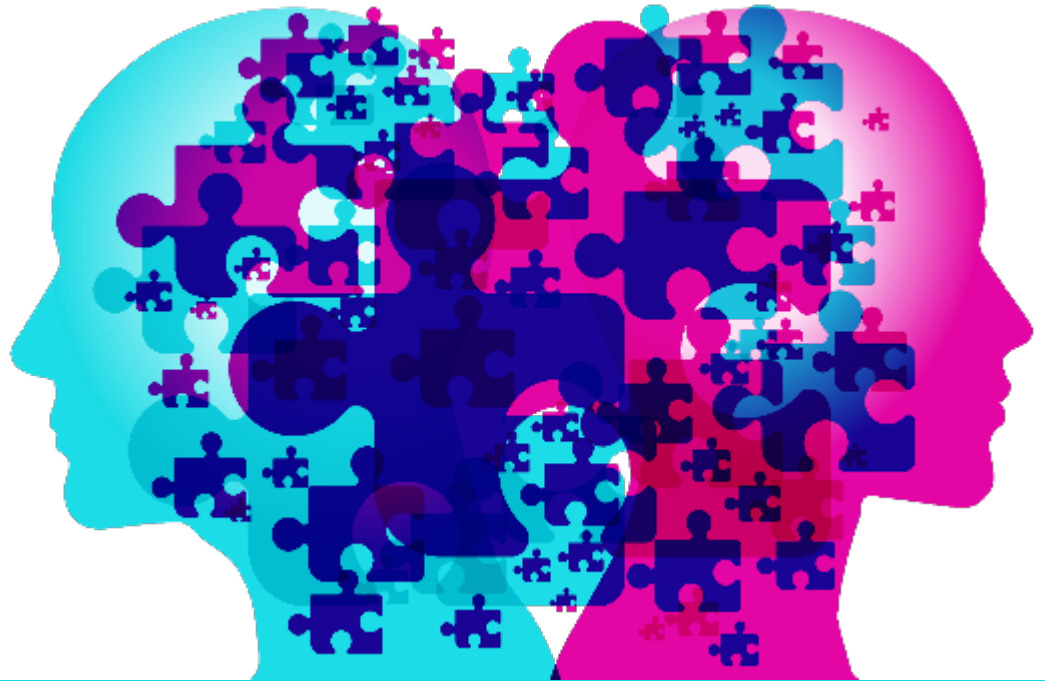


International Student Mental Health Lightning Round: Approaches to Understand Needs and Support with Training and Response



Round 1

Presenters

Round 1:



Ashley Henggeler
International Affairs Coordinator
Northwest Missouri State University



Steve Rude
International Student Advisor
Des Moines Area Community College



Bryanna Davis
Marketing Manager
International Student Insurance

Round 2:



Karla Weilbrenner McCollum
Director, International Affairs
Indian Hills Community College



Matt Lewer
Client Services Advisor
LewerMark Student Insurance

Agenda

- What's Going On With Our Students
- Understanding the Challenges
- Programming That Works
- Resources



What's Going On?

40% of students so depressed they
found it difficult to function



61% of students felt
"overwhelming anxiety"



38.5% felt things were hopeless



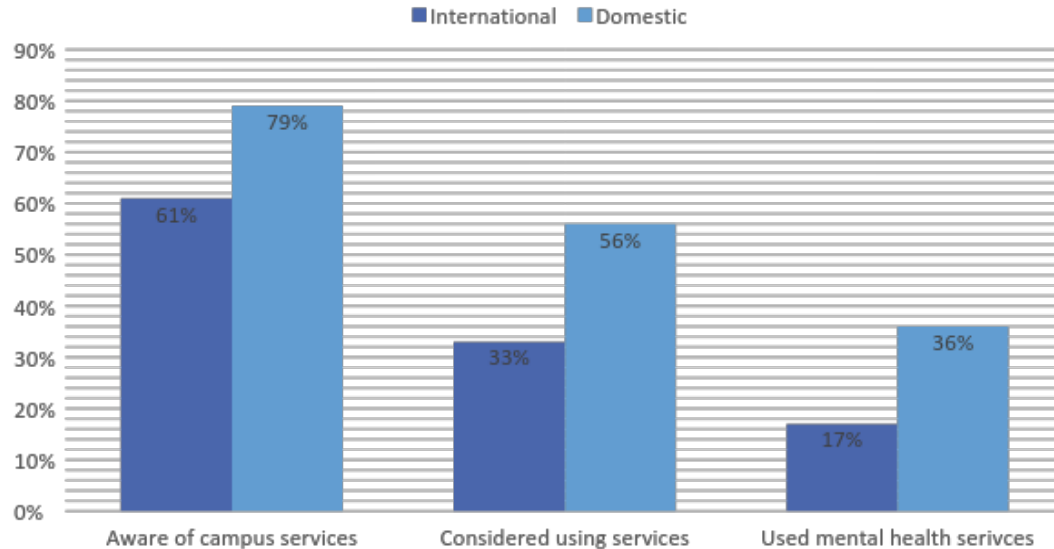
13.9% of entering freshman
anticipate a "very good chance" of
seeking counselling



Source: acha-ncha.org
[American College Health
Association](http://AmericanCollegeHealthAssociation.org)

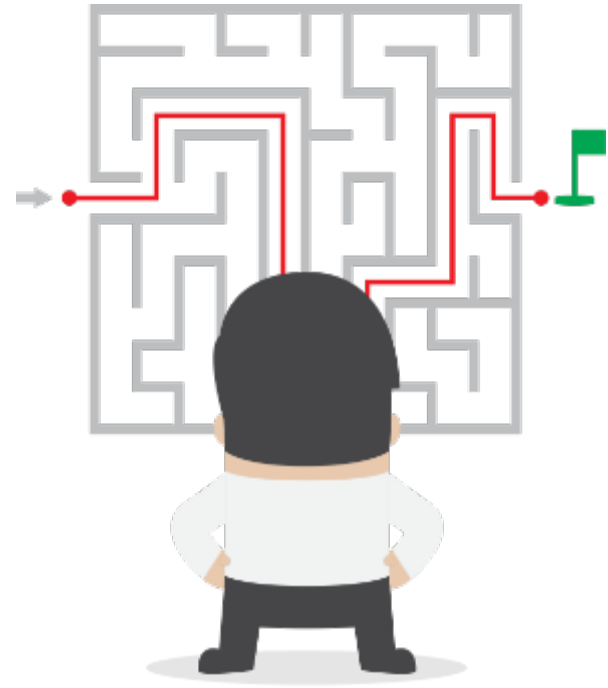
Mental Health Care – Underutilized

Mental Health Need, Awareness, and Use of Counseling Services Among International Graduate Students, *Journal of American College Health*



Source: Hyun, Quinn, Madon, & Lusting, 2010

Understanding the Challenges



Culture Impacts All Aspects of Illness

- Expression of symptoms outwardly and inwardly
- Coping
- Where to seek care
- Management of symptoms
- How they seek help



Common Issues

Communication styles

Verbal v. non-verbal
High-context vs. low-context

Second language anxiety

Daily routine
Communicating with professors and classmates
Coordinating a living situation
Asking for help

Interpersonal

Boundaries
Cultural differences in relationships
Peer pressure
Parental expectations

Identity

Acculturation
Social class
Race
Discrimination
Political Oppression

Career Planning

Finances
Area of study
Planning

Academic

Formal vs. informal classroom
Presentation styles
Outcome vs. process oriented



Barriers To Treatment

- Lack of mental health literacy
- Unaware of services
- Language barriers
- Role of psychiatry in other cultures
- Stigma (Family & friends)
- Location of counseling center
- US therapists lacking cultural understanding
- Lack of support



Yeung A, Kung W. *Psychiatric News*. 2004; 21(1): 34-36.

Kim BSK, Omizo MM. *Couns. Psychol.* 2003; 31:343-46.

Common Myths

Only someone from my home country will understand my problem.

Counseling is for “crazy” people.

I can handle my own mental health problems. If I can't, that means I'm weak.

I could lose my visa status.

"Everyone will know I saw a counselor."

Programming that works



Building the Trust – Creating the Connection

“The first day of a student’s orientation is too late to be discussing student mental health for the first time.” Lee Burdette Williams, “It’s Never Too Soon To Talk About Mental Health,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 10/14/2016, p. A56.

Introduction materials about the Counseling/Wellness initiatives available on campus with pictures and phone numbers/emails:

- Testimonials from current students about homesickness, culture shock, stress, anxiety, and depression (perhaps in video format)
- Quotes about acceptance of mental health and counseling (like “Common Myths”)

Mental Health in Orientation

- Inform students of challenges and cultural adjustment
- Invite Counseling Center or other mental health professionals to introduce mental health service/host a luncheon
- Educate students about campus/community resources
- Parent and Partner programs
- Train your peer leaders and mentors to be knowledgeable enough about these issues to help guide students
- Collaborate in residence halls on outreach programming

Programming that helps

- Buddy/Peer mentor programs
- Workshops (e.g., “Decoding U.S. Culture”, “Lost in Translation”, “Culture Shock”)
- “Let’s Talk” Drop -in Hours
- University 101-type courses
- Social organizations/student clubs
- Summer/Holiday programs
- Friendship family programs
- Discussion/Support Groups
- Creative initiatives (e.g., “Welcome to My World Photo Exhibition”)



Resources & Hotlines

Pre-departure, Orientation, Online

Emotional Wellness Training



Powerpoint
Presentation



Video Content



Student Handout



Interactive Activities



Proctor Guide

In partnership with:



The MGH Center for
Cross-Cultural Student
Emotional Wellness

 **International**
Student Insurance

Culture Shock & Stress Video and Mental Health Awareness Video



Stress & Culture Shock
as an International Student



[https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/
explained/culture-shock-and-stress-video.php](https://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/culture-shock-and-stress-video.php)



[www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/
explained/mental-health-video.php](http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/explained/mental-health-video.php)

Resources

NAFSA Resources

- Best Practices in Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting Education Abroad Participants: <https://shop.nafsa.org/detail.aspx?id=102E>
- Crisis Management in a Cross Cultural Setting: ISSS https://www.nafsa.org/Professional_Resources/Publications/Crisis_Management_in_a_Cross-Cultural_Setting_International_Student_and_Scholar_Services_Checklists/
- Available December 2018, NAFSA Book/E-book: Mental Health Issues and International Students

Other Resources

- Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness (MGH CCCSEW) <https://www.mghstudentwellness.org/consortium-landing>
- Center for Online Education <https://www.onlinecolleges.net/for-students/mental-health-resources/>

Services & Hotlines

Services

- Crisis Text Line
<http://www.crisistextline.org/>
Text 741-741
- Online and phone counseling services

Hotlines

- National Suicide Prevention
1-800-273-TALK
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE
<http://www.thehotline.org/>
- It Gets Better Project (LGBTQ)
1-866-4-U-TREVOR
www.itgetsbetter.org/pages/get-help



Too Stressed to Succeed?

Examining international student mental health, its impact on academic performance, and how to measure it.

NAFSA Region IV Conference—October 15, 2018

Learning Objectives

- Major points of stress for international students
- Identify and categorize a range of campus resources and interventions to support international students that address their stress points
- Reflect and examine your campus network of care
- Identify appropriate and important campus climate and success resources to measure success
- Discuss potential interventions and pathway development to take back to campus and start appropriate conversations



International Student Mental Health



Social

- Far from home and family (lack of social capital)
- Help seeking with family members is restricted

Cultural

- New customs, greetings, expectations
- Food and money worries
- Assimilate versus adapt

Language

- Problems with expressing themselves quickly and fluently
- Comprehension

Academic

- New academic system: attendance, timeliness, homework, reading
- Family expectations: success and good jobs

Research: International Student Well - being

Mori, S. K., (2011). *Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of International Students*. Wiley.

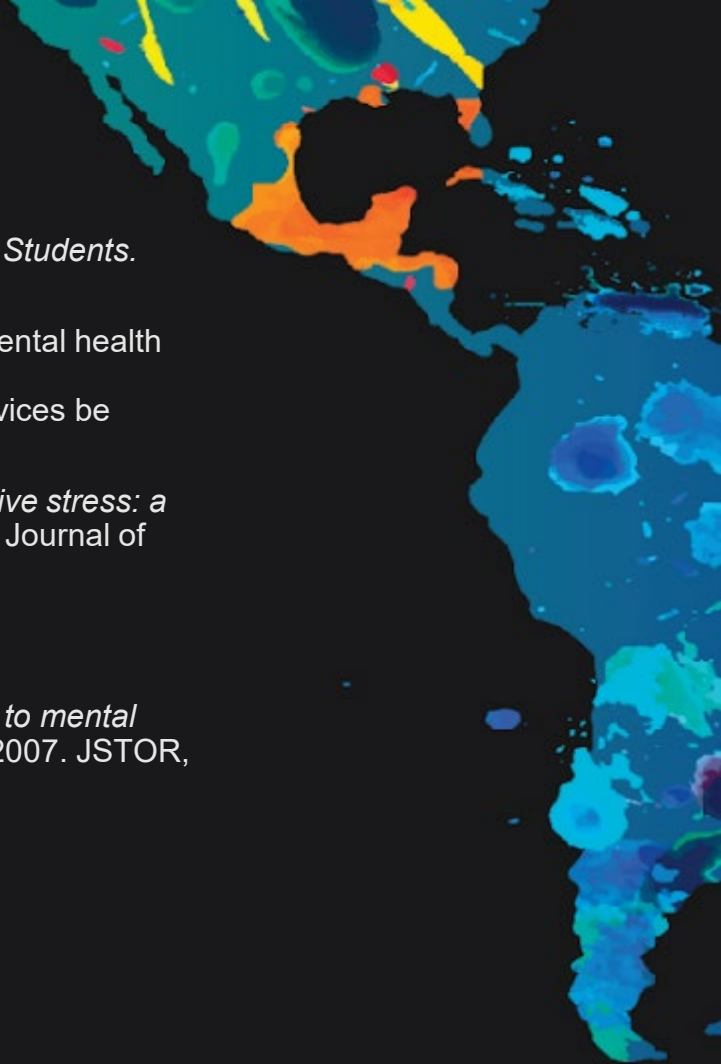
- Cultural adjustments put international students at increased risk of mental health issues than students in general.
- It is important that sufficient and readily accessible mental health services be established for them.

Lee, J., Koeske, G., Sales, E., (2004). *Social support buffering of acculturative stress: a study of mental health symptoms among Korean international students*. Int'l Journal of Intercultural Relations.

- Social support can alleviate symptoms of stress.
- A need for support structures is evident.

Eisenberg, D., Golberstein, E., Gollust, S., (2007) *Help-seeking and access to mental health care in a university student population*. Medical Care, vol. 45, no. 7, 2007. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/40221476

- Students do not access wellness services.
- Initiatives to improve access produce significant benefits.



Top Presenting Issues at Indian Hills Community College

Making Friends

Doing well in class

Language

Homesickness



Indian Hills offers free mental/behavioral counseling to students

Barriers to getting help and what is in place on campus to overcome

- Barriers
 - Awareness that the resources exist
 - Cultures not accustomed to talking about depression, stress, & mental health
 - Fear of Failure (perceiving mental stress as a failure)
- Opportunities to Help Students Overcome Stress as Indian Hills
 - Free behavioral/mental health counseling on campus
 - Referrals for off campus counseling
 - Morneau Shepell app and free counseling by phone or web chat



Stress Impacts Academic Performance

- An emphasis on the need to recognize cultural differences in stress management ¹
- Evaluate the effectiveness of services – from orientation to academic support ²
- Best practices

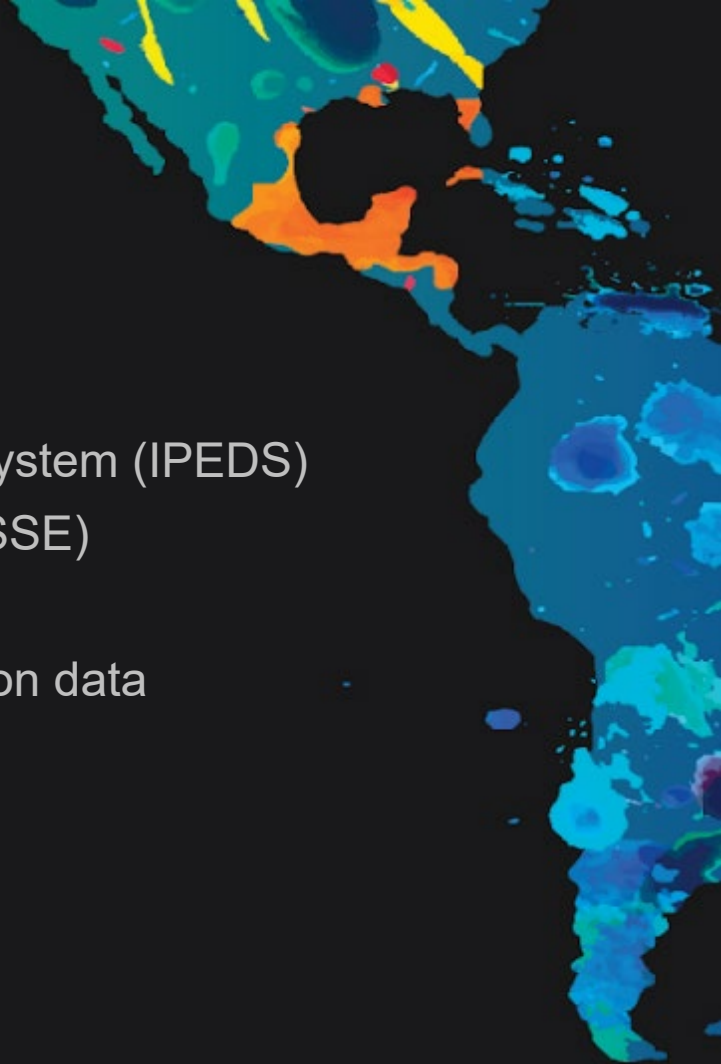
1. Misra, R. & Castillo, L. G.(2004). Academic Stress Among College Students: Comparison of American and International Students. *International Journal of Stress Management*, Vol. 11(2) , May, 132-148. Accessed <http://psycnet.apa.org/buy/2004-13300-003>

2. Bista, K. & Foster, C. (2011). Issues of International Student Retention in American Higher Education. *The International Journal of Research and Review*. Vol, 7, October, 1-10. Accessed <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED525791.pdf>.

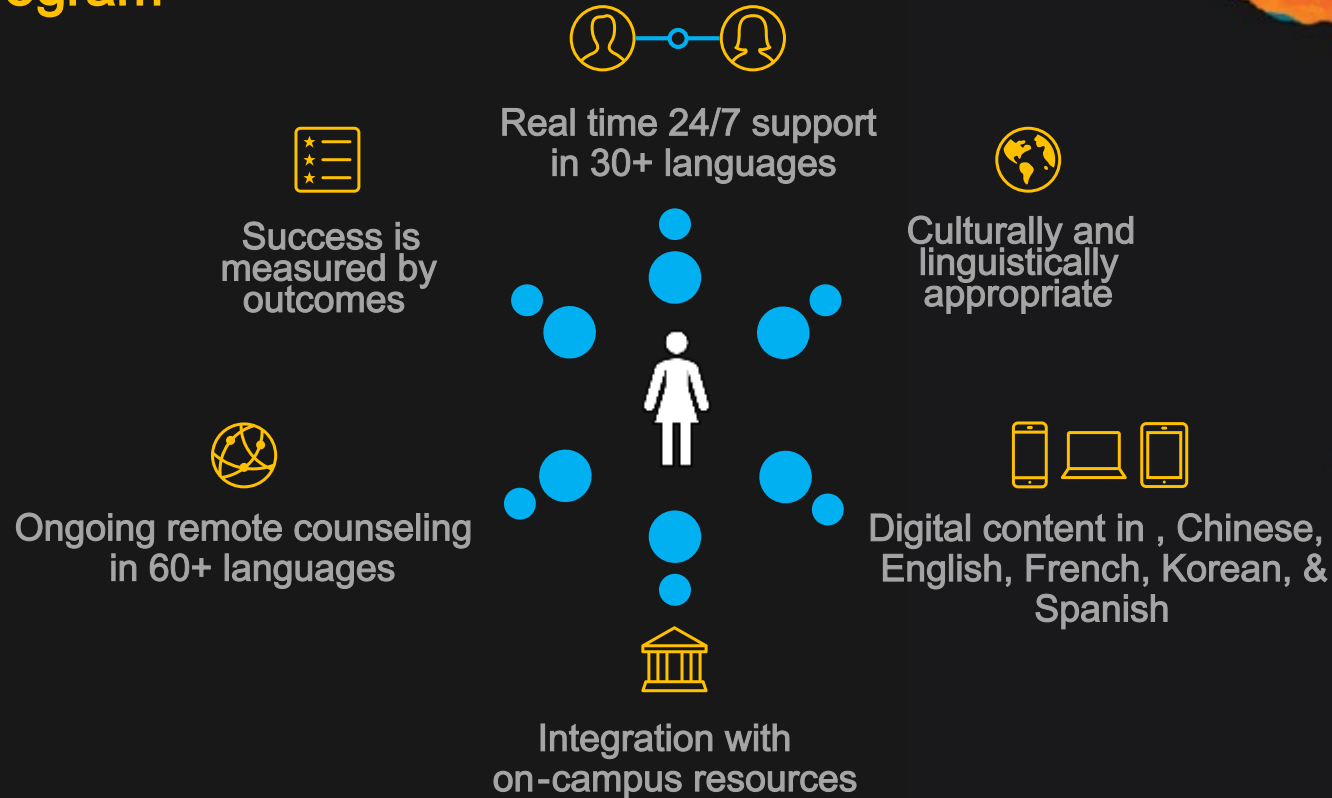
Institutional Data

Sources of data

- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz
- In-house collected retention data & graduation data



Example of innovation: Online International Student Support Program



Questions

- What services do you have?
- Are there on campus obstacles to programming and services?
- Who are campus champions you can include?



Thank you!

The image features a dark, almost black background. In the upper right quadrant, there is a collection of vibrant, abstract splatters and brushstrokes. The colors are primarily bright yellow, orange, and red, with some lighter, almost white, areas. The splatters vary in size and shape, creating a dynamic and energetic visual element that contrasts sharply with the dark background.