

Workshop for the Establishment of Buddy system at WB Universities

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1. Buddy system-basics

- Term: mentoring, students helping students
- Concept: initial integration of incoming students
- Applicability

2. Promotion

- Online channels: official mailing lists, social media
- Offline: posters, leaflets, flyers; university campus, info events, etc.

3. Information for future buddies:

- Leaflets, presentations
- Why? : friendship, communication and language practice, meeting new culture
- Role of a buddy: buddy's tasks, boundaries of mentoring, buddy's abilities
- Intercultural differences: help mentee to deal with difficulties
- Tasks before the arrival: contact, help with accommodation, visa, health care, faculty deadlines, pick-up
- Tasks after the arrival: administration (immigration office, bank account), faculty (a tour, enrolment, courses), social integration (programs, events, excursions, thematic evenings, sport events), health-related issues
- Help for buddies: buddy program coordinator, international incoming students' coordinator
- Useful information for buddies:
 - immigration office, consular service, visa/residence permit application, health insurance card;

information about country, city, transportation
information about festivals, cultural events, sport events

4. Buddy recruitment

- Open call for buddies: invitation, buddy program in short, application deadline
- Application form: full name, Email address, faculty, year, spoken languages (mother tongue and other-with level), motives to become a buddy, source of information (where did one hear about the program-to measure the most effective way of promotion), etc.
- Acceptance/Refusal email- For the approved mentors: term(s) and place of interview, live/online, email, deadline for the response.

5. Buddy matching

- Criteria: faculty, study year, gender
- Systems: one-to-one, buddy groups (2 buddies to 3-4 students)
- Introduction: via Email, with basic information of the students: full name, nationality, spoken languages, faculty/study program, email, status (buddy/ incoming student).

6. Buddy program evaluation

- Feedback from buddies, in order to improve the program
- At the end of semester
- Questions: name, first time/ have been buddy before, evaluation scales for own and buddy partner work, international student office or buddy program coordinator work, feedback on organized events, activities involved, recommendations and suggestions.

7. Buddy recognition:

- Mostly volunteering, the need to acknowledge the effort
- Certificates, public recognition, organize a reception, nominate for volunteer awards, post an honor roll, reimburse certain expenses, arrange for discounts, enlist to train other volunteers, offer advocacy or consultant roles, invite to participate in policy formation, etc.