

# **Cross Cultural Understanding across continents to facilitate internationalisation of the staff and student experience**

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In 2013 ANU and UoM formalised a staff exchange program which was initiated in 2011 to provide student affairs/student services profession at both universities with the opportunity to inject an international perspective into their work through international and cultural exchange. This initiative of 'internationalising' student affairs has enabled both institutions to provide professional staff development through a two way exchange- both in person and virtually. The collaboration is aligned with the strategic vision of both universities and currently we have 8 active projects that cross the range of student affairs/services areas including Counselling, Careers, Orientation and Transition, Student Leadership, International Student Engagement, Student Equity or (under-represented groups) and virtual student communities. This has enabled student affairs/services professionals at both institutions to learn and share best practice that enhances and enriches the student experience whilst at the same time addressing student needs at each campus. It has also enabled staff to enhance their cross-cultural awareness and its role in service provision.

2014 has also seen the two universities look at how to enhance the cross-cultural understanding of our students through a pilot program- the Global Undergraduate Leadership program (GULP). This course focuses on providing our students with experientially-based co-curricular learning that enhances cross-cultural communication, global connectedness, an 'internationalised experience' and enhances domestic and international student integration. Interdisciplinary in nature the program was open to students from any academic discipline. Using technology we have linked students across both campuses where they have collaborated on activities that will culminate with a two week visit to Malawi.

This presentation will discuss the staff exchange program in more detail and highlight the opportunities for cross cultural awareness raising at both ANU and UoM and detail some of the learnings and next steps.

## **Key Words**

Cross cultural understanding, internationalisation, staff development, student experience