

RLA Capstone Project - Anu Gupta

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT



Overview

Mission: To enhance academic success of international students

Key Programmatic Partners: International Academic Support Working Group, Student Affairs, Admissions, Foundation

Core Focus Areas:

- Pre-Arrival Orientation
- Transition Course
- Peer Coaching

Growth Areas:

- Student Leadership
- Faculty Support
- Capacity Building of student facing units

Activities:

- Asia PDO series
- RU-FIT transition course
- Pilot Peer Coaching mini-course
- Pilot Learning Centers Peer Coaching sessions
- Pilot Global East Asia TA/Peer Mentor pairing
- Pilot SAS Advising Peer Mentor

Beneficiaries:

- AC students/families
- 1st year intl. students
- Intl. students at large

- Rutgers Faculty and Administrators

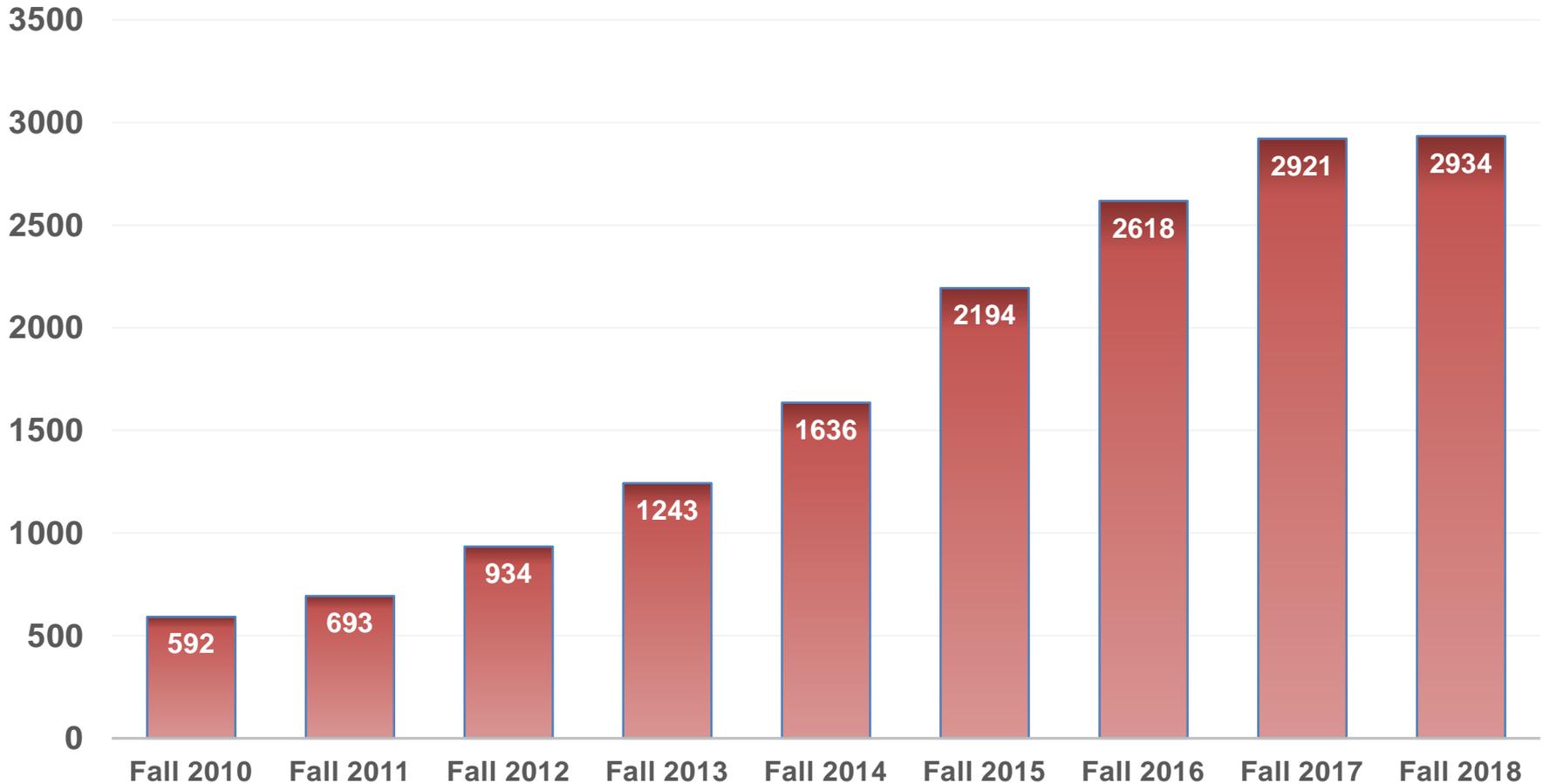
Impact:

- Increase awareness of US academic system
- Ease and enhance intl. student FYE
- Build on existing Peer Mentor model
- Support a wider cohort of Intl. students
- Train and embed Peer Mentors in student facing offices

Challenges: Acculturative stress, cultural barriers, English language competencies, immigration regulation compliance, lack of familiarity with US academic system, teaching methods, academic integrity standards

5x Growth

International Undergraduate Students at Rutgers - New Brunswick



A Diverse Student Population

There are 8,700 international students from 120 countries at Rutgers.



51 percent of these students—about 4,600—are from China.

Problem Statement

The rapid increase in international students at Rutgers–New Brunswick has necessitated academic support that addresses the challenges faced by these students. These unique challenges include (but are not limited to):

- Acculturative stress
- Cultural barriers
- English language weakness
- Pressure from home
- Mental health stigma
- Mandatory compliance with immigration regulations
- Lack of familiarity with American academic integrity standards and/or teaching methods



RU-NB Bachelors Degree Seeking Cohort 4-Year Graduation Rates

| Cohort | Cohort Size | %Non-Resident Alien | %All RU-NB |
|--------|-------------|---------------------|------------|
| 2008 | 72 | 59.7 | 58.7 |
| 2009 | 99 | 51.5 | 57.9 |
| 2010 | 105 | 55.2 | 58.4 |
| 2011 | 126 | 44.4 | 58.8 |
| 2012 | 281 | 42.3 | 59.7 |

Academic Integrity Violations

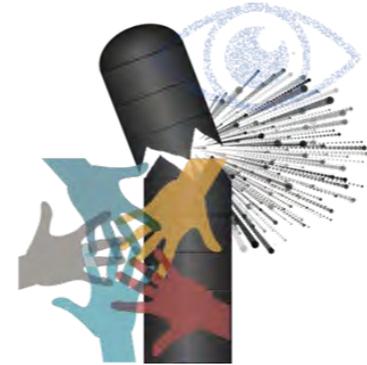
- Currently, about 24% of cases referred to the Office of Student Conduct involve international students.
- Cheating has consequences for individual students' retention and graduation (and for universities' retention and graduation rates) when suspension and/or expulsion are employed as sanctions.



Institutional Acknowledgement

The New Brunswick Strategic Plan (2015-2020) recognizes that “International students play a vital role in promoting New Jersey’s global connections and intellectual resources and help boost Rutgers’ profile around the world. Yet these students face certain unique challenges: culture shock; unfamiliarity with American academic culture; studying, writing, and interacting in a nonnative language; and sometimes radically different ideas about how to study and succeed academically.”

Institutional Commitment



Transforming the Student Experience:

Supporting our International Students Academically
“Heightening attention to student advising and services, both academic and nonacademic, to ensure student success and enduring satisfaction. New Brunswick-wide projects will bolster student advising, improve the **first-year experience**, **support international** and transfer students.”

Rutgers University Strategic Plan (2015-2020)

Office of International Academic Support

In 2016, Rutgers created International Academic Support—a central administrative office under the auspices of Rutgers Global—which is charged with:

- Enhancing academic success of international students
- Reducing redundancy in programming
- Easing the complexity of navigating the decentralized university structure



Project Priorities

- **PRIORITY I**
Enhance student understanding of academic expectations and resources
- **PRIORITY II**
Create a multi-stakeholder working group for international academic support
- **PRIORITY III**
Design and implement academic support programs for international students
- **PRIORITY IV**
Support faculty and staff capacity to address the unique challenges of international students



Priority I: Pre-Departure Orientations

2017

- Beijing, China
- Shanghai, China

2018 (expansion beyond China)

- Beijing, China
- Shanghai, China
- New Delhi, India
- Seoul, South Korea

2019

- Beijing, China
- Shanghai, China
- Guangzhou, China
- New Delhi, India
- Mumbai, India



Priority II: Create a Multi-Stakeholder Working Group for International Academic Support

To leverage campus-wide resources, Rutgers Global-IAS and UAA Co-Chair a Working Group for International Academic Support with key stakeholders across campus. Members include:

- Undergraduate Academic Affairs (UAA)
- School of Arts and Sciences (SAS)
- School of Engineering (SOE)
- Rutgers Business School (RBS)
- School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS)
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Learning Centers
- Writing Program
- Office of Student Conduct
- Center for Teaching Advancement and Assessment Research
- Office for Institutional Research and Academic Planning
- Rutgers Foundation



PRIORITY III: Design and Implement High Impact Academic Support Programs

- **RU-FIT: MULTI-SCHOOL TRANSITIONAL COURSE:** Mandatory course for all first year international students enrolled in SAS, SOE and SEBS
- **STUDENT TO STUDENT ACADEMIC COACHING MINI-COURSE:** Piloted in Spring 2019
- **PEER COACHING PROGRAM AT THE LEARNING CENTERS:** Available weekly at all four learning center campus locations
- **PEER ADVISORS AT ACADEMIC ADVISING OFFICES:** Pilot at OAA/SAS



PRIORITY IV Support Faculty and Staff Capacity to Address the Unique Challenges of International Students

RU-FIT PEER LEADER-TA PAIRING MODEL: Pilot – Global East Asia Signature Course (01:098:250)

- Each TA will be paired with an RU-FIT Peer Leader
- Peer leaders will hold office hours twice per week for a total of 4 hours
- During office hours, Peer Leaders will address the needs of international students such as how to think analytically and apply concepts from the readings, develop ideas for their Response Papers and learn effectively
- Peer Leaders will attend all lectures on a non-credit basis



Challenges: Bandwidth

- An Office of 2 staff
- Budgetary Constraints – limited success with cost-share model of financing projects
- Location within a non academic unit
- Rutgers silos



Future Directions

Expansion:

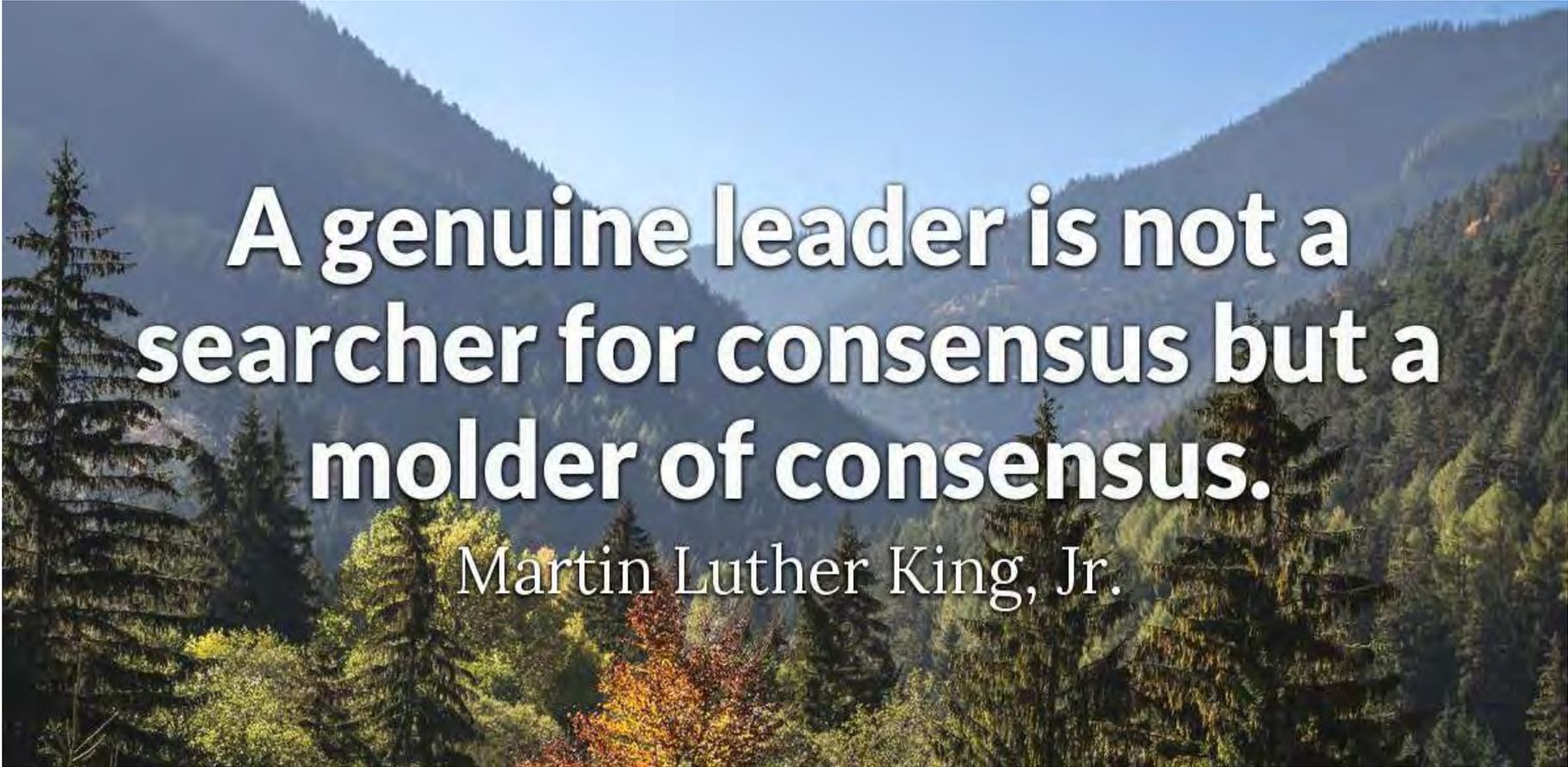
- Creating Value
- Programmatic Offering
- Partnerships
- International Graduate Students
- Newark and Camden



My Big RLA Takeaway



My Big RLA Takeaway



**A genuine leader is not a
searcher for consensus but a
molder of consensus.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thank You

RLA:

Brent Reuben
Ralph Gigliotti
Richard De Lisi
Christine Goldthwaite
RLA Fellows

Mentors:

Barbara Lee
Ben Sifuentes-Jauregui

