‘Fostering a Sense of Belonging’

The University of Warwick
Coventry, United Kingdom
6 May 2014
In March 2012, The University of Warwick and Warwick Students' Union organised a two-day Integration Summit with the aim of bringing universities and their students' unions together around a common theme. The choice of theme – how best to encourage integration between international and domestic students – was triggered by the latest student survey data which showed 31% of international students at 44 UK institutions agreed with the statement “I feel isolated from the university community” and over a quarter were dissatisfied with making friends with local students. These represented some of the lowest satisfaction scores across the whole student experience for international students studying in the UK in 2011. The summit attended by 78 universities and students' unions was repeated in 2013 with a focus on promoting dialogue between international and domestic students.

In March 2014, our theme is ‘fostering a sense of belonging’ and our summit coincides with the launch of a publication, commissioned by UKCISA, which aims to provide a platform for understanding and evaluating what works in the context of further and higher education in order to move the integration debate forward. It is hoped that the 2014 Warwick Integration Summit will establish a number of communities of practice that will work together over the coming years to address the questions raised in the publication in order to increase integration and improve the experience of all our students.

The Warwick Integration Summit 2014 has been organised jointly with the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and the National Union of Students (NUS) out of a desire to increase collaboration between universities and their students' unions and will feature the NUS Internationalisation Awards. We thank you for your participation in the debate and hope you enjoy an insightful and stimulating Summit.”

Claire O’Leary
Assistant Director (Student Experience), International Office, University of Warwick

Cat Turnham
Welfare Officer, Warwick SU
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A Quick fire Round (Up) of Best Practice
Chaired by: Dominic Scott, UKCISA
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Guiding Principles for Promoting Integration – Insights from Research
Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey, University of Warwick
It is widely accepted that there is insufficient integration of home and international students on university campuses. Glass and Westmont (2014), for example, argue that “domestic and international students often live in parallel social worlds, shut off from meaningful interaction with one another.” Most universities have taken numerous steps to try and address this issue, with varying degrees of success and with most people feeling much more integration still needs to be done. In this talk, I explore some background research that can offer some useful principles on which to guide our integration efforts.

Building Communities of Practice – next steps

The Oz Moment: Cultural Learning and the Intuitive Mind
Dr Joseph Shauues, Japan InterCultural Institute, Tokyo
Many travellers and sojourners remember tiny details from their time abroad. Aki remembered the short toilet stall doors in the lax airport; Tony recalls cars he saw by the side of the road in Canada. I call these slice-of-life memories “Oz moments” after a scene from the movie “The Wizard of Oz” in which Dorothy looks around wondrously at her new environment and says “I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore Toto.” Oz moments are provoked by tiny things which remind us that we are in another world. Yet why do we remember such tiny details for months or even years? To find answers, we need to look at new research from the fields of cognitive and cultural neuroscience. Recent research in cultural neuroscience is showing us that much high-level cognition takes place outside of conscious awareness. From the perspective of Oz, moments can be seen as evidence that our intuitive mind (or, cognitive unconscious) is hard at work detecting and making sense of anomalies. Oz moments are just one example of cultural learning phenomena that can be better understood using a cognitive perspective. Others include deep cultural difference, culture shock, ethnocentrism, hidden bias and cultural frame-shifting. Research in these areas may lead to a paradigm shift in intercultural education as we start to better understand the unconscious processes underlying cultural learning.

Cultural Learning and the Intuitive Mind

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NUS Internationalisation Awards – sponsored by UKCISA
These Awards reward best practice within universities and students’ unions and recognise some of the hard work that unions and officers put into supporting international students. The results will be announced at the Warwick Integration Summit and comprise the following categories:

- International Student Officer of the Year
- International Student of the Year
- Internationalised Students’ Union of the Year
- International Student Adviser of the Year
- Innovation in Internationalising the Student Experience
- Excellence in International Student Support

Workshop Descriptions

A. Towards a Global Community
Katy Manns, Leeds University and Sarah Charlesworth, Leeds University Union
Colleagues from Leeds University and Union will share their experiences of working collaboratively to build a sense of global community on campus through their international ambassadors programme, the Elerisse Global Residence (which has a very clear integration aim in its allocation policy), Global Cafe, Student families programme and student societies support.

B. Enhancing intercultural effectiveness for integration at home and abroad: Introducing online components of a new training programme to develop intercultural skills and competencies
Sophie Reissner-Reubick, Lynnette Richards and Emily Lim, University of Warwick
Intercultural effectiveness both contributes to, and comes out of, integration between home and international students. So we need to know what defines intercultural effectiveness, what determines it – and we need to take steps to ensure we are giving students appropriate opportunities to acquire it, to apply it and to articulate it.

One snapshot of that process can be taken at the point where students are preparing to Study Abroad. This workshop will introduce you to a new online course designed for this pre-departure stage but with equal potential to be used locally. As its three mini-modules draw on intercultural training and research with home as well as international students and those who have recently returned from study abroad. This will be a ‘hands-on’ session for participants to both try out the interactive online materials and evaluate their appeal and usefulness from different perspectives, with an overall focus on the student experience. We’ll describe how our work with engineering students on multicultural teamwork has fed into the online course and also invite discussion of our plans for two further stages of training: while-abroad and post-return.

C. Our Students as global citizens
Johanna Holtan, Edinburgh University Students’ Association
Through our work on student-led global citizenship, EUSA Global have learned a great deal about the communities we build with students. Whether through language learning or addressing global challenges, EUSA Global provides spaces for students to learn and share skills, realise ideas, burst the local bubble, tell stories, and create their own communities. These spaces have provided healthy opportunities for integration. This workshop will build on lessons learned from these activities and how they are relevant to integration. We will also draw on the knowledge and experience of participants in exploring different perspectives around global citizenship, generating recommendations for unions, universities, and other relevant organisations such as UKCISA to develop activity around the topic.
Katy’s experience of the rewards and difficulties associated with integrating with locals whilst on Teaching Assistant placements in France and Spain left her with a passion for helping connect people from different cultures. After several posts in marketing and TELs, she joined the British Council, first in a support role with international scholarship-holders and then building relationships with Midlands organisations with international student bases. Her MA dissertation explored speech changes in friendships between students from different countries with a shared language. Head of International Student Office at the University of Leeds since 2003, Katy works in partnership with University and Students’ Union colleagues and with students, to enhance international student experience, supporting students to develop and articulate their intercultural competence and the promotion of integration on campus.

Claire O’Leary

As Head of Student Experience in the International Office at the University of Warwick, Claire is responsible for monitoring and enhancing the international student experience as well as internationalising the student experience. Claire also leads on Tier 4 compliance strategy and policy for international students. Her previous roles at Warwick include Head of Immigration Services. She has worked in international student support at three universities over the last 16 years. Claire also serves as trustee on the board of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA).

Dr Sophie Reissner-Roubicék

Dr Sophie Reissner-Roubicék teaches on the MSc in Intercultural Communication for Business and the Professions at Warwick, and develops cross-faculty intercultural training with a focus on employability. Her research focuses on job interviews, teamworking and leadership and she has developed a new module on Leadership, Language and Culture for the Warwick International Summer School.

Lynnette Richards

Lynnette joined the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick in 1999 and, in her current position she teaches international students English for Academic Purposes and Study Skills. Over the past six years, she has also being involved in the development and delivery of courses and workshops in Intercultural Communication, both at Warwick and Oxford Brookes University. She is currently involved in collaborative projects with the Engineering and Statistics departments at Warwick, focusing on multicultural teams and working across cultures. Recently, Lynnette has collaborated with colleagues on the development of a pre-departure online course in intercultural skills for out-going ERASMUS students.

Dr Joseph Shaules

Joseph Shaules (PhD) has worked in intercultural education in Japan, Mexico and Europe for more than 20 years. He spent ten years as a tenured faculty at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, as well as 5 years as a special associate professor at Rikkyo’s Graduate School of Intercultural Communication. He is currently the director of the Japan Intercultural Institute (JII). He is a co-presenter on the NHK Television program Myouku de Eikou. He is the Japan specialist for Intercultures, a consulting and training company based in Germany. With the International House of Japan he has developed seminars in leadership skills for intercultural professionals. His books include Identity (Oxford University Press), Deep Culture. The Hidden Challenges of Global Living (Multilingual Matters) and Beneath the Surface: The Beginner’s Guide to the Deep Culture Experience (Intercultural Press). He is proficient in English, Japanese, French, Spanish and Indonesian. His latest book, The Intercultural Mind: Connecting Culture, Cognition and Global Living, will come out later this year.

Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey

Helen Spencer-Oatey’s educational background is in both psychology and linguistics, and throughout her career she has worked at the interface of the two disciplines. Her first teaching experience was in Hong Kong, where she taught English language to sixth-form (pre-university) students, as well as to adults taking evening classes at a British Council language school. Later she spent seven years working for a private UK-based University, training teachers of English language from colleagues and universities in the eastern region of China. After completing her PhD at Lancaster University, she lectured at the University of Luton (as it was then) for 10 years and established the first MA in Intercultural Communication in the UK. In 2002 she started managing the major intergovernmental eChina-UK Programme on behalf of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and found it a transforming experience. She joined the University of Warwick in September 2007, where she is Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics.

Stephen Williams

As Head of Partnerships in the International Office at the University of Warwick, Stephen develops strategic institutional-level partnerships in line with the University’s goal to be a globally-connected university. His previous roles at Warwick include Head of International Student Experience and Deputy Head of International Student Recruitment with specific responsibility for South Asia and the Americas. He has also been a Study Abroad and Foreign Student Advisers (SAFSAs) Board member for the past two years. This experience has given him a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by internationalisation and how they relate to both students and advisers. Stephen created and organised the first two Warwick International Summits in collaboration with Warwick SU. NUS and UKCISA, he has also co-written the recent Fostering a sense of belonging on integration, commissioned by UKCISA.

Katy Manns

Katy Manns has focused on the internationalisation of student experience, supporting students to develop and articulate the links between national identity and language. She went on to work for the British Council, working with the first of several international assignments which have taken her around the globe. Emllie was awarded an MA in Race and Ethnic Studies from the University of Warwick in 2004 where her dissertation explored the links between national identity and language. She went on to work for the British Council working with international students studying in the UK as well as designing and delivering international youth projects designed to increase mutual understanding across cultures. Since 2011, Emily's work at the University of Warwick has focused on the internationalisation of student experience, supporting students to develop and articulate their intercultural competence and the promotion of integration on campus.

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For summit videos and presentations visit:
www.warwick.ac.uk/globalpeople/integration