

# International Student Program (ISP)

## Reflection Questions

1. Overview: Assess program, services, division during the 2019-20 year. Describe accomplishments, challenges and how challenges were addressed. Include evidence that illustrates accomplishments and challenges.

The F-1 international student enrollment continues to decline nationwide due to U.S. domestic and foreign policies. Furthermore, the Corona virus pandemic hit hard the F-1 student population due to lack of clear guidance from immigration. ISP staff put on an over-drive mode and overcome many obstacles while working remotely:

- **International Student Application**

The online international student application software – SLATE – was fully implemented effective Winter 2020. The transition was a smooth one. Working closely with the district International IT manager, the ISP admission team continue to provide feedback, identify glitches, and improve application process.

- **Spring 2020 New Student Orientation Program**

The Shelter-in-Place and school closure orders (March 16, 2020) were on the same day of the scheduled orientation program. We canceled the program immediately and broadcasted the closure via listserv and social media. The orientation program was postponed for a week so that we have time to switch it from an on-campus event to a virtual platform.

- **Virtual services**

All services were switched to the virtual platform overnight after the school closure announcement. Primary communication tool between staff and students was email in the beginning. Eventually, we added Zoom meeting option to meet with students.

2. Describe how program plans were met, including evidence that illustrate how these program plans were met.

- **Orientation**

ISP conducts new student orientation/welcome program 4 times a year: Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer Intensive ESL Course.

- **Assessment**

Placement tests are arranged during the orientation/welcome program week.

- **Education Planning**

Students are encouraged to consult with the International Counselors to develop education plan and academic issues.

- **Follow-up for at-risk students**

Reports are generated for immigration status compliance each quarter: full-time enrollment (minimum 12 units) and academic progress. International Student Counselors and International Student Advisors (Immigration Advisors) initiate communication with at-risk students at ISP.

3. Describe your experience related to transition of remote work, including online services, instruction, and supporting students offsite during the pandemic.

The ISP staff and faculty were working collectively to achieve a smooth transition from in-person services to virtual services. All sections – front office, health insurance, international admission, immigration and counseling – are communicating effectively via SMS, emails and zoom meetings. Since day one of the shelter-in-place order, we have successfully transform all services to 100% virtual services. We continue to improve and increase online services for our student population.

4. Describe how Student Equity goals were met and any improvements that were made. Include evidence that illustrate how goals were met using institutional data.

ISP provides equal access and services to ensure that international students reach their highest educational, personal and career goals. The majority of international students achieve their goals within the estimated 36-month program length and transfer-out to 4-year institutions. ISP staff and faculty utilize reports from Argos and Sunapsis on a regularly basis and reach out to at-risk students to ensure they are in compliance with U.S. Immigration regulations and academic achievement.

5. Describe the impact of the 2020 pandemic and all of the associated events have had on the students served by the program. Share what the program review data reveals about the corresponding impacts of the current circumstances.

The 2020 pandemic and U.S. immigration policies under Trump's administration have accelerated the decline of F-1 international student enrollment. The initial COVID-19 guidance from SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitors Program) was full of confusion. Numerous revisions were broadcasted but many questions remain unresolved, or up to DSO's (Designated School Official) interpretation of the regulations.

6. Describe resource needs based on current programs and services to effectively and efficiently serve students.

The second Admissions and Records Assistant position continues to be vacant due to hiring freeze. With the increase data traffic through SLATE (online international application software), a second full-time employer will decrease stress to the International Admission Team and will increase productivity.

Counselor's availability is often an issue with ISP since the two full-time International Student Counselors are operating to their capacity. Ideally, an additional full-time and/or part-time counselor can be hired or reassigned to ISP would alleviate burnout to current staff.

7. Other Relevant Information, including future anticipated goals.

The IE (International Education) field will have a long and difficult recovery from the pandemic due to the fact that many countries are having a much slower recovery rate than the U.S. Meanwhile travel restrictions are still in place and the news on racial tension and gun violence in the U.S. are contributing to the slow recovery in the IE field. Safety is a major concern for students and families.

Given all the negativities and uncertainties to the IE field, distance learning and/or distance-hybrid model may be the only option left. However, immigration continues to be slow with regulations and rules changes. Without a clear guidance from immigration, we are at a stand-still position.