



ICTAS – Intercultural Training for Administrative Staff

Dr. Margarita Calderón-Peter
Drs. Jeanine Gregersen Hermans
Hanne Droidal

Introduction



Central questions of the project

- Is the university ready to incorporate international students and staff?
- Is the university incorporating these students and staff in an intercultural sensitive way?
- Does the university provide a learning environment for all its members developing their intercultural competence?



ICTAS



1. Who
2. What
3. Where + When



1. ICTAS - Who



- **Project partners:** (IROs, Staff office, Libraries, Admission + Housing office, secretaries, Research office....)
 - BOKU (co-ordinator),
 - LIFE,
 - CULS,
 - WULS,
 - University of Lleida,
 - University of Udine
- **2 experts:**
 - Jeanine Gregersen-Hermans (University of Maastricht)
 - Peggy Pusch (Intercultural Communication Institute, USA)

2. ICTAS – what?



This project focuses on administrative staff dealing with increasing numbers of international students and staff, but often use standardised procedures that might have intrinsic difficulties for international students and staff compared to nationals.

2. ICTAS – what?



- **Goals:**

- To analyze existing administrative procedures for incoming and outgoing students and staff
- to develop a manual of best practice models (showing examples of how to arrange administrative procedures in a way that meet the needs of international students and staff)
+
- within the manual, to provide a kind of „intercultural toolbox“ for administrative staff

3. ICTAS –where +when



- September 2008: Kick-Off-Meeting in Vienna
- October- January: Self-evaluation report at each university;
- February – April: Evaluation audit
- Mai – September: preparing the manual (+ project presentation at EAIE)
- 27.+28. October 2009 : closing conference at LIFE; presenting best practice models+ manual
- ...to be continued ...???

Self evaluation questionnaire



- Admission + student service centers
- Libraries
- IT management
- Facilities (= infrastructural support including housing)
- Research support services
- Human Resource Management
- International offices
- And selected departments

Question 1



- Are services available in English? If yes, which services are available in English (written materials, service desk assistance, other)?
- Are services available in other languages? If yes, which languages?

2. Internationalization in the Institution



How do you think the university defines internationalization?

How have the competences required in [unit's] work changed to include internationalization (language skills, intercultural competencies, other)?

Does your unit offer special activities associated with internationalization? Please describe.

3. Student Matters



- What services/activities does [unit] offer the international students attending this institution? How does this differ from the services offered to national students? Please answer this question in relation to: Pre-arrival (e.g. introduction program, other)? During period of stay (counseling, guidance in the learning / studying process, other)? Post departure (alumni programs, networking, other)?
- What services/activities does [unit] offer the outgoing students? Please answer this question in relation to: Pre-departure (e.g. preparation, other)? During period of stay abroad? Post return?

4. Staf Matters



- What services/activities does [unit] offer the international staff associated with this institution? How does this differ from the services offered to national staff members? Please answer this question in relation to: Pre-arrival (e.g. introduction program, other)? During period of stay (counseling, career advice, other)? Post departure (affiliation programs, networking, other)?
- What services/activities does [unit] offer the outgoing staff? Please answer this question in relation to: Pre-departure (e.g. preparation, other)? During period of stay abroad? Post return?

5. Evaluation and Feedback



- Does [unit] evaluate the services/activities/programs provided and how is this done?
- What difficulties are encountered on a daily basis within the [unit] when working with international staff and students and with outgoing students and staff?
- How has [unit] changed or plan to change the following to increase internationalization within the [unit]:
 - The way in which information is provided?
 - The procedures that are used?
 - The structuring of the [unit]?
 - Incentives for participating in internationalization?
 - Other?
 - In your opinion what services/activities offered by (unit) work best in relation to international students, outgoing student and staff
- What services related to the above-mentioned groups in your [unit], if any, need improvement or are missing in order to contribute to the internationalization of your university?



Table 2: Four possible combinations the type of international strategy and the dominant worldview in the university

Policies/Worldview	Ethnocentric	Ethnorelative
Separate	<i>'I don't feel very welcome here.'</i>	<i>'I had great international experience but did not meet with many locals.'</i>
Integrated	<i>'As long as I stick to the rules this is a good place to study' (if only I knew the rules)</i>	<i>'This is a great place to be for all of us.'</i>

Ethnocentric - separate



'I don't feel very welcome here.'

- Mono-cultural orientation;
- Focus on incoming students / staff;
- Competition for resources;
- Limited interaction between local and international students / staff;
- Similarity is assumed when interacting with others;
- Limited interest for other ways of doing things;
- Limited opportunities for intercultural development.

Ethnocentric - integrated



'As long as I stick to the rules this is a good place to study' (if only I knew the rules)

- Mono-cultural orientation;
- Limited awareness of differential needs and goals;
- Newcomers need to be taught how things function in this environment.
- Differences are not seen as a resource for intercultural development;
- Fear for loss of quality when newcomers don't fit in;
- Opportunities for intercultural development in newcomers.

Ethnorelative - separate



'I had great international experience but did not meet with many locals.'

- Awareness of differential needs and goals;
- Focus on mobile (in/out) students and staff;
- Competition for resources
- Limited interaction between local and international students / staff
- Differences are seen as a resource
- Cultural parallel management solutions;
- Opportunities for intercultural development for mobile students

Ethnorelative - integrated



This is a great place to be for all of us.'

- Cultural inclusive orientation;
- Focus on all constituents in the university;
- Differences are seen as a resource;
- Management solutions jointly constructed and with sensitivity to the local environment;
- Intercultural development part of the quality control systems for education and HRM;
- Opportunities for intercultural development for all constituents in the organization.

First results



- **Working definition of internationalization:** internationalization is a educational / developmental process to help individuals – groups – organizations, students academic and support staff, to function better in a globalized world.
- This process promotes the exchange and sharing of idea's by mobility of individuals, **that if conducted well**, helps enhance the competence in individuals, groups, organizations to build constructive and productive relationships and engage in meaningful interaction across cultures. The internationalization process aims at enhancing the competency to work more successfully across cultures.
- The implication for the university is that the whole system needs to change. (create third culture).



Thank you for your attention!