

BUDDY PROGRAM: A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO CROSS-CULTURAL
ADJUSTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

BY

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A Practicum Report
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

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CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

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PATRICIA ILAGAN

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
MASTER OF EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

International students face many difficulties when they study overseas. Some of these difficulties include language, finances, and adjustment to a new educational, social, and cultural environment. Adaptation to a new environment becomes easier when students enjoy support from educational institutions. It is then necessary for the receiving institution to develop programs that will ease the adjustment process of international students particularly during the critical initial months of their stay. Also, it is equally important for institutions to develop programs that involve the students and individuals who are in close contact with them. The International Centre for Students provides various support to international students from the moment they are accepted to the university until they complete their program. However, prior to the establishment of the Buddy Program in 1995, there was no program at the Centre that provided a continuing support to international students in cross-cultural adjustment.

The purpose of this practicum is to design a peer support or a Buddy Program that is participatory and continuing and that will address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students at the University of Manitoba. This included interviewing international students and individuals who are involved with the education and well-being of international students, meeting with the students and asking them to fill out a rating scale about their participation with the program.

The results of the study revealed that the Buddy Program had greatly contributed to the cross-cultural adjustment process of international students. It provided opportunity for them to have access to somebody for information they need during the initial adjustment period, to interact or develop friendships with Canadians and individuals from other cultures, and to become aware of and appreciate other cultures.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many individuals who have contributed to this practicum. With their support, encouragement and gentle prodding, the accomplishment of this undertaking has become less difficult but more fulfilling.

Special thanks to the international students and other Buddy Program stakeholders who agreed to take part in the study. They provided me the opportunity to learn, grow, and be their partner in implementing the Buddy Program at the International Centre for Students.

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cultural initiatives in the Centre were launched.

To the ICS staff members, your support and years of genuine friendship were greatly appreciated.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BUDDY PROGRAM: A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
	Page
CHAPTER I	GENERAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH PROBLEM
Introduction	1
The Present ICS Programs	4
Fall Orientation Program	6
Cross-Cultural Adjustment Program	8
The Problem	8
The Objectives	11
Limitations of the Study	11
Significance of the Study	12
CHAPTER II	REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND EXISTING PROGRAMS
Introduction	13
Discussion	13
CHAPTER III	METHODOLOGY
Introduction	23

Participatory Planning Framework	25
A. Assess Needs	26
1. Using Available Resources and Information	26
2. Gathering Information from Stakeholders	27
B. Design the Buddy Program	28
1. Objective #1	28
2. Objective #2	29
3. Objective #3	30
C. Implement the Buddy Program	30
D. Evaluate the Buddy Program	32

CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction	36
Framework for Data Analysis	38
Discussion	39
I. Interviews with Stakeholders	
Objective #1	39
A. Difficulty in Language	39
B. Different Academic System	42
C. Making Friends	44
D. Adjusting to a New Culture or Place	45
II. Five-Minute Interviews with Participants	
Objective #2	46
Process Used in Designing and Implementing the Program	
A. Needs Assessment	51
B. Implementation	53
C. Evaluation	53

III. Rating Scale on the Cross-Cultural
Adjustment Concerns

Objective #3 55

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Introduction 62

Discussion 62

Personal Learning 65

Recommendations

Introduction 69

Discussion 69

REFERENCES 77

APPENDICES

I Buddy Program Application Form 82

II Cross-Cultural Adjustment Workshop
Evaluation Form 84

III ICS Orientation Workshop Evaluation Form 85

IV Needs Assessment Questions with
International Students 86

V Interview with Non-International Students 88

VI Rating Scale for the Cross-Cultural
Adjustment Concerns 90

VII Data Bank for the Buddy Program 92

VIII Results of Rating Scale Filled Out by
International Students 94

LETTERS CONCERNING THE PRACTICUM

Researcher's letter 96

Director's Response 97

Information to Participants
Consent Forms

99
109

CHAPTER I

General Background and Research Problem

Introduction

As Programmer at the International Centre for Students (ICS), I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students and their families. These activities may include, but are not limited to, cross-cultural workshops, receptions, orientations, social events, and information sessions on topics such as income tax, job search, immigration policies, and issues related to international students.

I assumed the full-time programming position only in December 1994. However, since 1992 I have been coordinating the summer social events and the Fall orientation for new international students. Therefore, the ICS welcomed the creation of the new position since it would provide on-going programming for international students throughout the year.

The International Centre for Students is one of the ten departments under the auspices of Student Affairs. The ICS has a mission to support international students; provide information on international affairs and opportunities;

promote understanding in cross-cultural matters; and encourage internationalization of the University. Hence, the programming position complements the mission of the Centre related to international students.

International students, also referred to as foreign students, are students who are neither Canadian citizens nor permanent residents of Canada (formerly called landed immigrants). International students require student authorizations issued by Immigration Canada, although a small number have ministerial or diplomatic permits (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 1995).

In 1994-1995, 36,711 out of the total 84,871 international students in Canada, attended Canadian universities (CBIE, 1995). They come from virtually every country in the world. According to CBIE (1995), in 1994-1995, the ten biggest sources of international students were, in descending order, Hong Kong, United States, Japan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, People's Republic of China, France, South Korea, Iran, and Malaysia.

As of October 20, 1995, 839 international students from 79 different countries were listed in the University of Manitoba Registry. Of this total enrolment, 328 were graduate

students and 511 were undergraduate students. Also, of 839 students, 163 were new students in September, 1995, from 37 countries (Interact, 1995). Based on the 1995 User's Report, 296 out of the total 821 international students in December, 1995, were females (Institutional Analysis, 1995).

It would be difficult to estimate how many international students use the different services of the Centre. However, all international students come to the Centre to ask for "student status" letter when they renew their student authorization and when they apply for a U.S. visa. Also, one of the Centre's services, the ICS-list has approximately 350 members who are mostly international students. This e-mail information service provides the most up-to-date information about Canada immigration, general concerns, and the ICS activities.

International students face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university because they are from different cultures and backgrounds from the host country. In this light, it becomes imperative for host institutions to facilitate adjustment of international students to Canadian society. Programs have to be developed to help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process. Not

only do programs have to be conducted, they should also be planned with the involvement of international students and other individuals concerned with their education and well-being in a foreign land.

In this practicum, the focus of the study was the design of a participatory planning process in developing a program with international students and their families.

The Present ICS Programs

My practicum took place at the International Centre for Students which is located at 541 University Centre at the University of Manitoba. The ICS provides the following services to international students: a) Volunteer English Practice Program (VEPP), b) Buddy Program, c) Host Family Program, d) WORLD W.I.S.E. (Work, Internship and Study Exchange), e) Immigration Counselling, f) Sharing Cultures (international students give presentations to public schools about their countries of origin), g) Notarial Service, h) Group Programs and Receptions, and i) Cross-Cultural and other informational workshops.

The Centre has one part-time and two full-time staff members who do programming for international students. The

Director is responsible for policy and administration of the ICS. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for advising all international students on government contracts. She is in charge when the Director is absent. The other full-time staff person is the ICS Programmer. The Host Family Coordinator, who is also the VEPP Coordinator, works as a sessional part-time staff from June - September and December - January. The World W.I.S.E. office provides information on international opportunities.

The Centre provides on-going support services to international students on campus from the day they are accepted to the university until their program completion. For this practicum, I only discussed the educational and informational events which I organize.

The ICS generally sponsors four to six monthly programming activities for international students and their families. During the Fall term, the ICS organizes a) a three-day Orientation program, b) reception, c) workshops on job search and cross-cultural adjustment, and d) other educational events, which are usually co-sponsored with other university offices working with students. Activities during the winter include: a) social events such as skating-

tobogganing, indoor Canadian games, Holiday Reception, skiing, International Christmas celebration, and curling; b) informational events such as Job Search workshops and tenancy rights; and c) sessions on Income Tax Information and Immigration. During the spring and summer, a) the Communal Garden Project, b) outdoor social events, and c) trips to the different parts of Manitoba, are undertaken.

To the extent possible, the ICS tries to make its program planning participatory and reflective of the needs of the participants. A great deal of room for participation, creativity, and flexibility is reflected in the planning process of ICS programs. To cite examples, I presented two of the programming activities that use adult education principles in activity planning, the Fall Orientation Program and the Cross-Cultural Adjustment Workshop.

Fall Orientation Program

1. Day one of the three-day annual Orientation Program for new international students starts with "Star Lake." Organized in 1994, "Star Lake" is an intercultural experience designed to bring together international students, staff, and Canadians. This program gives

participants an opportunity to learn about the values and customs of different cultures. While the Canadians will learn about customs from around the world, new international students will get an opportunity to learn about the Canadian way of life.

2. Day two of the Orientation provides information about the academic system and student support services on campus. A social event is held in the evening, where new international students meet returning internationals and the Centre's volunteers such as the Host Families, VEPP partners, and orientation volunteers.
3. Day three of the Orientation introduces students to consumerism in Canada, and provides them an opportunity to see the city through a guided tour of the Legislative building, the Forks Market, and Portage Place. A movie about the history of the province and an evening get-together mark the end of the three-day Orientation.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment Workshop

The Cross-Cultural Adjustment Workshop is held twice a year-- during the fall and spring. Five international students are invited to share their experiences living in

Canada and a Canadian also shares his/her overseas experience. After the presentation, facilitators (individuals who have a cross-cultural experience) lead small group discussions which focus on some guiding questions related to cross-cultural adjustment. The evening ends with sharing of interesting highlights discussed by the small groups, and a wrap up.

The three-day Orientation Program and the Cross-Cultural Adjustment workshop involve not only program participants in the planning process, but also other university staff and community volunteers who participate in programs related to international students. For both events, planning committees composed of returning international students, staff members, concerned Centre staff, and community volunteers who work with international students, are formed to design and evaluate the programs. Planning the next event always builds on the results of the formal and informal evaluations conducted for the programs.

The Problem

All the educational and programming events previously mentioned are held one to three times a year. While there is a variety of activities offered throughout the year, there is

really no program which offers continuing support to new international students in cross-cultural adjustment. Furthermore, there is no cross-cultural adjustment program which is directly offered by students to fellow students.

In September, 1995, the ICS started the Buddy Program which was conceived to help new international students during their first few weeks on campus in areas such as a) registration, b) accommodation, c) transportation, d) shopping, e) banking, f) use of the library, g) use of the computer, and h) editing paper. (Refer to Appendix I for the Buddy Program Application Form). New students who were interested in having a buddy and Canadian and returning international students who liked to help new international students, filled out the Buddy Form. Every time the program was explained to new international students, I pointed out that "buddy" means a friend whom they could trust. While the term is understood by international students when it was first explained to them, it may be necessary to consider whether this is the appropriate word to use. However, for purposes of this practicum, I used the same word.

I matched pairs based on the needs identified by the new international student and the type of assistance that could be

provided by the prospective buddy. Meetings were informal and held at the Centre or at any convenient place arranged by the pairs. While the program is primarily for new international students, returning international students who still needed help were also included in the target group.

The program seemed to be filling the needs of new international students (based on comments from the participants); however, the program as initially conceived had flaws. The immediate need to help new international students "settle" in Canada during the first few weeks after classes started in September, 1995, did not leave much room to plan the Buddy Program. Unlike most of the ICS programming activities, it was established without the participation of students. Also, it had no clear guidelines for matching of Buddies and international students, it had no provision to meet the cross-cultural needs of students beyond the first few weeks of classes, and it had no mechanism to receive feedback from participants and evaluate the program. However, the program had great potential for helping international students; therefore, my practicum addressed these gaps by developing a Buddy Program that is participatory, continuous, and reflective of the needs of international students.

Objectives

The objectives of this practicum were:

1. To identify some of the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students at the University of Manitoba.
2. To design and implement the Buddy Program that will address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students.
3. To assess the results of the Buddy Program that was developed to address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations to the study. As a Programmer who works at the Centre, the results of the study could be biased. Since I have been working with international students for the past five years, my observations and interpretations of the situation could be subjective. When I interviewed students, they could have seen me as a staff member, hence, this could have influenced their answers to my questions. Also, the small sample of the population studied does not allow me to suggest that the findings were representative of the concerns

of most international students at the University of Manitoba.

Another limitation of the study is that it is primarily focussed on the effect of the Buddy Program on international students. The involvement of the Buddies and the impact of the Buddy Program on them has not been considered, a topic which can be an interesting subject for future research.

Significance of the Study

As a staff member at the International Centre for Students providing informational and educational activities for international students, I greatly improved my knowledge and skills in delivering programs. As an international student myself, I gained a better understanding of their cultures and values, which are essential in developing programs for them. Finally, as an adult educator, the practicum provided me a deeper appreciation of the learning experiences that occurred with the implementation of this program. I believe that the reflective learning experience that I went through in this study could be of assistance to other adult educators in the field and to individuals involved in providing services to international students.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature and Existing Literature

Introduction

This chapter will include a review of literature as it pertains to concepts related to cross-cultural adjustment of international students. As well, it will be a review of the experiences of educational institutions which have implemented peer assistance or buddy programs to address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students. Finally, the last section of the chapter will present theoretical and adult education concepts related to a participatory program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Discussion

International students undergo a period of adjustment when they enter into a new culture. Some authors (Lee, Abd-Ella, and Burks, 1981) indicate that the common concerns reported by international students from developing countries were language difficulties, financial problems, adjustment to a new educational system, social and cultural adjustment, and

relevance of academic programs.

The focus of this study was the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties faced by international students at the University of Manitoba. Cross-cultural difficulties refer to personal or social problems related to adaptation of international students to the Canadian way of life such as the climate, food, housing, use of campus facilities such as computers and libraries, knowledge of Winnipeg, and friendship with Canadians.

Adjustment has been defined by Berry (1976) as the degree to which one feels congruent with and in harmony with the environment. Students' adjustment should be of concern to host institutions because foreign students are more likely to have positive academic and non-academic experiences if they enjoy a satisfying contact with the host community (Hull, 1981; Mickle, 1984). The importance of social support has also been documented previously (Church, 1982; Ying and Liese, 1990). Support can be provided in many ways: through contact with international offices on campus that deal with international students, with ethnic social groups, host families and other groups in the community, and students from host country.

Adaptation is greatly facilitated when the new settlers have access to networks of social support. These networks are usually face-to-face primary relationships that provide emotional reassurance and social support to the individual (Coelho, Yuan and Ahmed, 1980). Studies show that support can come both from fellow nationals and people from the host country. Most research in this area has shown that social support is important to international students, especially at the early stages of their adjustment. Ethnic social networks have been found to be beneficial for psychological well-being because they provide a sense of security and facilitate the transition, particularly at the initial stages (Arnold, 1967; Chandra, 1974; Harding and Looney, 1977; Hendricks and Skinner, 1977; Kang, 1972; Kuo and Tsai, 1986; Spaulding & Coelho, 1980; Ying and Liese, 1991; and Zheng and Berry, 1991). In his study of overseas relocation, Fontaine (1986) maintains that although the ability to form new relationships nearby is vital for the student, continuation of old ties also lends comfort and stability while the student is coping with this major transition. Fellow nationals, according to Coelho, Yuan, and Ahmed (1980) and Klein (1971), provide an important buffer against initial cultural difficulties of international

students. Even for problems where university offices would have been helpful, Pedersen (1975) discovered that co-country persons were the most frequently sought out sources of help for personal problems.

While a support network that consists primarily of country nationals has proven beneficial to international students, this may insulate them from fostering long-term adjustment in the host country (Amarasinghan, 1980; Hull, 1978; Klineberg, 1970, 1980; and Ying and Liese, 1994). Hull (1981) indicates that foreign students who mix with people from the host country report greater satisfaction than do students who are withdrawn into their own national or ethnic groups. The study of Surdam and Collins (1994) and Ying (1994) showed that those international students who attempted to connect with Americans reported better adjustment. Finally, Ingram (1985) reported that the impact of unsuccessful or successful experiences of international students will be equally felt in both the sending and host countries.

It is then important for host institutions to plan and implement support services and program activities that will provide a meaningful experience and respond to the needs of

international students. The academic and personal life stresses of international students can be lessened if university staff provide cultural orientations, peer support programs, English classes, and programs that can help mature international students ease into a strange and sometimes bewildering environment (Huntley, 1993).

Quintrell and Wildwood (1994) did a study on the influence of a peer-pairing program. They reported that a structured peer-support program between host and international students had beneficial effects on international students' experience. Participants were also most likely to have had positive experiences during their first year on campus, to have used campus services, and to have experienced gains in language proficiency.

According to Williams (1981), an anticipated advantage of a formalized peer program was to provide continuous and pervasive resource support responsive to whatever concerns might be identified. The author adds that peer helpers would, via their own skills and/or in concert with institutional resources including staff, faculty, and community, assist students to help themselves resolve problems and engage in directed behaviours enhancing their own adaptation.

A study of an experimental peer helping model at the State University of New York at Buffalo, reveals that the program met many needs of the foreign population. Open ended comments received from helpers reinforced that the presence of helpers contributes to students' feelings of security (Williams, 1981).

The Peer Program at the University of British Columbia links newly arrived international students with Canadians on a one-to-one basis shortly after the arrival of new students and for an extended period of time (International House, 1991). In an assessment of the Peer Program for international students at the UBC, Badyal (1994) maintains that the UBC Peer Program has been successful in easing the transition of foreign students into a new culture. Specifically, the program has been instrumental in providing: a) better social adjustment among international students, b) increased knowledge and appreciation of other cultures, c) increased social contact with people from the host culture, d) increased opportunity to speak a foreign language, e) increased international contacts, and f) increased personal growth, among others (Badyal, 1994).

Experiences from the universities mentioned above indicate that careful planning is necessary to implement an

effective peer pairing or buddy program. One of the most important values that the program planner should uphold is the belief that the direct participation of the learner, where possible, is essential in planning any programming activity. Participation is the common thread that weaves through the components of program planning. According to Kowalski (1988), "...participation of learner stems from the beliefs that involvement creates a sense of ownership, helps build motivation, results in more relevant educational experiences, provides a democratic procedure which is valued by most adults, and even influences achievement" (p.103). The more an adult learner can be involved in planning related to his/her own learning activities, the more productive those activities will be and the more likely the desired outcomes will be reached (Freire, 1972; Hebb, 1973; and Norman, 1973). Therefore, careful planning starts with identifying the needs of program participants.

Sork (1989) defines need as a gap between a present state of affairs (psa) and a more desirable state of affairs (dsa). The author's definition implies that a level of standard higher than the existing one has to be met. Assessment of students' perceptions of their needs can provide a realistic

source of information on which to base decisions about service type and quality (Altmaier and Rapport, 1984). Knowles (1980) argues that through interviews or direct questionnaires much useful information regarding the needs of individuals can be obtained from people to whom they bring problems: ministers, social workers, family-service counsellors, etc. The author calls these individuals people in "helping roles." A good way of being responsive to the adults' preferences for active participation is to include them in the needs assessment and objective-setting process.

Objectives should describe the intended results of the program plan and give focus and direction to the program (Sloane-Seale, 1994). It is essential for the students to participate in the objective-setting process because participation increases their understanding of and commitment to achieving the objectives. Their participation also increases their motivation to receive the expected benefits of achieving the objectives, enables them to use the objectives to guide their own learning efforts, allows various activities to achieve the objectives, and allows learners to assess their own learning process (Knox, 1986).

In developing and implementing a program, one cannot anticipate the whole in advance. There is a need to provide a mechanism for revision as planning goes along (Sloane-Seale, 1994). Evaluation is a process of examining certain objects and events in the light of a specific value standard for the purpose of making adaptive decisions (Paulson, 1970).

There is no one best method of evaluation; however, the situation plays a crucial role in defining one's evaluation framework. While there is no one best method of evaluation, certain activities are necessary to undertake an evaluation. What is important is for evaluation to be consistent with the program theory and philosophy of the stakeholder. Lindeman (1961) points toward a continuing process of evaluating experiences where experience is first of all, doing something; second, doing something that makes a difference; then knowing what difference it makes.

Evaluation is also an art (Cronbach, 1982). It is a process of understanding, analysing, and interpreting data. All these skills involve the importance of critical thinking and reasoning, relating well with people, using available resources, and communicating effectively the results of evaluation. Evaluation is a cyclical process. It offers an

understanding of the relationships of the means and end to an activity and an analysis of how outcomes of an evaluation help make better decisions for the program participants.

This chapter underscored the theoretical underpinnings of a participatory program planning, the cross-cultural adjustment concepts, and the experiences of other institutions on the program. It is clear from the discussion that any plan to address the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students should consider their participation in identifying their needs and designing a program that will meet these needs.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

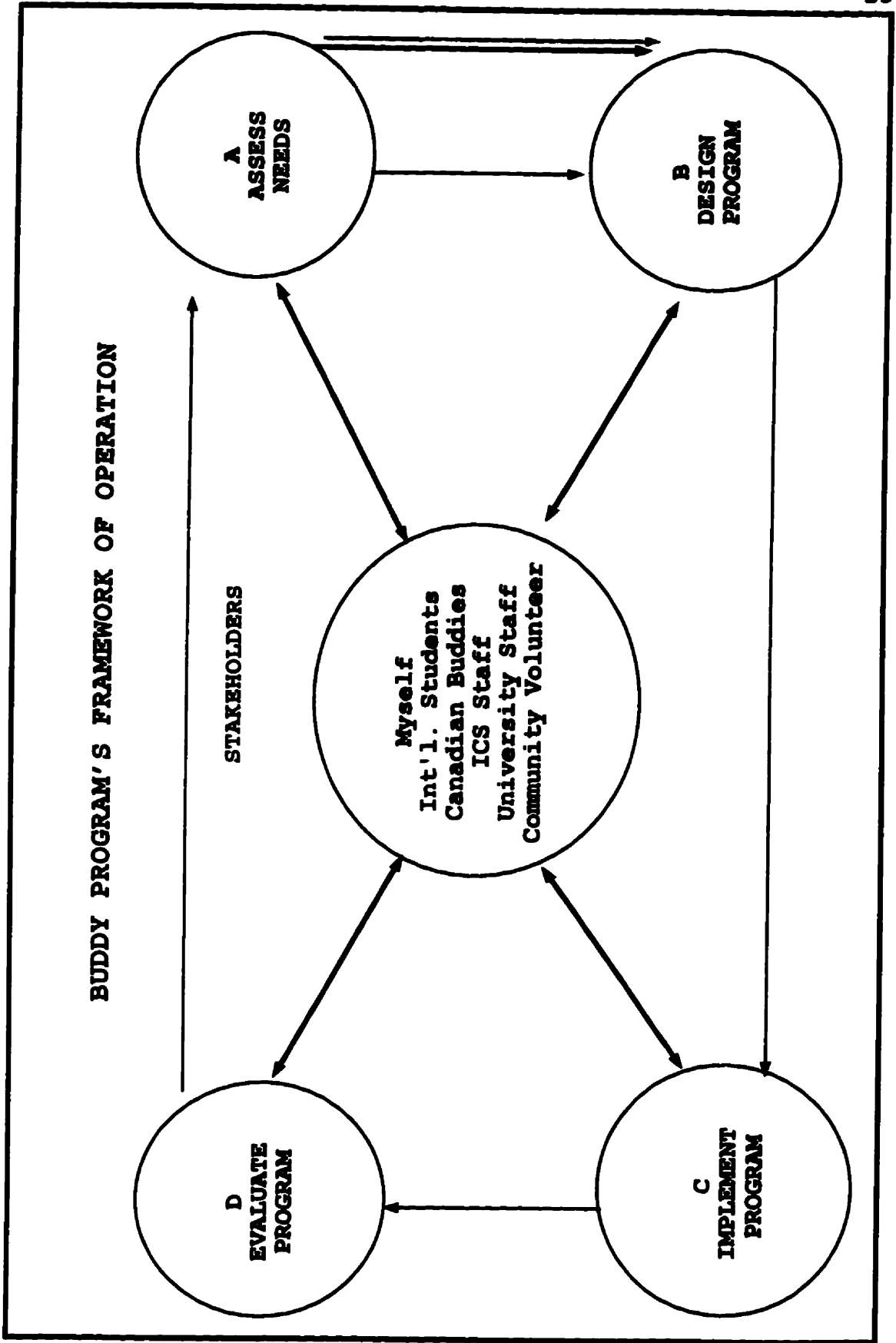
Introduction

The background information, objectives of the practicum, the theoretical concepts on cross-cultural adjustment and program planning have been presented in the previous chapters. The present chapter will now describe how the objectives of the proposal were met. Specifically, the role of the stakeholders and the components of a participatory program planning such as: a) needs assessment, b) design, c) implementation, and d) evaluation, will be presented.

In my study, stakeholders are individuals who are interested in the academic and personal achievements of international students at the University of Manitoba. For this practicum representative stakeholders include a) myself, b) four new and four returning international students (those who have been here on campus for a while), c) four Canadian students, d) one ICS staff member, e) one university language teacher who teaches English to international students, and f) one community volunteer. Of the fifteen stakeholders, there

were ten females and five males. These individuals have been chosen because of their interest in the well-being of international students and their involvement in the activities at the Centre.

The following diagram shows the program's framework of operation.



A. Assess Needs

For this practicum, assessing the needs for the Buddy Program was conducted by using materials and information currently available and by gathering information from the stakeholders.

1. Using available resources and information
 - a. Results of the Cross-Cultural Workshop conducted by the Centre on November 12, 1995, showed that international students experience cross-cultural difficulties. As indicated in the Cross-Cultural Evaluation Form (refer to Appendix II), the participants suggested that future topics for discussion should include: international students and their adjustment to the Canadian educational system, cross-cultural communication, body language differences among cultures, stress management on campus, and others.
 - b. Results of the Orientation evaluation conducted in the Fall, 1995, indicated that new international students would like more assistance in learning about campus facilities and the academic system. Refer to Appendix III for a sample of the

Orientation evaluation result.

- c. Before I became a Programmer in December, 1994, I conducted summer programming activities for international students and their families. Students asked me why these activities were not on-going throughout the year.
- d. Through my discussions with other ICS staff members, I learned that provision of continuing social support is a concern that is always brought to their attention by international students.

2. Gathering information from stakeholders

- a. International students were interviewed to determine their cross-cultural adjustment concerns. See Appendix IV for the needs assessment interview questions.
- b. International students were asked to fill out the rating scale on the cross-cultural adjustment concerns after their interview. Refer to Appendix VI for the rating scale. The answers determined the students' knowledge of the areas of adjustment mentioned in the Buddy Program Application Form (Appendix I). The same form was used to assess the

effect of the Buddy Program approximately three months after the program started. This time frame gave the pairs enough time to discuss cross-cultural concerns.

- c. Non-international students (Canadian students, ICS Staff, an English teacher, and a community volunteer) were interviewed to determine their perceptions about the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and suggest recommendations for programs or services to address these concerns. See Appendix V for the interview with non-international students.

B. Design the Buddy Program

Once the needs of the participants were identified, the Buddy Program was designed. Refer to program implementation of the Buddy Program on pages 30 - 32 for details.

How objectives of the Buddy Program were met

Objective #1

To match newly-arrived international students at the University of Manitoba with experienced students/individuals.

This objective was measured by the following data which were obtained from the Buddy Program Application

Form:

- a. Number of new international students involved in the program.
- b. Number of returning international students who volunteered as buddies.
- c. Number of Canadian students who volunteered as buddies.
- d. Number of community volunteers or university staff who volunteered as buddies.

Objective #2

To help international students adjust to the Canadian culture and way of life.

From the Buddy Program Application Form, the following were determined:

- a. Areas of adjustment where international students needed assistance and where the buddies helped as obtained from the Buddy Program Application Form. Examples of assistance frequently asked by new international students when the Buddy Program was first introduced in September, 1995, included asking information on:
 - accommodation
 - shopping
 - registration
 - use of the libraries
 - use of computers
 - conversational English

- Canadian culture

- b. Number of meetings held with the international students and the buddies. Example: hourly meeting per week.

Objective #3

To involve the different stakeholders in planning and implementing the Buddy Program.

This objective was measured by determining the:

- a. Number of new and returning international students in the program determined from the International Students Data Bank Form (Refer to Appendix VII). The data bank for the participants provided basic identifying information about them (name, address, telephone number, faculty, areas of concerns, etc.).
- b. Number of community volunteers involved in the program.
- c. Number of ICS staff involved in the program.
- d. Number of university staff involved in the program.

C. Implement the Buddy Program

1. Developed criteria for matching - once the application forms had been collected from the

international students and the buddies, matching pairs was done with the help of selected buddies and returning international students. These stakeholders also helped develop the posters and advertise the Buddy Program. The criteria for matching were based, to the extent possible, on the following:

- a. The needs identified by the international students (e.g. assistance in using the libraries or computers) were matched with the skills or interest mentioned by the buddy in the application form (e.g. knowledge of the libraries and computer skills).
 - b. Graduate and undergraduate international students were matched with buddies from the same program level.
 - c. The pairs should be from the same faculty or field of study.
 - d. Time commitment of both participants. For example, students needing a shorter term of assistance (e.g. for information on registration, accommodation, shopping, etc.) were matched with buddies who volunteered for only a few weeks.
2. Developed posters and brochures - once criteria for matching international students and buddies had been developed, posters were designed at the Centre.

3. Advertised program -advertising the program was done by:
 - a. Sending posters and letters explaining the program to international student groups on campus such as the Chinese Scholars and Students' Association, Malaysian-Singaporean Students' Association, African Students' Association, Indian Students' Association, Libyan Students' Association, etc.
 - b. Sending an e-mail to the ICS-List.
 - c. Sending posters and letters to faculties and departments.
 - d. Having paid advertisement in the Manitoban, the students' newspaper.
4. Hold an hour information meeting for the Buddies and international students - the meeting provided the history, and rationale of the program and clarified expectations on the part of the Centre staff, the Buddies, and international students. The meeting was held two weeks after the program started. The participants were asked to inform the Centre if problems such as discontinuity of meetings, and unavailability of space for meetings occurred.

D. Evaluate the Buddy Program

The three levels of program assessment on the Buddy

Program were:

1. Needs identification - conducted at the beginning of program as indicated in Appendices IV and V and as discussed on pages 26 - 28.
2. Formative - conducted as the program progressed. This was done to ensure that concerns of participants were addressed as early as possible.
 - a. Followed up with the pairs - the Centre staff, Buddies, and international students who helped matched the participants called each of the pairs after a month to see how the program was doing. The following questions were asked:
 - On average, how often and how long did you meet your partner?
 - Did you have continuity in your contact?
 - What did you discuss?
 - So far, did you encounter any problems?
 - Did you think the program help you? Explain.
 - Did you have suggestions to improve the program?
 - b. A report for each pair was prepared after the follow up indicating the status of program

involvement as follows:

- pair met regularly (depended on the agreed meeting schedule of the pair. E.g. weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.)
- pair did meet regularly based on their agreed schedule.
- pair had not met since the information meeting.

The answers to the above questions were collated and analysed in the next chapter.

3. From the Buddy Program Application Form (Appendix I) and the brief report prepared for each pair during the follow up (see 2b above), the following questions were answered approximately three months after the program started. Answers were later analysed and compared vis-a-vis the data obtained when the program started.
 - a. How many pairs were matched?
 - b. How many international students had continuous contact with their buddies?
 - c. Using the Buddy Application form, in what areas of adjustment did the buddies help international students?
 - d. Other than those indicated on the forms, what new areas of assistance were asked by international students from their Buddies?

- e. Other than those indicated on the forms, what new areas of assistance were offered by buddies to international students?
4. Also, international students who participated in the program filled out the rating scale on the cross-cultural adjustment concerns three months after the program started. Refer to Appendix V. The answers of each student for each of the adjustment concerns were tabulated and compared with the answers obtained during the needs assessment (refer to Appendix VIII and the next chapter). The answers showed that there was an improvement in the cross-cultural adjustment of international students as a result of their participation in the Buddy Program.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Data

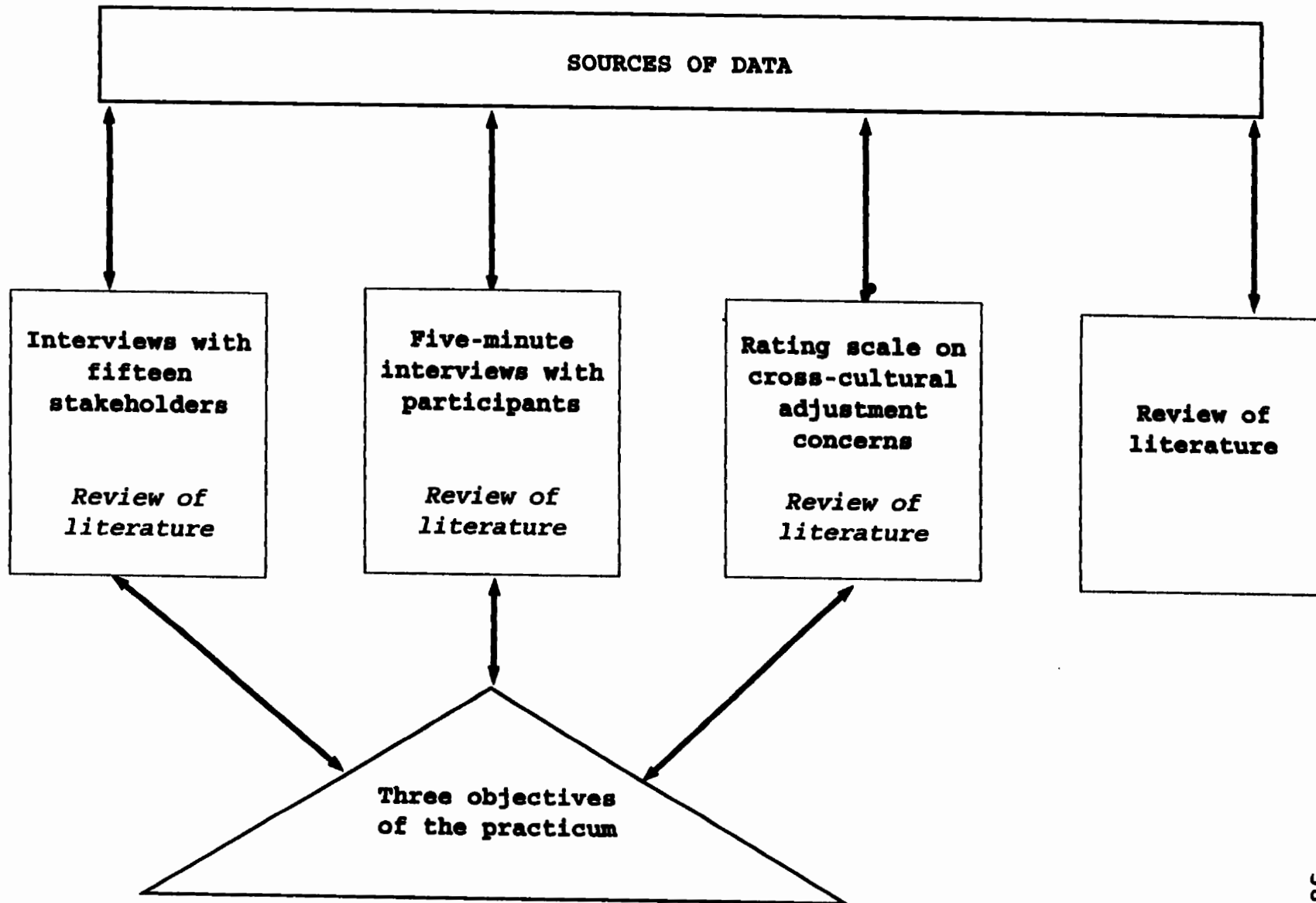
Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss data derived from the following sources: a) interviews with fifteen different stakeholders, which include new and returning international students, buddies, ICS staff, an English language teacher, and a community volunteer; b) the five-minute interviews with program participants; c) the rating scale on the cross-cultural adjustment concerns filled out by international students before and after their involvement with the program; and d) the review of literature which either confirms or negates the data.

The data gathered from the first three sources will be presented by examining and discussing them against the three objectives set out at the beginning of the practicum. For the fourth source of data, the review of literature, no separate section will be devoted to this as it is interspersed in the discussion of the first three sources. As well, excerpts from interviews conducted with the different stakeholders are

quoted to substantiate the data.

The following diagram provides the framework for the analysis of data.



Discussion

I. Interviews with Different Stakeholders

Objective #1

To identify some of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus.

Seven of the eight international students interviewed mentioned that the four most common cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks at the University of Manitoba were: a) difficulty in language; b) different academic system; c) loneliness, homesickness, or difficulty in making friends; and 4) living in a new place or culture. This result is supported by Lee, Abd-Ella, and Burks (1981), who also found these areas as the common concerns reported by international students from developing countries.

A. Difficulty in Language

The majority of the international students interviewed underscored the importance of language in their adjustment to the University of Manitoba. Most of them come from countries where English is not the first or the second language. This poses a major adjustment concern because they have to speak English not only in the classroom but in almost all

situations, except when they are in the company of their fellow nationals.

When the students were asked questions about the common difficulties they had in language, they noted pronunciation of English, use of slang, correct grammar, word usage, and phrasing questions as major concerns. A Korean student aptly put it:

Language is a problem because I do not understand people and they do not understand me...and I don't want to talk to people a lot because I know I have this problem. I also don't want to look stupid.

Even for students who seemed to have a good command of English, there was a feeling of insecurity at the beginning. A Brazilian student expressed having a problem with initiating conversation in English for fear that she would not understand what was being said:

Will my English be good enough to understand people?

To international students, adjustment in language does not only mean using the correct grammar and pronunciation. It goes beyond writing acceptable research papers and giving class presentations. It means using English as a spoken, conversation language. An ICS staff member who has been

working with international students for years alluded to this during the interview:

...they know English well, they read newspaper, but they have never spoken it. Many students who come here have never used it to make friends back home, to look for things, and so for them language is a big, big issue. How to understand people who speak quickly, mumble and who use a lot of slang.

Language also means understanding how people communicate.

A German student commented that she had difficulty communicating with Canadians:

One thing I have to learn here was formulating or "beating around the bush kind of matter," not putting things in a straightforward manner, but like putting more things in a question, like could we do this? could you please? Back home, we have more of an imperative kind of saying things.

This is one of the surprising findings of the study. While this German student speaks perfect English, she found it difficult to understand how questions were phrased because she could not communicate in English as it is spoken in the Canadian society. It appears that speaking English fluently does not necessarily mean understanding and using it the way a native English speaker does.

When all four Buddies were interviewed, they also

confirmed that language is one of the major cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus. This is consistent with the study of Quintrell and Wildwood (1994) which identified language problems as one of the main concerns of international students. The Buddies indicated that if international students are not fluent in English or if they are not confident in their conversational language skills, then they are going to have a hard time.

B. Different Academic System

The second cross-cultural adjustment concern mentioned by the majority of international students (seven out of eight) was the different academic system. Aspects of academic system included interaction with professors, big classes and lecture halls, grading system, finding things on campus, eating in classroom, and reading and writing assignment.

There were many aspects of academic life that looked different to many international students. A Kenyan student provided a typical description of what new international students felt during their first few weeks on campus:

I find it really weird. First, you go to class, some people are bringing their coffee and muffins to class. Even the

way they interact with the profs, the profs may be talking and someone at the back will just shout out the concerns or questions they have without let's say putting up their hands or until they are recognized or something like that. And even the profs were also kind of informal in how they approach student...that threw me off guard for sometime.

Similarly, two of the Buddies indicated that getting used to Canadian system of education is an initial problem for new international students because the system here is quite different from any other countries. While all seven international students felt that academic adjustment was a concern at the beginning, the German student appears to be an exception. This is probably not surprising because she was a former exchange student in the United States, hence, she felt more comfortable about the Canadian system of education.

While the majority of the students interviewed seemed to express a feeling of disillusionment and intimidation when they first came, it appears that the longer they stay, the more comfortable they become (Mickle,1985). Many of the international students appeared to have adjusted to the system after sometime. This pattern was echoed by an Iranian student who remarked:

I try to adjust myself somehow... sometimes by working hard, talking more with Canadian students, with students who have more experience... by working harder and trying to get to know the system.

C. Making Friends

Four of the international students mentioned making friends as another concern. Because of the absence of friends or family members, oftentimes, they get lonely and homesick. The stresses of adjusting to an entirely new academic system and cultural environment are compounded by the painful feelings of loss (Coelho and Ahmed, 1982). In many of the countries where international students come from, the family has been the constant source of support. When they study overseas, all those familiar faces such as immediate and extended family members, friends, and long-time acquaintances that international students readily turned to back home are no longer around. Therefore, they try to build new relationships.

Five of the students interviewed appeared to have established successful friendships with either their host families, buddies, Canadian classmates, or other international students. The studies of Hull (1981) and Klineberg (1980) agree with this finding which show that relationships with people appear to have a dominant role in determining the

degree of satisfaction foreign students will have overseas. While at the university, international students try to establish relationships with Canadians; however, not all of them are successful. This gives rise to feelings of isolation and loneliness because of the inability to establish relationships with nationals of the host country. As the Korean student explained:

...I still do not have a lot of friends... I like to have friends, but if there is no reply, I can't do it...it's not like a one-way dance.

D. Adjusting to a New Culture or Place

Finally, adjusting to a new culture or place can be intimidating according to three international students, an ICS staff, a community volunteer and a buddy. The aspects of new culture reported by students included food, dress, and use of telephone, banking, and bus systems. For example, a Malaysian student reported that her eating habits changed when she came to Canada:

Back home we were used to eating home cooked food...here, I also realize that I eat a lot of fast food stuff because it's faster and you don't have to waste time.

All the stakeholders identified similar major cross-cultural adjustment concerns for international students when they first came. While there were some minor variations, it is probably not surprising that there are many commonalities in the cross-cultural adjustment concerns expressed by eight international students and the other seven stakeholders. One possible explanation of this result is that the latter have been involved with many ICS programs for international students and have interacted with them on many occasions.

II. The Five-Minute Interviews with Participants

Objective #2

To design and implement a Buddy Program that will address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students.

As presented in Objective 1, the Buddy Program appears to have achieved its objectives. However, in order to fully substantiate the impact of the program, it is now necessary to examine how it was designed and implemented. While the details of the design and implementation of the Buddy Program have already been discussed in Chapter III, Methodology, it is crucial to discuss the features of the program which helped in addressing the gaps identified at the beginning of this practicum. This will be done by presenting the results of the

five-minute interviews with participants. A five-minute interview with fifteen participants was held to follow up concerns identified. Of the fifteen international students who were interviewed, there were nine females and six males. The interviews, which included six questions, lasted from five to ten minutes. As well, the process used in designing and implementing a Buddy Program will be analysed.

1. On average, how often and how long did you meet your partner?

The first question asked about the length and frequency of meetings between the buddies and international students. Eight out of fifteen students mentioned that they met once a week from one-to-one-and-a-half hours. Three met once or twice a month for about two hours; another one met once a month; and, one pair called each other on the basis of need. Two students had an unusual experience. The Indian student who needed help with computers met her buddy once (and only for thirty minutes) because the latter left Canada for a holiday. Also, since the Indian student only needed help in opening a Unix account, which the buddy is not familiar with, no further communication between the two took place. The other international student had two buddies. One helped him with

computers, but after three meetings, they stopped seeing each other. The other buddy was a classmate with whom the international student interacted two-to-three days a week.

2. Did you have continuity in your contact?

The second question asked about maintaining a continuous meeting among the pairs. Of the fifteen pairs, thirteen met from three months to almost one year. Two students met once or twice with the buddy and one did not pursue the meeting because of the conflict with class schedule.

3. What did you discuss?

The third question asked about the topics discussed during the meeting. The majority of the students gave the following answers: a) culture of Canada and that of the student's (twelve out of fifteen); b) English language, pronunciation (six out of fifteen); c) information about facilities and offices on campus (seven out of fifteen); d) tips on making friends (one out of fifteen); and e) information about the city (one out of fifteen).

4. Did you encounter any problem?

With respect to problems encountered in the course of their participation in the program, the following are the responses of the fifteen students: a) nothing (ten out of

fifteen), b)being shy at the beginning of the interaction (two out of fifteen), c)conflicting schedule or opposite interest of the pair(two out of fifteen), and d)not getting much help from the buddy (one out of fifteen). As for the last reason, I thought the criteria for pair matching was overlooked at the beginning of the program because it was assumed that since the buddy works with computers, then she would be able to help the student; however, given the technical nature of the student's request about computers, the buddy was unable to help.

5. Did you think the program help you?

The participants repeated their responses to question #3 in answering this question. The answers to question #3 were also an indication of the benefits derived by international students from the program.

6. Did you have suggestions to improve the program?

The last questions asked for suggestions to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program and provide recommendations where necessary. Through these suggestions, program plans were revised (Sloane-Seale, 1994). For example, the following were some of the suggestions of the participants which should be considered in planning the next buddy program:

a) the criteria for matching (by faculty, age, interest, etc.)

buddies and international students and the length of time commitment to the program should be revisited to meet the needs of most of the participants; b) the Centre has to follow up the pairs during the first month of operation to see whether they are meeting regularly, or see whether the pairs are comfortable with each other; c) the Centre has to organize social activities where participants can meet each other and exchange experiences during the initial months; d) the Centre needs to link the participants with other cultural groups on campus; and e) buddies should know offices on campus where students can be referred for additional services if necessary.

The results appear to indicate that the frequency, length of meetings, and presence of continuous meetings depend on the type of assistance sought by international students from their buddies. For example, asking for help with the use of computers and libraries requires short-term assistance. However, getting to know Canadian culture, establishing friendship, and practising English requires longer interaction between the two parties. As well, the results indicate that international students who require the second type of assistance are much more likely to develop interactive friendship with their buddies.

The Process Used in Implementing and Designing the Buddy
Program

As mentioned in Chapter I, there were flaws in the initial Buddy Program that was developed. Before the present Buddy Program was implemented, there was no program at the Centre which offered continuing support to international students in cross-cultural adjustment, and there was no program in cross-cultural adjustment which was offered by students to fellow students. Similarly, while there were initial attempts to help international students during their first few weeks on campus, these were short-term and non-participatory.

The results of the Buddy Program support a view that designing and implementing a continuing and participatory Buddy Program for international students entail needs assessment, implementation, and evaluation. This is consistent with the studies of Freire (1972), Knowles (1980), and Kowalski (1988), theorists in the field of adult education, who all believe that program planning involves participation of learners in defining their needs, planning their learning experiences, and evaluating learning processes.

A. Needs Assessment

At the outset of planning for the Buddy program, needs assessment was conducted to determine whether there was a need for this activity at the Centre. The major stakeholders in the adjustment process of international students were interviewed. It is interesting to note that when non-international students (four buddies, an ICS staff, an English teacher and a community volunteer) were asked about who should be involved in developing programs for international students, they all suggested that there is a need for a broad representation of people who are concerned with the welfare of international students. This view of the stakeholders validated the rationale to involve the key players in the adjustment process of international students which was set forth at the beginning of the practicum. As Knowles (1980) has noted, individuals who provide support in the learning experience of adults should be included in needs identification and planning process.

The semi-structured questions used during the needs assessment and the follow-up interviews enabled the stakeholders to discuss their perceptions and ideas about the variety of issues related to the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The questions (seven for international

students and eight for non-international students) allowed for an interactive discussion between myself and the participants.

B. Implementation

During the implementation stage, steps were built in to make the Buddy Program not only participatory but continuing as well. Participation of students was seen in their attendance to Buddy information meetings and social gatherings where experiences of participants were shared and relevant issues discussed. A student from Hongkong stated:

...many of my questions about the program were answered during the information meeting.

During the information meeting, the students realized that there were other students who were experiencing similar cross-cultural adjustment concerns. They also became aware that the program could help them not only with academic adjustment but with social and cross-cultural growth as well.

C. Evaluation

Finally, during the last phase of the program, the participants had the opportunity to assess the result of the program by critically examining the rating after their involvement with the program. The discussion of the results of the rating scale are found in the following pages. During the

follow-up interviews, it appeared that the buddies helped international students in most of the areas mentioned in the Buddy Program Application form. However, there was one form of assistance which was not included in the list when the program was initially conceived in September, 1995, but which concerned most of the students--understanding the Canadian culture. Also, information about the city, shopping places for good but cheap winter clothes and other basic necessities, and anything that would help during their initial stay were brought up during the conversation with buddies.

The majority of the buddies were Canadian students, four were returning international students (experienced international students who had been here for a while), two were staff persons, and four were community volunteers.

The continuing interactions (needs assessment interview, information meeting, follow-up interview, and filling out the rating scale) provided a mechanism whereby participants identified their adjustment concerns, analysed the factors affecting them, and provided suggestions on how to deal with them. Adult educators such as Cronbach (1982) and Lindeman (1961) agree with this view when they suggest that evaluation is a cyclical process which is aimed at improving the learning

experience.

III. Rating Scale on the Cross-Cultural Adjustment Concerns Filled Out by International Students Before and After Their Involvement with the Program

Objective #3

To assess the results of the Buddy Program that was developed to address the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students.

The responses to the interviews, which have already been presented, and the rating scale filled out by international students after their involvement with the Buddy Program, showed that the program has had an overall favourable impact on their adjustment in the university. With respect to the rating scale, the students were asked to rate their cross-cultural adjustment using the following concerns: a) familiarity with Winnipeg; b) knowledge of climate, housing, food, and clothing; c) relationship with Canadians; d) knowledge of campus facilities such as the libraries and computers; e) understanding of the academic system; f) understanding Canadian culture; and g) facility with English. The data will be presented by discussing the general responses to the seven concerns (see Appendix V for the Rating Scale on the Cross-Cultural Adjustment Concerns of International Students Before and After their Involvement with the Buddy

Program). For purposes of presentation, responses to related adjustment concerns have been summarized.

1. Familiarity with Winnipeg

The responses to the first concern indicated that the majority of the students (eleven out of fourteen) showed that Buddies helped international students become familiar with Winnipeg. Refer to Appendix VIII. In fact, nine students who rated themselves "1" ("1" means not at all, "3" means moderately, and "5" means fully) before joining the program rated "3 or 4" after joining the program. However, while most of the students discussed this adjustment concern with their buddies, there were some exceptions. Three students rated themselves "3" before and after the program. When asked about the rating, the students commented that they did not fully discuss this concern with their buddies. I could only surmise that this category was no longer a concern to the students because previous contacts had introduced them to the city. In this case, one student lives with a fellow national and another one with her husband who has been here for the past two years.

2. Knowledge about Climate, Housing, Food, and Clothing

The second question asked how the program helped students

improve their knowledge about Winnipeg's climate, housing, food, and clothing. As in the first concern, most of the students rated themselves "3 or 4" after their involvement with the program from a low of "1 or 2" before joining the program. In particular, the information provided by buddies to students regarding the Winnipeg weather was most helpful. However, of all the seven concerns, it appears that this is the area where most students (# 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 12) reported that they did not consider information about housing, food, and clothing as a major adjustment concern. I would like to think that most of them had already prior knowledge of these concerns before joining the program.

3. Relationship with Canadians

The third concern, relationship with Canadians, appeared to be the area where the program created the greatest impact. Thirteen students reported a score of "3 or 4." Even during the course of the interviews, many of the students indicated that they have developed personal and emotional involvement with their buddies. The comment below by two Chinese graduate students is representative of the responses of international students whose participation in the program lasted for months.

My buddy helped me a lot...we have become good friends, and I could always ask my buddy if I had any problems... We had gone out together-- watched movies, attended cultural programs. I even spent Christmas at her place...I really love my buddy and there is no substitute for that.

These students indicated that the program offered them continuing social and emotional support throughout the year. As noted at the beginning of the practicum report, the program was conceived and implemented to achieve that objective.

Five of the students indicated that their interactions with their buddies had greatly helped them in their social and personal growth. As mentioned previously, the studies of Badyal (1994), Quintrell and Wildwood (1994), and Williams (1981) underscored the importance of the Peer Program among international students in enhancing their adaptation into the new culture.

4. Knowledge of Campus Facilities

Similarly, the responses to the use of campus facilities such as computers and libraries, reflected the same pattern of responses. What is worth noting is that most of the students (# 2, 4, 6, and 12) who indicated that they did not consider information about housing, food, and clothing relevant also

provided a similar response when asked about the use of campus facilities. Since I know these students, it appears to me that some of them were hosted by Canadian families when they first came. Also, some of the students live with their relatives and fellow nationals who have been here for a while; hence, these individuals in "helping roles" (Knowles, 1980) must have oriented them about the living condition in the city. I would also like to believe that these students joined the program with a very specific purpose in mind in terms of the assistance to be provided by the buddy. Therefore, in their interactions with the buddy, only those categories which concerned them most were discussed.

5. An Understanding of the Academic System

For this concern, understanding of the academic system, the majority of the students rated their adjustment as "3 or 4." In contrast to the majority, the German student's (# 11) rating for both categories did not change as a result of her participation with the program. As already mentioned, the fact that she was a former exchange student in the United States provided her a good knowledge base about the academic system in North America.

6. An Understanding of the Canadian Culture

Eight students who rated themselves "1" and "2" before joining the program gave a rating of "4" and "5" after their involvement with the program; three students reported a score of "3"; two had prior knowledge about the culture; and the German student's score of "2" did not change after her interaction with her buddy.

7. Facility with English

Finally, the majority of the students (10) gave a rating of "4" when asked about their facility with English as a result of their involvement with the program. Again, the exceptions would be an Indian student who joined the program because she needed someone to help her with computers and three other students, which included the German student, who were already fluent in English when they came to Canada.

In summary, it appears that the practicum achieved all the three objectives set forth at the beginning of the research project. With respect to the first objective, the Buddy Program participants identified four major cross-cultural adjustment concerns, which seem to be not totally independent of each other. With respect to the second objective, the feedback received from the participants about

their involvement with the program indicates that the program will become a continuing feature of the Centre to help ease the adjustment of international students into a new environment. As a final comment, it should be noted that the beneficial results of the Buddy Program are being reflected in the continuing interaction of the Buddy Program participants months after their program commitment had formally ended.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

This practicum was undertaken a) to identify some of the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students at the University of Manitoba during their first few weeks on campus; b) to design and implement the Buddy Program that would address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students; and c) to assess the results of the Buddy Program that was developed to address the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of international students. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part of the chapter will provide the findings from the study, and the second part will present the recommendations as a result of my practicum experience.

Discussion

The Buddy Program participants and other stakeholders involved in the study all agree that international students experience cross-cultural adjustment difficulties especially

during their first few weeks on campus. However, the study has shown that there seems to be variations related to the cross-cultural adjustment difficulties experienced by international students when they first arrive.

The variations in adjustment difficulties are clearly manifested in the use of the English language. It appears that students who come from countries where English is commonly used do not have much difficulty in communicating. While these students still worry about the right English pronunciation, accent, and understanding of the Canadian slang and jokes, their facility in speaking English helps them in the settling-in process during the crucial initial months.

From the study, it appears that the length of stay, openness of the student to the new culture, previous exposure to the North American or Western system of education, and the presence of support network are factors that are helpful in the adjustment process of international students. However, it is not the intent of this study to look at other socio-cultural variables that might negatively or positively affect the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. For example, the question of racism did not surface at this point in time. Since the questions on the cross-cultural concerns

were asked a few weeks after international students arrived in Winnipeg, students were still in the stage of excitement and interest. However, racism as a cross-cultural adjustment concern may come in at a later stage.

Findings from the study indicate that the support network comes from fellow nationals, buddies, Canadian friends, host families, language partners, staff from the Centre, and members of the church and cultural groups on campus and in the greater community. In particular, those who had buddies either from the International Centre for Students or from the departments reported greater ease in adapting to the new culture. Specifically, the Buddy Program helped students in three main areas of adjustment: a) understanding the Canadian culture; b) practising English; and c) using the campus facilities such as computers and libraries. All but two program participants expressed satisfaction with their involvement with the program. They also reported continuous interactions with their buddies for at least three months. While the beneficial effects of the Buddy Program among its participants have been proven in the study, it is now necessary to analyse its impact on my learning experience.

Personal Learning

At the beginning of the practicum report, I stated my personal learning objectives regarding the conduct of this study. The first and second objectives are related to the improvement of my knowledge and skills, and a greater understanding of the values of international students so I could plan better programs. The last objective refers to the acquisition of a reflective learning experience brought about by the study. I will present this section by following this sequence.

Through the interviews with stakeholders, meeting with participants, review of literature, and analysis of the rating scale, I was able to increase my knowledge about the adjustment concerns of international students and the means they use to deal with these problems. From the amount of research involved and the interactions with participants, I gained more insight into the different cultures and values held by international students. This insight strengthened my commitment to provide even better cross-cultural, orientation, and adjustment programs that recognize cultural diversity. I have become more sensitive to the fact that while many international students face adjustment difficulties, their

needs may vary; therefore, programs and services should consider individual or group differences.

Also, while I enjoyed gathering the data, putting them together in a concise and clear manner was a challenge. Trying to include all the data was tempting, but picking out only those that were relevant was equally demanding. My learning in this area was tremendous. Trying to assess the data presented was also a daunting task. Having come originally from a developing country myself, I could easily relate to the experiences of many international students. Hence, I had to guard against my own biases regarding cultural issues, value judgments, and assumptions related to adjustment of international students. I believe this area brings one of the best learning experiences I had in this practicum.

As an educator, I have the responsibility to be critically self-reflective (Cranton, 1994). For example, while assessing the data, I tried to examine my own socio-cultural assumptions about the adjustment of international students, and put them in the right context, then validate them through my interviews, reading and interactions with stakeholders, and finally formulate my conclusion (Mezirow, 1985). For me to be able to arrive at an informed decision about the impact and

future direction of the Buddy Program, I tried to discuss my assumptions, fears, and ideas with my advisor and a classmate who is also doing a practicum. As Cranton (1994) noted, consulting or working with others fosters critical reflection. The series of validations and discussions with them precipitated an awareness of how my socio-cultural perspectives can influence me in planning programs and services for international students. However, the process does not end with critical reflection.

As Schön (1983) emphasizes, an educator can engage in reflection action by reacting to events while engaged in practice and then reflecting on subsequent events. In the case of the Buddy Program, I have used the data from the interviews and literature to question and reflect on my own long-held assumptions about adjustment of international students. After evaluating the data, I used the resulting information to revise the Buddy Program so that it suits the needs of the students.

Since program planning is a cyclical process, the revised program is again tested and evaluated. I believe that being both a reflective and transformative practitioner has been my guide in the exciting journey of undertaking this practicum.

The idea that I am continuously engaging myself in the reflection-action process has made my journey meaningful. If I were to undertake a similar study in the future, I would use the same methodological process and theoretical perspectives that guided me in this research.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Introduction

There are a number of recommendations that evolved out of the results of the practicum and my own learning experience during the course of the study. These would be worthwhile considering if individuals involved in working with international students would like the students to have a relevant and meaningful experience overseas.

Discussion

I will briefly discuss each of the seven recommendations put forth in the study:

1. The need for the continuous participation of international students in designing, implementing, and evaluating programs that directly affect them became very evident during the course of the study. Meetings should be regularly held to gather feedback from students related to the overall progress of the program. For a new initiative such as the Buddy Program these follow-up meetings became crucial in identifying areas for further

improvement and growth. While not all participants can be involved in program planning, a core group of students who represents the interests of the greater majority can be mobilized.

2. Related to the above recommendation, it should be noted that the successful adjustment of international students at the University of Manitoba should be a concern not only of the International Centre for Students but also of all offices on campus that deal with international students. Therefore, the development of a support program for international students should be grounded on the following program criteria:

- a) That the program be holistic. This means each of the major stakeholders should look at the different aspects of the adjustment process of international students. For example, the departments and faculties should develop services or programs that would address academic adjustment concerns of international students, and the International Centre for Students should expand its cross-cultural events and link these with departmental initiatives.

Support services to international students such as the library, counselling office, housing services, health services, student advocacy, and employment services should provide an opportunity for participating in activities and events that bring together international and Canadian students. These activities help create a global ethos or perspective on campus; therefore they should be part of the regular student programming at the university.

- b) That the program be encompassing. This requires involving a broad representation of new and returning international students, Canadian students, and members of student groups, faculties, departments, language centres, and other university support offices.
- c) That the program be continuing. This means relevant information should be provided to new international students even before they arrive and during their stay at the university. Informational materials sent out to students should identify areas (e.g. language, academic, accommodation, etc.) where

students need immediate help upon arrival. Students should be assigned partners or support in areas identified. In other words, there should be a sustained effort to ensure that the academic, social, and personal concerns of international students are being met.

3. All campus personnel dealing with international students should have cross-cultural experience, training on or sensitivity to the needs and concerns of international students. The university has the responsibility to ensure that personnel are cross-culturally competent to work with international students. As one Canadian Buddy put it:

The University invites foreign students to study here and I think if they want to keep the students, they should try to help them adjust or else they will leave and there goes the university's money...I think if you are going to invite people to your home you try to do the best you can to make them feel comfortable and I think the university must really do that...

An international student has a similar remark:

...I believe that if the University of Manitoba gives more attention to international students they will get it

back in the future...students will get a degree, go back home, get good jobs and if they have a good experience at the university, they will talk to people in their own country...this means more contracts, more negotiations. I am trying to say, why don't we think about the long-term relationships...

4. Since international students bring with them a different world view, it is in the best interest of the university as a whole to provide avenues whereby international students can share their cultures and experiences. Their potential as catalyst for internationalization of the campus should be recognized and fully utilized. Better still, the internationalization of the campus should be incorporated into the mandate of the institution.

The presence of international students on campus not only enriches the academic milieu but also helps facilitate awareness, understanding, and acceptance of other cultures. Students, whether from the North and the South, bring global dimension to the university. Specifically, since many of the students at the University of Manitoba come from developing countries, internationalization of the campus should be encouraged by learning from the South. One way of doing this is

through class presentations and student exchanges. Learning then becomes what it should be--a two-way process. There is also as much to learn from the South as from the North.

5. Since the emphasis of this study is on the impact of the Buddy program on international students, it may be necessary to look at the impact of the program on the buddies. As already mentioned, the Buddy Program should be a two-way process where both the international student and the buddy grow in the process of the interactions and the relationship; hence, the benefits of the program on both sides should be explored.
6. The Buddy Program should be expanded to reach as many new international students as possible at the beginning of the first and the second terms (September and January). A system has to be in place so that all international students who are identified as prospective Buddy Program participants get a buddy even before they come to Winnipeg. The Internet can be utilized to serve this purpose.
7. Finally, to ensure that the International Centre for Students is able to implement the Buddy Program

effectively, resources should be available so that it can hire a half-time staff particularly in July to September and December to January. The main responsibility of the staff is to make sure that new international students who need help especially during the crucial months get the support in time. The staff should do the necessary follow-ups with participants, hold meetings, conduct cross-cultural workshops and social events, and initiate linkages with departments and support offices until such time that the student has passed the critical stage in the adjustment process.

I believe that the practicum went well. The Buddy Program appears to have had, and continues to have an impact in the adjustment process of international students at the University of Manitoba. In my opinion, it has made a significant contribution in making the initial months a little bit easier for international students on campus. Some of the friendships that evolved out of the program remain strong and continuing. Two of the Canadian students who left for Japan to teach English in 1996 will meet their buddies in their home countries. When I interviewed one of the buddies, she said:

...now, I will be in the shoes of my international student. I hope my experience with the Buddy Program will help me as I make my own transition to a new environment.

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APPENDIX I

BUDDY PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Appendix I

Where Can We Meet?

International students and their Buddies can meet at the ICS lounge which is open until 10:30pm every day. A study table at the end of the hall is available for meetings. Also, you can leave messages for your Buddy in the "Buddy Box" at the front office.

Application Form for a Buddy

First Name: _____
 Last Name: _____
 Miss _____ Mr. _____ Mrs. _____
 Address: _____
 Postal Code: _____
 Tel.: Home: _____ Office: _____
 Faculty: _____
 Dept/Major: _____

The following are examples of concerns where international students may need assistance. Pls. check where you can help:

Registration _____
 Accommodation _____
 Transportation _____
 Shopping _____
 Banking _____
 Use of the library _____
 Use of the computer _____
 Editing of paper _____
 Pls. specify other(s): _____

Time spent with your Buddy: _____
 Pls. check: 1-2 hrs/week _____
 2+ hrs/week _____
 Pls. specify other time schedule: _____

Cut Here

International Center for Students

BUDDY PROGRAMME

International Ctr for Students
 University of Manitoba
 541 University Centre

ICS MISSION

...support international students at the University of Manitoba and foster awareness and involvement of Canadians in the international community.

ICS SERVICES

- Volunteer English Practice Program
- Group Programmes & Receptions
- Intercultural Programming
- Immigration Counselling
- Speakers' Bureau
- Notarial Service
- Host Family

ICS OFFICE ADDRESS/HOURS

541 University Centre
 Winnipeg, MB.
 R3T 2N2

Phone: (204)474-8501
 Fax: (204)-275-5253

Hours: 8:30am - 4:30pm
 (Monday through Friday)

Application Form for International Students

First Name: _____
 Last Name: _____
 Miss _____
 Mr. _____
 Mrs. _____
 Address: _____

Postal Code: _____
 Home: _____
 Office: _____
 Tel: _____

Nationality: _____
 Faculty: _____
 Dept./Major: _____

Languages (Spoken and Written Fluently): _____

Where would you need help from your Buddy? PIs. check your concerns: _____

- _____ Registration
- _____ Accommodation
- _____ Transportation
- _____ Shopping
- _____ Banking
- _____ Use of the library
- _____ Use of the computer
- _____ Editing paper
- _____ PIs. specify other(s): _____

Cut Here

Who Can Apply?

All newly arrived international students can apply. In some cases international students who have been studying at the University of Manitoba can also apply if they think the programme will help them.

How Long is The Programme?

New international students need assistance most during the two weeks before and after classes start in September and January. After this period, the buddies can determine the frequency of their meetings.

How Can I Apply?

Please fill out the attached Buddy Programme Application Form and submit it to Patricia at the ICS Office 541 University Centre or call her at 474-9506 or send an e-mail to ILAGAN@Bldgmsu.Lan1.Manitoba.CA if you need additional information about the programme.

What is The Buddy Programme?

The Buddy Programme matches newly arrived international students with experienced students/individuals. The programme aims to provide friendly support to international students during their first few weeks on campus and in the city.

Why is it important?

- It helps newly arrived international students cope with their new environment.
- It provides an opportunity for international students to meet new friends and establish contacts.
- It facilitates students' adaptation to the Canadian culture and way of life.
- It provides a friendly source of information for international students about concerns such as registration, accommodation, transportation, shopping, banking, etc.

APPENDIX II

ICS CROSS-CULTURAL WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

Appendix II

**ICS CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT WORKSHOP (Nov. 15, 1995)
EVALUATION FORM**

Instructions: The ICS invites your assessment of the workshop. Please complete and leave the form in the evaluation box.

	A Outstanding	<u>B</u> Very Good	C Good	D Fair	E Poor
1. How do you assess the overall workshop?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. How do you assess the relevance of the workshop?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How do you assess the usefulness of the workshop to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. How do you assess the format of the workshop?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To help facilitate adjustment of international students, I would like to suggest a workshop on the following topics:

Cultural differences
language differences
Body language differences

If we were to hold this workshop again next year, what would you suggest:

Talking about the importance
of body language

Any additional comments:

- Please check:
- International student
 - Canadian student
 - Host family
 - VEPP volunteer
 - Buddy
 - UofM staff
 - Other

WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME!!!

APPENDIX III

ICS ORIENTATION EVALUATION FORM

Appendix III

ICS ORIENTATION EVALUATION

1. Using numbers 1-7 with 1 as the least helpful and ~~7~~⁷ as the most helpful, how do you rate the following orientation sessions (write numbers on spaces provided)?
- A. 4 Canadian Academic System
 B. 7 Group Discussion on the Canadian Academic System
 C. 6 Immigration Policies
 D. 2 Panel Discussion on University Services
 E. 6 Computer Awareness and Tour of Facilities
 F. 6 Tour of the Libraries
 G. _____ Tour of the Physical and Recreation Studies
2. How do you rate the overall Orientation Program (circle answer)?
- Not Helpful 2 3 4 Very Helpful?
 1 (5)
3. What else do you think should have been included in the Orientation?
- It is useful if you could spend more time illustrating computer services in a more detailed manner. Also the trip tour guide to library was not enough to cover things about library system
4. For those who joined the trip to Star Lake on Tuesday, August 28, 1995, how do you rate the event?
- Not Helpful/Not Important Very Important/Very Helpful
 1 2 3 4 5
5. What other suggestions might you have to improve Star Lake for next year?
- _____

APPENDIX IV

NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Appendix IV**Needs Assessment Questions with International Students**

1. Have you encountered cross-cultural adjustment concerns during your first few weeks on campus? If yes, what were your three major cross-cultural adjustment concerns? If no, proceed to question 3.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

2. How did you deal with them?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

3. In general, what do you think are the three most common cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students at the University of Manitoba?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

4. What are three ways in which international students cope with these difficulties?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

5. If you experience any cross-cultural difficulty, where do you go for help?

Why?

6. How would you suggest that these concerns be dealt with by the university?

7. Would you attend sessions designed to help international students?

Yes _____

No _____

APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW WITH NON-INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Appendix V**Interview with Non-International Students (Canadian Students, ICS Staff, an English Teacher, and a Community Volunteer)**

1. What do you think are the three most common cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks at the University of Manitoba?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. How do you think international students deal with these concerns?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. If international students experience any cross-cultural difficulty, where do you think do they go for help?

Why?

- _____

4. List three activities or services which you think ICS can provide to help international students deal with these cross-cultural adjustment difficulties?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. Why is it important that the Centre develop these programs?

6. Who do you think should be involved in developing these programs?

7. How do you think should we prepare individuals who would like to help international students?

8. Do you have other comments about the adjustment of international students on campus?

APPENDIX VI

RATING SCALE FOR THE CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT CONCERNS

Appendix VI

Rating Scale for the Cross-cultural Adjustment Concerns (as Determined from the Needs Assessment and the Buddy Program Application Form) Before and After the Buddy Program

Concerns	Before the Buddy Program					After the Buddy Program				
1. Familiarity with Winnipeg	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knowledge about:										
a. Climate	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Housing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c. Food	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
d. Clothing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3. Relationship with Canadians	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowledge of campus facilities										
a. Use of the library	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Use of the computer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Legend:

1 Not at all

3 Moderately

5 Fully

Appendix VI - continued

5.An understanding of the academic system	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6.An understanding of the Cdn. culture	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
7.Facility with English	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Legend:

1 Not at all

3 Moderately

5 Fully

APPENDIX VII

DATA BANK FOR THE BUDDY PROGRAM

Appendix VII

Data Bank for International Students (Buddy Program)

Name	Tel. #	Address	Faculty Dept/Major	Language (Spoken and Written fluently)	Concerns of an International Student									
					R 1	A 2	T 3	S 4	B 5	L 6	C 7	E 8	CD 9	
1.	H.													
	W.													
2.	H.													
	W.													
3.	H.													
	W.													
4.	H.													
	W.													
5.	H.													
	W.													
6.	H.													
	W.													
7.	H.													
	W.													

Legend: 1 (registration), 2 (accommodation), 3 (transportation), 4 (shopping),
5 (banking), 6 (library), 7 (computer), 8 (editing paper), 9 (Canadian culture)

Appendix VII - continued

8.	H.																		
	W.																		
9.	H.																		
	W.																		

Legend

- 1) Registration
- 2) Accommodation
- 3) Transportation
- 4) Shopping
- 5) Banking
- 6) Library
- 7) Computer
- 8) Editing paper
- 9) Canadian culture

APPENDIX VIII

RESULTS OF THE RATING SCALE FILLED OUT BY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Appendix VIII

Results of the Rating Scale Filled Out by International Students Before (B) and After (A) Their Involvement with the Buddy Program

S t u d.	Famili arity with Wpg.		Knowledge about								Rel. with Cdns.		Knowledge of Campus facilities				Understand- ing of the Academic system		Understand- ing of the Canadian culture		Facility with English	
	B	A	Cli	Hou	Food	Clo							Lib	Com			B	A	B	A	B	A
#	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
1	1	3	3	5	2	4	3	4	3	4	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	4	4	4
2	1	3	2	4	H	H	H	H	2	4	2	4	H	H	H	H	2	4	2	4	2	3
3	3	3	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	2	4	2	5	1	4	2	4	H	H	2	5
4	3	4	2	4	H	H	2	5	H	H	3	4	H	H	H	H	H	H	2	5	3	5
5	1	4	2	4	1	4	2	4	1	4	1	4	1	5	2	4	2	5	1	4	3	4
6	1	2	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	1	3	3	5	H	H	2	4	2	4	3	3
7	1	4	1	5	2	3	1	3	2	5	1	4	3	4	3	4	2	4	1	4	2	4
8	1	2	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	1	3	1	3	D	D	D	D	D	D
9	1	4	2	3	1	4	H	H	H	H	1	4	1	5	1	5	1	4	1	4	2	3
10	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	2	5	2	5	3	5

Legend: Stud(student), Rel(relationship with Canadians), Cli(climate), Hou(housing), Clo (clothing), Lib(library), Com (computer), H (has prior knowledge), D(did not seek assistance), N(did not discuss)

Appendix VIII - continued

S t u d.	Famili- arity with Wpg.		Knowledge about										Rel. With Cdns.		Knowledge of Campus facilities		Understand- ing of the Academic system		Understand- ing of the Canadian culture		Facility with English		
			cli	Hou	Food	Clo																	
11	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	2	2	4	4	4
12	1	3	3	4	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	1	3	2	4	4
13	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	3	3	3	4
14	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	3

Legend

- Stud. - Student
- Wpg. - Winnipeg
- Rel. - Relationship with Canadians
- cli - Climate
- Hou - Housing
- Clo - Clothing
- Lib - Library
- Com - Computer
- H - Has Prior Knowledge
- D - Did Not Seek Assistance
- N - Did Not Discuss

RESEARCHER'S LETTER

Dr. Lyle Eide
Director, International Centre for Students
541 University Centre

Dear Dr. Eide,

As I have mentioned to you a few months ago, I would like to do my practicum at the International Centre for Students. The practicum is part of the requirements for my masteral program in Adult Education in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations at the Faculty of Education.

The proposed study will build on the Buddy Program that was developed in September 1995, which aimed to meet the needs of new international students a few weeks after classes started. However, while the initial Buddy Program met its intended objective, the program needs to be expanded to address the cross-cultural needs of international students beyond the first few weeks of classes. Therefore, my study will focus on developing, implementing and evaluating a Buddy Program that is participatory, continuing and reflective of the needs of international students.

I have chosen to do my practicum at the International Centre for Students for the following reasons. As a staff member at the Centre, I provide informational and educational activities for international students and their families; therefore, the knowledge and skills that I will gain in this study will help me better plan these programs. Working with international students will also give me a deeper understanding of their cultures and values, which are essential in developing programs. Finally, I believe that the Centre offers the best work milieu among student offices on campus where I could apply the principles of adult education, which I believe in and value. These principles include, but are not limited to, participation, belief in the learner, and program needs assessment and evaluation, etc.

All information related to the practicum will be kept confidential. The names of the participants will be replaced and will not be mentioned in any reports written about the practicum. Also, no description of the participants will be provided that will identify them. Upon completion of the

practicum, the needs assessment questionnaires and evaluation results will be destroyed. However, the participants will be offered the opportunity to have access to the practicum report, which will be available at the International Centre for Students.

I look forward to applying the skills and knowledge of adult education to a real and challenging work situation. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE



THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR STUDENTS

98

541 University Centre
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2

Tel: (204) 474-8501
Fax: (204) 275-5253

March 26, 1996

**Ms. Patricia Ilagan
International Programmer
International Centre for Students
541 University Centre**

Dear Patricia:

It was a pleasure to receive the proposal that you be allowed to do your practicum for your masters degree in Adult Education in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations at the International Centre for Students. I approve and endorse your request without hesitation.

I am also particularly pleased to see that you are doing a practicum placement with Canadian and international students participating in the Buddy Programme. First of all, I believe further study of needs related to cross cultural programming for participants will enhance our own programme. Then, I also believe that results from your study will contribute to the body of knowledge of cross cultural programming for everyone involved in building cross cultural links. I particularly believe results of your study will be appreciated by people in universities and colleges who are attempting to do similar programming at our educational institutions across the land. In a year from now, your findings can at least be a CBIE presentation?!

If I can be of assistance while you are doing your work with students at the International Centre for Students, please feel free to call on me.

Good luck.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lyle Eide".

Lyle J. Eide, PhD.,
Director



LETTERS CONCERNING THE PRACTICUM

A. INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR PARTICIPATION

B. LETTERS OF CONSENT

A. INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR PARTICIPATION

Information Regarding Your Participation (For New International Students)

Dear _____ :

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, presently working towards my Master's Degree in Education. For my practicum, my research topic is "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." This is a study about the effect of the Buddy Program on how well students adapt to a university life. The research will be conducted at the International Centre for Students (ICS) located at 541 University Centre. I also work as Programmer at the ICS where I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students.

International students (because they are from different cultures and backgrounds) can face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university. Programs that help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process have to be developed. To address this concern, the ICS introduced the Buddy Program which matches new international students with experienced individuals who can be a contact for their social, personal, academic, and cultural needs. Therefore, a Buddy is a friend who assists a new international student with general concerns or questions. To understand the role of the Buddy Program on the adjustment of international students, I would like to undertake the following activities.

- a) I will interview you on: 1) the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus and how they dealt with them, 2) offices on campus where international students go for help, and 3) suggestions to deal with adjustment concerns.

I will ask about your observation of the experience of international students regarding cross-cultural adjustment. The interview will be audio-taped and will last approximately thirty minutes. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts for your review or revision.

- b) I will ask you to fill out a simple rating scale on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students at the beginning of the Buddy Program to determine your knowledge of these adjustment concerns. Approximately three months after the program starts, you will fill out the same rating scale to assess the effect of the program on your cross-cultural

adjustment after participating in it. Filling out the two scales takes about five minutes each.

- c) Two weeks after the Buddy Program starts, there will be an hour informal information meeting to discuss the history, objectives of, and expectations from the program.
- d) A month after the program starts, you will receive a telephone call asking about the progress of your involvement with the Buddy Program. The questions, which take about five minutes to answer, will focus on the frequency, continuity and the content of your meetings with your buddy.

You can refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview, the meeting, and telephone call and may withdraw from this project at any time. Your name will not be identified, and all information I gather will be kept confidential and destroyed after the completion of the study.

The research study will not benefit you directly; however, it will benefit future international students and individuals who work with these students. When completed, the study hopes to provide a better understanding of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and the role of the Buddy Program in addressing these.

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact me at 783-8627, or my faculty advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244. I will also be pleased to provide you with a summary of the research findings if you are interested.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

**Information Regarding Your Participation (For Returning
International Students)**

Dear _____ :

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, presently working towards my Master's Degree in Education. For my practicum, my research topic is "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." This is a study about the effect of the Buddy Program on how well students adapt to a university life. The research will be conducted at the International Centre for Students (ICS) located at 541 University Centre. I also work as Programmer at the ICS where I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students.

International students (because they are from different cultures and backgrounds) can face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university. Programs that help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process have to be developed. To address this concern, the ICS introduced the Buddy Program, which matches new international students with experienced individuals who can be a contact for their social, personal, academic, and cultural needs. Therefore, a Buddy is a friend who assists a new international student with general concerns or questions.

To understand the role of the Buddy Program on the adjustment of international students, I would like to interview you on: a) the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus and how they dealt with them, b) offices on campus where international students go for help, and c) suggestions to deal with adjustment concerns.

I will ask about your observation of the experience of international students regarding cross-cultural adjustment. The interview will be audio-taped and will last approximately thirty minutes. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts for your review or revision.

You can refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview and may withdraw from this project at any time. Your name will not be identified, and all information I gather will be kept confidential and destroyed after the completion of the study.

The research study will not benefit you directly; however, it will benefit future international students and individuals who work with these students. When completed, the study hopes to provide a better understanding of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and the role of the Buddy Program in addressing these.

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact me at 783-8627, or my faculty advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244. I will also be pleased to provide you with a summary of the research findings if you are interested.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

**Information Regarding Your Participation (For an ICS Staff
Person)**

Dear :

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, presently working towards my Master's Degree in Education. For my practicum, my research topic is "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." This is a study about the effect of the Buddy Program on how well students adapt to a university life. The research will be conducted at the International Centre for Students (ICS) located at 541 University Centre. I also work as Programmer at the ICS where I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students.

International students (because they are from different cultures and backgrounds) can face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university. Programs that help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process have to be developed. To address this concern, the ICS introduced the Buddy Program which matches new international students with experienced individuals who can be a contact for their social, personal, academic, and cultural needs. Therefore, a Buddy is a friend who assists a new international student with general concerns or questions.

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I will ask about your observation of the experience of international students regarding cross-cultural adjustment. The interview will be audio-taped and will last approximately thirty minutes. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts for your review or revision.

You can refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview and may withdraw from this project at any time. Your name will not be identified, and all information I gather will be kept confidential and destroyed after the completion of the study.

The research study will not benefit you directly; however, it will benefit future international students and individuals who work with these students. When completed, the study hopes to provide a better understanding of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and the role of the Buddy Program in addressing these.

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact me at 783-8627, or my faculty advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244. I will also be pleased to provide you with a summary of the research findings if you are interested.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

**Information Regarding Your Participation (For a Language
Teacher)**

Dear _____ :

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, presently working towards my Master's Degree in Education. For my practicum, my research topic is "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." This is a study about the effect of the Buddy Program on how well students adapt to a university life. The research will be conducted at the International Centre for Students (ICS) located at 541 University Centre. I also work as Programmer at the ICS where I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students.

International students (because they are from different cultures and backgrounds) can face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university. Programs that help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process have to be developed. To address this concern, the ICS introduced the Buddy Program which matches new international students with experienced individuals who can be a contact for their social, personal, academic, and cultural needs. Therefore, a Buddy is a friend who assists a new international student with general concerns or questions.

To understand the role of the Buddy Program on the adjustment of international students, I would like to interview you on: a) the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus and how they dealt with them, b) offices on campus where international students go for help, and c) suggestions to deal with adjustment concerns.

I will ask about your observation of the experience of international students regarding cross-cultural adjustment. The interview will be audio-taped and will last approximately thirty minutes. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts for your review or revision.

You can refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview and may withdraw from this project at any time. Your name will not be identified, and all information I gather will be kept confidential and destroyed after the completion of the study.

The research study will not benefit you directly; however, it will benefit future international students and individuals who work with these students. When completed, the study hopes to provide a better understanding of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and the role of the Buddy Program in addressing these.

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact me at 783-8627, or my faculty advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244. I will also be pleased to provide you with a summary of the research findings if you are interested.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

**Information Regarding Your Participation (For a Community
Volunteer)**

Dear :

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, presently working towards my Master's Degree in Education. For my practicum, my research topic is "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." This is a study about the effect of the Buddy Program on how well students adapt to a university life. The research will be conducted at the International Centre for Students (ICS) located at 541 University Centre. I also work as Programmer at the ICS where I organize educational and informational programming activities for international students.

International students (because they are from different cultures and backgrounds) can face many difficulties when they come to a foreign university. Programs that help ease the pains and frustrations that come with the settling-in process have to be developed. To address this concern, the ICS introduced the Buddy Program which matches new international students with experienced individuals who can be a contact for their social, personal, academic, and cultural needs. Therefore, a Buddy is a friend who assists a new international student with general concerns or questions.

To understand the role of the Buddy Program on the adjustment of international students, I would like to interview you on: a) the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students during their first few weeks on campus and how they dealt with them, b) offices on campus where international students go for help, and c) suggestions to deal with adjustment concerns.

I will ask about your observation of the experience of international students regarding cross-cultural adjustment. The interview will be audio-taped and will last approximately thirty minutes. You will be provided with a copy of the transcripts for your review or revision.

You can refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview and may withdraw from this project at any time. Your name will not be identified, and all information I gather will be kept confidential and destroyed after the completion of the study.

The research study will not benefit you directly; however, it will benefit future international students and individuals who work with these students. When completed, the study hopes to provide a better understanding of the cross-cultural adjustment concerns of international students and the role of the Buddy Program in addressing these.

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact me at 783-8627, or my faculty advisor, Dr. Deo Poonwassie, at 474-8244. I will also be pleased to provide you with a summary of the research findings if you are interested.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Patricia Ilagan

B. LETTERS OF CONSENT

Consent Form (For New International Students)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and a copy of the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. My participation in the project will involve the following activities.

- a) I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped, and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.
- b) I agree to fill out a simple rating scale on my adjustment as an international student at the beginning of the program. Filling out the rating scales takes about five minutes each.
- c) Approximately two weeks after the program starts, I agree to attend a Buddy Program information meeting to discuss the history, objectives of and expectations from the program.
- d) Finally, approximately one month after the Buddy Program starts, I agree to participate in a 5 minute telephone interview about the progress of my involvement with the Buddy Program.

All information provided by me will be kept confidential. My name will not be identified in the tapes, interview questionnaires, transcripts, rating scale, or in any verbal or written reports. Instead, a pseudonym will be used in the report. Once the research is completed, all research documents and reports will be destroyed. Finally, I understand that the information gathered in this research study will be presented at the defense of the researcher's Master of Education practicum in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Name of Student

Date

Name of Researcher

Date

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____

Consent Form (For Returning International Students)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. For this project, I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped, and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.

All information provided by me will be kept confidential. My name will not be identified in the tapes, interview questionnaires, transcripts, or in any verbal or written reports. Instead, a pseudonym will be used in the report. Once the research is completed, all research documents and reports will be destroyed. Finally, I understand that the information gathered in this research study will be presented at the defense of the researcher's Master of Education practicum in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Name of Student

Date

Name of Researcher

Date

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____

Consent Form (Buddies)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and a copy of the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. My participation in this project will involve the following activities.

- a) I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped, and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.
- b) Approximately two weeks after the program starts, I also agree to attend a Buddy Program information meeting to discuss the history, objectives of and expectations from the program.
- c) Finally, approximately one month after the Buddy Program starts, I agree to participate in a 5 minute telephone interview about the progress of my involvement with the Buddy Program.

All information provided by me will be kept confidential. My name will not be identified in the tapes, interview questionnaires, transcripts, or in any verbal or written reports. Instead, a pseudonym will be used in the report. Once the research is completed, all research documents and reports will be destroyed. Finally, I understand that the information gathered in this research study will be presented at the defense of the researcher's Master of Education practicum in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Name of Student

Date

Name of Researcher

Date

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____

Consent Form (For an ICS Staff Person)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and a copy of the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. For this project, I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped, and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.

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Name of Student Date _____

Name of Researcher Date _____

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____

Consent Form (For a Language Teacher)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and a copy of the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. For this project, I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped, and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.

All information provided by me will be kept confidential. My name will not be identified in the tapes, interview questionnaires, transcripts, or in any verbal or written reports. Instead, a pseudonym will be used in the report. Once the research is completed, all research documents and reports will be destroyed. Finally, I understand that the information gathered in this research study will be presented at the defense of the researcher's Master of Education practicum in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Name of Student

Date

Name of Researcher

Date

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____

Consent Form (For a Community Volunteer)

I, _____, agree to take part in the study, "Buddy Program: A Participatory Approach in Cross-Cultural Adjustment of International Students." I have been given the researcher's name, her University address and a copy of the Information to Participant.

I understand that my participation in the research study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. For this project, I agree to a thirty-minute interview on the cross-cultural adjustment of international students. The interview will be audio-taped and I can refuse to answer any of the questions or stop the interview at any time. When the interview is transcribed, I will have an opportunity to review the transcripts and make revisions as necessary.

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Name of Student

Date

Name of Researcher

Date

Would you like a copy of the summary of the research study?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes, send to:

Postal Code _____