *needs* that you've noticed of first year international students.
- 2) Which needs are *not currently being met*?
- 3) What could be some *realistic & practical solutions* to meet needs?



“I loved meeting fantastic international people and being able to help others.” RMIT University



“Every international student should do this program. It’s very hard to live in a new country, so having a program like this can help with feeling like they belong because they can make new friends, not just people they know from their country.”

“...I learned not to be worried about meeting new people. They are friendly and similar to yourself. You just need to be confident and open.”



“I can’t believe how much I’ve learnt from this program. I thought I would be helping international students, but I never expected how much I’ve actually learnt from them.”



“Before doing this program, I never knew that people do things so differently to what I’ve learnt in my home country...I understand so much more now.”



“I’ve made new local friends in Melbourne that I never had before because I didn’t know how to go and start talking to them. But with the 3Cs Program, it has helped me start talking with people I never knew.”



“The most important thing that I’ve learned is respect for other people’s culture.”





“I enjoyed every minute of the 3Cs program...and I hope there is more to come. Great job!”



Thank you!

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