

From Multicultural to Intercultural

Intercultural Council

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Introduction

- ▶ Intercultural Council
Vision and mission
- ▶ Training
 - ✓ Peer leadership program
 - ✓ Global Competency Certificate
 - ✓ Workshops
- ▶ Purpose/what we do?



Time to Exercise: Please move from your tables

1. What are some common issues/concerns you all face with regards to international students?
2. How should an intercultural campus look?
3. What is the main challenge when going from multicultural to intercultural?

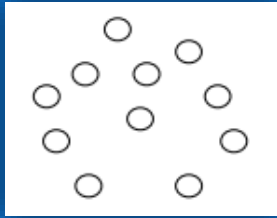
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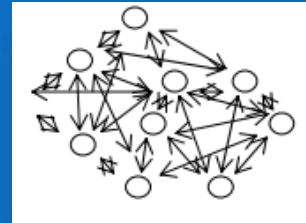


Multicultural vs. Intercultural

Multicultural



Intercultural



In multicultural communities there is representation and possibly recognition

In intercultural communities strives for meaningful interaction and inclusion

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light to dark, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect.

Canadian Universities are
Multicultural, **not** Intercultural (Yet)

Multiple & Complex Identities

- ▶ It's not only Canadian and International Students

Canadian students includes:

- Aboriginal students
- First-generation Canadians
- Canadians who belong to racialized groups
- French Canadians
- Eastern/Western Canada, rural/urban, etc

International students includes:

- Students from many different regions, nationalities, and ethnicities
- Students who have lived abroad for a large portion of their life
- Students who have never left home before

Students' Perspectives

Expectations and Fears

► Expectations

- Parents Expectations
- Personal Expectations
 - Making Friends
 - New Cultural Experience

► Fear

- Failing (Academically and Socially)
- Unforeseen future
- Not fitting in (New country and home country)



Comfort Zones & Stereotypes

► Comfort Zones

- Cultural Comfort Zone
- Apathy instead of Sympathy
- Noticeable division on campus
- Misconception of individuals



► Stereotypes

- Influences stem from media and personal experiences

Orientation



► Why is it important?

- Formal introduction to the university and campus life
- Informs students on services/supports on campus
- Helps students transition into university
- Allows students to meet and form bonds with other students

Orientation



- ▶ What universities currently do:
 - Domestic/General orientation, international student orientation, and Aboriginal student orientation

- ▶ The positives:
 - Specialized orientations cater to students' needs
 - University accommodates cultural differences

Orientation

► Considerations

- Separated orientations can hinder contact between students
- First year international and domestic students have a lot of the same fears and problems
- Universities can downplay problems that new domestic students have (living alone, adjusting to new area, etc.)



Campus Life

▶ Clubs

- Why are they important?
 - Help integrate and find common ground
 - Meet and interact with fellow students
- What universities currently do:
 - Open to all
 - Diversity is encouraged
- Considerations
 - Some are non-inclusive
 - Culture oriented
 - Lack of interest from people not in the club



Campus Life

▶ Student Union

What universities currently do:

- Some have included advocacy positions on the Board of Directors (e.g. International Student Representative, Aboriginal Student Representative)

Considerations

- Lack of ownership
- International students are generally underrepresented in top levels of student governance
- Student Unions sometimes take a hands-off approach to cultural issues on campus



Campus Life



▶ International Student Activity Program

- Why is it important?
 - Helps international students integrate with Canadian life/culture
 - Something outside of classrooms
 - Social interaction
- What universities currently do:
 - Activity program primarily for international students
- Considerations
 - Balancing international/Canadian attendees
 - Budget goes out of international tuition

Classroom



▶ What schools currently do:

- Large class sizes vs small class sizes
 - No room for personal interaction in large class sizes
 - International to domestic student ratio depends on courses opted by students:
 - Different classroom sizes
 - ESL
 - Courses (Example: Business courses tend to have more international students)

**Courses themselves don't help students integrate.
Lack intercultural learning.**

Classroom

▶ Small Class Sizes

- Student-teacher ratio better
- Cultural clusters formed per class



▶ Group Work

- “Form Groups” – Cluster > International VS Canadian
- Instructors have assigned groups with mixed ratio of international and Canadian students (Inter-Group Contact Theory)

Classroom

- ▶ Misunderstanding Between Cultures > Intercultural Learning
 - Diversity in learning
 - Assignments
- ▶ Power Distance Between Teacher and Students
 - Polychronic VS Monochronic
 - Collectivistic VS Individualistic (communication styles and pattern preferences)



Conclusive Discussion

1. Recap of solutions
2. What do you believe is the best solution to deal with these issues?
3. Compare and contrast our experiences and our solutions from student perspective

Suggestions

1. Integrated Orientations
2. Promote meaningful cross-cultural interaction → A main idea that came back was mentors
3. Quota per culture zone on campus
4. Intercultural training for students and teachers
5. Meaningful interactive events
6. Inclusion in clubs

Questions?