

Connecting Best Practices for Teaching Linguistically and Culturally-Diverse International Students with International Student Satisfaction and Student Perceptions of Learning

Dr. Clayton Smith
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario (Canada)

AGENDA

Research
Team

Introduction

Research
Design

Findings

Conclusions

Next

Research Team

- Dr. Clayton Smith, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor
- Dr. George Zhou, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor
- Prof. Michael Potter, Centre for Teaching and Learning, University of Windsor
- Ms. Deana Wang, International Student Centre, University of Windsor
- Ms. Miranda Pecoraro, Outstanding Scholar (3rd Year Social Work), University of Windsor



INTRODUCTION



Another Record Year for Canadian International Education

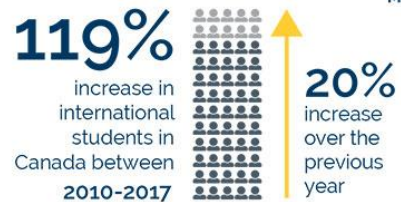
- As of December 31, 2018 there were **572,415 international students in Canada**. This number from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)* represents a 16% increase over 2017 in which international student numbers grew by 20%.
- “The new data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada clearly demonstrate the **continuing attractiveness of Canada as a study destination**,” said Larissa Bezo, President and CEO of CBIE. “Our research shows that international students choose Canada because of the **quality of the Canadian education system and our reputation as a safe and tolerant country**. This reputation is especially appealing at present given current geopolitical realities, and **96% of international students tell us they would recommend Canada to family and friends.**”

-Canadian Bureau of International Education, 2019

International Students in Canada 2018

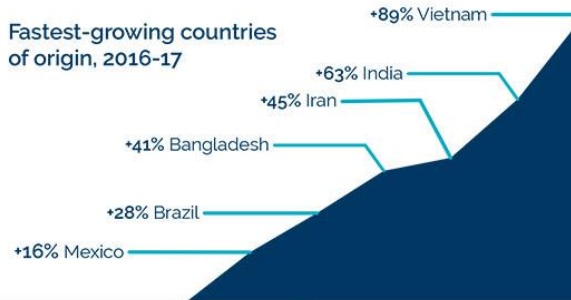
494,525
international students in Canada at all levels of study in 2017¹

Where do inbound students come from?



“The most positive part of my study experience in Canada has been the guidance I received from my professors. The quality of education is outstanding.”
- Natural Sciences student from Egypt

Fastest-growing countries of origin, 2016-17



Top **3** reasons international students choose Canada²

- 1 The **quality** of the Canadian education system
- 2 Canada's reputation as a **tolerant** and **non-discriminatory** society
- 3 Canada's reputation as a **safe** country



of international students recommend Canada as a study destination³



of international students plan to apply for permanent residence in Canada⁴

¹ Unless otherwise specified, CBIE uses Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) data
^{2,3,4} CBIE International Student Survey, 2015.

Campus Internationalization

- Current internationalization initiatives normally focus on external areas:
 - Education abroad
 - Student exchange
 - Recruiting international students
 - Institutional partnerships



Moving Forward

- More institutions are developing academic-related internationalization initiatives:
 - International or global student learning outcomes
 - International-focused general education requirements
 - Foreign language requirements

“We need to make sure that faculty are engaged in and central to internationalization efforts.”

-Robin Metros Helms,
Director, American Council
on Education Center
for Internationalization and
Global Engagement

A Challenge and an Opportunity

- Few instructors have received formal training for intercultural learning or inclusive education (Paige, & Goode, 2009).
- But there are many promising teaching practices that faculty can add to their teaching repertoire, which will improve their teaching of international students and are believed to result in high levels of student learning.



Promising Teaching Practices



Focus on...

1

Providing increased **contextual information and linguistic support, specific learning and study approaches, and greater opportunities for classroom interaction and participation** (Kinsella, 1997).

2

Putting **culturally-responsive teaching** into practice in the classroom (Gay, 2010).

3

Using **differentiated instruction** that builds on student strengths (Tomlinson, 1999).

Promising Teaching Practices (107)

Academic integrity (3)	Academic skills (3)	Assessing needs(2)
Assessment (3)	Assignments(7)	Class preparation (3)
Clarifying expectations(4)	Climate in classroom (4)	Communicating outside of the classroom (4)
Culturally-responsive teaching (11)	Differentiated instruction (6)	Diversity and inclusion (14)
Feedback (5)	Group work (6)	Language proficiency (4)
Lecture design and delivery (18)	Note-taking (5)	Physical environment (2)
Reviewing material (2)	Student-centred teaching (6)	Verbal communications (7)
Visual communications (3)		

International Student Satisfaction



International Students are Satisfied



- Nearly 9 of 10 (89%) indicate that they are satisfied with the learning experience at Canadian and US colleges and universities
- This is slightly higher than satisfaction at non-North American institutions (87%) and the global index (87%)

-ISB 2016 Wave

International Students are Relatively Satisfied with their Learning Experience

	Canada	United States	Non-North American Institutions	All Institutions
Learning Overall	89%	90%	87%	87%
Assessment	91%	92%	88%	89%
Careers advice from faculty members	81%	83.0%	71%	72%
Course Content	90%	91%	89%	89%
Course organization	88%	91%	84%	85%
Employability	86%	84%	78%	79%
Expert lecturers	93%	94%	94%	94%
Good teachers	89%	90%	88%	88%
Laboratories	92%	92%	91%	91%
Language Support	91%	93%	89%	89%

International Students are Relatively Satisfied (Cont'd)

	Canada	United States	Non-North American Institutions	All Institutions
Learning spaces	93%	93%	89%	90%
Learning support	91%	93%	89%	89%
Marking criteria	89%	91%	83%	84%
Online library	92%	88%	91%	91%
Performance feedback	90%	91%	84%	85%
Physical library	90%	93%	90%	90%
Quality lectures	91%	91%	88%	89%
Technology	91%	94%	91%	91%
Virtual learning	92%	93%	91%	91%
Work experience	81%	78%	69%	70%

Where Perceptions Varied



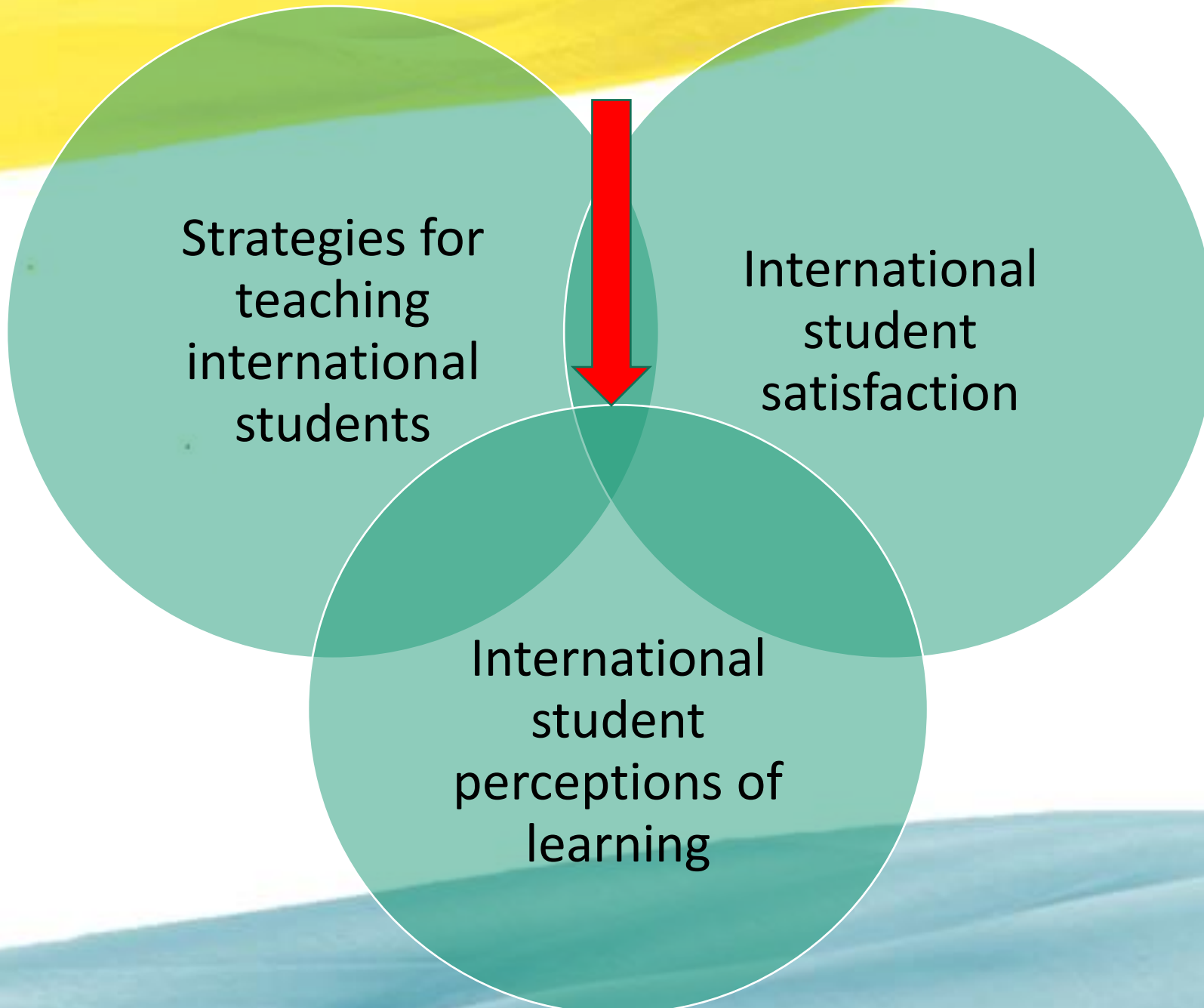
Research Design



- Purpose
- Research Questions
- Pilot Study
- Research Participants
- Data Collection

Purpose

- Purpose: To explore the promising teaching practices for teaching linguistically and culturally-diverse international students by identifying the teaching practices that have high levels of student satisfaction and student perceptions of learning.



Strategies for
teaching
international
students

International
student
satisfaction

International
student
perceptions of
learning

Research Questions

1. What are the promising teaching practices for teaching linguistically and culturally-diverse international students that have **high international student satisfaction**?
2. What are the promising teaching practices for teaching linguistically and culturally-diverse international students that are associated with **high international student perception levels of student learning**?

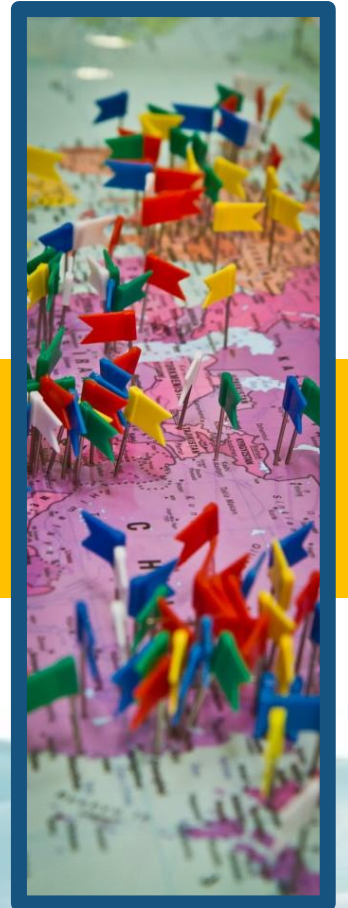


Pilot Study – Internal Validity

- Panel of 10 international students
 - Half in their first-year and spoke a language other than English as their first language
 - Remaining students were upper-level undergraduate or graduate students
- Reviewed the questions used in the instruments to ensure they matched their intended use.
- Modifications were subsequently made to the instruments.

Research Participants

- All UWindsor international students enrolled in Winter 2018.
- Represented a wide array of:
 - Countries of origin
 - Study levels
 - Academic programs
 - Study stages
 - Ages



Data Collection

- Online survey questionnaire administered in February 2018
- Five focus group discussions in March-April 2018
- Six individual interviews in March-April 2018
- 32% response rate



A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is positioned over a document. The lens is sharply focused on the word "ANALYSIS" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The document has a white background with a torn edge effect. Below the word, there are several lines of binary code (0s and 1s) in a smaller, blue font. The background of the entire image is a mix of white, yellow, and light blue wavy patterns.

ANALYSIS

Findings – Survey Data

- Most (93.9%) reported being **somewhat satisfied, satisfied, or very satisfied** with their learning experiences.

Findings – Survey Data

- Teaching practices with satisfied/very satisfied respondent **satisfaction** greater than 70% included:
 - ✓ academic integrity
 - ✓ assessment
 - ✓ assignments
 - ✓ clarifying expectations
 - ✓ communicating outside of the classroom
 - ✓ lecture design and delivery
 - ✓ verbal communications
 - ✓ visual communications

Findings – Survey Data

- Promising teaching practices with medium/high respondent **perception of student learning** levels included:

Academic integrity	Academic skills	Assessing needs
Assessment	Assignments	Clarifying expectations
Class preparation	Climate in classroom	Communicating outside of the classroom
Culturally-responsive teaching	Differentiated instruction	Diversity & inclusion
Feedback	Group work	Language proficiency
Student-centred teaching	Verbal Communication	Visual communications

Teaching Practices with High Student Satisfaction and Student Perceptions of Learning – The Top 8

- Academic integrity
- Assessment
- Assignments
- Clarifying expectations
- Communicating outside of the classroom
- Lecture design and delivery
- Verbal communications
- Visual communications



Relationship between Student Satisfaction and Student Perception of Learning for each Promising Teaching Practice

- All promising teaching practices reported a **positive correlation**
- All correlations were statistically significant at the **0.01 level**
- The **most positive correlations** (0.700 or higher) were reported for:
 - Assessing needs
 - Assignments
 - Clarifying expectations
 - Class preparation
 - Culturally-responsive teaching
 - Feedback
 - Language proficiency

Findings – Focus Groups & Interviews

- Overall:
 - Student learning experiences were **mainly positive**.
 - Most identified **instructors as a key factor** in the student experience.
 - Some **characteristics** were especially appreciated, including: humour, valuing diverse cultures, and an encouraging approach.
 - Students at **all study stages** endorsed a student-centred approach, use of interactive teaching methods, specific and prompt feedback, use of practical experiences, pleasant learning environment, and methods that support the learning of additional language learners.

Findings – Focus Groups & Interviews

- Study Stage:
 - Students in the **ESL program** called for strategies that help improve writing, daily homework , and in-advance agendas.
 - **Undergraduates** were interested in academic support, updated curricula, and partially-filled slides in advance of class.
 - **Graduate students** spoke of the importance of a free learning environment, multi-modality teaching strategies, use of digital and visual materials, and emotional, physical, and non-judgemental support from their supervisor.

Selected Student Comments

- “I think that the teacher can give us some strategies for us to learn.”
- “the professor [should] give more opportunity for international students to speak in the classroom.”
- “There should be more videos. There should be more examples; in case teachers can teach the definition, they have to explain it using an example. More examples, more explanations.”
- “If the classes are going to discuss ... some technical terms, the professor gives us these terms in advance, we can read them, and we can know those terms that we do not know.”
- “I would like to say ... the professors should add the practical data to the course when they’re giving assignments, instead of from the book.”

CONCLUSIONS



Conclusions

- Identified teaching practices
 - with high student satisfaction
 - with high student perceptions of learning
 - with both high student satisfaction and high student perceptions of learning
- Identified some teacher characteristics international students prefer

Limitations

- Responses on the survey were approximately two-third's graduate students, which limits what can be said about **international undergraduate student experiences**, except in aggregate ways.
- The perceptions of student learning data is self-reported, which makes it hard to discern **how much student learning** can be accurately associated with each teaching practice.
- The study was completed in the winter semester and is based on one semester of data. Research conducted for the full academic year may have created more **response diversity**.

Further Research

- To better understand how the identified teaching practices that produce high levels of student satisfaction and student perceptions of learning are **impacted by individual student characteristics** (e.g., study location, program stage, length of time studying outside of the country of origin, study level, country of origin, age, gender, parents' educational level).
- Which teaching practices **predict** high levels of student satisfaction and student perceptions of learning.
- How student satisfaction and student perceptions of learning related to the teaching practices **change over time**.

For more information on our research project: <http://www.uwindsor.ca/people/csmith/320/connecting-best-practices-teaching-linguistically-and-culturally-diverse-international-students>

What's
next



International Student Learning Community: Student-Informed Research

- Our Purpose:

- Increase student research skills and curiosity by participating in an **academic year-long research project** in which students will demonstrate responsibility for all phases of the research; and
- Strengthen our research program by giving **more student voice** to our investigation of best practices for teaching international students.

Benefits to Students

- Experience a [high-impact educational practice](#) which will provide students with an opportunity to engage in collaborative inquiry and discovery in student-informed research on an important educational topic;
- Act as [researchers](#) who will define and carry-out (with the facilitation of faculty researchers) their own research tasks that will focus on the topics and issues of their own study and living;
- Obtain recognition on the [University of Windsor Co-Curricular Record](#), which complements a resume and academic transcript with a documented list of experiences, validated by a UWindsor faculty/staff member;
- Participate in related academic conferences (such as [UWIII Discover](#) undergraduate research conference and the [University of Windsor-Oakland University International Teaching and Learning Conference](#)); and
- Possibly publish findings in an academic journal.

Current Status

- Research topic:
 - Difference between STEM and non-STEM international students on student satisfaction and perceptions of student learning with promising teaching practices
- Qualitative research design using focus groups and individual interviews
- Seeking University of Windsor and University of Northampton research ethics approval
- Research is planned for October-December 2019

For more information: <http://www.uwindsor.ca/people/csmith/325/development-international-student-learning-community-using-research-and-student-engagement>

Questions and Comments



Marsi



Miigwech

谢谢



תודה



Dr. Clayton Smith, Clayton.Smith@uwindsor.ca
Dr. George Zhou, gzhou@uwindsor.ca
Prof. Michael Potter, pottermk@uwindsor.ca
Ms. Deena Wang, deenaw@uwindsor.ca
Ms. Miranda Pecoraro, pecorar1@uwindsor.ca