INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
@ JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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Rationale for Research
• Nationally, adjustment issues are higher for international student than for domestic students (Andrade, 2006)
• International student retention is lower compared to that of domestic students at JMU
• New International Study Center (ISC) and a desire to understand ISC students’ experience and how it compares to that of the direct enrollee

Research Question
• What contributes to international students’ academic success at JMU?
• Exploratory approach
  - Seeking to understand the international student experience
  - Helping JMU faculty, staff, and administrators in working with international students

Research Methods
• Data on this poster reflects information retrieved from various assessment instruments over a two-year period at JMU, unless otherwise noted.
• The international student population size ranged from 400 - 450 undergraduate students (pathway program students included), with sample sizes ranging between 92 - 176.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

HOW DO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS COMPARE TO DOMESTIC STUDENTS?

Sense of Belonging
Students responded to 3 items evaluating their sense of belonging at JMU:
1) I feel a sense of belonging at JMU.
2) I see myself as part of the JMU community.
3) I feel that I am a member of the JMU community.

Results were not significantly different between domestic and international students.

International vs. Domestic Related to GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Mean Cumulative GPA (as 2nd-Semester Sophomores)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cohort 1 (SP12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Cumulative GPA (as 2nd-Semester Sophomores)

“Low is better”

“High is better”

Pathways Program Comparison

Perceived Barriers to Academic Success

Summary Points
• International students feel a sense of belong at similar levels to domestic students
• High work avoidance and low self-acceptance are more detrimental to GPA for international students than for domestic students
• English proficiency was the most frequently reported barrier to academic success by active ISC students and ISC completers, and ISC students improved the most on English proficiency; therefore ISC is helping students overcome barriers to academic success.