

I. Basic Facts and Description of the Unit

a. **Mission:** The International Center provides support for international students, scholars, and education abroad participants to achieve their educational goals, and it ensures institutional compliance with federal immigration regulations. The International Center aims to attract, enroll, and retain international students by encouraging their participation in campus life and connecting them with other campus departments and community organizations that can support their social, emotional, academic, and cultural needs. The International Center cultivates sensitivity within the campus community regarding cultural differences and international student needs, and it helps students successfully adapt to their host culture.

b. **Primary Services:** The International Center is divided into the following categories:

i. **International Recruitment:** International Recruitment is responsible for the marketing, recruitment travel, customer service, and admissions processing relating to undergraduate/ELI students requiring a visa to study in the U.S. AND U.S. citizens/permanent residents residing outside of the U.S.. Credential evaluation for all courses taken outside of the U.S. are also provided through this office.

1. Current Services

- a. **Recruiting** – Recruit diverse international freshmen, transfer, postbaccalaureate, and adult students through recruitment travel, marketing, and individual communications. Assist with graduate recruitment where feasible.
- b. **Admissions Processing** – Process and evaluate all undergraduate applications for University/program entry as well as convert foreign academic qualifications to a U.S. GPA for both admission and scholarship purposes. Additionally set English proficiency standards and ensure qualification.
- c. **Credential Evaluation** – Academic credits taken outside the United States are evaluated for University of Akron equivalency for all students.

2. **Magnitude:** The international recruitment team spent 339 days recruiting in 42 countries this academic year. The IR Enrollment Pipeline for Spring 2018 through Fall 2018 consisted of “cold” communications to roughly 16,000 contacts, hard inquiry communications with more than 4,800 prospects, worked with 893 applicants, admitted 420 applicants, and expect a total of 150 international students for the year. Additionally, credential evaluations for credit were performed for 71 students.

3. Critical Partners

- a. **Internal:** Other divisions of the International Center, Admissions, Financial Aid, Athletics, IT.
- b. **External:** International high school counselors (International ACAC and CIS members), community college transfer centers,

Technolutions (beginning Fall 2018), U.S. State Department/EducationUSA, Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM).

4. **End-Users:** Attending International and Global Nomad students.
 5. **Key Performance Analysis:** Expected to increase from 67 new international students of all types (15 freshmen, 11 of whom were athletic recruits) in Fall 2017 to 139 international students (45 freshmen, 15 of whom are athletic recruits) in Fall 2018. Within five years, the goal is to have between 6 and 10% of the undergraduate student body be comprised of international students.
 6. **Brief Assessment:** There have been several structural changes to International Recruitment since its inception. Originally conceived as a recruiting only operation, in the first 4 months admissions processing and credential evaluation responsibilities were added. Additionally, one of the three recruiters was reassigned to the admissions processing team to keep up with the work load (further expansion of the processing team should be unnecessary with the implementation of the Slate CRM in 2018-2019). Thus, there are only currently 3 travelling staff (2 recruiters and the Executive Director). The third recruiter position will need to be replaced in 2019-2020 to continue growth and prevent burnout. Overall, targets have been met or exceeded for Fall 2018.
- ii. **Center for International Students & Scholars:** Support services for international students and scholars, broadly defined. This currently includes, international students (who need a visa to study), global nomads, and first-generation U.S. students (who self-identify).
1. **Current Services:**
 - a. **Educational (academic) support** – provide resources and services to help all students be successful academically.
Includes:
 - i. Orientation: online and on campus;
 - ii. Ad hoc ESL support;
 - iii. Akron Experience class;
 - iv. Events in collaboration with libraries and academic departments;
 - b. **Social support** – resources and services to help students and scholars. Includes:
 - i. Community building, virtually and on campus;
 - ii. Initiatives with UAPD, Counseling, Health Services, Res Life, academic departments, etc.;
 - iii. Support for student organisations;
 - iv. Friendship programs between US/international students and international students/Akron community;
 - v. Hardship fund for unexpected financial crises;

- c. **Programming** – events and programs to celebrate our differences and similarities. Includes:
 - i. Orientation: online, on campus, and on-going;
 - ii. International Education Week;
 - iii. Diversity Week/Black History Month/Rethinking Race, etc.;
 - d. **Pre-arrival outreach** (as part of online pre-orientation);
 - e. **Regular interaction with all constituencies** via website, newsletters, social media;
 - f. **Support for students/scholars** on issues of insurance and taxes;
 - g. **Community outreach**, including:
 - i. Fostering close relationship with local organisations, including Global Ties Akron and Akron Internationals;
 - ii. Friendship program with UA Women’s Committee assistance.
2. **Magnitude:** Per academic year, we serve approximately 1,200 international students. In addition, we serve hundreds of admitted international applicants who are seeking to negotiate the transition to Akron. It is more difficult to quantify the refugees, DACA, and first-generation students as they all self-identify and the number fluctuates. There are also approximately 100 visiting scholars and we are beginning to serve them also.
3. **Critical Partners:**
- a. **Internal:** General Counsel, OAA, Registrar, Graduate School, Deans, English Language Institute, academic advisors, and other divisions of the International Center. Also Student Affairs, Health Services, Libraries, Counseling, etc.
 - b. **External:** Global Ties, Akron Internationals
4. **End-users:** international students (need a visa to study), global nomads, first generation US students (who self-identify), and increasingly scholars, dependents, refugees...
5. **Key performance analysis:** Without having had a starting point in terms of metrics or a process in place to track success, we can only track performance in a general sense. We assess many of our events and programs for learning outcomes and students satisfaction.
- a. **Brief assessment:** For much of the first year, there was only one full-time employee involved in this work. The first year focused on building relationships across campus and in the community, on all aspects of orientation, and on creating new policies/procedures to best serve students. By necessity, little to no programming took place. Throughout the year additional support has been added to the area, so there are now two full-time employees in this area, which will permit us to extend our

support for students, provide support to scholars, and to begin programming for all.

iii. Immigration Services

1. Current Services:

- a. **Advising admitted applicants, current students, and visiting scholars** on matters relating to their immigration status;
- b. **Issuing initial Certificates of Eligibility (I-20s and DS-2019s)** to admitted applicants and incoming visiting scholars. This includes:
 - i. evaluating financial documents,
 - ii. reporting information to the Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) government database, and
 - iii. arranging for express shipping;
- c. **Assessing and discussing relevant policies** with campus stakeholders for increased compliance with federal regulations pertaining to F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrants, and clarifying, amending, and disseminating these policies;
- d. **Processing updated immigration documents for current students and certain alumni** relating to changes to academic programs, employment authorization, and travel;
- e. **Reporting government-mandated information** relating to student enrollment, employment authorization, student contact information, arrival of new students/scholars, and information about the university.

2. **Magnitude:** Per academic year, we serve approximately 1,200 international students (including approximately 400 alumni who have applied for or currently have optional practical training authorization). We serve approximately 100 visiting scholars. In addition, we serve hundreds of admitted international applicants who are seeking initial immigration documents to get student visas.

3. Critical Partners:

- a. **UA:** General Counsel, OAA, Registrar, Graduate School, Deans, English Language Institute, academic advisors, and other divisions of the International Center.
- b. **External:** While we do not necessarily consider the U.S. government a partner, we report mandated information and are in regular contact with government officials from U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

4. **End-users:** Primarily, we serve F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrants (prospective, current, & alumni). Secondly, we serve dependents (F-2 and J-2) and nonimmigrants with other visa statuses that seek to change to F or J

status. A third group that we serve is academic departments that have questions relating to students' enrollment or employment eligibility.

5. **Key performance analysis:** We aim to serve students, scholars, and academic departments accurately and efficiently. Without having had a starting point in terms of metrics or a process in place to track task assignment/completion, we can only track performance in a general sense. We normally have a two-week processing time for most applications to our office, although some are faster if they are simple or there is an urgent need to process them immediately. We are often waiting on students to submit additional documentation before we can complete processing, so the timeline is not often outside our control.
6. **Brief assessment:** During 2017-18 we increased our institutional compliance with federal reporting requirements by correcting past errors in tracking enrollment and creating new policies/processes aimed at efficiency and accuracy. Staying on top of the workload is our biggest challenge – advising this many students and managing the large amount of data without having data management software or additional staff makes it difficult to stay fully compliant with federal reporting requirements or increase efficiency of student services.

iv. Global Partnerships

1. **Current Services:** staying aware of various College/School efforts to build relationships with institutions abroad; maintaining electronic and hard copy records of agreements; working with OAA & General Counsel for approval/signature of new agreements; contacting counterparts at partner institutions for changes and renewals relating to agreements; and serving as the main contact for incoming exchange students.
2. **Magnitude:** UA currently has approximately 50 valid MOUs and 30 Agreements of Cooperation with institutions abroad, and a handful of new relationships are typically in development at any given time.
3. **Critical Partners:**
 - a. **Internal:** OAA, General Counsel, College of Polymer Science & Polymer Engineering, College of Engineering, College of Business Administration
 - b. **External:** our most critical partner universities are those with whom we have active exchange relationships and whose students have enrolled in Akron Masters Programs in COE & CPSPE.
4. **End-users:** UA faculty and deans (typically from the Colleges listed above under Critical Partners), OAA.
5. **Key performance analysis:** There were not clear expectations for this section when the Executive Director of Global Engagement was hired, so the unit is awaiting further guidance on priorities/goals. Meanwhile, the focus is on maintaining accurate records regarding current agreements

and amending/renewing agreements as deemed necessary in consultation with OAA.

6. **Brief assessment:** In the past year, the compiling of the current MOUs and Agreements, and regular communications with critical internal partners, has laid a helpful foundation for setting future goals. In the future, the university should identify and pursue strategic relationships with (1) destinations UA students are seeking to study abroad and (2) where we have a strong possibility of recruiting fee-paying international students.

v. Education Abroad

1. Current Services:

- a. **Individual student advising** to help students explore opportunities, narrow down options, and explain the steps needed to study abroad through a faculty-led program, exchange program, third-party program, or direct enrollment at a university abroad;
- b. **Promotion of study abroad opportunities** through study abroad fairs, orientations, and website and social media updates;
- c. **Facilitating student mobility** by providing timely information about deadlines, program eligibility requirements, and completion of necessary paperwork, and communicating with partners/affiliates;
- d. **Recordkeeping** relating to medical insurance, transient permission, student conduct, liability, itineraries for UA short-term programs, mandated information required by Clery Act, and study abroad participation;
- e. **Researching financial aid resources for study abroad** to provide students with a starting point for seeking funding their travels abroad.

2. **Magnitude:** Approximately 138 students participated in a credit-bearing education abroad experience between Fall 2017 and Summer 2018. Final numbers are not yet available.

3. Critical Partners:

- a. **UA:** Financial Aid, International Recruitment (transient credit processing), Risk Management, College of Business Administration, faculty directors.
- b. **External:** 14 exchange partner schools and 12 affiliated third-party study abroad program providers.

4. **End-users:** Primarily, students that participate in, or plan to participate in, study abroad opportunities. Secondly, faculty directors of study abroad programs.

5. **Key performance analysis:** Our student participation in study abroad is extremely low (less than 1% of our student population). Around 25% of the participants chose to go abroad for an entire semester.

a. **Brief assessment:** While improvements such as adding more information to the website have increased our ability to guide students seeking to study abroad, a lack of resources and multiple transitions within this area have resulted in minimal availability of individualized advising services. Further, faculty that wish to propose programs receive limited guidance, resources, or training. Another area that needs attention is developing policies relating to student eligibility, conduct expectations, and crisis response. Education Abroad is an area that requires investment, expertise, and strategic planning if the university wishes to increase the number of students studying abroad and enhance the quality of short-term programs.

c. **Resources**

i. **Personnel:** Please see attached organizational chart and refer to section (b) above regarding duties of each subdivision.

ii. **Financials:**

1. **Line-item summary of budgeted and actual expenses.** See appendix for a list of budgeted and actual operating expenses.
2. **History.** As this is a new unit, we do not have the history of the past 5 years.
3. **Key Takeaways.** The International Center (including International Recruitment) has become revenue positive in its first year of operation if projections hold true, one year ahead of schedule.

iii. **Equipment and technology:** General office equipment such as computers, printers, scanners, and phones are heavily utilized. The recruiters also use cell phones while traveling internationally. The computer systems accessed frequently include PeopleSoft, Nolij, Slate (beginning 2018), and the SEVIS government database. We also use social media accounts such as Facebook to communicate with students.

iv. **Space.** The unit is split into two suites in Buchtel Hall. We use 7 individual offices in Suite 202, as the eighth office is occupied by the Chief Diversity Officer. We use 5 offices in Suite 212, as the other offices are occupied by the President's Chief of Staff, Director of Community Engagement, and the Senior Executive Administrative Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer.

II. **Future Plans**

a. **Potential changes over the next 3-5 years:**

i. **International Recruitment**

1. Fully implement Slate CRM.

2. Reorient from a growth strategy to a focus on increasing quality and maintaining the international student population.
 3. Unforeseen geopolitical changes and currency fluctuations will be monitored and plans adjusted accordingly.
- ii. **Center for International Students & Scholars**
 1. Fine tune services and support for students.
 2. Increase services and support for scholars.
 3. Increase services and support for dependents of students and scholars.
 4. Refugee outreach and support (in collaboration with Multicultural Services.)
 5. Engage with international alumni.
 - iii. **Immigration Services**
 1. Acquire data management system to integrate university records, immigration documents, and SEVIS reporting requirements.
 2. If student enrollment increases as expected, hire an additional staff member to oversee implementation of the data management system and assist with the international student advising workload.
 - iv. **Global Partnerships**
 1. Establish and cultivate active exchange partnerships in destinations attractive to UA students.
 2. As partnership agreements including scholarship provisions approach auto-renewal deadlines, communicate to partner universities our intention to not renew the agreement.
 3. Seek direction from next president regarding priorities for global partnerships.
 - v. **Education Abroad**
 1. Acquire staff for advising.
 2. Work with campus partners to develop policies & processes relating to all aspects of education abroad.
- b. **Emerging trends and our planned responses:**
- i. **At UA:** The transitions during our first year have prepared us well for adapting to future changes as UA hires a new president.
 - ii. **In the field of international education:** Our field is significantly influenced by national policies regarding immigration, as policies perceived as adverse to international students can affect decisions of prospective students and the advising/support needs of current students. We plan to stay abreast of the latest changes (and potential changes) so that we can respond and reassure our applicants and students that we are here to help them navigate the changes.
 - iii. **Nationally:** The vast majority of U.S. schools are seeing either stasis or declines in their international student population. This has resulted in cuts are reassessments of tuition rates. Akron is in a strong position with both the out-

of-state tuition rate and scholarship offerings, combined with the appeal of our programs.

- iv. **Globally:** There is increasing competition for students, not just with other U.S. colleges and universities, but with institutions in the U.K., Canada, Australia, and even The Netherlands. Additionally, there is the beginning of a cultural shift in China that sees study at any but a Ivy League or similar school as poor ROI, which is expected to greatly reduce the number of Chinese undergraduates in the U.S..

As multiple surveys and studies have indicated, the top three concerns for international students are security, support, and cost. The Support & Services divisions will continue to work on enhancing the support services. Our costs are already competitive, and the recruiting team has adopted a diverse recruiting strategy to reduce the impact of declines in any one market.

International Center Organizational Chart

(Full Time Employees)



FY18 INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Expense Category	International Recruitment (203200)			Center for International Students & Scholars (203202)			International Education & Global Engagement (203205)		
	Original Budget	Adjusted Budgeted	Actual	Original Budget	Adjusted Budgeted	Actual	Original Budget	Adjusted Budgeted	Actual
5400 Student Assistants	20720	9718	9718	0	7280	7280	31000	20510	3259
5700 Supplies & Services	9160	59174	59714	17000	10220	8020	8500	15467	15467
6300 Communications	4800	1778	1778	3000	3000	0	500	0	0
7000 Travel & Hospitality	161200	104749	104749	30000	9386	2553	10000	5286	5286
7040 Hospitality	0	1195	1195	0	8400	8359	0	8547	8547
7080 Foreign Travel	0	61554	61554	0	0	0	0	0	0
7400 Cost Sharing	0	0	0	0	980	930	0	0	0
Total	195880	238168	238708	50000	39266	27142	50000	49810	32559

International Center as a Unit			
Expense Category	Original Budget	Adjusted Budget	Actual
5400 Student Assistants	51720	37508	20257
5700 Supplies & Services	34660	84861	83201
6300 Communications	8300	4778	1778
7000 Travel & Hospitality	201200	119421	112588
7040 Hospitality	0	18142	18101
7080 Foreign Travel	0	61554	61554
7400 Cost Sharing	0	980	930
Total	295880	327244	298409