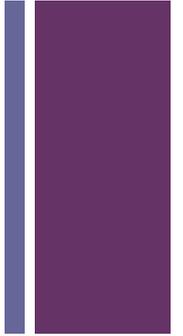


Services Used and Desired by International Students at UBC

Wendy D. Roth and Youcheng Ding
Sociology Department
University of British Columbia



Study of International Student Integration at UBC



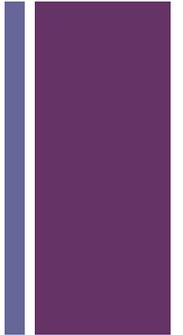
- To examine how international students are integrating into the UBC community and Canada
- To investigate what services they use and what additional supports, if any, they feel they need
- To explore their post-graduation immigration plans

+ Today's talk

- International students interviewed in 2014 and 2017 (N=62)

International students:

- who plan to complete their degree at UBC (not temporary exchange students)
- who did not attend all their secondary school in Canada



+ Recruitment for Study

- Most students interview someone they know
- They can also:
 - Distribute the recruiting e-mail to friends and ask them to forward it to anyone they know who may be eligible
 - Make an announcement in their classes or activities
 - Make announcements in large lecture classes
 - Visit International House or student dormitories
 - Post notice on campus
 - Post notice on discussion forums of websites for their other classes



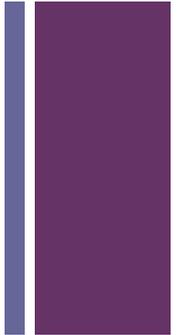
International students' citizenship

Country	%
China	25.8%
US	14.5%
Singapore	6.5%
UK	4.8%
Hong Kong, Kenya, Mexico, Taiwan, Vietnam	3.2% each
Argentina, Colombia, France, Greece, Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, St. Lucia, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda	1.6% each



Services Used

- Academic Advising Services
- Housing Services
- Health Services (incl. Mental Health Counselling)
- Student Service Centre (online portal)
- Tutoring Programs
- Enrolment Services Professionals
- Career Services
- International House
- Safe Walk...



A Personal Connection



Q: So which of those...services do you use the most?

My international student advisor, [John], I love him, he helped me through first year a lot. He's the person I go to and cry to "[John], I'm not doing anything right! I'm failing all my subjects!" Which I wasn't – I was overreacting as usual [laughs].... I think my international student advisor knows me personally and...can give me more chill advice, because when I go to like, arts advising, they lead me around in circles. I'm asking like I want someone's honest opinion, they say "hey, I think you should check out these people." "Oh, go check out Poli Sci advising." "Oh, go check out these services," but I don't want it. I just want [them] to tell me – I want someone to bounce ideas off of, and my international student advisor is someone who I can do that with. (1st year, Jamaica)

A Personal Connection



“They know their job so it’s easy to get a straight answer but sometimes it feels like they are giving generic answers, like they kind of fake active listen to you because it’s their job so they feel a bit robotic. Sometimes it was a bit frustrating like, for instance, at the Arts Advising they say ‘Next customer, please.’ And I’m like, ‘I’m not a customer.’” (3rd year, France)

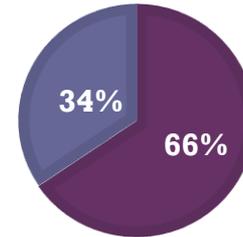
“I went in and ask a question. He just straight up gave me [the] website answer. It felt like he didn’t want to go that extra, to help you out. It’s just like answer quick, get out, and switch. Next person’s in and tries to get through everyone.” (3rd year, Taiwan)

+ International House

- 57% Had experience with I-House
- Positive experience:
 - Go Global program
 - Health insurance
 - Renewal of student permit/VISAs
 - Work Permits after graduation
 - Social Events

EXPERIENCE WITH I-HOUSE

■ Positive ■ Negative



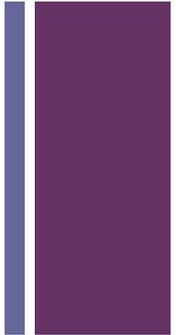
“I went there to apply for my study permit extension and it was super helpful....They literally helped me apply.... I was trying to see if I could apply for like another family member. We went on to discuss about that. She spent a lot of time on me almost like she had all the time to spend on me in the world.” (1st year, Nigeria)

+ International House

- Negative experience:
 - Long wait times
 - Unable to help

“I thought they could help me [with my study permit]....I went there and they were like ‘Oh, actually we don’t know how to help you.’ And so then that was another frustrating run-in trying to get communication from someone. And that was the only time I went.”
(2nd year, U.S.)

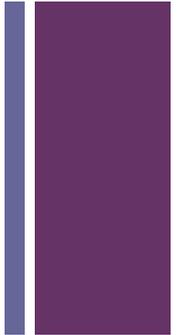
- No experience:
 - Have not heard of I-House
 - No need of I-House services



+ Services Desired

■ More flexible orientation programs

“Orientation. The very first sessions that I missed before I arrive here. If I had had a chance to get that - these kind of sessions before, I think it wouldn’t have taken me a long, long time for getting adapted to [the] UBC environment.” (1st year, Vietnam)

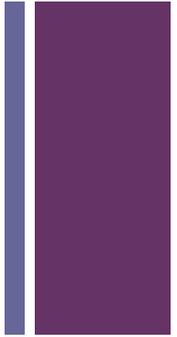




Services Desired

■ Orientations for Canadian life

“I know for other, particularly African students,...they aren’t given anything and...a lot of the...important...adaptations, sort of adjustment stuff, was done by other students....So sending them to stationary shops and taking them around the city and showing them how a university works and how to print, etc., like very integral things to do at the university – even though there’s tons of support in libraries, things that you can always ask someone, but it’s intimidating. And being someone that sticks out like a sore thumb in the university...particularly racialized students...I don’t think the university knows how to deal with that....But they should.” (4th year, South Africa)



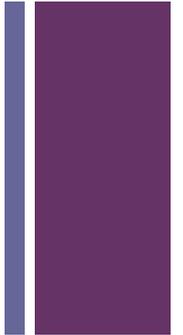


Services Desired

■ Peer Mentoring

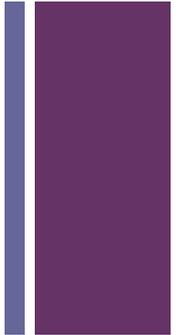
“I think I mentioned this before, when I was helping a first year student myself. I think I could be helped by an elder student here.” (3rd year, China)

“It might have been cool to have, not like a pen pal, but when you are living in Totem [a dorm]...to have a way to meet people that live in other dorms. ‘Cause once you are locked into your floor, you don’t meet...anyone anywhere else. Like a little within campus pen pal system...Or like older, not mentoring necessarily, but more...getting someone who is a third or fourth year as a study buddy or something.” (5th year, U.S./Sweden)





Conclusion



- Students take up services at low rates, even though they say they want them
- They want a personal connection, and information both about the university and about life in Canada
- Peer Mentoring matching international and advanced domestic students may help meet these needs



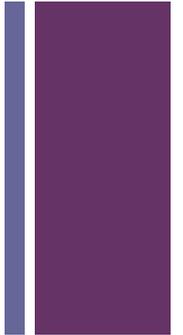
Thank You!

For data inquiries, contact:
wendy.roth@ubc.ca

+ Other Services Desired

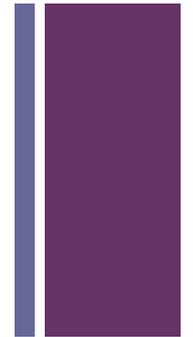
- Support for Initial Transition
 - Housing
 - Short-term health insurance

- Improved counselling services

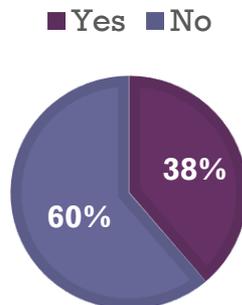


+ Future Plans

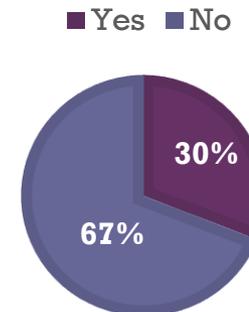
	Wants to stay in Canada	Wants to bring family to Canada
Yes	43%	37%
Maybe	27%	16%
No	21%	44%

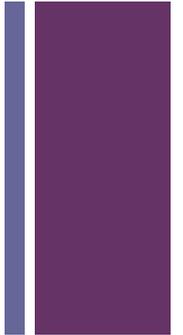


HEARD OF CANADIAN EXPERIENCE CLASS

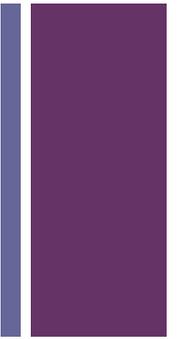


HEARD OF BC INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES PROGRAM





Demographics	
% Female	66.1%
% Undergrad	75.8%
Median age	21
Years at UBC:	
1	17.7%
2	32.2%
3	20.9%
4 or 5	24.1%



International Students

