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# Tuning in to the Needs of International Students

Elizabeth Ramsey  
*Boise State University*



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“International students are not just the sum of their difficulties.”

- Gail Shuck, Associate Professor,  
Coordinator of ESL at Boise State



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# 549 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Saudi Arabia	262
Kuwait	75
China	21
Nepal	21
Vietnam	13
Korea	13





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# 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



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# Individualistic vs. Collectivistic Societies



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# Time Perception and Rules

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

- Ali Alotaibi, Saudi Arabia  
ELS Language Center, Portland, OR





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# 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



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“Smiling, smiling, why do  
Americans always smile?  
I don’t do that in my country.”

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



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# 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



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“Please be patient with us.”

- Ahmad Almotairi, Saudi Arabia  
Boise State Saudi Student Club



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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](mailto:cbabcock@boisestate.edu), 426-2660



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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