



**LA TROBE**  
UNIVERSITY • AUSTRALIA

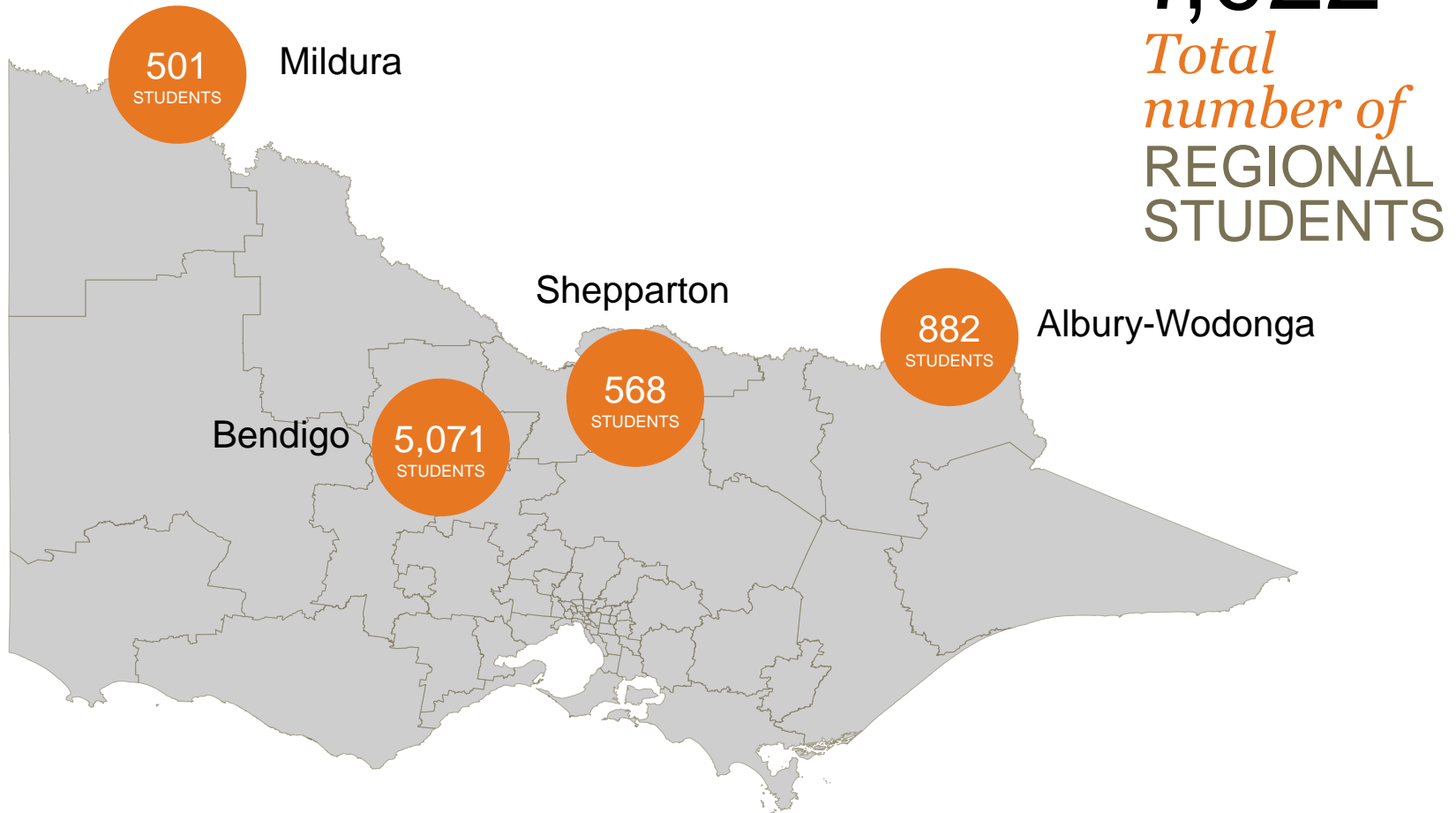
## Catch me if YOU can – Evidence Based Practice in the Regions 2016

# Overview



- Introduction to La Trobe University
- Data Collection Methods
- Results – What Students Want
- Challenges
- Success
- Key Points
- Questions

# La Trobe's regional students



# La Trobe University



- 6 locations – Melbourne (3 sites), Sydney, Bendigo, Albury-Wodonga, Shepparton, Mildura.
- 4 regional campuses –

Regional Campus	Bendigo	Albury-Wodonga	Shepparton	Mildura
Town Population	120,000	100,000	30,000	29,000
Total Students	5,071	882	568	501
International Students	200	8	7	2
% International Students	3.94%	0.91%	1.23%	0.39%
Impacting Environments	1.5 hours to Melbourne	Twin City, Competing Uni & TAFE's, CSU 4000 students	Proximity to Bendigo 1.5 hours	Remote, 6 hrs to Melbourne

# Courses available by campus

**Albury Wodonga** - arts, business, health sciences, education, Masters of Business Administration and other post-grad study.

**Bendigo** - arts, business, health sciences, education, creative arts, information technology, engineering, pharmacy, dentistry, law, sciences and psychology, Masters of Business Administration and other post-grad study.

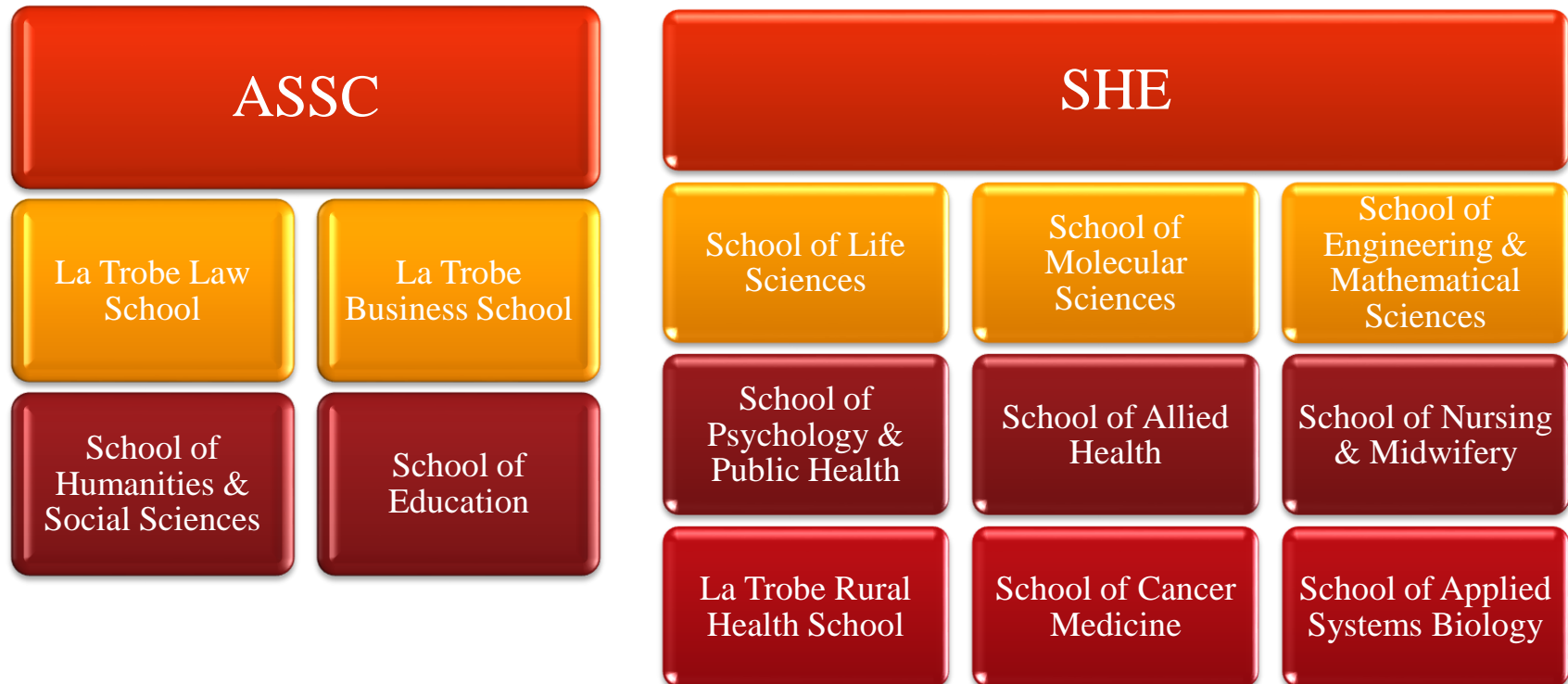
**Mildura** - arts, creative arts, business, health sciences, education, Masters of Business Administration and other post-grad study.

**Shepparton** - arts, business, health sciences, education, Masters of Business Administration and other post-grad study.

# Introduction to the university



- College of Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce (ASSC)
- College of Science, Health and Engineering (SHE)



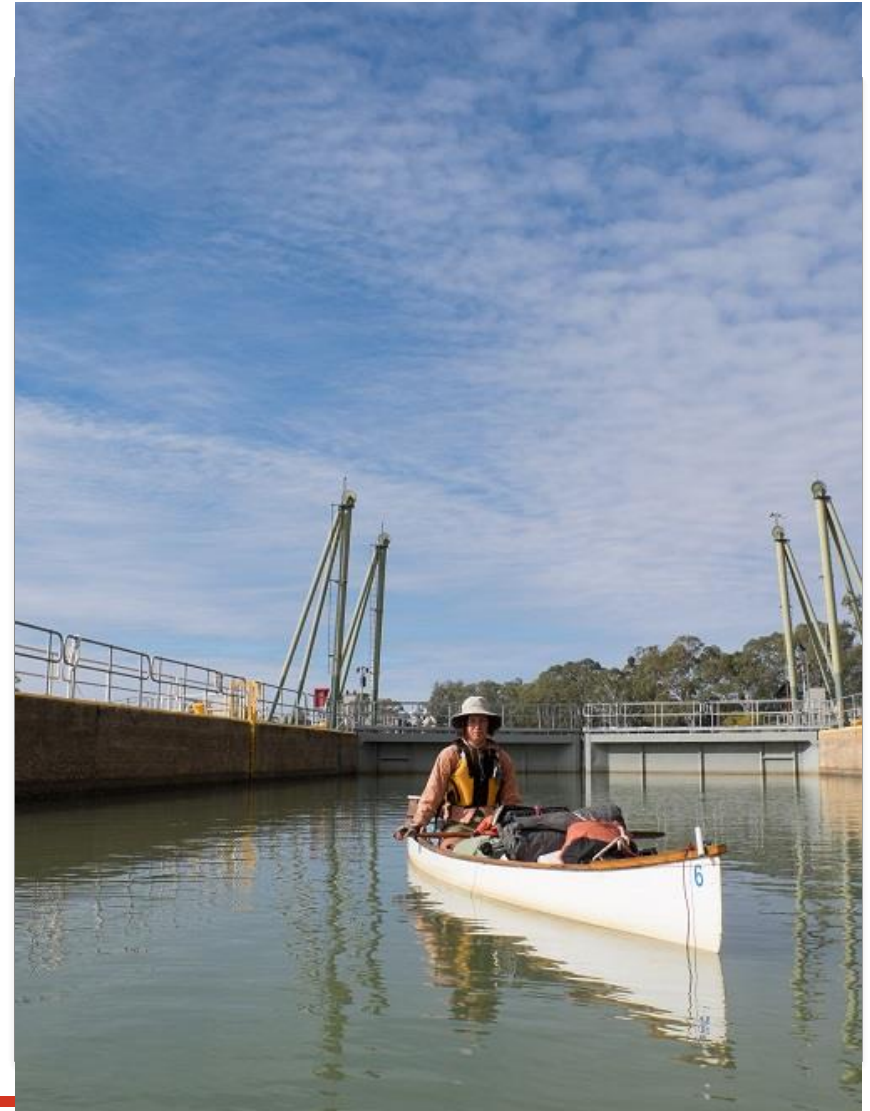
# Big Environmental Focus in the Regions – Research Students

## Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre

The Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre is on the Mildura and Albury-Wodonga campuses.

It generates research into the environmental management and assets of the Murray-Darling Basin.

The centre is a venture between La Trobe, CSIRO, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the Federal Government's Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, People and Community.



# Data Collection Methods



- International Student Barometer (online - external)
  - Externally coordinated method, not enough regional focus, or specifics.
- Student Experience Survey (online – internal)
  - Internal Campus Specific, not enough International Specific representation.
- **Focus Groups** – facilitated student panel, providing feedback to staff across all campuses.
- **Projects** linked to ‘Leadership Programs’ or Course – Student on placement with WSA; Detailed Data, What Students Want?
- **Conferences** - students attend conferences, professional development, feedback to La Trobe staff.

# Data Collection Methods



- **International Club** - Survey on Facebook
  - Monkey Survey – Events, Support, Participation
  - International Student Host – buddy with new students for transition, receiving instant feedback
  - **One-on-one Discussion & Informal Chats**– regional students have access
  - **Email** – very reliable in the regions, due to close rapport between staff and students
  - **Create Opportunities** for Students – attend CISA conference, ISANA events, PD, reporting back through ‘Student Panel Discussions’. Motivates students to provide detailed feedback and plans to contribute.
-

# Does it work?

## Yes -



A variety of methods of data collection allows for quantifiable data, specific to regional needs.

It also allows us to capture data from students the way in which they want to deliver it.

Many students will not complete surveys, but like to chat, be interactive, or provide data along with their subject project or leadership programs.

# What Students Want?



- Well Ranked University Courses - with excellent job prospects
  - Clear Easy Access to Information Online – including videos
  - Easy Application & Admissions Systems
  - Fees & Scholarships Information - SCHOLARSHIPS
  - Quality Pre-Arrival Information and Networking Opportunities PRIOR to Arrival into the country.
  - Smooth Supported Transition – Safe, Friendly, Comfortable.
  - Access to Support Staff and Services – Accommodation, Travel Assist, Student Engagement & Transition
  - Programs that engage students with local students – make friends and build support network
  - Academic Support – Peer Learning Advisors
-

# What Students Want?



- Language Support – Improve English Language
- Awards and Programs that ADD VALUE; eg. Exchange, Outward Bound, Homestay Program, Leadership Award.
- Employability and Careers Support – assist get casual job, volunteer, career job.
- Know where to get help – Contact Lists
- **Feel Connected with other students and the community**
- Participate in quality workplace learning activities, making quality contacts in their chosen career
- Great selection of course OPTIONS – with Good Reputation
- Learn about Australian culture & way of life

# Challenges



- Course Offering Limitations - common first year & relocation, blended mode of learning with on-line VC
- Staff Knowledge – develop specialist advanced learning
- Off-Shore Agents – incorrect distribution of information to potential students, requires increased regional knowledge and training.
- Isolation and Homesickness – missing the feeling of multicultural, requiring more support and connection to community.
- Lack of Jobs
- Lack of Public Transport – no buses after 5pm, and no International Student Concession.
- Interaction within classrooms – redesign of assessment methods

# Success



Students Design Practices – getting involved!

Credit Based Interaction Design – students receive credit for design

Research Student develops ‘Marketing & Recruitment Plan’ for AW Campus – Vietnam Market

- Increase in market-share PhD - Vietnam
- Expansion of ‘Vietnamese Community Support Group’ – AW

Student Leadership Program – Bus Marketing Student links Community Project to La Trobe Recruitment and Retention Strategy

- Establishment of La Trobe Asia – Regional Expansion
- Opening new office 2017 – China
- Update to existing office– India

# Success



- Stronger International Student Voice – Association Rep. Students working with Student Association, placements
- Community Partnership – Mount Beauty Homestay Education
  - Shanghai Relationships – China
  - Study Tour Groups – Visit AW Campus
- Community Partner - Volunteer Resource Bureau, engaging into community + jobs.
- Outback Program: Short-term Programs/Placements
- International Student Welfare Grants: Increase jobs, engage into the community, active International Clubs.
- Development new International Connect Club (AW) – linking students to the community, support, engaging, & making friends.

# Success



- **Student Mentors (subject/course)** – local students engage with and support International Students in class, encouraging friendships and academic development, working with each other in group-work activities, after class study groups, and social activities. **Transition, Engagement, Academic, Support, & Friendships!**
- Matched up with mentors from same course or subject, depending on development needs (6 weeks).
- Mentors are able to learn about another culture, adding value to their career development, global employability skills
- Collaborative approach - lecturer, course coordinator, ISS Staff
- Mentors are offered reward for their time; vouchers and **'Global Citizen Award'**.

# Global Citizen Award



- Mentors become globally aware, culturally sensitive, and are able to live and work independently.
  - Designed to engage students with a variety of global programs and activities, building skills that are important in the global community.
  - Aimed at supplementing studies and involves a range of different international activities –
    - International-centred volunteering – Peer Mentoring
    - International Study Experiences - Study Abroad, Over-seas Exchange Programs, Internships, & Placements
    - Learn a foreign language & culture
    - Attend Seminars – International Topics
-

# Success



- New Student Services APP coming 'Social Media', includes China Engagement
- Cultural Development Workshop – for staff 2017
- Reviewing Structures – Regional Focus 10% +
- Refreshed Internationalisation Plan – Amended Goals – Regional Focus
- Strategic Partners in countries – targeting Regional Interest Areas
- Increase target for International Student Load Regional – 10% +
- La Trobe Online – many new and improved systems
- Employability Initiative – new program 2017 + links
- E- Friends Engagement – facebook
- Quality programs, resources, & publications that support students, providing development opportunities – Student Services
- Quality Overseas Exchange and Traineeship Opportunities for International Students – Study Abroad
- Close student friendships, welcomed by community, supported, multicultural services creating jobs, references, networks, and making new friends.
- Community Support Links
- Staff Training – sharing knowledge

# Designing Practices Partnership TNE



- Working with International Markets – Tourism Northeast

Distance from Melbourne is an issue in attracting international tourists to the regions

Need to find the hook that the Melbourne education market can not accommodate  
Snow is a very strong driver for the Asian market, and showing excellent growth  
Environmental Research and Water Ecology – Big Drawcard. Murray Darling  
Research Centre AW Campus and Mildura  
Situated on Murray River with Hume Weir water supply – Big Water Sports Focus  
Hot Summers, Cold Winters, mountainous regions, national parks, water-falls,  
wineries.

Increase wholesale market on the region – to include Educational Providers

TNE representing the region to build awareness

Refined processes

# Key Points



- Students involved in the process – Collecting data and designing practices
- Linked to ‘Student Leadership Awards’ & ‘Global Citizen Award’
- Embedded Global Projects in the course structure - linking local and international students
- Course activities and delivery changed - more interaction with local students, and increased learning
- Students involved in Student Association, Committees and Boards, Volunteering (increased International Voice), developing Employability Skills
- Students Connected and Engaged – APPS, Social Media
- **Staff and students develop relations with key personnel for policy change**

# Key Points



- Weekend Break Program - city to regional, regional to city or regional
- Host Program, Mentor and Buddy Program, E-Friends Program, Orientation Program
- Volunteering Opportunities – ISS Host, Student Leadership
- Language and Cultural Exchange – Mount Beauty Education Centre (Weekend Trips, Events)
- UniMates – Friendship Program, bringing local and international students together for regular social outings (+ International Connect Club)
- Outward Bound Programs – Australian short tours and weekend trips, linked to course.
- Reintegration Program – finished study, returning home

# Key Outcomes



- **Innovation** – New office in China, La Trobe Asia Department on-shore, office in India. Support Programs on and off-shore
  - **Collaboration** – partnered with community to attract international market, support, and retain (North East Tourism Vic, Education, Council, local Multi-cultural Agencies)
  - **Commitment** – La Trobe has put on ‘high priority’
    - Clear Vision & Objectives
    - Communication Focusses – students, staff, agents, o/seas
    - Restructuring; committed staff matched to objectives
    - Training and development - high priority
    - Educating Agents with a difference
  - **Delivering what students REALLY WANT!**
-

# Learning at university



# Learning at university

## DEME Field Work



# Learning at university



# Learning at university



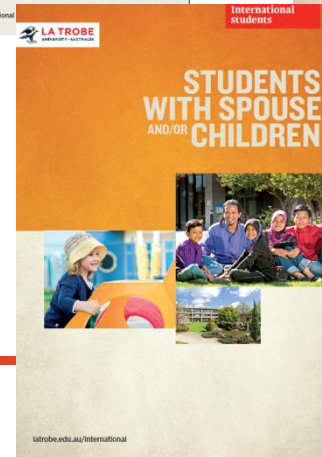
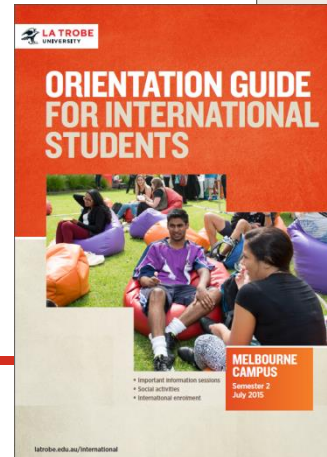
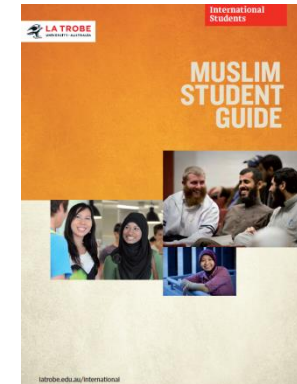
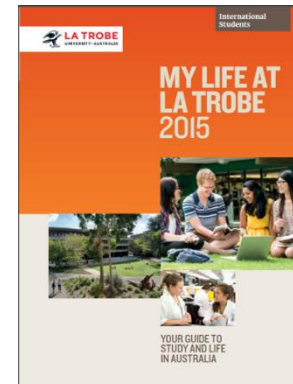
# Looking After Our International Students

## Dedicated LTU International Student Hotline

- A telephone hotline for international students Monday to Friday after-office hours and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays.

## Resources

- Dedicated publications (hard copy and online) to support international student needs





Questions?