



diversityabroad

PREPARING INDIAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOR US DIVERSITY

SHORT COURSE SERIES



Introduction

Welcome to *Diversity Abroad's Short Course Series*. These 30-minutes e-learning opportunities are designed to provide professionals with insight and practical tools to support and advance inclusive excellence in global education.

Short courses are facilitated by experts in the field of diversity, inclusion, and international education. Each course includes a resource sheet of links and further information. For more information, please visit: diversityabroad.org/ShortCourses.



Instructor's Biography & Profile



Geeta Tirumala

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Global Transformative Education Counseling (GTEC) is a premium provider of bespoke overseas higher education (both undergraduate and graduate) and career counseling services to students and working professionals looking to take that quantum leap in their careers.

Geeta completed her masters degree from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, one of the premier private colleges in the US. She is a Six Sigma Black Belt. She led the South Asian Affinity Group at Cummins which was an inclusive platform for global employees to embrace cross-cultural exchanges as part of doing business.

Geeta also served on the Board of Directors of the Indiana Children's Museum, and as the president of the India Association of Columbus where she led a number of initiatives to spread awareness of Indian culture in the broader community. In recognition of her efforts, she was felicitated by the Mayor of City of Columbus as a dynamic community leader.



Overview

- Understanding India – A Different Lens
- For Academic Administrators
 - Multiple Levels of Empathizing with Indian Students
- How to assist Indian Students Matriculating to US Higher Education



Image source: india.com



UNDERSTANDING INDIA – A DIFFERENT LENS



India: A Diversity of People, Language & Culture



Source: www.mapsofindia.com

- 22 languages recognized by the constitution
- 122 major languages
- More than 2000 dialects⁺
- Dialect changes every 100 km⁺
- Diversity of opinions, backgrounds, literacy levels, cultures, accomplishments, aspirations
- 1.3 billion people seeking opportunities to improve their own social standing

⁺: India Reloaded: Inside India's Resurgent Consumer Market, D Sinha, Palgrave McMillan, 2015



India's Population Compared to Other Countries



- High population levels
- Aspirations are limited by access to opportunities
- Overseas opportunities are sought after
- Indians are largest group of test takers for standardized tests such as GRE, TOEFL, and GMAT
 - ~100K GRE test takers in 2015-16⁺
 - ~29K GMAT test takers in 2015[#]

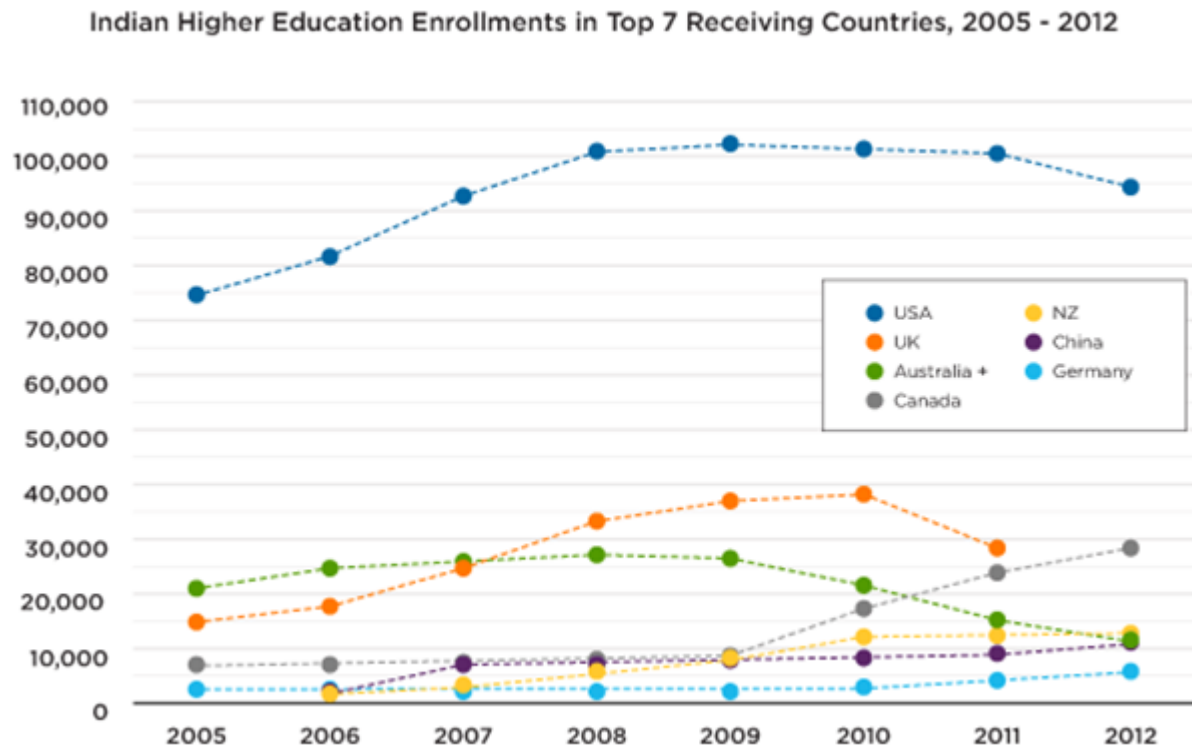
Source: CEIC; Economist Intelligence Unit; national statistics, The Economist

⁺ GRE Worldwide Test Taker Report – July 2013-2016, ETS®

[#] Profile of GMAT® Testing: Citizenship Report, Five Year Summary, TY2011-15, November 2015, GMAC



US Higher Education Most Favored Among Indian Students



Source: Indian Study Abroad Trends: Past, Present, and Future, World Education News & Reviews, World Education Services



The Indian Education System

- Predominantly lecture-based
- Theory-heavy coursework, prescribed text books, and model “examination papers”
- Large class size
- High student-teacher ratio
- Preset coursework for each semester
- Cohort-based grouping

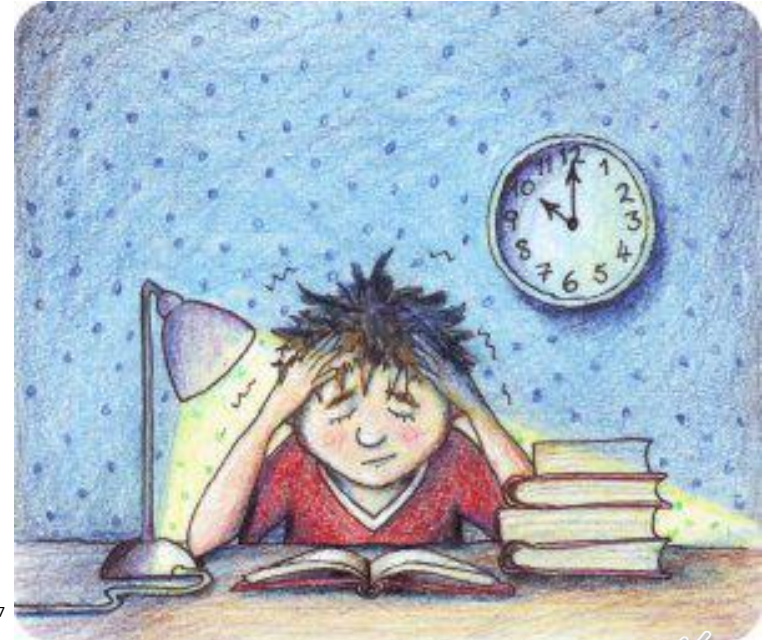


Image source: <http://www.reviewmantra.com/2016/03/indian-education-system-at-crossroads.html>



Understanding Factors Affecting Indian Students' Participation In Academia

- Decisions are rarely individual-driven – parents/elders/family/friends are involved
- Intense competition
 - 1.3 million students took the IIT JEE in 2016⁺
- Too much focus on academics at the expense of extracurricular activities
- Students more prone to silence rather than ask questions of the professor
- Wary of offending others – rarely voice disagreement
- Hardworking – get things done



⁺: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Entrance_Examination accessed on April 9, 2017
Image source: <http://udaipurtimes.com/the-fallacy-of-our-education-system>



FOR ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS: MULTIPLE LEVELS OF EMPATHIZING WITH INDIAN STUDENTS



Sensitivity to Indian Students is a Diversity Imperative

- How Can We Empathize With Newly Arrived Indian Students to Our Campuses?
 - Create opportunities in the classroom
 - engaging interactions that draw on prior experiences of the students
 - Help them identify potential pitfalls
 - adjusting to a new culture while handling multiple responsibilities



Image source: <http://www.edelevate.com/blog-post/undergraduate-studies-in-usa>



Creating Safety Nets for Indian Students to Cope in Their New Homes in the US

- Support from the graduate school to ease transition will be highly effective
 - Leverage Indian faculty/staff/community members to serve as mentors to Indian students during transition period
 - Connecting incoming students with the Indian Students' Association
 - Creating a buddy system that pairs current students with incoming students



Image source: <http://www.indianyouth.net/youth-mentoring-important>



Creating Safety Nets for Indian Students to Cope in Their New Homes in the US

Top 5 Academic Support Areas:

- Allow students time to familiarize with software packages used in labs
- Proactively share expectations of proficiency in various topics
 - Ensures they can come up to speed while still in India
- Encourage involvement in student clubs
 - Immerse in learning beyond classroom
- Highlight importance of class participation and participating in open discussion
- Open door office policy and timely check-ins to address any concerns

**STUDENT
CLUBS
AND
ORGANIZATIONS**

Image source: <http://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/stmary/student-clubs>



Creating Safety Nets for Indian Students to Cope in Their New Homes in the US

Top 7 Social/Cultural Support Areas:

- Social icebreaker before launching into coursework
- Empathize with students facing culture shock
- Making the effort to pronounce students' names correctly
- Teachers referred to as “Sir” or “Ma'am” and not by first names
- Appreciating different communication styles
 - question vs. doubt
- Leverage Indian Students Association to ensure no one falls through the cracks
- Pairing with buddies to ease transition and answer questions

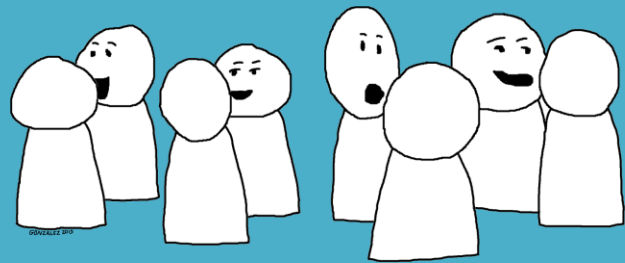


Image source: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/classroom-icebreakers>



HOW TO ASSIST INDIAN STUDENTS MATRICULATING TO US HIGHER EDUCATION



Before The Indian Students Arrive On Campus

Preparing For Arrival – Top 5 Things:

- Use social media - Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn – to join student groups
- Connect with potential roommates, plan housing, etc.
- Reach out to International Students Office
- Plan involvement with student clubs and other activities
- Understand pre-requisites for courses and ensure familiarity with topics



Image source: <http://www.fmtroop108.com>



Once They Arrive On Campus

Top 7 Things To Do On Campus:

- Create a plan of study that reflects their aspirations
- Leverage office hours to understand subject matter better
- Developing team skills – it's the key to success in courses and projects
- Emphasis on learning concepts – tests/assignments are challenging
- Approach Vs. accuracy
- Class participation counts!
- Strict rules against plagiarism

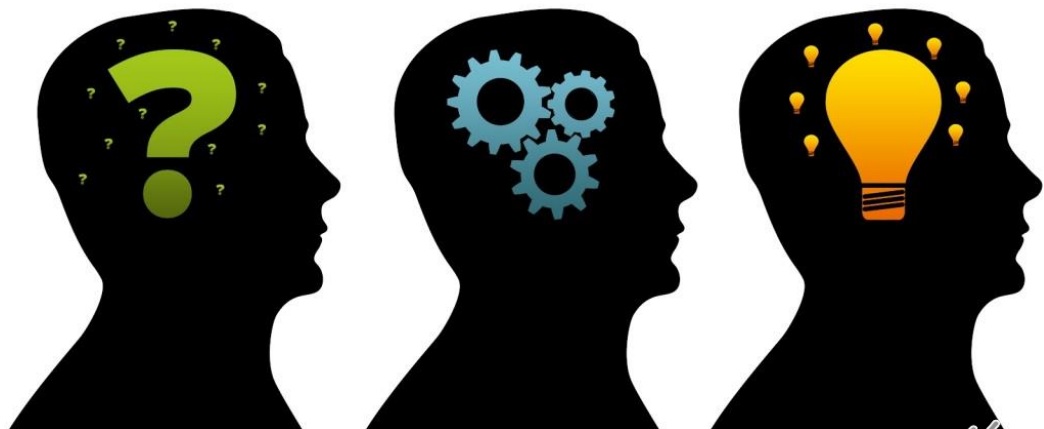


Image source: <https://www.brainscape.com/blog/2011/04/rote-memorization-important>



Truly Immerse in the Overall Experience

Help Them Make The Most Of The Opportunity:

- Time management is the key
- Work smart in addition to working hard
- Learn to say 'no' instead of being ambiguous
- Obey laws
- Communicate clearly and confidently
- Networking is very important
- Connect with students from different countries



With your support, the incoming Indian students will make their pursuit of higher studies in the US, a fulfilling and successful endeavor!!

Image source: <http://anth3142.blogspot.com/2015/02/cultural-diversity-in-united-states.html>





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THANK YOU!

