

Engaging Students: The ins and outs of International Student Transition

Non refereed paper (25 mins)

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Abstract

At UNSW, Student Development International looks after Orientation and Transition activities for International Students. This presentation will highlight the best practices that support students to effectively transition from the time they arrive through to graduation and beyond. The purpose of all these activities and programs is to help the international students to build academic skills, social interactions, develop a feeling of belonging on campus and also cultivate intercultural competencies that will provide an enriching life experience to our graduates.

Transition In & During: The Welcome Centre, International Student Housing Assistance Office and the International Student Orientation StepUp and University-wide Orientation aim at providing students with adequate information on getting started at University, enhancing student life and available student support services.

During the semester, students have ample opportunities to attend a wide range of programs such as the Culture of OZ, The UNSW Language Exchange Program, Conversation Classes, Women's Health and Safety and Academic Intervention workshops, Family Sessions, and Social Events. They also have access to mentoring support through the Alumni Host Program and Cultural Mentor Program.

Transition Out: As the time at UNSW comes to an end, Completing Students Seminars tailored to meet the needs of students that intend to return home or enter the international workforce as well as students wanting to remain in Australia, Feedback Forums and the Graduation Sundowner are offered to assist in preparing for life after university, allow an opportunity for feedback to the university as well as to new commencing students and to celebrate their achievements.

The emphasis will be placed on; program rationales, outcomes and challenges, the evolving nature of the programs based on students' needs at the given time, with a particular focus on the unique details of each of them that may set them apart from similar programs.

Key Words

Orientation, Transition, Student Experience, Intercultural Competencies, Student Engagement