12-6-2012

Tuning in to the Needs of International Students

Elizabeth Ramsey
Boise State University

Presentation given at Albertsons Library for Public Services meeting.
Tuning in to the Needs of International Students
“International students are not just the sum of their difficulties.”

- Gail Shuck, Associate Professor, Coordinator of ESL at Boise State
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

“When I came to the U.S. to learn English, I had to throw out the way I used to study English in Japan.”

- Kazumoto Aoki, Japan
Conference on Culture, Language, Identity
“Harsh rules in home libraries made them a place of detention or a place to hide... students wanted to avoid notice and contact with librarians.”

- E. Ketting Law & N. Kille

International Students and Academic Libraries: Initiatives for Success
Individualistic vs. Collectivistic Societies
Time Perception and Rules

“You have so many stop signs in America. And everybody stops!”

- Ali Alotaibi, Saudi Arabia
ELS Language Center, Portland, OR
Formality and Ritual

“(Americans) treat each other in very informal ways, for example, even in the presence of great differences in age or social standing.”

- Boise State International Student Services Handbook
“Smiling, smiling, why do Americans always smile? I don’t do that in my country.”

- Ali Herrod, South Africa Conference on Culture, Language, Identity
Communication Differences

Eye contact

Gestures

Personal space

Accents
Who would have the tolerance listening to what I have to say, who would have the patience talking to me to help me feel comfortable enough? They are the worlds that have had the will and love to share themselves with mine, making my own world shine.”

- Yen Chi, China

Conference on Culture, Language and Identity
“Please be patient with us.”

- Ahmad Almotairi, Saudi Arabia
  Boise State Saudi Student Club
Student Diversity Center: 426-3652 on the 2nd flr of SUB, includes ISS and MSS, Coffee & Conversation Wednesdays 3:30-5pm  
http://mss.boisestate.edu/student-diversity-center-info/

Multicultural Student Services: mentoring programs for international, refugee students and first generation students  
http://mss.boisestate.edu/

International Student Services: http://iss.boisestate.edu/, Christy Babcock cbabcock@boisestate.edu, 426-2660
Writing Center, Liberal Arts 200, 426-1298: several tutors with ESL subject expertise, T.E.A. Time Thursdays from 6pm

http://writingcenter.boisestate.edu/tea/

Intensive English Program, Liberal Arts 120, 426-1921