

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CO-ORDINATOR

If you take a short walk around your campus, you will notice that every year there are more and more students from outside Ireland coming to study and live in Ireland.

Some students come for a term, a full year or they are beginning a 3/4 year degree. We have students from mainland Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and the States. Many students are coming from "closed countries" where the spreading of Christianity is forbidden or not allowed. There is great opportunity to welcome students from closed countries and to introduce them to Christianity.

The other side of the same coin is that some international students are coming from Christian backgrounds and other student movements like IFES Ireland in their own countries.

What is God's picture?

Revelation 7:9 -12

In Revelation, John gives us this huge vision or picture of a great multitude of people that no one could count.

What is distinctive about this great multitude in v9?

They were from every nation, tribe, people and language before the throne and in front of the lamb.

This picture gives us an insight into the way things will be in heaven – that there will be those from every background colour and language before God, doing what? Crying out in a loud voice "salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne and to the lamb"

What is the role of an international secretary?

- To increase the awareness of international students in the CU and on campus
- To Inspire and motivate the CU to develop relationships and reach out to International students
- To remind the committee of the special needs of international students and encourage them to think through how the CU can respond.
- To give some ideas to the committee for teaching programme that addresses the area of reaching out international students
- To encourage CU members to befriend and witness to overseas students.
- To organise special events for international students.
- To work towards integration of overseas students into CU life and campus

Evaluating your CU

How does the Christian Union welcome international students who are Christians?

How does the Christian Union move towards or welcome international students who are not Christians to the campus or city or university

How does your CU currently reach out to international students on your campus?

Do these things work?

What is your Christian Union's vision for international students on campus?

In what ways have the Christian students moved towards these students?

Are there different ways that the CU can support them and be introduced to International students?

Ideas

- Encourage the exec / committee to get good missionary speakers in the main teaching program.
 - Enter a 'twinning project" with a CU in your regional link country.
 - Organise a team from your CU to go on a cross-cultural summer mission.
 - Recommend and make available inspiring missionary books etc.
 - As a CU, support a missionary or have a gift day for your IFES link movement.
- Run regular prayer meetings focused on cross-cultural work and specific countries.

Welcoming international students

- Arrange a team of people from CU to be there when they arrive, perhaps working with the SU welcome programme, many universities run orientation days for international students, the week before lectures begin and the CU can be represented there. Be interested in them and be aware of different cultures.
- Welcome new arrivals with practical help.
- Organise sightseeing trips, with others from the CU (and perhaps local churches).
- Try pairing schemes between international students and CU members.
- Help publicise information about hospitality schemes esp. during holidays.
- Set up a bookstall and/or a display about countries that students come from.
- Get feedback from students who've been away.
- Arrange a team from your CU to go on an international students outreach team (ask your staff worker for details).

Do training to help CU members to be more aware of international students and more capable of relating to them.

Integration of international students into CU

- Have interviews and testimonies from international students.
 - International students can really enrich the CU and its meetings , you could have a slot for them to talk about their culture back home, Christian culture in how they pray or worship or the special meaning a biblical passage might have in their context. By allowing this to happen the CU is bring their different experiences into the group and making them part of the CU movement
 - Include international students in leadership roles.
- Get international students to lead prayer meetings and Bible studies.

Up to Date on the Web:

Keep in touch with what's going on around the country & latest available resources by visiting the IFES Ireland website www.ifesireland.org or the IFES world website www.ifesworld.org.

Recommended Reading

Biographies on the following individuals;

George Muller

Hudson Taylor

Carey

Corrie ten Boom

Jim Elliot

Let the nations be glad – John Piper (IVP)

Why bother with Mission – Stephen Gaukroger (IVP)