

WORKING WITH THE UNIVERSITY

Build Trust and Be a Genuine Blessing:

- Treat university staff as people you care about and want to be friends/partners with
- Start with their strategic goals in mind
 - “Internationalization” encompasses things like encouraging study abroad, partnerships with universities abroad, and hosting international students
 - Engagement with the community: If the campus has an “International Friendship Program” or an “English Conversation Program”, you may also offer to recruit community people to be that friend to an international student
- Learn some insider language
 - Integration and engagement: helping students blend in with the campus community, the larger community, and the U.S. culture in general
 - Student success: desirable outcomes for successful students
 - NAFSA-Association of International Educators: a large nonprofit organization dedicated to international education and exchange, this organization sets standards of conduct for interactions with community members

Become a Resource:

- Though most universities are aware of the needs of international students, they’re too understaffed to meet them all – one of your most important missions is to show the people in charge what a great help you can be
- You can help them with meeting the practical needs of students
- You can provide a pool of community volunteers to meet the students’ needs for friendship, sense of belonging, and family
- You can also provide different activities that support and enhance students’ educational experience

Challenges:

- Some of the more “politically correct” universities are coming down strong on religious groups and evangelical Christian groups in particular
- Some university staff members have had bad experiences with pushy or obnoxious church people and want to protect students from all Christians as a result
- Others see international student ministries as competing with their own programs
- Be positive: Focus on values that your ministry and the university share, keep the value you bring to the table front and center, and utilize the insider language

The First Steps

- Familiarize yourself with the university’s website
 - Contact a staff member at the university’s International Student Office and set up a meeting
 - Prepare in advance what you will share, but also come as a learner, with a humble attitude, ready to discuss ways you might serve the university staff and students
 - Pray!
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