

Notes from AWISA - Orientation/Activities Roundtable

March 1, 2013

Orientation

- **How long is your orientation?**
 - Answers included: ½ day, 1 day, 2 days, 3 days, ongoing (once/week – 2 credits, Bellevue College)

- **How is your orientation funded?**
 - Answers included: in the budget, provided by FIUTS (UW), students pay an extra, non-optional fee (\$60 for 2 days, \$40 for 1 day) (SU)
 - Idea: ask vendors to sponsor orientation (insurance company, bank, Zipcar, cell phone company, local business, etc)

- **Pre-arrival orientation / tips for ensuring that students attend orientation**
 - Pre-arrival orientation presentations (created using Slide Rocket), sent to incoming students (Links: <http://portal.sliderocket.com/CDCET/8CAAA898-5B63-48C1-B38D-95F56D48B18C>, <http://portal.sliderocket.com/CDCET/DB967627-B105-4FD1-85DC-9E435C2B72F4>, For more information, email: catherine.holker@seattlecolleges.edu) (SSCC)
 - Online orientation for students who cannot attend the regular, in-person one (students can only access it after the date of original orientation has passed); a hold is placed on student's account if they do not attend either the in-person or online orientation
 - Pre-orientation reminders (lots of them! by phone and email)

- **Other Orientation tips**
 - Student Ambassadors (have them sit with new students of the same language group, serve as mentors) (Northstar at NSCC)
 - Orientation leaders (both intl and domestic, assigned to students by major) (Seattle U)
 - Bates Buddies (domestic & intl students matched for friendship, conversation, & cultural exchange, 2 models: 1-on-1, small groups) (Bates Tech College)
 - End orientation with a fun quiz that covers 10 most essential points (give prizes, make sure everyone knows the answers before they leave); follow immigration PowerPoint with 3 skits (acted out by advisors/admissions staff) that reinforce main info(maintaining your status, importance of communication, leaving the country)(A.C.E.)
 - Create Jeopardy game to review key orientation info (For more info, email Akane at: yamaguaa@plu.edu)
 - For a discussion on culture/culture shock, have each student share something they like about US culture and something that is challenging for them

Activity Ideas

- Activity Group-ons!
 - Choose 5 activities per quarter, offer them as a package deal with a reduced price if students pay in advance (deadline: one week before 1st activity then price goes up!), Advertise like a Groupon: Actual cost = \$___, You pay = \$___, You save \$___)
 - Sample activities: snow tubing, ice-skating, shopping, Argosy cruise, bowling, hiking, camping (they use school bus for transportation)
 - Requires advance planning but really helps avoid the problem of booking transportation, tours, etc , then cancelling when not enough students sign up
- CORT passed out Frisbees at a UW orientation, played frisbee at Gasworks Park, many had never seen a Frisbee before and had a lot of fun learning!
- Offer City Passes at orientation for a discounted rate (\$30 instead of \$70, school subsidizes the rest), offer 1-2 activities a day for the week after orientation (SSCC)
- Potlucks
 - Popular for special events like Lunar New Year (use a google sign-up sheet to coordinate food)
 - International Thanksgiving Dinner (great activity for a culture/conversation buddies program; domestic students bring traditional thanksgiving dishes and intl students bring holiday dishes from their countries; share holiday traditions) (A.C.E.)
 - Gyoza Day (partner with Culinary dept, some were pre-made; included demonstration and hand-on cooking)
- Sports (great for bringing together intl and domestic students)
 - Indoor soccer / ping-pong competitions (every team required to have 2-3 intl students) (UW?)
- Karaoke (very popular with students)

AWISA - Credential Evaluations Roundtable:

Participants:

Maggie Barklind (WWU-EXT)

Wade Bird (UW-Bothell)

Geoff Foy (CWU)

Christine Lewis (BCC)

Laurie Linblad (UW-EXT)

Aleks Morawski (Seattle U)

Ted Olsen (UW-Tacoma)

Deanne Puloka (NSCC)

Aracelly Salazar (Bastyr)

Announcements:

Aleks Morawski will be presenting a NAFSA e-seminar re: Document Fraud on March 21st – it's free but registration is required:

http://www.nafsa.org/Attend_Events/Training/Preventing_Document_Fraud_Tips_for_New_International_Admissions_Officers/

Roundtable discussion re: internal versus external (Third Party) evaluation of foreign credentials. Participants noted that regardless of which route a college chooses here, it still requires a staff person who is knowledgeable enough with foreign credential/evaluations so as to be able to review the materials and determine the applicability to the individual college's requirements and/or application of international transfer work.

If a service is used, then it's important to verify the information provided by the credential evaluation service as assessments can and do vary from provider to provider, ex: ECE, FIS, WES, etc.

Institutions *largely* seem to require an English translation of the documents from either the institution of origin or an approved translation provider, such as the American Translation Association (ATA) or someone who has a Masters in Translation. Most roundtable institutes require original paper transcripts mailed directly from the institution of origin. Though some indicated that they allow transcripts to come through either a verified fax number or a verified documenting service such as e-verify and docufide - <http://www.docufide.com/> .