

One stone, three birds– Improving Campus Cultural Competency through student engagement programs

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Cultural competency of staff, faculty and students is a key dimension of campus internationalization. Apart from exchange programs, educational programs are the common strategy universities employ to improve campus cultural competency. Although educational programs have proved very useful, their success is only as great as the number of staff, faculty and students who recognize the need to attend these programs. Often, it is those within these 3 areas who do not recognise the value of internationalisation and who need it the most. As such the goal of improving campus cultural competency is difficult to achieve. In order to address this issue, the University of Canterbury has developed holistic student engagement programs focusing on improving cultural competencies within these 3 key areas. This paper uses one of the University of Canterbury's student engagement programs, Chinese Student Career Workshops, as an example to demonstrate the procedure of designing these programs. Interviews, focus group discussions and content analysis will be used to collect and analyse data that reflects the learning progress and outcomes of this programme's participants. Challenges of designing and implementing these programs will be also discussed.