

International Education Experiences

Student Challenges and Faculty Strategies to Support Students

Student experiences and resulting challenges	What may be helpful for students	Services/ programs Addressing this Issue
<i>Saudi Arabia</i>		
Students may have been directed towards a specific program of study, and may struggle to develop personal motivation and a goal-directed orientation towards their studies.	Help students connect their current role as students with their desired future and career possibilities. Clear goal-setting is a predictor of success for Saudi international students (Carty et. al., 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arabic Language Academic Skills workshop (student-facilitated, Learning Centre program)
Students may experience challenges taking notes during lectures. Selecting main ideas may difficult, as students lack experience attending to the cues that mark important information.	Early in the semester, provide additional verbal cues to help students attend to important information. Continue to encourage students to thoughtfully take hand-written notes, even if some lecture notes are supplied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Skills Workshop: Reading Texts and Making Notes
Students may find some test-taking formats, particularly multiple choice, to be unfamiliar and initially confusing (Carty et. al, 1998)	Introduce students to types of questions used on assessments through informal in-class quizzes. Provide guidance on the types of questions used in examinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Skills Workshops: Exam Preparation In class “mini-workshops” on multiple choice questions, preparing essay answers etc.
Students may have studied in single-gender environments. The adjustment to a mixed-gender environment with significantly different social norms may be challenging. Students may need to negotiate new ways of interacting across genders.	Be aware of students’ comfort levels; for example, men often refrain from shaking hands with women. In general, students express that they appreciate interacting with faculty and students across genders when interactions are sensitively handled (Sandekian et. al., 2015)	

A significant percentage of Saudi students are married, and bring their family to Canada as they study. Expectations to spend evenings in family activities may be high. Interestingly, students who come with their families tend to have higher GPAs than those who come alone (Carty et. al, 2007)	Introduce students to time management strategies, including creating a semester schedule and developing a weekly schedule that balances study and personal commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Skills Workshops: Time Management
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References

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