Handbook for faculty & advisors
Best practices in teaching and advising international and ESL students (V. 3)
August 20, 2013

Editors:

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Abstract

The handbook contains contributions and perspectives from faculty and advisors about best practices regarding teaching and advising international and ESL students at Drexel University. For the most part, it is focused on undergraduate rather than graduate students, although some general principles apply to both populations. The handbook is an evolving work, currently in its third edition. For more information or for corrections or contributions, contact Barbara Hoekje at hoekje@drexel.edu or at 215 895-2067.

Acknowledgments

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1. THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT AT DREXEL (POPULATION FACTS AND FIGURES)

Drexel traditionally has had large numbers of international graduate students, but recently has enrolled many more international undergraduate students. In Fall, 2012, international students were 15% of the entering freshman class. International students enter the U.S. on a student (F-1) visa. The largest populations of undergraduate international students are from China (35%), India (14%), Vietnam (8%), and Korea (6%).

Drexel also continues to enroll many students who are U.S. permanent residents or citizens whose first language is not English. These students are referred to here as "Domestic English as a second language (ESL) students."

INTERNATIONAL (F1) STUDENTS AND DREXEL CO-OP
   Submitted by Rachel Johnson, Rosa Lee, and Maura O'Connor
·   90.1% of full-tine undergraduate F1 students at Drexel participate in co-op. (from 2012-2013 census report)
·   In AY 2011-2012, 84.4% participated in co-op in the United States and 15.6% participated in co-ops abroad (in their home country or elsewhere).
·   Students are required to take and pass COOP101 prior to participating in co-op, at which time they write a resume and polish their job search and interviewing skills.
·   Students are assigned a co-op coordinator specific to their major (these individuals works solely with international students at Drexel).
·   Coordinators assist with the entire co-op job search process, are the students' point of contact while working, and meet with each student post-co-op to review and discuss their experiences, allowing students a chance to assess the experience and reflect upon professional/personal development.
·   Students are also required to coordinate with ISSS to obtain work authorization prior to each co-op; students may not work without proper paperwork and authorization.
·   The Steinbright Career Development Center also offers educational and career advising(including pre-law and pre-health), workshops(such as mock interviews, job search strategies, etc.), employer information sessions, and much more to all students and alumni.

2. LEARNING PROFILES OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ESL STUDENTS

International students
-Study on F-1 visa which has strict requirements for number and type of courses;
-Are high-performing students who are used to performing well academically;
-May never have studied in an English-medium school before;
-May have little work experience and have little opportunity to work off-campus in the U.S.
        because of visa regulations;
-May have little familiarity with U.S. classroom culture, academic discourse forms or notions of plagiarism;
-May have stronger reading or listening (considered the "receptive") skills than the
        "productive" skills of writing and speaking;
-May be facing culture shock and cultural adjustment issues with food, health, and loneliness;
-May not be familiar with counseling or academic support services;
-May not have family support or a peer network in place;
-May rely on faculty for guidance; for academic direction and extra help;
-May not be used to expectations of individualism and independence of U.S.;
-May face problems with finances, crime or scams, or have family problems at home.

Domestic ESL students:
-Have had varying amounts of time in U.S. schools (often Philadelphia area schools);
-May be first generation college students;
-May work full or nearly fulltime;
-May be relatively "savvy" about U.S. classroom culture;
-May have relatively good listening skills that may mask other language difficulties;
-May have never had sufficient instruction in academic written English;
-May face family/school disjuncture in expectations & experiences.

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

In designing course curriculum and classroom activities, faculty should understand the diversity of experiences that international students bring to the classroom. International students bring the following kinds of diversity to the classroom:

> 1) Diversity of knowledge (of people, places, events, popular culture, etc.)

International students bring knowledge of their home culture, people, places, events, and media. This means that common references that American students know—especially ones related to childhood or sports figures—may not be familiar to international students. If the content of the course depends upon familiarity with Western culture or other knowledge, some means of providing this background will need to be made.

> 2) Diversity of educational backgrounds (Curriculum, classrooms,
> educational traditions)

Western education is based in the Socratic tradition, whereas many international students come from different educational traditions, including the Confucian tradition (Turner, 2010). These various traditions shape the nature of the student/teacher relationship, the pedagogical practices of the classroom, and expectations about what counts as learning. This means students will not automatically understand the purpose of certain assignments or why they are asked to do things such as group work. Faculty should be prepared to give explicit explanations of why they make certain requirements.

> 3) Diversity of languages & academic discourses

International students speak different first languages or world varieties of English. They have had different experiences of language use in the classroom, even those from English-medium-of-instruction (EMI) countries. This diversity means that international students have different experiences with the "social-navigational" language of instructions, groupwork, and discussion formats. They may need initial support in classroom participation and working effectively in groups. They also have different experiences with academic writing and the nature of what different genres such as "journal entry" or "persuasive essay" means. It is useful for all students, but especially so for international and first generation college students, to see models of good assignments and explicit rubrics for evaluation.

> 4) Diversity of experiences outside of the classroom at Drexel including different holidays;
> different financial trajectories; different family obligations and   support systems; different
> friendship patterns and support systems and different work experiences.

This diversity means that outside of class, international students may be leading very different lives from domestic students. The work experiences that many U.S. students have are not as common outside the U.S. and international students may need other ways to build a portfolio of responsibility and independence for co-operative education.

What type of student goes abroad to study?

Katthryn Dettmer & Brenda Dyer

- ➢ Students who study abroad are often brave – they leave their support systems (family, friends, culture and language) to further their studies.
- ➢ They are often excellent students in their home countries. Only top students are accepted at foreign universities and they have had to pass an English competency exam.
- ➢ Students who study abroad have a real desire to live and learn in another country. They are risk takers.

Why isn't **this student** always showing up to my class?

- ➢ Initially, the student may suffer from culture shock. She may feel like she is drowning in a language that is not her own, and having to play by rules she doesn't understand or even know exist. Luckily, for most people (especially smart, brave, risk-taking people) these feelings wear off eventually.
- ➢ Sometimes, the foreign student's confidence gets shaken. He is no longer the best English speaker in the room. He doesn't always know what the teacher wants when it comes to answers and assignments. Studying abroad can be a very humbling experience for some students.
- ➢ It can be exhausting to live in another culture. Every interaction is a learning experience that requires constantly thinking and listening carefully. She may be tired.
- ➢ He may be sick. He may not understand what the temperature is, because he doesn't know the Fahrenheit scale. He may have trouble buying healthy food, because who uses pounds anyway? He might not know that there are health services on campus, or may feel that his language is not good enough to communicate with a doctor.
- ➢ The student may have lost patience with herself. She feels frustrated that she is not learning faster or more. Intelligent, driven people often have this problem when confronted by a very big challenge.
- ➢ Some bad behavior is just bad behavior.

So what can I do?

- ➢ Be empathetic.
- ➢ Make an effort to hear all of the voices in your classroom. Call on people if necessary.
- ➢ Gently point out when a student's behavior is unacceptable and clearly explain your expectations.

4. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

International students submit scores from standardized tests of academic English language proficiency (usually TOEFL and IELTS tests) to demonstrate English language proficiency. These tests have four subsections which measure different modalities (reading and listening, considered the "receptive" skills and speaking and writing, the "productive" skills. According to research done by Drexel's office of Academic Advising, Retention, and Diversity (AARD) as well as by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), scores in various subsection areas may be more predictive of student success in different types of courses. For example, in courses with a lot of group work, students need the productive skills of speaking and writing and cannot only rely on reading or listening skills.

Regardless of a student's score on a standardized test, learning to use English for all the tasks in an English medium of instruction (EMI) environment requires additional time and experience with the expectations of academic discourse in the U.S. university. An analogy with getting a driver's license is appropriate. When you get your driver's license, you have been certified as skilled enough to drive independently. However, becoming a skilled driver involves many more hours of driving practice and more experience in different locations and with varying weather conditions.

In the same way, students need experience with the "terrain" of each course they are taking, with model assignments, rubric expectations, and clear instructions. They profit from the chance to draft and revise their work in at least some assignments, and should be encouraged to use the resources listed here at the end of this handbook. Here are a few issues to be aware of:

1.   Be alert to terms of usage that refer to American cultural concepts and provide brief explanations in your lectures or course outlines.
2.   U.S. education is characterized by dialog and discussion. This is not the case in many other educational systems. Helping international students join appropriately in classroom discussion is an important part of their academic socialization. They may not know what "participation" actually means in your discipline. It would be very helpful—not only for international students but for first year students generally--for you to spell your expectations out explicitly. What are you looking for in discussions of readings? What kinds of questions and comments are most useful in stimulating and contributing to classroom discussion?
3.   International students need social language and relationships as well as academic language to facilitate their course assignments. If your course requires group work, be prepared to help assign partners, roles, and responsibilities at least at first or in a sample exercise.
4.   Forms of writing such as journals, essays, research papers, and lab reports may or may not be familiar to those educated internationally. Even those coming from English-medium of instruction (EMI) countries may not have taken the same range of distribution requirements as U.S. students have. Give explicit rubrics for evaluation that you post and review. If possible, give past examples of work (with student permission or write one yourself) that fits your expectations.
5.   Warning students against "plagiarism" by itself is not always enough. You should take the time to review several examples in the context of your course. Especially useful would be a short training exercise that each student completes and hands in so that you have a record of their participation if a later issue arises.

5. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MODELS

There are several different course models for supporting international students at Drexel:

1. Augmented courses such as the ESL sections (300-level sections) of first year writing courses. In these sections of ENGL101, 102, and 103, instructors teach 5 hours, instead of the regular 3 hours for three credits, and they have smaller class sizes. LANG180: Foundations of university study is an additional course for those who need additional instruction before ENGL101. Incoming freshmen are placed in these sections on the basis of incoming standardized test scores and are reassessed by faculty for correct placement in the first week of class.

2. "Wrap around courses." These courses, which have run in the first year business program (as for example BUSN 481) provide additional instruction to support the curriculum of a core course. Contact the Office of Academic Advising, Retention, and Diversity (AARD) for more information about setting up such courses.

3. Sheltered courses. In some programs, e.g., International Gateway, a foundation year program for prematriculated students, university courses are taught in special sections known as "sheltered" courses with additional coursework provided to support the instruction.

4. Course-specific tutoring ("Attached course tutoring'). Support faculty from the English Language Center can support course-specific assignments. Contact Barbara Hoekje at the ELC directly (**hoekje@drexel.edu**)

5. General student support services. General student support services are available through the Writing Center, the Drexel Learning Center, and the ELC. See appendix for resource contact information.

6. General strategies for teaching international & ESL students

1. Use Universal Design for Learning principles

Use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles for differentiated instruction generally
http://www.udlcenter.org/

    I. Provide Multiple Means of Representation
    II. Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression
    III. Provide Multiple Means of Engagement

2. Identify needs early
Identify students without adequate language or academic preparation and refer them to appropriate resources as early as possible, noting that high conversational abilities do not necessarily predict high literacy skills and that high literacy skills do not necessarily predict high spoken language proficiency.

One suggestion for early identification is to require an early assignment that tests comprehension and academic production skills, such as a summary of the main points of the day's lecture or reading.

3. Build inclusive classroom communities
    Learn students' names and use them smoothly
    Encourage participation through various mechanisms of calling on
        students (such as round robin; assigned reporting roles) index cards with
        questions collected from each person
    Use different participation structures for discussions (not only full group
        discussions, but small group with "report back" summaries, etc.
    Require an early assignment where students can meet others in class by name and
        contact info
    Make reference to international examples; ask for examples if you do not know them;
    Build participation into the course grading with specific evaluation mechanisms; eg., start the
        classroom discussion; prepare discussion questions; prepare summary of last class;
        choose top three questions from index cards (see above)
    Create process charts for analyzing group process (role assignments such as
        facilitator or timer or CEO that rotate)
    Create intentional mixed groups (THAT YOU ASSIGN) and then in-class
        competitions between groups that stimulate group loyalty

4. Help students manage the classroom environment
    Provide written support for orally-presented information (post lectures on
        on BbLearn)
    Provide written instructions for assignments or changes to the syllabus
    In lectures, chunk information into segments and use frequent summaries;
    Encourage students to sit close and record if needed
    Explain idioms and cultural references (e.g., "Mom and Pop stores); explain
        cartoons and other humor quickly
    Give index cards out for anonymous questions about terminology or
        examples
    Get to class early or stay late for individual questions
    Check comprehension: Ask students to outline or summarize readings

Collect "one minute responses" to lectures asking, "What was the main point of today's lecture/class?

5. Use the board (computer projection) as effectively as possible

- Plan to use the board: Writing key terms will help all students
- Outline the day's topics, emphasize major points of a lecture or discussion, summarize ideas raised in class discussions.
- Include headings and other methods to highlight important information.

6. Help students manage the academic workload

Make expectations about reading assignments explicit esp. relationship between the lecture and reading

In large reading assignments, point out key sections

Avoid folksy, highly idiomatic language on syllabus or in reading texts

Give models and other examples of good work

Develop and post rubrics for evaluation

Give interim due dates (drafts)

7. Create fair testing environments* (*ESL is not a disability and does not get a separate accommodation)

Make sure the intent of test questions is clear: Give a chance for students to ask questions to clarify question intent;

Give ungraded quizzes throughout the term so students can be familiar with your testing style;

Establish one achievable standard for all (use of standard English including spelling checker; errors that don't interfere with comprehensibility)

Allow paper, not electronic dictionaries

Use multiple & varied assessment activities that privilege different skill sets, including good student preparation; e.g., in-class essay vs. at home essay; use of BbVista discussion board; multiple choice;

presentations; role play; selection of reading passages to explain

Create and explain your rubrics for evaluation

8. Develop clear and inclusive syllabuses

1. Design student learning outcomes (SLOs) that include international knowledge or examples—if you don't have that knowledge, ask students for case studies
2. Give assignments that require different skills and knowledge sets
3. Build participation into the course grading with specific evaluation mechanisms;
4. Create interim due dates on large assignments (drafts) using the process approach
5. Give examples of various kinds plagiarism
6. Give models and other examples of good work
7. Develop and post rubrics for evaluation
8. Consider requiring an office hour visit as part of the participation grade

Suggestions for the first day of class

- Have students fill out index cards with information that will give you some insight into your students' interests and needs. Have them write down the name they wish to be called with some suggestion about how to pronounce it.

- Provide an opportunity for students to introduce themselves and share basic information. It is important that each person's voice be heard in the class as early as possible.

- Review the syllabus carefully on the first day. Make sure that the major information is clear: grading policy, attendance policy, test and homework policy, etc

- Encourage students to come to your office during your office hours for problems with the class, assignments, tests, etc.

Making use of the office hour

- Make the office visit as useful as possible. Get to know your students: Open the visit with small talk questions to find out how they are doing in general.
  (Examples: How do you like Drexel? How are you classes going? Are you adjusting to the food and weather in Philadelphia?)

- When you are ready to " get down to business", you might ask questions like these: What do you like about this class? What have you learned?   What do you hope to get from this class? What problems are you having in class? Why do you think you are having this problem? What have you tried to do about it?   Are you able to take good notes? Do you know anybody in the class who would help you? Are you checking the professor's websites? Are you reading the text before coming to class? How are you studying for this class? Do you ever practice writing complete answers to questions? Do you know what to expect on the next test? How are you going to prepare for this test?

- If the student comes with a question about a grade or a comment, try to make sure the student leaves with an understanding of what s/he did that was wrong so s/he doesn't make the same mistake.

- If your student leaves on a positive note with a plan for improvement, he or she will feel empowered.

VIII. Teaching & advising across the curriculum: Content area specific strategies

Tips for advising international ESL students (by Jennifer Rubin)

• **Be REALLY aware of your own use of language**

Outside of idioms and slang, be aware of using too much subtlety or 'softening' of language that is typically more helpful for students for whom English is their first language. For instance…I often say "I would go and speak to _____ to address that problem"…I realized later that, directly translated, it sounds like I'M going to do this for the student. Better to say (nicely of course) Go speak to _____. He/she can help you with _____.

• **Look for patterns of areas that seem to be confusing for students and more consciously provide comprehensive information about those areas**

Many of my students from China have not understood the need to take required classes which are not directly related to their major (i.e. the Math requirement for the Communication major). In addition, many have also been unclear about the concept of 'elective courses' within given categories (i.e. humanities electives, fine art electives, etc).

• **Learn some words/phrases in the student's native language. Learn more if you can.**

Experiencing this little glimpse of familiarity from home as well as the demonstration of a conscious effort on our part can go a long way with a student

• **Temper your own knee-jerk reactions to requests that may sound like demands, either because of translation issues or cultural differences in getting needs met**

• **REALLY encourage students to seek out language support help (for those who need it) and redefine this 'need to seek help' as a courageous and empowering action that students can do for themselves**

I've found many students associate having language difficulties with shame and this discourages them from getting assistance that would help them be more academically successful. It is very hard to get an entire degree in a language that is not native to you and not all appreciate the accomplishment this represents.

1. Tips for Teaching International Students in Content Courses (including BUSN 481)

Henry Haduck, English Language Center

International students, particularly those from Asian countries, have been educated through a completely different system than ours here in the United States. The focus is predominately on memorization and rote learning with the ultimate goal of passing stringent examinations. There is minimal emphasis on asking questions, group work, expression one's opinion, and challenging the status quo. Assignments are explained in great detail leaving little room for error on the part of the student. Teachers and textbooks are considered the authority and are not to be questioned. Considering these ingrained cultural factors, educators here in the United States are faced with quite a challenge.

The following are some pedagogical approaches that were utilized in a business support class (BUSN481) co-taught by instructors from the English Language Center and the LeBow College of Business which proved quite effective in helping international students gain the necessary academic and cultural knowledge and skills to function proficiently in the class as well as within the university system.

1. Identify student knowledge base: What do students know already?

Determining the extent of student knowledge is a difficult challenge for all instructors. At the beginning of this course, we administered an examination composed of general business terms and concepts. Prior to the exam, the questions were explained in detail to help the students gain an understanding of the material. After the exam was completed, an oral review was conducted to determine student knowledge of business concepts, as well as to evaluate their oral language ability.

2. Provide new information through *comprehensible input* by simplifying, chunking and then pausing & checking for understanding, etc.

Throughout the course, concepts were simplified to aid in student understanding. Students were required to answer in "their own words" rather than to copy answers from their textbooks. Examples and concepts were modeled and chunked with great detail to ensure comprehension. Ample response time was given to the students to allow for the process of translating questions and answers into their native language and retranslating them back into English. The extended time factor for response was needed and extremely helpful for those students with lower levels of language ability.

3. Connect new information to students' *prior knowledge & experience.*

When concepts were first introduced, all students were questioned whether they had heard of them or had any prior experience within their own countries. Questions were posed to the class as a whole to lower anxiety. Responses were discussed, compared, and contrasted by the instructors and the class. This type of prior knowledge questioning continued throughout the entire course on a regular basis helping to bridge both academic and cultural knowledge.

4. Guide & extend student answers into *comprehensible output* by allowing sufficient response time; providing support through restating and recasting; developing knowledge & performance of knowledge through scaffolding.

Initially, student responses were short and often incomplete. Through recasting and rephrasing, as well as combining and building upon responses from other students, more precise and accurate answers were obtained. This not only helped the students gain knowledge of a particular topic, it also fostered more class participation and helped to build student confidence.

5. Support students' language development through opportunities for interpersonal *interaction and negotiation of meaning.*

A significant amount of the class time was spent with the students working in pairs or small groups to answer questions and complete assignments. This activity helped students to get accustomed to working with others and to develop a foundation for several group presentations which they delivered during the course. By the end of the course, all students gained considerable skill as presenters which greatly increased their confidence and oral language ability.

6. Build student confidence and motivation by providing ongoing opportunities for them to be correct and develop a new "intercultural self-identity" through connecting present and prior knowledge.

Through the simplification of comprehensible input, in-depth modeling, scaffolding, connecting to prior knowledge and cultural norms, group work and presentations, and the lowering of classroom anxiety through positive reinforcement of student responses and participation, confidence and motivation was greatly increased by all students. All students acknowledged that they had come a long way since the start of the course and were much better prepared to face the challenges of a new academic and intercultural life.

2. Teaching International Students in Beginning & Intermediate Language Courses
Kathryn Dettmer & Brenda Dyer

The increased number of international students in our beginning and intermediate language courses has led us to think about "best practices" that benefit not only international students, but all our students. Our goal is to create an **inclusive classroom** that takes into account the diversity of experience, preparation and points of view, as well as different learning styles and comfort levels, of all our students. We have developed a list of techniques that acknowledge that all our students arrive at university with varying levels of preparation and different frames of reference. By being explicit about our expectations as teachers, and guiding our student learning, our students come to understand that they are responsible for their own learning.

A key element of the inclusive language class is to create a **cohesive class dynamic**. Students learn best in an environment in which they feel **connected**, **respected** and comfortable. A relaxed classroom atmosphere, one which the students all know each other by name and engage in meaningful, interactive dialogue, is conducive to learning. Such a classroom provides a space for students to acquire new skills, make mistakes and then correct them, share their ideas, express their opinions and listen to those of others.

Learning a second language as an adult can be stressful for everyone, domestic and international students alike. Foreign language <u>anxiety</u> is as real a phenomenon as math anxiety. Because all language students find themselves in a "foreign" environment, surrounded by a language that they do not completely understand, they are on common ground. By recognizing and acknowledging this reality, the professor can use humor and kindness to put all students at ease. Explicitly telling students that mistakes are acceptable and indeed a crucial part of learning a language combats anxiety that impedes learning.

Pair and small group work help create a sense of camaraderie among the students so they feel secure enough to ask questions, make mistakes and learn from each other. On the first day of class, have students introduce themselves and get to know each other throughout the term through pair work, small group projects, debates and language games.

International students often find it difficult to choose partners and make the transition from professor-led lectures to student-guided small group exercises. Professors can use a variety of techniques to establish ever-changing small groups, so that all students get the chance to work with various classmates.

The following is a list of different ways to pick partners:

1. Work with the person to your right, left, behind, in front of you, etc.
2. Students count off for the number of groups you want, then find the partners with the same number.
3. Tell students to choose someone with whom they have never worked before.
4. Use your imagination – there are many ways to do this. Finding one that is comfortable for you and your students is what is important!

Classroom configuration contributes to a positive classroom dynamic. Whenever possible, arrange the chairs in a semi-circle, manipulating the physical space of the class, which takes the focus from the professor and encourages students to speak to one another. Many international students have

learned in environments where the instructor is the only expert and all information is top down. In the United States, professors can also serve as facilitators who encourage students to communicate interactively and engage in dialogue. It is important to make it explicit that we learn from one another. Moving the chairs, so that so that everyone can be seen while speaking, helps to reinforce this notion.

Making an effort to **hear all of the voices** in your classroom can make all of the difference for some students. Both international students and domestic students may need encouragement to speak in class. Consider calling on your students in a variety of ways: Choral response, asking for volunteers, by name, having students call on other students, having students report on something another student has said to them, etc.

Treating each person in the class as an **"expert"** about something encourages conversation and inspires confidence. When dealing with cultural differences or grammatical differences, ask students how these elements are handled in their native language or home country. These cross-cultural and cross-linguistic discussions can be brief, but help all of our students learn to think on a meta-linguistic level (i.e. What is language or culture? How does language structure thought? How do we learn? What strategies can help us learn better?). By explicitly highlighting these differences and comparing them, our international students get to share their expertise and our domestic students get a broader worldview.

Each student is a unique individual who learns best in his or her own way. All students can learn a second language, though for some of them it is a greater challenge. It is important to teach the students you have, taking into consideration **individual learning styles** and backgrounds and adapting lessons as necessary.

Design lessons with a focus on the learners themselves. Because all learners are different, help the students identify their learning styles and develop strategies for improving their study techniques. Discuss, in the early days of each class, what kind of learners they are: auditory, visual, sensory or kinesthetic. Do they tend to be more analytical or global learners? How is their tolerance for ambiguity? Do they work better with others or alone?

Grammatical terms, the jargon of the language classroom, may be unfamiliar to your international students. They can also be unfamiliar to your domestic students. Often, students are too embarrassed to ask the meaning of a term or concept that they should so obviously know. There are different ways to approach this. You can just define the term (and write it on the board) so that students know it. You can also ask for volunteers to explain the term to the class or give examples. You can, if you have the time, even ask students to analyze examples and give you their ideas about the role that certain parts of speech play (so that they create their own understanding of the rules).

Scaffolding assignments can be a good way to introduce the students to the particular rules of writing in your target language. For example, for a composition on a particular city, break the assignment down into smaller parts. For each part, focus on a grammar or stylistic point, and then all of the smaller assignments fold into the longer paper in the end.

Office hours and contact information are important tools for students and professors. When a student is not comfortable to speak in class, he may be comfortable to speak one on one. This gives you both the opportunity to know each other better, and become more comfortable. This comfort will enter your classroom and boost the student's confidence. It also gives the professor the opportunity to closely assess the student's needs and work with the student on an individual plan to improve in the target language.

3. Teaching international students in the First year writing program
Maria Volynsky, English & Philosophy

1. **Reading Guide:** Since texts are hard to understand, provide students with a set of questions they need to find answers to while reading an article/book chapter. The questions are based on the instructor's goals and plans for the class. Students will receive the most important information without trying to translate and understand every word in a text. It is helpful to ask them write down answers to the questions. Being non-native speakers, they may find it hard to come up with the answer in class, while their notes would help them formulate responses in a classroom discussion. Finally, students will have a feeling that they are under the control of their reading – they think they can skip several lines if the information in those lines is not reflected in the questions.

2. **Vocabulary:** One of the major problems with reading in ESL sections is students not knowing the words. In class go over the most difficult words/phrases/ definitions/etc. or the most frequently words used in the text. Also, explain to students 1) why there is no need to look for each word they do not know in a dictionary, and 2) what words they need to find in the dictionary. Crosswords with the words from the article/book chapter/text are very beneficial since the student pay attention to both meaning and form.

3. **Collaborative critical reading:** Break all students into several groups, usually three, four people maximum. Prepare several questions that are based on the text, but require students to give their own opinion/examples/details/etc. in addition to the demonstration of the knowledge of the text. Then, write one question on one poster; the number of posters depends on the number of questions prepared by the instructor. Each group gets one poster and students re given 5 -10 minutes (depends on the questions) to write down their answers on the poster. Then, they will rotate the posters. Students will read what others have written and add one comment and at least one new piece of information to the poster. Then, rotate the posters again. The last group to answer the questions then summarizes the answers.

4. **Assign responsibilities:** Make each student or pair of students responsible to speak on a topic/question. Ask students to prepare answers to all questions, but assign (or students choose) one or two students to be responsible for the discussion of one questions. They will need to prepare a more detailed answer and get ready to monitor a short discussion of a question. International students, especially first-year students, prefer to know exactly what they need to do to be able to organize their time and their efforts better.

5. **Cultural differences:** Coming to an American academia is one of the biggest culture shocks our students experience. Learning to write under the conventions of American academic writing may be even a bigger culture shock. A big number of students are used to teacher-centered instruction with students having no voice in the classroom; students do not have experience in or appreciation for expressing their opinion on the issues under discussion, they find it difficult to articulate their ideas in a clear, precise, and concise way, and they do not feel comfortable writing about themselves. Thus, instructors need specifically address these issues and help students learn to value and explain their own beliefs. This can be done through several steps. First, instructors should provide a lot of support, such as detailed questions, outlines, examples, etc. Then, gradually instructors remove the support, step by step, one support at a time. In this way, students do not feel drowning in an unfamiliar mode of learning and learn the skills of self-expression, critical thinking, and, independent work. Also, instructors need to explain to students what is expected from them in terms of being

pro-active and seeking help and advice from instructors. A lot of them come from an academic culture where it is not appropriate to approach an instructor with questions based on the material and coming to an instructor's office hours is considered a punishment. We need to spend more time with ESL students on the explanation of policies, what is appropriate and what not, and how to communicate with professors and peers in American academia.

Creating rubrics or giving students voice

One of the activities in the First Year Writing Program is creating a rubric for one of the projects together with students. Usually, the instructor is the one responsible for producing criteria for grading students' papers. Letting students participate in the decision on how their work will be evaluated is very productive and beneficial for both the students and the instructor. This activity can not only increase students' engagement and motivation, but actually help students understand the assignment and produce a more thoughtful paper/project/etc.

There are many possible ways to structure the activity; what follows is just an example of one of them. A pre-requisite for the activity is discussion of the project/paper and knowledge of the components and requirements of the project. Prior to the class when you create a rubric, ask students to read an article on the topic (e.g., Skillings and Ferrell, "Student-generated Rubrics."). In the beginning of the class have a whole-class discussion on the importance of having rubrics for an assignment and the benefits of being an active participant of the project. Then, break the class into groups of three or four (depends on the size of the class) and ask students to think about at least five categories for the rubric. In five or seven minutes ask each group to present their categories to the class explaining why they think it is important to include these categories into the rubric. As a class decide on the categories that you will include into the rubric (e.g., proposed solution, audience, use of sources, paragraph development, mechanics, etc.).

The next step for the instructor is to put the name of each category on a big self-adhesive blank poster, add the possible points (e.g., 4, 3, 2, 1, 0) and/or labels (e.g., excellent, good, fait, poor), and hang the posters on the walls in the classroom. Let the students walk around the classroom and put their descriptions of what the paper/project should look like to get that number/label in that category. Let us imagine that we have a category use of sources: a student needs to write what they should do to get the maximum, for example, four points for this category, or describe what is the criterion is for getting two points in this category.

Finally, the instructor takes the posters home and creates the rubric based on students' comments. Another possibility is to distribute the posters among the groups and let the students create parts of the rubric based on the comments.

Works cited:

Skillings, Mary Jo and Robbin Ferrell, "Student-generated Rubrics: Bringing Students into the Assessment Process" *The Reading Teacher*. 53.6 (2000): 452-455. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20204821>

Total _____/28

SAMPLE Rubric for Composition Project 2
Maria Volynsky, Ed. D.

	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Fair (1)	Poor/Absent (0)
Overall overview/impression of the project					
Discussion of the campaign					
Discussion of the collaboration within the group					
Discussion of personal efforts within the project					
Discussion of personal gains and losses and the impact of the project on your learning					
Grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, clarity					
Formatting (Times New Roman, 12; 1 inch margin top, bottom, left, right; first line; no extra space between the paragraphs)	NA	NA	NA		

Teaching international students in the First – Year Writing Program: the role engagement plays in teaching critical thinking skills.

Sharon M. Brubaker, English & Philosophy & University Libraries

The first thing is get to know who your students are simply by calling them by their given names. It is a great ice-breaker, and shows students their professor is human. Initially you may meet with mixed success in pronouncing their given names, and some students may be quick to tell you to call them "Nancy," "Elaine," David." Be curious, interested, ask them how they got their "American names," and why they prefer for example "Nancy," rather than "Iat-Chi." A spirited discussion will follow, where you will learn that their English teachers give them American names simply because they are easier to pronounce. Try to pronounce their given name, ask them for a nickname or "American name. There will be difficulty, use this as a simple teachable moment when you can learn valuable information from them, and they become engaged directly with what is going on in the classroom.

Another simple way of engaging ESL students in the initial weeks of class is to have them discuss/explain a subject they have firsthand knowledge about: Chinese versus American education, how traditional Chinese food is bears little resemblance to the Chinese food they will find in the U.S., or what their idea of a research paper is. This empowers them, builds confidence in their English language speaking skills, and gives you firsthand knowledge about them. Use this information to help them develop paper topics/research questions that they will engage with, rather than giving them a topic to write about (which is what many of them want).. Getting ESL students to the point where they are comfortable enough to ask questions in class, formulate research questions that are not formulaic and expected, and have analytic thoughts takes time, patience, and knowledge of who your students are as individuals.

Coming up with ideas and analysis, critical thinking, is difficult for first term students in ESL writing classes. The more engaged international students are in class, the better their writing will become. The Chinese educational system is much different from ours, and when teaching writing and research it helps to know that rote memorization of things like grammar rules for many is easy. However, coming up with their own research project or simple keyword searching is difficult. ESL students take notes on everything, but when asked open-ended questions, give standard, expected answers. Knowing that student "A" is a business major from Beijing, student "B" is an engineering major from Guangzhou, and student "C" is a fashion merchandizing major from the Ukraine, allows you to ask questions and give examples in class that they can relate to and understand. And more important, guide them in finding a research topic, not giving them a topic to write about.

One-one-one engagement takes time. However, in the ESL First Year Writing classroom this type of engagement leads to projects students are invested in personally. Case in point, students in an ESL English 103 class (analytical writing) were given the task to write a 7-9 page paper on a subject of "cultural, social, or historical significance." The focus of the project is vague, readings for class focused on "Create Dangerously" by Edwidge Danticatt and "The Buddha in the Attic" by Julie Otsuka, along with examples from Chinese writers and poets considered controversial in China. Class discussions ranged from what the texts were about(and for some this admittedly was a struggle) to why a poet was imprisoned for writing poetry while a controversial blogger was left free, to how can a writer "create

dangerously" using words to inspire. For a few this was abstract, but what made it work was relating it to subjects and people they are familiar with. Students formulated their own unique research questions: does China have the capability of becoming a democracy, what is the impact of education abroad on "leftover girls," how does the "one child policy" impact women in 21st century China, are children born in the US to Chinese parents more or less Chinese than children born in China, etal. Students were engaged with the assignment, had a personal interest in what they were writing about, and did stronger work. Do they still have difficulties with research and writing? Yes. What has grown is their ability to think more independently and analytically.

4. Teaching international students in *Introduction to Entrepreneurship*

Michele K. Masterfano, Management Department

Introduction to Entrepreneurship (MGMT 260) can be taught on campus, online, and a hybrid of the two. Given that it is a 200 level course, it can consist of freshman through seniors, although it tends to consist largely of juniors and seniors. It is a required course for Entrepreneurship concentrations, and a popular elective with all business concentrations and majors. It tends to have a very large population of international students in it. The class itself is large, typically with 45 students in an on campus or hybrid section, and 35 if the course is offered online.

The interesting point is that these international students tend to want to learn the "American" way of starting a business, which makes teaching this course a little easier than some. However, there is still the language problem, and as the major project in this course is to produce a feasibility analysis for a business concept of their own, done in teams, there can be problems that crop up. For instance, the writing abilities of many international students are not good; the feasibility analysis final document is generally 15 to 20 pages long, which can make for some very difficult reading when grading. Also, I've discovered that many international students appear to think that more is better, so while the average paper may be the length already mentioned, I've had them come in from fully-international teams as high as 47 pages! This, of course, could be solved by giving a maximum number of pages as part of the assignment, however no one in business does that when a report is requested, so this is a good opportunity for students to start making decisions as to what is important to include and what is not important to include.

In allowing the students to form their own project teams, consisting of five students each, I first have the entire class introduce themselves, including name, major/concentration, what kinds of skills they have (writing, analysis, development of PowerPoint®, etc.) and why they are interested in entrepreneurship. I strongly encourage all students, but particularly the international students, to speak loudly enough so that the entire class can hear them. This is critical, since after introductions but before teams are formed, we discuss the qualities of a high-functioning team, which includes such items as diversity of experience, diversity of functional expertise (accounting, marketing, etc.), and diversity of backgrounds. Then the students form their own teams, exchanging contact information.

The course has both individual and team assignments. Each of these is explained in the syllabus and is also discussed in class. Students are encouraged to ask questions about them at any time, whether in class, in email, or during office hours. Blackboard is used for all course materials, including the submission of quizzes and assignments. Quizzes are available for a full week in order to give time to the students to do the reading before attempting the quiz.

Quizzes: These are open book, multiple choice tests. They are simply a means to determine if the students are doing the reading and are comprehending the material that they read. This also has the additional benefit of seeing how the international students are dealing with the written material in class, although the main purpose of the quizzes is to give each student an opportunity to impact their grades individually, since the course is so team project intensive.

Case studies: In on campus and in hybrid classes, case study analysis is done in teams, since the classes are so large. In an online section, which is smaller, these are done individually. In all modes

of delivery, there are one or two specific questions that must be answered in writing. In class, the case is then further discussed as a way to show how to use the various analysis tools that are available to business people. In online sections, this discussion takes place online as well. In that case, the discussion actually goes on for a week. The reason for using that particular case is then discussed at the conclusion. No additional supports are given for these, and no particular issues have been noted with the international students, beyond their writing ability.

Feasibility analysis: This is a major project that includes both oral presentations and written work. The first oral presentation has a set format, while for the final presentation the team is able to determine what should be presented to the class. The written assignments include a rough draft that should be about 60% complete and the final completed analysis. A template is provided all students that must be followed, and each area of analysis contains detailed information on what must be included.

Throughout the term, there are opportunities for the class time to be spent working on the projects. This is an opportunity for them to ask specific questions regarding their own business, which is important, since each business has its own unique characteristics that must be covered in an analysis. These individual team meetings with the instructor are extremely helpful to the international students, who frequently do not ask questions openly in class, but are willing to do so in a more intimate environment. Of course, this is not able to be accomplished in an online environment, however being available *daily* for emailed questions helps tremendously.

It has been found to be helpful to not only explain idiomatic expressions, which are rampant in business, but also basic business terminology. Simply pronouncing some of the words several times, i.e., using them in lectures and deeper explanations, is helpful to students with English as a second language. For instance, even though it is a widely used business term, the term "pro forma" financials needs to be explained. Also, the difference between a franchised business and one with all corporate-owned outlets generally needs explanation. A specific word I've found international students can struggle with is "ambiguity," something that all entrepreneurs face every day of their lives. While American students might know of some business successes and failures through growing up in this country, not all international students will know about companies that may have started (and failed) when they were children. These also need to be explained and discussed further; this will also aid those domestic students who do not want to admit not knowing the reference. For instance, one of the cases we use is based on MySpace, which, while still in business, is functioning in a much narrower segment than when it first launched and grew much faster than Facebook originally did.

5. Providing social experiences for academic learning: "TV Night"

Philip W. Salas, Paul F. Harron Graduate Program in Television Management

In the graduate program in television management, current graduate assistants[1] have created an event that we believe will serve a variety of purposes in helping our international students. "TV Night" allows for learning and socialization in a relaxed environment.

Our cohorts generally contain 25 students, half of which can be international. The curriculum in Television Management studies the systems, segments and organizations of US media companies; their content, distribution methods, business models. The difficulty for international students is to understand a business, its products and history, with which they have little to no experience. Imagine teaching a television programming course to a group that has never seen "I Love Lucy", "M*A*S*H", or "Seinfeld".

The concept is "TV Night", the first of which was held on Friday, 11/16/12. The initial screening was "All in the Family", a sitcom that broke every mold and shattered every notion about traditional American television families. The group gathered in a large screening room with pizza and soda, with no faculty members present; this provided a relaxed, informal environment which facilitated discussion during and after the screening. According to the graduate assistants that facilitated the event, the main issue was the inability of the Chinese students to understand the humor, which requires advanced cultural experience and language.

We will screen significant episodes of US programs that are selected because of their significance in culture and industry. Sitcoms will be primarily utilized, because they provide a unique look at American culture, and its evolution, through the eyes of television producers.

- *I Love Lucy,* for its significance as the first show ever recorded for future syndication. It is also shot in black and white, a format that many of our domestic students have never seen.
- *Donna Reed/Leave it to Beaver,* for portrayal of "typical" utopic suburban life
- *All in the Family*, a breakthrough on so many levels
- *M*A*S*H*, for its ability to use satire and humor as commentary on war
- *The Cosby Show* , for its portrayal of an upscale African American family
- *Married with Children*, the "anti Cosby", and a show that launched Fox, a network to challenge the dominance of the big 3.
- *Mary Tyler Moore*, for its early portrayal of a successful unmarried career woman.

There are many aspects of life in the US that can be illustrated by our television programs; we choose sitcoms, but other genres can teach as well; reality, drama, news, variety, game shows and animation.

We hope that our television night, as a social event, can not only provide opportunities to discuss the evolution of television, but can also stimulate useful discussion and help to bring the cohort together as a cohesive group.

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[1] Andrea Gould and Christina Coleman

6. Understanding adjustment challenges for international graduate students: In Conversation with international Graduate Students from India

Suruchi Sood, School of Public Health

Based on informal discussions with international students enrolled in the Masters of Public Health (MPH) Program at Drexel University special efforts were undertaken to understand first hand the issues that these students grappled with both within and outside the classroom environment. Interviews were conducted in and around the university campus by asking participants a series of open-ended questions. Their responses were recorded on a voice recorder. In order to establish an informal or comfortable atmosphere for communication, a 1st year MPH student also an international student from India conducted the interviews. Each interviewee was assured of confidentiality and informed that no names or identifying information would be utilized in the analysis and reporting of the information being collected.

The total sample included nine international students from India (6 female and 3 male). The average age of the student was 25 years. Seven of the nine students had been in the United States for less than one year while two of the students had been at Drexel for approximately 18 months. All of the students had arrived in the US to pursue graduate education after having completed professional training from India: three were dentists, three were medical school graduates, two of the students had degrees in Engineering and one student was a Pharmacist. The students were asked a series of structured questions on the challenges they faced both within and outside of the classroom, especially with regard to interactions with their peers, advisors and instructors. A summary of the findings from these interviews is provided below.

Contrary to popular perceptions about international students, in general this student subset considers itself to be on par with native English language speakers. English has been their primary language of instruction throughout school and college and the communication of thoughts and ideas in English is not a concern for any of the interviewed students. At the same time several academic concerns were expressed during the interviews. These concerns can be classified as being associated with the demands in terms of content and mechanics of writing research papers, structure of classroom instruction, adjusting to a quarter system, and lack of experiential opportunities.

Specifically relating to the demands of "academic writing" for example reviewing and critiquing research papers or linking theories and research in their academic writing, one of the students noted: *"I'm not used to this. I did my undergraduate work in a technical stream so it was only related to science. This is the first time I'm writing papers in my life!"* Another student echoed a similar sentiment: *"My background is more mathematical and logic based as I have an engineering background. Here I find there is more theory. I have to read research papers and write reviews on them, which is something I am not used to doing. Because I wasn't used to writing, I haven't developed my writing skills. That has been the most challenging thing for me."* Apart from a lack of familiarity with the process of writing research papers, these students also report frustration with their relative lack of knowledge on the mechanics associated with research articles, for example following APA style guidelines: *"It was difficult to gather the ideas that were put forward to us especially in terms of paper writing. The APA style or certain other concepts were difficult to understand."* Some of the classes these students are required to take comprise a didactic component (in a large classroom setting) followed by small group interaction. This weekly combination for a single class was mentioned as a challenge *"Initially it was really tough because you are not used to the didactic sessions and group discussions."*

Another common refrain that emerged during the interviews was the challenge of switching from a semester or in some cases an academic year system to a quarter system: *"in Drexel we have the quarter system…have the final exam at the end of the 10th week, which is only two and a half months. That is very short to be very honest."* Others expressed similar thoughts indicating that the structure of the quarter system is too fast paced and they feel that they are constantly caught in a cycle of meeting assignment deadlines. One student noted: *"The quarter system is totally hectic. I just remember deadlines. I don't remember dates, I don't remember days. I don't have a life. I only have homework, assignments, and jobs to search for. Just finishing my assignments and staying on top of things."*

Another set of challenges noted by several students was the lack of experiential opportunities for international students in terms of research assistantships, fellowships, internships, and employment. Students felt that many offered opportunities came with citizenship or permanent residence requirements. For example one student noted: *"when you apply for part time jobs here on campus, they give credit for being a work study person over a person from an international country and that is where I feel is the gap."* Another student felt that this lack of opportunities was misrepresented before enrollment: *"At the university level, I do feel they have more options for US citizens or green card holders. This is contradictory to what they endorse when they want us to join their college."*

Students were also asked about interaction with their academic advisors and professors. The students look to their advisors not just for guidance on course curriculum but also to serve as effective career counselors. In general the interviewees were less than forthcoming about their interaction with their advisors. At the overall level the experiences reported by the students in our sample with their advisors can be described as cordial if not nurturing. For example, when asked to describe their interaction with their advisors, one student stated: *"I haven't been in touch with my advisor a lot. I haven't sat with her and spoken about my courses or anything a lot. But I feel she is not very friendly, that's one of the reasons why I don't try and approach her. I know she's there to help me out but I don't go to her. So I rather go and ask my seniors or other professors I'm working with rather than going to her."* Other students report being underwhelmed with their interactions with one student describing the following experience of approaching their advisor repeatedly regarding insights on job opportunities for international students: *"My advisor hasn't been very supportive. Every time I go to her, she is like 'I'm sorry, I don't know about this' or 'I'm sorry, I don't have any information about it', 'oh! That's something I'm clueless about', 'that's something you might want to go and ask Mr. Warren Hilton.' We were told that if we had any problem then go to your advisor but all she has to offer is a simple "no!"* On the other hand when asked about their interactions with the individual professors for the courses they were enrolled in, students appear extremely satisfied with their interactions, claiming that they have not faced any problems in receiving advise from their professors.

A third set of interaction questions pertained to communication with peers – both domestic and other international students. By and large it appears that participants had arrived with a fellow student from India or had met within days of their arrival in the US. A residential clustering is also observed that contributes to the development of stronger intrinsic ties and networking. Students expressed that "seniors" or international students from India who had been in the US for a longer period of time serve as a crucial support system by assisting them in the adjustment process.

A majority of the participants reported that they do not socialize with those outside their own ethnicity and that they kept interactions with domestic and international students from other countries to a minimum and restricted to official university gatherings/events. When asked about the reasons for this, the common refrain was that "there was no need" as their social expectations were being

fulfilled within their own clique. Another reason provided by some participants was that although Americans are "polite" and "responsive" they are not forthcoming towards international students. One participant noted: *"People are not very social but if you talk to them they answer back, they are polite with you."* Another student observed that *"They will be nice to some extent but for example I draw a line, I don't even have to say it. I can make you feel I have drawn a line. So that is something, which I feel in them. You can clearly feel their preferences."* Interestingly, few students reported within-group dissatisfaction, specifically among students from different parts of India. For example one of the participants indicated: *"I am from the northern part of India, there are a few people around me from different parts of India…they have some different attitudes that are discriminatory. Instead of respecting the other peoples culture or opinions or their tastes, their views, they impose theirs and try to dominate…as if they are good at everything they are doing."* Another participant made a similar observation by indicating: *"I have seen discrimination among the group from India at Drexel. When I came here I was happy there were so many students from India but now that I know all of them and I am good friends with only few of them. The others don't even care. I faced more problems with the group from India in general"*

Another set of questions included in the interviews focused on challenges these students faced outside of academia. Some of the common difficulties reported include finding suitable accommodation, procuring food, transportation, navigation around campus and changes in weather. Some pertinent examples from the interviews include:

"They keep telling us healthy food, healthy food while any kind of food grocery store is so far away! You have to walk 6-7 blocks to get it. All you get right next-door is a food cart endorsing bagel with cheese or Thai food carts or Chinese food cart all full of fast foods!"

"The major challenge for me is food because I am vegetarian and here we don't have much options for vegetarians."

"Initially it was really hard for me to get accustomed to the ways people live here in the U.S. say for example right from groceries to laundry to food making, cooking. I had to figure everything out myself."

"I stay in a residential area. I couldn't drive until I had a license. In India, I could just go anywhere I want or take the bus or take a train…go wherever I want. Also, public transportation is so expensive here. And going to a grocery store from my apartment would take me an hour which is only 20 minutes if we were driving."

"There were certain issues that I have come across living outside of India. Initially there were certain issues like following road signs or maybe the traffic rules."

These issues were all reported to be of major concern when first arriving from India and most participants mentioned they had adjusted over time to these inconveniences. Once again help from international students from India who have been at Drexel for a longer period of time was reported as being of most value indicating a general comfort level and trust established between students undergoing common experiences.

VIII. Resources

Drexel Resources

Watch your language

Tips for communicating with international students who speak English as a second language

General resources on language, culture, and international students in the U.S.

Drexel Resources
Take the time to reach out to international or ESL students who need help.

University City Campus

- English Language Center (www.drexel.edu/elc), ext. 2022; 229 N. 33rd Street
- Writing Center (ESL tutors are available) (www.drexel.edu/writingcenter)
- Office of Equality and Disability (www.drexel.edu/edt/)
- International Students and Scholars Services (www.drexel.edu/isss)
- Steinbright Career Development Center www.drexel.edu/scdc
- The Counseling Center http://www.drexel.edu/studentaffairs/support_health_services/cc_ucmc/
- The Drexel Learning Center http://www.drexel.edu/provost/dlc/
-

Center City campus

- Center for Student Academic Resources (New College Building, 1st floor) 215 762-8121
  http://Tutors.dlc.drexel.edu/accuweb to schedule appointments

Multimedia resources

Video: International students' perspectives: Drexel international students talk about their experiences at Drexel:
http://media.irt.drexel.edu/Mediasite/Play/128f8b313eb64a4da2c7cd8f70744f7a1d (Part I)
Introductions and first experiences
http://media.irt.drexel.edu/Mediasite/Play/93f5283a8a6f4edd82ad3527535b8f301d (part II) Studying in the US
http://media.irt.drexel.edu/Mediasite/Play/30d0d82fd1294cf2860921b606754b591d (part II)
friendships, communication, and student life experiences

Community Resources

·   International House http://ihousephilly.org/

Watch your language! Learn to monitor for colloquial expressions, two word verbs such as "fill out" and "hand in," cultural references, and folksy expressions.

From this
1. A catalyst is something that is not *used up* in the reaction.
2. You made an interesting claim. Can you *back it up* now?
3. One employee tried an *end run* around the policy.
4. The two companies were like *David and Goliath*.
5. The two companies were like the *Montagues and the Capulets*.
6. Can you *hold on* a minute?
7. Feel free to *add your two cents*
8. The need to *keep up with the Joneses* drives a lot of consumerism.
9. Would you say the experiment *worked out*?
10. Who needs me to *break it down*?
11. When does photosynthesis first *take place*?
12. This chapter is chock full of a bunch of technical stuff that you won't need til later so don't sweat it now.
13. Practice using this programming language to write out the steps to making a *PB&J sandwich*.
14. Malware software is a form of *Trojan horse*.

**To this:
1. *Used up* sounds too close to *used* which means the opposite. Can you find a synonym?
2. *Back it up* also has the meaning *to reverse*. Can you find a synonym or paraphrase?
3. *an end run* is one of many sports expressions in English that implies familiarity with the sport. Try to avoid.
4. *David and Goliath.* Cultural reference; try to avoid in lecture; can explain reference after class if it appears in text; or in a simple phrase in class
5. *Montagues and the Capulets;* same as above; many American students might need a refresher too.
6. Can you *hold on* a minute?
7. *your two cents—*colloquial; rephrase
8. *keep up with the Joneses* ; like *soccer mom* and *yuppies* and *elephants and donkeys*, the *Joneses* next door are cultural references.
9. Would you say the experiment *worked out? Worked out* is close to *worked* but be aware   of possible confusion; *succeeded* may be clearer.
10. *break it down*? *Break down* has other meanings too, and a student consulting a   dictionary might get the other meaning first and be confused.
11. *take place* means *happen* or *occur,* but literally refers to a location. Confusing!
12. *chock full, stuff, sweat it—*all markers of an informal register that students may find confusing---to say nothing of the lack of clarity with regard to what they should study.
13. *PB&J.* Two problems: first the acronym; but even *peanut butter and jelly* sandwich is problematic because it assumes experience.
14. *Trojan horse—* should be rephrased. Many students of all backgrounds might not get this.

General tips for communicating with international students

who speak English as a second language

Communication is a mutual process—together speaker and listener make meaning.

- Multiple factors can interfere with effective communication: linguistic ability, pronunciation, culture, and context.

- Use the feedback technique. If you aren't sure you understand the student's questions or response, ask: " Are you asking me …?" or " Are you saying…?"

1. Say hello first! Establish a human connection before getting to the task.

2. Less is more. Speak slowly. Give essential information clearly. Avoid slang and idioms and elaborate wording (compare "Food is prohibited" vs. "No food.")

3. Allow WAIT TIME when asking questions –don't just ask more questions. It takes time to process information. Watch for processing time to occur as lower proficiency speakers translate your words into their first language and then translate back out.

4. Be a "sympathetic interlocutor"—extend your sense-making ability to TRY to understand what is being said. Listen for word roots ("I can't commune well").

5. Smiles and head nods can be deceiving. The person may not really understand what you are saying. Check comprehension by asking for the information back or write down a short summary of your instructions.

6. Write down a word to help clarify meaning if communication breaks down.

7. Provide simple written instructions for common questions. Use visuals and graphic organizers to scaffold words (bullet points, outlines, charts, arrows, maps). Use white space and bold print to make key points stand out.

8. Provide multilingual support for procedural information.

9. Be aware that apparently self-evident terminology (e.g.,study carrels, the stacks) may not be understood. Proceed step by step: "Here are the study carrels. You cannot use video chat here."

10. Don't make overt language corrections of grammar or pronunciation in front of others. Use techniques such as *rephrasing* and *recasting* what the student has said into more comprehensible English.

General Resources on international students in U.S. classrooms

Videos

Asian international students in Western higher education: Multimedia videos (Chinese and American students in conversation): Michigan State University http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/multimedia/?id=1-14-21-103-w5f0lodnpna

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