



Building a sense of belonging and connectedness: what extra-curricular activities do International students really want?

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Outline

A Master chef, International students, a kitchen full of food

Is this the recipe to initiate friendships between those new to Australia?





Sense of belonging

- `belongingness hypothesis`, suggests that human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary 1995)
- need to belong is characterised by interpersonal bond marked by
 - stability,
 - affective concern
 - long term relationships
- failure to have 'belongingness' needs met may lead to feelings of
 - social isolation,
 - alienation
 - loneliness (Baumeister & Leary 1995)



Sense of belonging

- is one of the most important needs of all students to function well in learning environments (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1991)
- may have a direct and powerful influence on students' motivation (Goodenow, 1993; Finn, 1989)
- more dedicated to their education (Osterman, 2000; Tinto 1975)
- more engaged in study and classroom activities (McInnes et al.1995)
- increased performance of students coming from ethnic minorities and economically less advantaged families (Goodenow, 1993)
- higher enjoyment & enthusiasm (Osterman, 2000)
- happiness, interest, and more confidence in engaging in learning activities (Osterman, 2000)

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Idea????

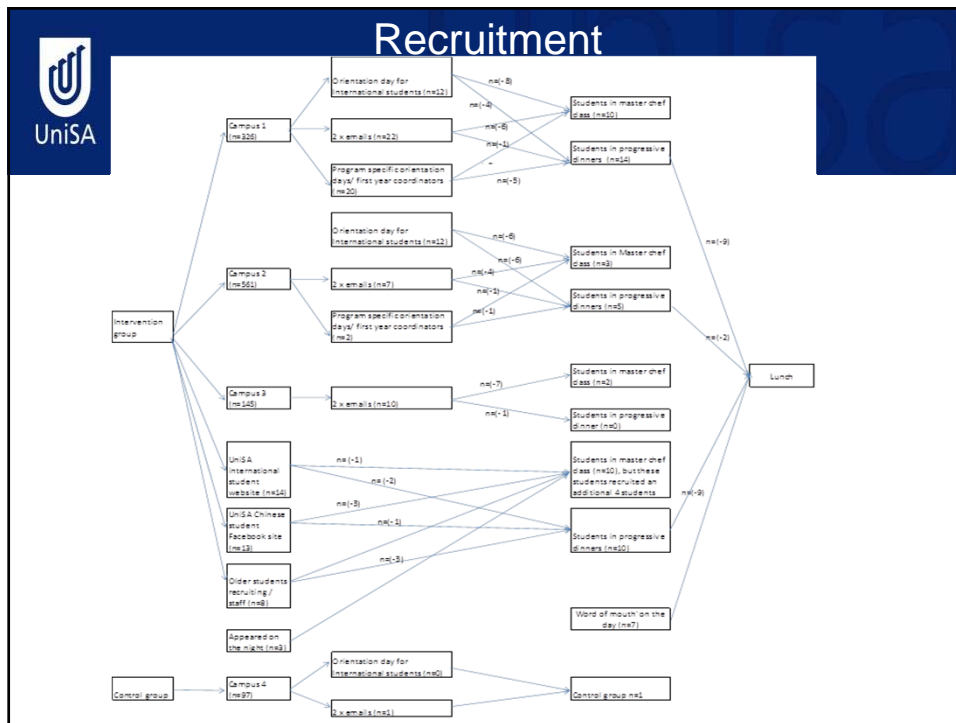


PROGRESSIVE DINNER

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Recruiting





Recruitment

- Speaking students at 2 campus international student orientation sessions resulted in 12 students completing consent forms, but none of them came.
- Speaking at Program specific orientations x 8 resulted in 40 expressions of interests, 9 completed consent forms, but no students confirmed attendance.
- Advertisement on the UniSA International student facebook site + UniSA Chinese facebook site (2 from first year who recruited another 2 students)
- Lots of interest from longer term second, third and 4th year students from UniSA and Adelaide Uni who were asked to help recruit first year students) 40 expressions of interest which translated into 30 completed consent forms however 24 withdrew. The remaining 6 students recruited 7 students.
- Approach first year co-ordinators and go into class rooms CE and CW (9 classes). 20 expressions of interests. 1 students completed consent form.
- 6 students recruited through fist year coordinators the day before hand
- 3 students were International students from the IBNF program on the day
- 3 students appeared on the night, but did not disclose how they got the information. They completed consent forms on arrival.

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Demographics

Please indicate your age (years):

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
16-19 years	5.6%	1
20-22 years	16.8%	9
23-26 years	61.1%	15
27-30 years	5.6%	4
>30 years	11.1%	7

What campus are you studying at?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
City East	22.0%	7
City West	38.0%	11
Mawson Lakes	6.0%	2
Magill	33.0%	10

In what year of the program are you

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
First	61.0%	18
Second	17.0%	5
Third	16.0%	5
Fourth	6.0%	2

Where do you stay during the semester?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Alone	5.0%	2
With my partner	22.0%	7
In a shared house	67.0%	20
In university accomodation	6.0%	2



Background

Answer Options	Response Percent
Did you attend orientation? Y/ N	83% / 17%
Have you attended any Uni activities i.e. muffin mornings, koala tour? Y/N	56% / 44%
Have you made any friends since coming to Australia? Y/N	83% / 17%
Have you made any friends through social networking sites? Y/N	28% / 72%
Do you intend to work during the semester? Y / N	61% / 39%
Are you homesick? Y/ N	50% / 49%
Are you lonley? Y/ N	35% / 65%
Do you feel that you belong at UniSA?	66% / 33%



Did you join any clubs?

61% stated 'no'

Answer Options	Response Percent
you dislike sports and clubs.	20%
UniSA did not offer your favourite club.	40%
you did not feel comfortable joining without a friend.	35%
have not explored the clubs available	5%



Food and friendship with Poh





What did the students say?

“What an awesome, amazing night – I feel so inspired to go home and keep cooking all night!”

“Food helps people get to know others’ cultures. This event shows new students they’re not alone here in a new place. I love Poh and knew she had been to Cambodia, so I was very excited to meet her. I can’t wait to go home and ring my Mum”

‘I love the idea of learning how to cook affordable food to share with others. I come from a family where 20 of us used to share a meal together. I am really missing that sense of family; eating by myself.... it’s just not the same’.



One month on

No progressive dinners

- One group of 2 students had cooked the recipes for 4 other students
- 76% of students had cooked the recipes again for themselves

Perceived barriers preventing the progressive dinners

- Didn’t feel safe with possible strangers in their house/ unit
- No time (too busy studying and too stressful to entertain)
- Others reported forgetting to take the list of ingredients shopping
- Don’t need to cook; others do this for them (Chinatown)
- 3 students were happy to help me cook the meal again for other new students over lunch at City East campus



Lunch time meal

- All 23 students from City East campus
 - 16 completed the online survey
- 87% first year students, 13% second year students
- 75% living in a shared house, 13% in university accommodation

Answer Options	Response Percent
Did you attend orientation? Y/ N	83% / 17%
Have you attended any Uni activities i.e. muffin mornings, koala tour? Y/N	7% / 93%
Have you made any friends since coming to Australia? Y/N	73% / 27%
Have you made any friends through social networking sites? Y/N	27% / 73%
Do you intend to work during the semester? Y / N	73% / 27%
Are you homesick? Y/ N	33% / 67%
Are you lonely? Y/ N	57% / 43%
Do you feel that you belong at UniSA?	60% / 40%



Did you join any clubs?

63% stated 'no'

Answer Options	Response Percent
you dislike sports and clubs.	14%
UniSA did not offer your favorite club	29%
did not feel comfortable joining without a friend	57%
have to work	5%
haven't been given any information on clubs	5%
too busy and need to study	10%



Did you hear about the 'cooking with Poh' activity?

- 80% had heard of the event

Answer Options	Response Percent
don't like cooking	14%
were too busy from 5- 9pm	58%
shy	8%
not sure you could understand the instructions	8%
wanted to study	6%



Follow up at the end of semester break in July

- 2 replies from 56 participants





Focus group feedback

- Week 3 is too early – no trust, students shy.
- Advertise via email, posters on campus
- More help with accommodation
- Phone app to find transport, market, shopping malls, multicultural food, accommodation, churches/ worship, activities within walking distance to the city, **karaoke venues**, places to buy text books & second hand goods, links to websites for employment, food manufacturing outlets
- Australian cultural awareness
- International cultural awareness/ names; **Mei Wei Lai**
- Easter perfect timing
 - movie night (Mercury theatre North Tce),
 - dinner (dessert and bubble tea)
- Other events in mid semester break, semester break



Focus group feedback

- More clubs
 - Sports clubs: badminton, basketball, soccer (Magill comp)
 - Girls tend to stick to cultural groups, boy happier to mix
 - Muslim students tend to stick together
 - New International students club + **Karaoke Club**
- University based Chinese New Year, Lantern festival
- Food Festival night (single country and mixed); culturally appropriate
- Halal noodle night and invite everyone
- More trips to see /cuddle animals
- Boot camp
- Trips to football, soccer with 'Aussies'
- Walking trails through the Adelaide hills
- Bike trails through the city
- More activities on campus (during the day)



Focus groups

- Mentors (only ¼ thought they would use a mentor; key issue was trust)
 - Program specific
 - Culturally specific



Where to from here?

- Suspect 'one size' will not suit everyone'
- Multi focused methods of recruiting
- More clubs and more activities on campus





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Questions?

