

Solutions to Enhance Students' Experience

Students' Mental Health

THEME: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH

Common issues, challenges, strengths and useful support strategies

Date: Thursday 23 November

Time: 12noon – 5.00 pm

Venue: Graduate House, 220 Leicester Street, Carlton

Support Strategies

Positive Psychology

Positive Attributes

Challenges



AGENDA:

- 12.00pm -1.00pm Registration and lunch
- 1.00pm - 1.30pm ISANA AGM
- 1.30pm - 3.00pm Alison Hemsley - "What is Wellbeing for Student Advisors and Professionals?"
- 3.00pm -3.30pm **Afternoon Tea/Coffee**
- 3.30pm -4.45pm Panel Session - International Students Mental Health
- 4.45pm – 5.00pm Helen Zhang/Liselle Nelmes

THEME: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MENTAL HEALTH: Common issues, challenges, strengths and useful support strategies

1. "WHAT IS WELLBEING FOR STUDENT ADVISORS AND PROFESSIONALS?" - ALISON HEMSLEY

Wellbeing is commonly defined not only as the absence of illnesses and negative conditions but also includes a prevalence of positive attributes. This professional development session will:

- help you define what wellbeing is or means for you;
- outline key distinctions in understanding wellbeing;
- briefly review some of the key theories of wellbeing and
- focus on one of the best known models of wellbeing, that being Professor Martin Seligman's (founder of Positive Psychology) Wellbeing Theory and its five elements, summarised with the acronym PERMA.
- provide a way for you to think about how you can improve your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.



Alison Hemsley Bio

Alison Hemsley currently works at Trinity College in the Pathways School managing and leading a diverse and enthusiastic Student Services team.

The focus of the team is to provide an International best practice portfolio of programs to improve student wellbeing across the Foundation Studies student cohort.

Alison's training in Psychology and more recently in Positive Education, Positive Psychology and Positive Organisational Scholarship has enabled her to develop wellbeing programs in collaboration with International and Domestic students in a variety of contexts.

Alison is proud and has enjoyed leading the development of the World's First Positive residence - "Kooloonong Village" - a residential facility for over 600 tertiary students at the University of Wollongong. She has now turned her attention to measuring the Wellbeing of International Students to better gauge their strengths and needs and identify key areas that require additional support, training and development upon their arrival and during their stay in Australia.

Alison strives to build tools for life for others which are informed and guided by the Science of Wellbeing.

2. MENTAL HEALTH PANEL SESSION

International Students Mental Health: Common issues, challenges, strengths and useful support strategies

There is evidence that 1 in 4 people aged 15-24 will experience mental ill-health in one year. More specifically, tertiary students with mental health issues are at higher risk of dropping out early, academic failure, limited social connections and poor health outcomes. This panel will discuss the most common mental health issues experienced by international Students, the challenges faced in their transition into Australia, their main strengths as well as the risk factors experienced. Ultimately, the panelists will share support strategies that different education providers have put in place to address these needs and challenges.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH PANEL FACILITATORS

	<p>Camilo Izquierdo, Registered Psychologist Student Counsellor at TCFS Youth Mental Health First Aid Instructor</p>		<p>Ian Teo Lecturer (Psychology) Research Coordinator: Pathways School</p>
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Panel session members from:

- University of Melbourne
- RMIT
- Monash College
- Trinity College

Ian Teo Bio:

Ian is currently the research coordinator at Trinity College Pathways School and an honorary fellow at the Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education; both located with The University of Melbourne. His research interests are focused on issues relating to international education and preparing international students for their higher education studies.

3. HOW TO TURN A FROWN UPSIDE DOWN: WORKING TOGETHER TO TRANSFORM STUDENT COMPLAINTS INTO SOLUTIONS FOR ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

La Trobe International Student Services team conducts a focus group after annually to seek student feedback on our pre-departure, arrival and orientation information and programs for new commencing international students. In the Semester 1, 2017 focus group one participant – a newly arrived postgraduate student studying at our Melbourne City campus in Collins Street – voiced a strong critique of the differences in the student experience for those studying at the main Melbourne Bundoora campus compared with the City campus.

Seeking to turn this negative feedback into something positive, LTI International Student Services decided to engage this student as a casual during the Semester 2, 2017 intake as a “Super Host” at our City campus to coordinate a suite of new orientation initiatives for City campus students.

In our presentation, we will provide an overview of our focus group activities e.g. how we recruited participants, participant demographics, summary of findings etc. We will then present a case study of the aforementioned student/participant and the steps that LTI International Student Services took to turn her frown upside down and engage her assistance with improvements of our orientation experience for new students based at our City campus.

Time permitting, we will also include a summary of feedback from after the Semester 2, 2017 intake to measure students’ responses to the new City campus orientation initiatives.

Bios:



Liselle Nelmes joined La Trobe International in February 2016 and currently works as the Senior Coordinator, International Student Services. She has more than 10 years of experience in the international education field including management of Australian Government sponsored international students (Australia Awards and Endeavour scholars), various roles in international student support, and local and overseas English language teaching. With qualifications including a Bachelor of Social Work and postgraduate degrees in Psychology, TESOL and Human Resource Management (currently undertaking), Liselle is passionate about supporting international students towards a successful study experience and enjoys working in a team to foster continuous improvements in information provision and support services for international students.



Helen Zhang joined La Trobe International in February 2013 and currently works as the Coordinator, International Student Services. After completion of the Master of Applied Commerce degree as an international student at Melbourne University, she started to work from 2008 in the International higher education industry including various roles from admissions, to international student support. Helen is passionate about empowering international students and enriching their journey during their studies in Australia.