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

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AGENDA

Research Team

Introduction

Research Design

Findings

Conclusions

Next

May 21-24, 2019
Global Conference on Education and Research, Sarasota, Florida
Research Team

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• Dr. George Zhou, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor
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• 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
Canada’s Performance and Potential in International Education

International Students in Canada 2018

494,525 international students in Canada at all levels of study in 2017

119% increase in international students in Canada between 2010-2017

20% increase over the previous year

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

Top 3 reasons international students choose Canada:

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

95% of international students recommend Canada as a study destination

51% of international students plan to apply for permanent residence in Canada

Fastest-growing countries of origin, 2015-17

Source: A World of Learning - Canada’s Performance and Potential in International Education 2018
cibly-canada.ca
• 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).

## Promising Teaching Practices (107)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Non-North American Institutions</th>
<th>All Institutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Overall</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers advice from faculty members</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Content</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course organization</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employability</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert lecturers</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good teachers</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>88%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Support</td>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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International Students are Relatively Satisfied (Cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Learning spaces</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning support</td>
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<td>Marking criteria</td>
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<td>Online library</td>
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<td>Performance feedback</td>
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<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical library</td>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<td>Quality lectures</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Virtual learning</td>
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<td>Work experience</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<td>Country of Origin</td>
<td>Study Level</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Study Time</td>
<td>Study Stage</td>
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Research Design

• Purpose
• Research Questions
• Pilot Study
• Research Participants
• Data Collection
• **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.
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
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:

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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.

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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 UWIll 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
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