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**International Students 2012:
Transition,
Integration &
Retention**

February 16, 2012 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

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Panelist

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Overview

- U.S. colleges and universities best **support** and **serve** international students when we approach advising and programming **collaboratively**.
- An effective **holistic** approach to the student, and our roles in their success, focuses on student **transition, integration, and retention**.

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Nationally, 25% of first-year students do not return to their initial institution¹

- After our campuses attract and recruit international students, how can international educators be most effective in promoting students' success from pre-arrival through graduation?

1. Matthews, B. (2009). Retention Matters. Retrieved April 16, 2010, from <http://www.stanbridge.edu.com/files/2009/11/02/matthews>

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Transition

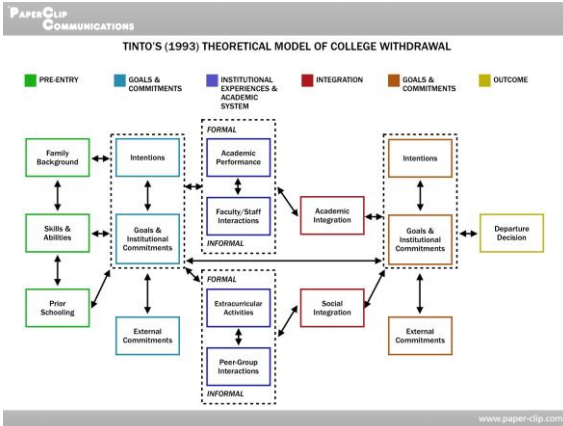
Given that a successful **transition** to the complex U.S. undergraduate experience is key to international student success, what can our institutions do effectively to support students?

Polling Question

- How is the international student retention rate reported at your institution?
 - The international student retention rate is not separated out from the overall retention rate.
 - The international student retention rate is reported separately from the overall retention rate, with international retention goals tied to domestic retention goals.
 - The international student retention rate is reported separately from the overall retention rate, with international retention goals unrelated to domestic retention goals.
 - An international student retention rate is not reported at my institution.

Retention vs. Withdrawal

- How can the efforts of international educators affect the likelihood of an international student staying at and graduating from an institution?
- What is our contribution to our institution's **retention** and internationalization goals?



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What role, predictive modeling?

Consider institutional predictive model's applicability to international students and modify appropriately.

Anticipated major	Alumni connections
Date of application	Scholarship level
Time between application to admittance	Race
Deposit date	Religion
Estimated family contribution	Unmet need
Ethnicity	GPA
How student found out about college	
Fall or spring start date	
Living on campus or commuter	

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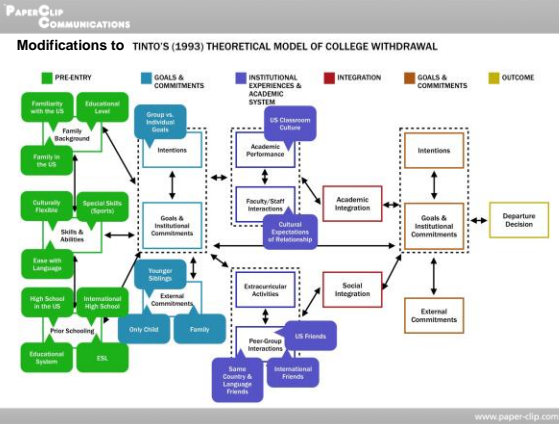
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Date of application	Scholarship level
Time between application to admittance	Race
Deposit date	Religion
Estimated family contribution	Unmet need
Ethnicity	GPA
How student found out about college	Country of origin
Fall or spring start date	English language learner
Living on campus or commuter	TOFEL score
	Attended SNC ESL

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Academic Advisement of International Students

Requires internal collaboration
Considers needs of "whole" student
Marries student expectations and realities
Is especially critical during transitions

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Polling Question

- Who is responsible for academic advisement of international students at your institution?
 - International office staff
 - A faculty member assigned to the student
 - Other

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Academic Advisement - Pre-arrival

- Begins during recruitment/admission
- “Hand-off” from Office of Admission to for immigration AND academic transition
- For graduating ESL students, preparatory workshops and pre-advising

Academic Advisement - Transition

- International staff academic advisor for new international students for first year; allows for HOLISTIC advising
- Pre-arrival, email/Skype advisement; in-person when possible
- Students registered and receive class schedules prior to semester

Academic Advisement - Group

- Group advisement during International Student Orientation includes culturally sensitive presentations by Academic Support Services
 - Academic Honor Code
 - U.S. classroom culture
- International staff facilitates academic support group for international students on probation

Academic Advisement - Individual

- Individual advisement sessions during orientation and “add/drop” period
- Close monitoring during early part of semester
- Advisor is liaison with faculty members, Registrar, Retention Committee
- Strengths-based advising approach; empower, and celebrate successes
- Midterm progress assessment/intervention

Academic Advisement - Individual

- Continue to address socio-cultural, personal, other non-academic issues
- Encourage exploration of academic major and career development
- Assist with change to permanent academic advisor in student’s major; international staff continues as secondary advisor

Integration

- How can we facilitate international students’ meaningful **integration** into our college community both academically and socially ?
- What role can programming play in integration?

What is integration and why does it matter?

- **Astin's Theory of Involvement** is that students learn more the more they are involved in both the academic and social aspects of the collegiate experience. An involved student is one who devotes considerable energy to academics, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations and activities, and interacts often with faculty.

(Astin, 1984, p.292)

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Polling Question

- At your institution, who is responsible for programming specifically for international students?
 - International office solely
 - International office in collaboration with other offices
 - Other offices solely (e.g., Student Affairs)
 - Institution does not offer programming specifically for international students.

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- **Service/Integration** activities are those that focus on the student's quality of life at the college, providing social and cultural support.
 - Organized entertainment
 - Ethnic celebrations
 - Visa/immigration issues
 - Welcome activities
- **Transformative/Educational** activities are grounded in educational theory to assist students in personal growth, intercultural sensitivity, and life-long learning.
 - Cross-cultural programming
 - Intentional learning communities
 - Peer mentoring
 - Bridging classes

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Case in point: Holistic approach to Saudi student success



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Case in point: Holistic approach to Chinese student success



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Reflection

- What does a **collaborative** and **holistic** approach to international student support look like at your institution? What are your effective strategies?
- What opportunities and barriers exist at your institution for approaching international student transition, integration, and retention holistically?
- What changes could be made within your institution and/or office toward greater synergy in meeting the needs of international students?

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