

# 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

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Conclusions

Next

# Research Team

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- 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> Year Social Work), University of Windsor



# INTRODUCTION



# Another Record Year for Canadian International Education

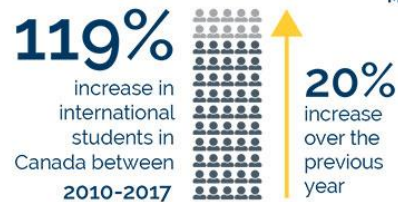
- As of December 31, 2018 there were **572,415 international students in Canada**. This number from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)\* represents a 16% increase over 2017 in which international student numbers grew by 20%.
- “The new data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship 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

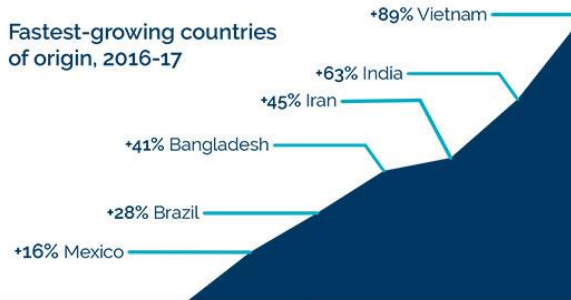
**494,525**  
international students in Canada at all levels of study in 2017<sup>1</sup>

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 Canada<sup>2</sup>

- 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 destination<sup>3</sup>



of international students plan to apply for permanent residence in Canada<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, CBIE uses Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) data  
<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> 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).

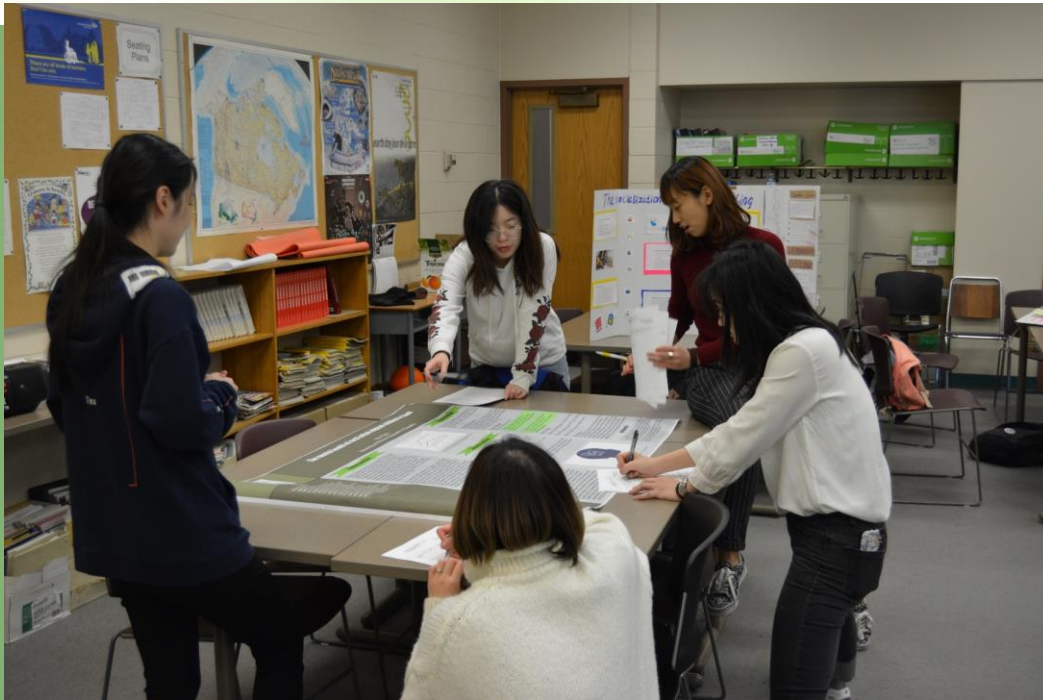
# Promising Teaching Practices (107)

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)		

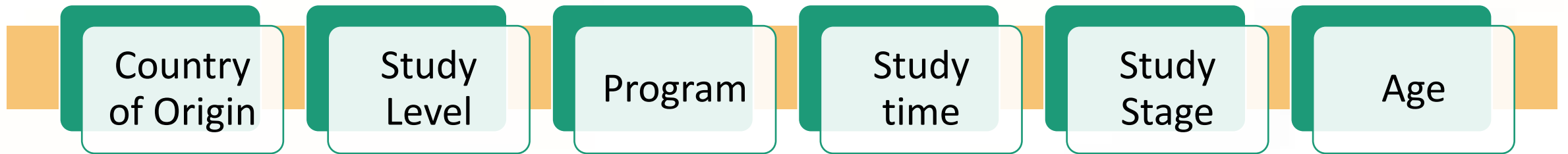
# International Students are Satisfied

- 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



# Where Perceptions Varied

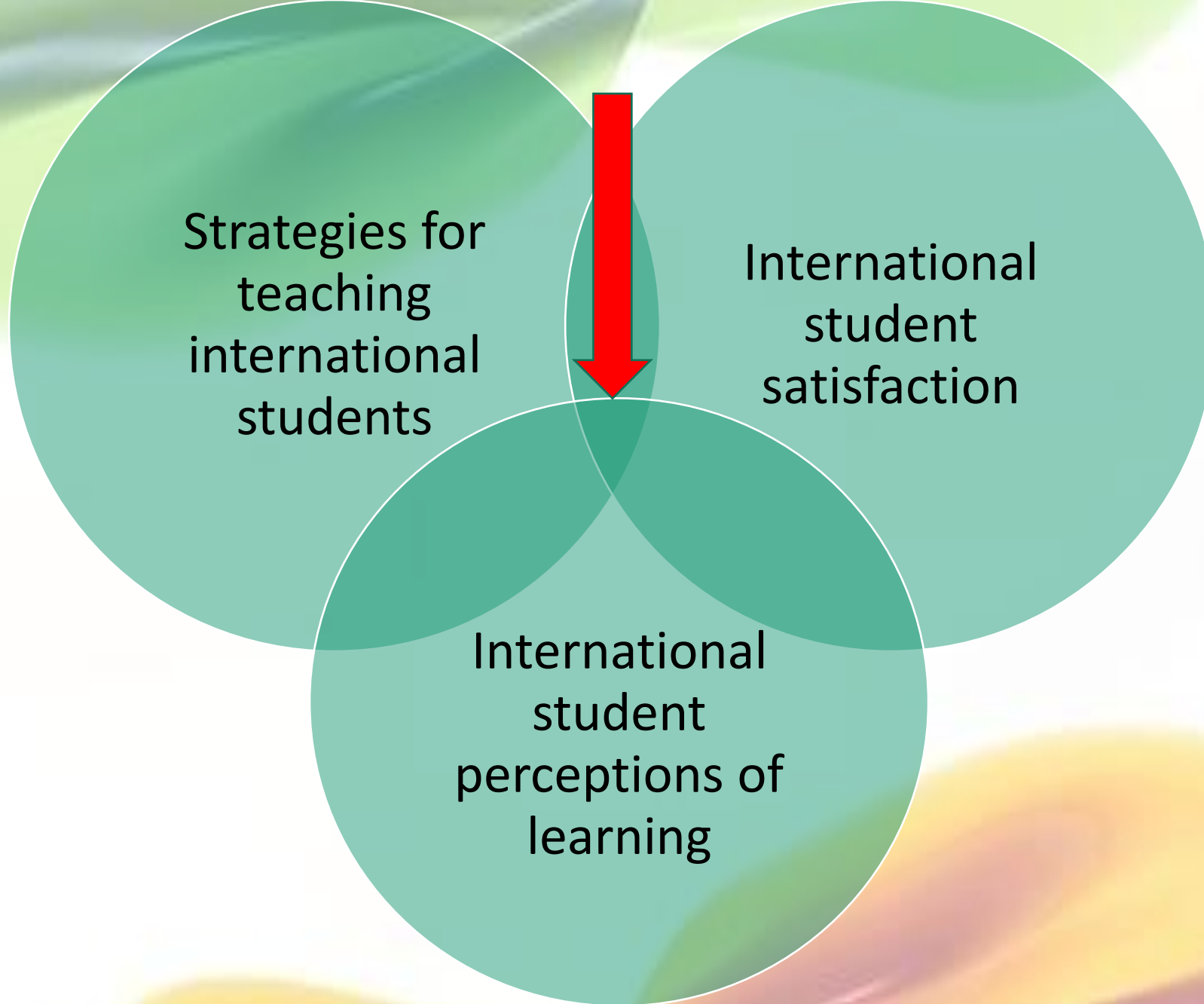




# Purpose

- 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.





# 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:

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 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.

# 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>

# Questions and Comments

