

Assessing and Improving Academic Advisor's Intercultural Competence

OVERVIEW

This project is designed to help improve academic advisors' intercultural competence in both undergraduate and graduate offices. Due to large number of international students in both undergraduate and graduate programs, the need for intercultural competence becomes more urgent than ever. IDI survey was conducted to evaluate academic advisor's intercultural competence. Workshops are developed, student panels are organized, and guest speakers are invited. Pre-post retrospective questionnaire is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project on academic advisor's improvement of intercultural competence.

Why Intercultural Competence (IC)

Advisors emphasize commonalities and minimize differences (Downey et al, 2006)
ECE undergrad has 40% international students, 20% Asian American students, 5% URM students.
ECE graduates: 70% international students.
ECE advisors: There are 9 Whites, 1 Asian, and 1 Latino

IDI Results



Lesson Learned

Improved skills of developing and leading workshops, collaboration with CILMAR, and project development and management. Had impact on academic advising at Purdue and beyond.



Workshops, Student Panels and Guest Speakers

- What does Minimization mean to Academic advisors?
- What is intercultural empathy?
- Self-examination of your own culture
- Guest presentation on LGBTQ students
- Student panel presentation- Chinese culture
- Student panel presentation- Indian culture
- Guest presentation on Mexican culture
- Guest presentation on Asian American students
- Guest presentation on URM students

Future Plan

More workshops and student panels concentrating on shifting perspectives and making adaptation will be developed and organized.
Introduce the project to other advising offices and/or to the department head.



Pre-Post Retrospective Questionnaire

Advisors were asked to answer each question two times: their certain competence before the project and now the project is completed.

The pros and cons of the Pre-Post Retrospective Questionnaire.

	Mean	differences	Std. d.	P-value
Realizing that students from different cultures have different values and worldviews				
Pre	3.2500	-1.08333		.75378 <.001
Post	4.3333		.77850	
Realizing that students from different cultures are different and they have different learning approaches, different educational backgrounds, and different needs				
Pre	2.9167	-1.66667		.99620 <.001
Post	4.5833		.51493	
Adjusting my communication styles to talk to students from different cultures				
Pre	3.0000	-1.41667		.95346 <.001
Post	4.4167		.66856	
Treating students differently with respect				
Pre	3.2500	-1.00000		.86603 .002
Post	4.2500		.62158	

Project Results

The differences between the pre and post survey were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Therefore, there is significant change in advisors' perception of their IC following the project, especially in the areas of knowledge, attitudes and skills.

The differences, however, in the areas of shifting perspectives and making adaptation in intercultural settings are not significant.