

Gustavus Adolphus College

International Student Support Services Task Force

22 April 2016

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Introduction

Over the course of the last several years, the number of international students matriculating at Gustavus Adolphus College has risen markedly (see Table 1). Concern about whether the College is providing the support services required for the growing international student population at Gustavus came to the forefront at the October 2015 Faculty meeting.

As a result, the President announced the formation of the International Student Support Services Task Force. The following people were invited to serve on the Task Force:

- Mark Braun, Provost and Dean of the College (Presider)
- Paula O'Loughlin, Associate Provost and Dean of Arts and Humanities (Convener)
- Ana Adams, Faculty Representative
- Roger Adkins, International and Cultural Education Director
- Jeff Anderson, International Student Services Coordinator
- Thia Cooper, Faculty Associate for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence
- Margo Druschel, Academic Support Center Director
- Brian Konkol, Chaplain's Office Representative
- Maddalena Marinari, Faculty Representative
- Gisel Murillo, International Peer Educators Representative
- Hubert Ngabirano, Student Representative
- So Young Park, Global Engagement Committee (GEC) Representative
- Charlie Potts, Vice President for Student Life Designee
- Cynthia Yang, Vice President for Enrollment Management Designee
- Louis Yu, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) Representative

Charge

The Task Force was charged with the following:

....guide planning for the support services required of a larger international population, including:

- a. Assessment of present services and GAPS
- b. Enrollment
 - i. Admission (application/financial aid information)
 - ii. Retention (and completion if applicable)
- c. Pre-arrival
- d. Orientation
- e. Academics
 - i. Center for International and Cultural Education (CICE)
 - ii. Academic Support Center (ASC) (academic advising, academic support, disability services, English learning)
 - iii. Registrar
 - iv. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning (KCEL) (faculty development)
- f. Dean of Students and Chaplain's Offices
 - i. Residential and dietary needs
 - ii. Multi-faith/religious
 - iii. Groups, clubs, and organizations

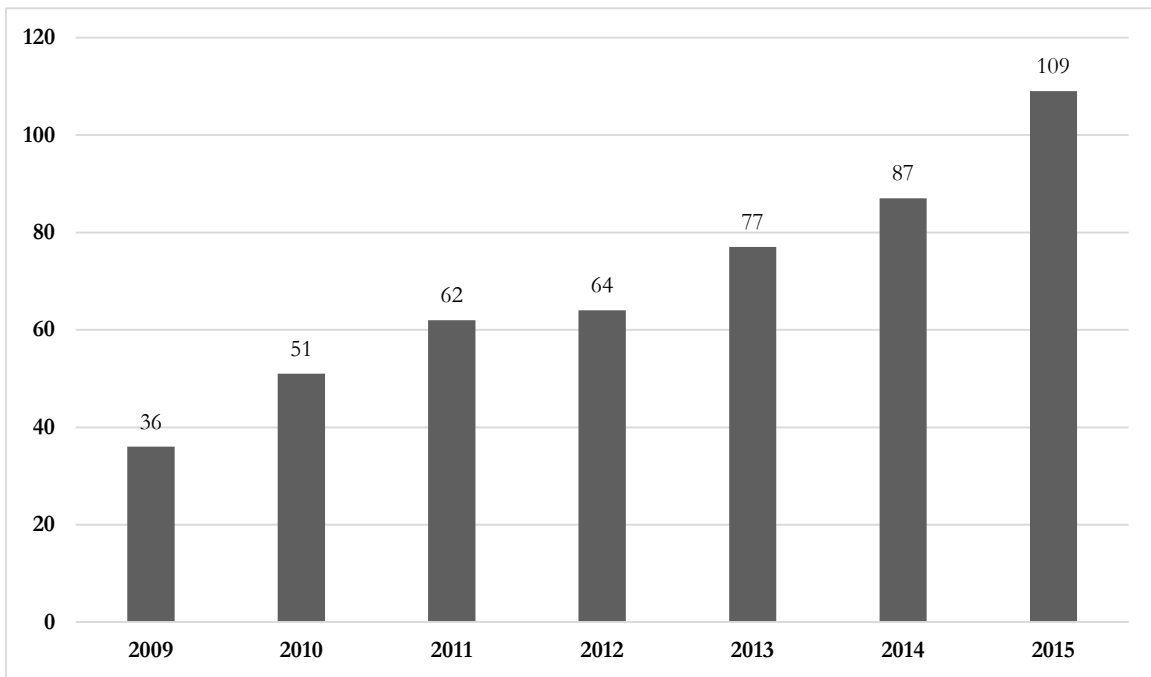
- iv. Federal, state, and local information (e.g., driving, shopping, tourism, school holidays)

The Task Force met four times as a whole (17 December 2015, 10 February 2016, 23 March 2016, 11 April 2016). Smaller sub-groups also met on their own to develop surveys. In addition, as the work of the group progressed, all work was uploaded to google documents so that even if people had to miss a meeting, they had the opportunity to still add their commentary.

Admission, Retention, and Satisfactory Academic Progress of International Students at Gustavus

Table 2 shows the number of international students at Gustavus as a percentage of the college’s enrollment going back to 1980. The number of students has ranged from the high 20s to the low 60s across these decades. However, since 2009-10, the population of international students enrolling at Gustavus has risen much more markedly from 36 to 109. Table 2 also illustrates that international students are growing in importance to the college’s overall enrollment. International students more than doubled as a percentage of the college’s overall enrollment across the same time period.

Table 1: Gustavus International Student Enrollment, 2009-2015¹



¹ Enrollment numbers based on fall semester enrollment

Table 2: Gustavus International Student Enrollment²

Year	Number of international students	Number of countries represented	Percent of FTE	Gustavus full-time equivalent students
1980-81	38	15	1.66%	2284
1981-82	35	19	1.53%	2284
1982-83	38	20	1.67%	2271
1983-84	33	15	1.54%	2147
1984-85	33	14	1.51%	2182
1985-86	29	15	1.33%	2174
1986-87	35	12	1.61%	2172
1987-88	44	20	1.91%	2304
1988-89	49	19	2.03%	2409
1989-90	50	21	2.13%	2348
1990-91	56	19	2.39%	2342
1991-92	51	21	2.25%	2271
1992-93	47	21	2.09%	2247
1993-94	44	22	1.92%	2296
1994-95	44	22	1.87%	2347
1995-96	62	26	2.61%	2379
1996-97	62	25	2.58%	2399
1997-98	61	24	2.55%	2390
1998-99	56	27	2.3%	2431
1999-00	46	21	1.83%	2516
2000-01	39	19	1.54%	2537
2001-02	43	21	1.66%	2592
2002-03	40	19	1.59%	2520
2003-04	40	22	1.57%	2555
2004-05	35	20	1.37%	2557
2005-06	34	20	1.31%	2587
2006-07	30	18	1.17%	2572
2007-08	35	17	1.36%	2573
2008-09	34	14	1.35%	2525
2009-10	36	14	1.47%	2456
2010-11	51	20	2.13%	2397
2011-12	62	24	2.53%	2450
2012-13	64	24	2.56%	2503
2013-14	77	22	3.15%	2441
2014-15	87	23	3.56%	2443
2015-16	109	29	4.6%	2364

² Enrollment numbers based on fall semester enrollment

It's also worth noting that unlike many peer institutions, Gustavus's international student population has not been focused on a particular feeder country or region of the world. Gustavus's international students truly have been from across the world. For example, the countries represented by the 109 international students on campus in Fall 2015 are as follows:

- Vietnam (34)
- Mexico (13)
- Sweden (9)
- Pakistan (8)
- China (8)
- Nigeria (6)
- Rwanda (5)
- Japan (4)
- Malaysia (4)
- Canada (4)
- Bangladesh (2)
- Ghana (2)
- South Korea (2)
- Jordan
- Libya
- Morocco
- Senegal
- India
- Ecuador
- Tajikistan
- France
- United Kingdom
- Burundi
- Solomon Islands
- Poland
- Ethiopia
- Russia
- Spain
- Germany
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Uzbekistan

The Task Force was also asked to address the retention and graduation rates for international students. International students are retained at levels comparable with the overall student body. Table 3 shows this data.

Table 3: International Student Retention³

Entering Year	Number of first year international students	Retention to sophomore year			Retention to junior year		
		Number	Percentage	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Percentage
Fall 2012	13	12	92%	90%	11	84%	83%
Fall 2013	23	21	91%	91%	17	73%	84%
Fall 2014	24	24	100%	90%	-	-	-
Fall 2015	43	40	-	-	-	-	-

³ The first percentage is for international students; the second percentage the retention percentage for the entire group of students in that entering class

While the college's 4-year graduation rate is lower than that of the entire student body in recent years, international students at Gustavus still graduate at a level that compares favorably with Gustavus's peer group aggregate 4-year graduation rates.

Table 4: Four-Year Graduation Rate

Entering Year	Entering Number	Graduation in 4 years	Percent Graduating in 4 years
2009	12	9	75%
2010	21	16	76%
2011	19	12	63%
2012	13	10	76%

Our international students also do well academically.

Table 5: Average Grade Point Average by Term

Semester	International Students	Aggregate Student Body Average GPA
Spring 2014	3.08	3.27
Fall 2014	3.10	3.238
Spring 2015	3.13	3.279
Fall 2015	3.12	3.259

This quick data scan shows that international students are coming to Gustavus from all over the world and they are doing well once here. The only difference of the last 5-6 years is that the volume of international students have grown rapidly.

Current Support Services

Gustavus currently has one full-time staff person (Jeff Anderson) who has international student support as one of his primary job responsibilities. His other two primary job responsibilities are *everything related to SEVIS and institutional immigration compliance and H-1B petitions*.

Inputs

Gathering Inputs from Students, Faculty and Administrative Staff

The Task Force began its work by subdividing into five research groups each tasked with collecting information. The first of these was Assessment of Student Concerns. This subgroup ran two focus groups in January 2016 and also sent an online survey to international students who could not come to the focus groups. The survey and the focus groups focused on the same set of questions:

1. What are your relationships with US students like?
2. What is your experience in the classroom like?
3. How involved are you in campus life?
4. What are the best aspects of your experience at Gustavus?
5. What are the things that frustrate you the most?
6. What expectations did you have about Gustavus when you first arrived and are they currently being met?
7. What kind of additional support would help you be more successful or have a better campus experience?

Twelve students responded to the survey and 14 students participated in the focus groups.

A second subgroup surveyed faculty online using the following questions:

1. Have you had international students in your classes or as advisees in the last two years?
2. What were some positive impacts or moments of joy that you experienced teaching or advising international students?
3. What challenges did you face in teaching or advising international students?
4. Please describe particular challenges (e.g. in communication or in intercultural understanding) that your students – both international and non-international – faced in learning and/or working with one another in the same classroom?
5. In your experience, what do you see as the key needs for international students?
6. What kind of faculty development (if any) would be helpful to aid you in working with this population (recognizing of course that they are not a homogenous group in terms of cultures of origin and other identities such as race, class, gender, etc.)?

Fifty-eight faculty responded to the survey.

A third subgroup surveyed Student Life staff and administrators on the following questions:

1. How involved are you in the orientation program of first year international students?
2. How involved are you in the general orientation program of first year students?
3. Please describe your personal contributions to retaining students at Gustavus?
4. In your specific work at Gustavus, how are the needs and challenges of orienting and retaining international students different from those of domestic students?
5. Please describe a time when you supported an international student at Gustavus?
6. What do you perceive as the greatest joys and challenges of international students at Gustavus?

Twelve Student Life administrators and staff responded to the survey.

The data collected by each of these first three subgroups is attached. A fourth subgroup was tasked with providing an overview of the College's current policies and practices for international students. The final subgroup was asked to review best practices in the field of international student support services.

As part of this, the Task Force also looked at the staffing levels and services provided by of international student offices at peer institutions. While there is no accepted or recommended "student to advisor ratio" for international student support, the Task Force felt this data would provide useful information. The Task Force shared the following information with 10 peer institutions and then asked for them to provide an overview of what they offer:

Gustavus has 110 international students. The Gustavus international student advisor is responsible for: initial I-20s; pre-arrival advising and logistics; course registration for first semester; international student orientation; advising on immigration, cultural transitions, academic issues, financial issues, personal issues; non-resident tax workshops; International Friendship Family program; a mentoring program; advisor for international student organization; J-1 exchange visitor program - exchange students and scholars; everything related to SEVIS and institutional immigration compliance; H-1B petitions and international faculty advising.

1. *How many international students do you have?*
2. *How many staff (full time equivalency – i.e. 1, 1.5) are responsible for international student advising?*
3. *Are the advising duties similar to Gustavus (listed above)? Please indicate if there is anything you do not do or anything you do in addition to those main duties. If elaboration regarding how you have structured things is helpful, please feel free.*
4. *Do you feel your level of staffing is sufficient? Please feel free to elaborate on that, if helpful.*

Responses

Augsburg College. 70 students. 2 advisors. Similar services. Does not do H-1B petitions. Suggests that 120 international students would require some changes, such as continuing to provide similar services and get additional staff support, or explore offloading certain responsibilities (e.g. registration for first semester or friendship family program). Notes the inevitable sacrifice would be a system that runs less and less like the family business - more like the U of M - where advisors primarily advise on immigration regulations.

Saint Scholastica. 90 students. 1 advisor. Does not do most initial I-20s, course registration for first semester, friendship family program, mentoring program, J-1 exchange visitor program, H-1B petitions. Meets with all students for 30 minutes each semester - 2 times for new students in first semester.

Hamline University. Just under 100 students. 1.25 advisors plus another position for programming (mentor program and friendship family program and events). Just started doing H-1B petitions. Does not do course registration.

Luther College. 144 students. 1.25 advisors. Does not do initial I-20s (admission), course registration for new students, J-1 scholars, H-1B petitions. Is part of Diversity Counsel - represents Diversity Center at events, lectures and meetings.

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. 150 students. 2 advisors, with one also working with intercultural/multicultural programs. Does not do J-1 program exchange students or scholars (academic affairs), course registration for first semester (academic advisor), initial I-20s (admission), friendship family program, or H-1B petitions. Does have a mentoring program and training of employees and students to work well with international students, cultural events and excursions.

Carleton College. 201 students. 3 advisors. Similar services. Does not do H-1B petitions.

Macalester College. 311 students. 2.5 advisors. 6 student employees. Similar services. Does not do initial I-20s (admission), course registration for new students, J-1 program, or H-1B petitions. Does a 1 hour meeting with each new student during first semester. Has an international student mentoring program.

No response. Saint Olaf, Bethel, Saint Catherine University.

Review of Inputs

After organizing and reviewing all of the above data, the Task Force identified key challenges facing international students at Gustavus. These challenges were then grouped under themes. Four overarching

themes emerged: academic, financial/careers, services, and social/community. Below are these themes as well as the individual issues identified:

Academic

Language barriers and need help with reading and writing

- Faculty need help/professional development to work with reading and writing issues faced by international students
- Faculty need training/professional development on how to teach to international students for whom English is not their first language; this issue ranges from assignment creation to evaluating student work to class discussion
- Individual students' needing a large amount of academic support
- Not enough academic support staffing with expertise working with international students

Academic culture of small liberal arts colleges

- Some international students come to Gustavus with the practice of rote memorization as their primary method for doing well in school
- Academic expectations of Gustavus need to be more clearly defined
- Domestic peers impatience with international students in classes
- Difficulty for international students with class discussion as a way of learning
- Misunderstanding of academic honesty and plagiarism expectations
- Class discussion is difficult for those whose English is weak
- Adjustment to academic expectations is hard
- Students face difficulty being selves in English in classroom

Training for faculty

- Lack of awareness among faculty of international students' needs
- Cultural expectations of faculty
- Cultural awareness needed by faculty
- International students often require extra help outside classroom
- Faculty not informed of what services are available and what we currently do
- Faculty find it difficult to comment on and grade papers with grammatical errors
- Faculty need support and need to learn new pedagogies that work for international and all students

Advising, registration, and orientation

- More resources for registration and orientation, especially around language barriers
- Advising and registration of international students needs to be improved upon so that students can succeed
- Late and large admission run into Jeff's work with orientation, visas and registration (meaning that he ends up doing initial work on paperwork, etc., when he should be focused on advising for registration and planning the orientation)

Financial and Career

Financial literacy: financial aid, funding, cost of attendance and living

- Proactive vs reactive financial support
- Provide some kind of coverage of US financial literacy for international students
- International students are stuck between the cost of attendance and aid available; as we get more and more high need students, resources become more and more limited
- If Admission is seeking students who can pay at least \$17,000 themselves (even with aid), this means that we are really only serving middle-class and wealthier international students
- Need to factor insurance and healthcare in to aid packages
- Need to factor cost of living into cost of education
- Students need help and guidance with financial aid and scholarship opportunities
- Need help with finding loans for international students and publicizing them
- Need help publicizing student employment jobs
- Need to develop an admission and financial aid process that does not rely so heavily on international postal/snail mail

Career development

- Need career services for international students. Stay in US or return home. Nothing Gustavus does now addresses these questions and opportunities for international students
- International students need to know about internship opportunities off campus. Few right now available for international students except off campus
- Students need a liaison for jobs and internships off campus

Medical financial literacy

- Lack of info around health services and insurance around acute care, chronic care and hospitalization
- Lack of proper system to transport students for medical appointments (current practice is ad hoc, episodic, and ineffective.)

Services

Housing

- Need housing over breaks

Transportation

- Public transport to MSP and Mankato
- Individual transport to medical appointments and other personal matters
- Transport around town
- Transportation in order to be moved into hostel over breaks.

Access issues

- International students not knowing where resources are or where to find them
- Everything decentralized and Jeff is the hub
- Old-fashioned paper-based systems
- All resources for students need to respect cultural differences

- To access services you need help with language barrier
- More international students = more needs

Food

- Accommodations for different types of food, diets, cultural and/or religious approaches to nutrition

Coordination between different offices

- Need coordination of services and supports across campus, in and outside the classroom

Social/Community

Integration/ segregation (group/ collective)

- Segregation in residence halls, organizations, and groups.
- Need opportunities for international students to meet US students
- Need for greater intercultural competence/engagement by domestic Gustavus community
- Lack of awareness and ignorant questions by domestic Gusties
- Social disconnect between US and international students
- International students sit together and alone in cafeteria
- Lack of connections outside campus
- Lack of integration in anything including greater Gustavus community
- Adjustment to US cultural norms is difficult
- Need acceptance of differences in greater Gustavus community
- International students think cultural festivals are perceived by other students as internal parties so other (domestic students don't attend them much)
- Roommate issues and challenges

Isolation (individual, loneliness)

- Distance from families
- Not a lot of friendships outside of other international students
- Don't feel a sense of community on breaks and weekends
- There are cultural norms around asking for/getting assistance
- Adjusting to US campus life

Mentorship

- Need peer mentors (both international and domestic) to help with adjustment

Existing Services

The task force then inventoried what the college currently does in the areas identified as concerns, best/common practices in the field of international student support services addressing these concerns and some initial ideas to address these issues offered by the Gustavus community. These are all provided below:

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Academic			
Language Barrier and need help with reading and writing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need staffing help • Faculty need help with reading and writing issues faced by international students. • Need academic support for individual students. • Faculty need training on how to teach international students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilingual Learner Specialist (Jody Bryant, 30 hours/week) • Writing Center (not their primary job) • Recent acquisition of Read and Write Gold, a comprehensive online reading and writing support program used by students with disabilities, but available to ALL students in the cloud on a site license. Will benefit ALL once we figure out how to use it effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive English language program (Summer Bridge Program and/or Semester). • Training for staff and faculty on how to write assignments and assess students who did not grow up in US educational system. • Providing access to online English language skills enhancement specifically targeted to thinking in English. • Volunteer courses for international students on English conversation, idioms, slang, grammar, pronunciation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online reading and writing program (such as Read and Write Gold) could be installed on computers in the renovated Anderson Hall computer lab. ASC and Writing Center will be located there and Writing Tutors and Peer Academic Coaches could be trained to instruct international students in how to use the program. • Ask KCEL to make faculty development around teaching in multilingual classrooms a priority.
Academic culture of small Liberal Arts college			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some international students come to Gustavus with the practice of rote memorization as the way they did well in school. • Academic expectations need to be more clearly explained. • Peers' impatience in class. • Discussion classes. • Misunderstanding of academic honesty and plagiarism. • Class participation is hard for those whose English is weak. • Adjusting to academic expectations is hard. • Students face difficulty being selves in English in classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International student orientation session on academics and classroom culture (1 hour out of 3 day orientation). • Booklet on US classroom culture sent pre arrival. • Post-orientation discussion with Writing Center director (3 weeks after orientation, an introduction to the writing center; only 1/3 of students attend). • Achievement Allies (ad hoc group of ASC and CICE staff, etc.) who come together at midterm and end of semester to review and address international students who may be struggling academically (it is reactive in nature, based on reporting) . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-arrival orientation (in country or online) with longer summer orientation program. • First semester for credit orientation course on US culture, academic expectations, social success, etc. • Training for staff and faculty (understanding diverse academic cultures of incoming students). • Peer programs pairing current international students with new, incoming students for academic success mentorship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online orientation module for students to complete pre-arrival (if we were to purchase an international student software program, it would have this and other capacities). • First-semester course on US academic culture, etc. • Peer program pairing new students with students already at Gustavus (they could be both domestic and international; this would also be an opportunity to build relationships). This could begin via social media before arrival to campus • Create some short videos showing examples of the academic culture at Gustavus (e.g.,

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASC session on academic culture, expectations, and how to access help (3 weeks after orientation; 1/3 student attendance) • International Peer Educators (returning international students help with orientation and serve as resources for new students, currently only formally available during orientation program). 		<p>students asking questions and disagreeing with professors in class discussions; office hours; academic advising; tutoring; writing center; etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask KCEL and CICE to include in faculty development activities training on how to help international and intercultural students adapt to the culture of a liberal arts institution.
Training for faculty			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness among faculty of international students' needs. • Cultural expectations of faculty. • Need for cultural awareness training of faculty. • International students require extra help outside of class. • Faculty not informed of what services are available and what we currently do. • Faculty find hard time in commenting and grading papers with grammatical errors • Faculty need support and learning of pedagogy that works for international and all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously, the college has done one or two "Teacher's Talking" and other KCEL workshops a year. • Writing Across the Curriculum workshop spring 2015 about how to assess student writing • 20 minutes of orientation for new faculty allowed for CICE Director to share information. • GEC and CICE Director setting agenda for 2015-16 to discuss ways to improve intercultural awareness on campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of international student population done as part of a broader campus wide internationalization and interculturalization strategic plan. • Develop certification series in order to train faculty and staff. • Online self-guided course to train faculty and staff. • Conferences and training sessions. • Participation in faculty seminars abroad (for additional intercultural development and gaining culture-specific knowledge). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Developing Intercultural Competence" series for faculty and staff; opt-in basis; completion of minimum number of workshops and activities leads to a certificate; will include a mix of workshops, self-guided activities, and experiential activities (this is in early discussions now: CICE director, CBSL director, planning to work with KCEL and D-Center, too). • Make faculty aware of the open-access Purdue Global Learning online module (aims to help faculty improve their own knowledge of the issues involved and their pedagogies). Completion of the module could count as one activity toward the certificate described above.

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Advising, registration and orientation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources for registration and orientation, especially around language barriers • Advising and registration of international students needs to be improved and expanded so students can succeed. • Late and large admission run into Jeff's work with orientation, visas, and registration (meaning that he ends up doing initial work on paperwork, etc. when he should be focused on advising for registration and planning the orientation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Anderson does pre-arrival registration and advising. In May and June, Jeff is busy with those same students, preparing their immigration documents, and advising them through the visa application process. He communicates with them about other pre-arrival matters (housing, student employment, health forms, insurance, arrival details, travel arrangements, requests for parent housing during orientation, and more). May and June is also when Jeff works with graduating students applying for OPT employment authorization or transferring to graduate schools, as well as advising all students who are traveling outside of the US during the summer (immigration documents, renewing visas, etc.). During May and June he is preparing H-1B petitions for new international faculty. • The ASC and volunteer faculty provide registration advising during international student orientation. • Students advised by FTS professors unless transfers/mid-year arrivals who are advised by Margo/Jane in ASC. • Faculty Advisor or ASC advising for subsequent semesters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient staffing and resources focused on international student advising. • Registration system and registration advising designed for students who are far from campus. • Training for staff and faculty re: registration, advising, and orientation. • One or more advisors are specifically designated as international advisors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising and Registration for incoming first-year students takes place in May and early June, and could be addressed by a 2-week contract extension for the Associate Director in the ASC. Cost: \$2,625, including benefits. <i>(Please note that the ASC cannot take this on without the contract extension to create the time to do the work.)</i> The rationale of this is that during May and June, Jeff is busy with those same students, preparing their immigration documents, and advising them through the visa application process. He communicates with them about other pre-arrival matters (housing, student employment, health forms, insurance, arrival details, travel arrangements, requests for parent housing during orientation, and more). May and June is also when Jeff works with graduating students applying for OPT employment authorization or transferring to graduate schools, as well as advising all students who are traveling outside of the US during the summer (immigration documents, renewing visas, etc.). During May and June he is preparing H-1B petitions for new

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
			<p>international faculty. Jeff has stated that if the course registration and advising is done well in May and June, it saves advising time in August during orientation and the beginning of the semester.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another idea would cost money (30 hours/11 months for approx. \$35,000 including benefits), but it would increase retention and serve a variety of students better. An additional professional advisor could share advising and registration duties among International students, transfer students and those returning to the College after a leave. All of these are populations which require extra time and attention. The transfers are advised by a professional advisor until they choose a major.

Financial and Career

Financial Literacy: financial Aid, funding, cost of attendance and living

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College tends to offer less proactive and more reactive support when crises happen. • Provide some kind of coverage of US financial literacy for international students • We are stuck between the cost of attendance and aid available. As we get more and more high-need students, resources are more and more limited; also, the fact that Admission is seeking students who can pay at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and financial aid information (general) provided by Admission. • Dean of Financial Aid, Doug Minter, works with current international students requesting additional financial aid. • Jeff handles individual advising on financial issues. • Jeff runs workshops about US taxes during tax-filing season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased financial resources necessary for international student admission and retention. • Scholarship programs are needed to support low-income international students (in order to ensure diversity); some institutions create programs in which students receive scholarships in exchange for sharing their cultural heritage and knowledge on campus and in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial literacy course or workshop series offered to all students (domestic students often need it, too), provided by Financial Aid • Ask Financial Aid to make financial information available in key target languages (e.g., Vietnamese, Spanish, Urdu). Current students could be hired to help with translation, or else professional translation services on short-term
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Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
<p>least \$17,000 per year themselves (even with lots of aid) means that we are only really serving middle-class and wealthier international students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to factor insurance and health care into aid packages. • Need to factor cost of living into cost of education. • Students need help and guidance with financial aid and scholarship opportunities before they get here and once they are here. • Need help with finding loans for international students and publicizing them. • Need help publicizing and connecting student employment jobs to international students. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and ongoing orientation sessions throughout the year to help students understand their options. • Financial orientation for parents of international students; providing this information in key target languages. • Hold Clinic - offered before registration begins to give students time to work on financial holds before registration. 	<p>contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create scholarship program for low-income international students (Admission and CICE working on a case statement draft for Advancement to edit and hopefully use in the future). • Ask Financial Aid to begin including costs of health insurance, a basic health care budget, and costs of living (e.g., including during breaks) into the costs of attendance and aid packages for international students. • Ask Financial Aid, Advancement, and CICE staff members to create a resource (webpage?) with information about scholarships available to international students. • Ask Advancement to develop a fund to provide financial assistance for students experiencing sudden financial hardship, e.g. circumstances in home country (conflict, economy, exchange rate, natural disasters, etc.). • Ask the Internal Budget Committee, Financial Aid, Student Billing, and CICE to collaborate in establishing a loan fund to provide aid to students with urgent financial issues (e.g., registration on hold, funding from home held up, medical expenses not covered by insurance,

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
			family tragedy/need to travel home). • More assistance with on- and off-campus summer employment options (Financial Aid and Career Development staff).
Career development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need career services for international students. • Students need to know about internship opportunities off campus. Few available for international students except on campus. • Students need a liaison for jobs and internships off campus. • Need career guidance for international students. Stay in US or return home. Nothing Gustavus does now addresses these questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Development advising and resources (general, not targeted). • Jeff runs workshops and individual advising regarding employment-related immigration regulations and strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding an International Career Fair on campus, inviting both domestic employers who hire international students and international employers who hire any students. • Resume and career search workshops specific to international students, including overview of different systems in US and home countries of largest international student groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Career Fair • Targeted career development workshop(s) for international students. • Enhance connections and networking options for international students (i.e., international alumni, alumni abroad, employers who highly value intercultural competence, language skills, and international perspectives).
Medical financial literacy			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of info around health services and insurance around acute care, chronic care, and hospitalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-arrival information sent regarding insurance and costs. • Health Service appointments during international student orientation. • Required international student health insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required health insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Student Life to develop system for transportation assistance for medical appointments. • Financial assistance for medical expenses not covered by insurance. • Medical financial literacy workshops, or include in general financial literacy workshops. • Provide basic information in key target languages.

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Services			
Housing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need housing over breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southwest Hall Hostel for Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring Breaks. • College View Apartments for summer break. • Residential Life efforts regarding food, transportation, activities for students in hostel for break this year. • Residential Life policies for earlier arrival and later departure for students who live more than 350 miles away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing students to remain in regular housing during breaks, or providing a substitute option of equal quality. • Placing students in holiday homestays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator/resource for students on campus during break (e.g., transportation, activities, food, Lund Center access, campus center access). • Improve kitchen in Southwest Hall Hostel (e.g., replace small fridge with two, full-sized fridges, better cooking equipment, serveware). • Ask Student Life team to ensure that students have access to transportation for grocery trips during the break. • Ask Student Life team to have selected meals catered for the students in residence during breaks.
Transportation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport to MSP and Mankato. • Individual transport to doctor's appointments and other personal matters. • Transport around town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discount Land to Air tickets through Campus Activities. • International Friendship Families sometimes provide transportation. • Jeff provides some emergency transport and helps students find other options to the extent he can. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schools have contracted with a rental car service to place a small number of rental vehicles on the campus; relatively inexpensive rental option; with reservation system. • Advocacy with local and regional authorities to improve transportation options (e.g., public buses, light rail, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand or improve online ride share (ride board) options. • Driver training options for students (Campus Safety or student organization). • Explore campus rental vehicle programs. • Advocacy for more area bus and public transportation services. • Explore additional discounts or subsidies for Land to Air shuttle service. • Create a network or system to aid students with specific transportation needs (e.g., medical appointment, job interview, emergency).

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Access issues			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International students not knowing what resources are or where to find them. • Everything decentralized and Jeff is the hub in the middle which wastes time and puts stress on Jeff. • We have old-fashioned, paper-based system. • We need resources for students that respect cultural differences. • To access services, you need help with language barrier • More students =more needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Student Orientation: an introduction to resources. • Jeff advising and referral to resources (serving as a kind of triage point). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with international student advisor each term to identify academic and social concerns and educate on resources (high maintenance but high quality option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional international student advising support (beyond one staff member). • Develop a pool of advisors specifically trained to work with international students (particularly in biggest majors) • Move or restructure some services provided by international student advisor (e.g., course registration for new students to faculty or academic advisors, H-1B petitions to external immigration attorneys, initial I-20 issuance to Admission). • Central data point or interface for international students to help them find services and resources (perhaps a webpage). • Student appointments with international student advisor each semester - more holistic advising rather than reactively dealing with issues (would need more staff or reduction in some services). • More peer advising (expansion of IPE program).
Food			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodations for different types of food, diets, cultural and/or religious approaches to nutrition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining Service makes an effort to offer food from different major food traditions, occasion halal, kosher, etc. options. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite International student representative to the Kitchen Cabinet. • Additional/ongoing training for Dining Service staff on cultural approaches to foods and nutrition.

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Coordination between different offices			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need coordination of services and supports across campus, in and outside the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CICE communication and collaboration with other departments has to be ad hoc because of the load of international students Jeff carries. • Achievement Allies group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of international student population done as part of a broader campus wide internationalization and interculturalization strategic plan. • Interoffice committee (CICE, Student Health, Counseling, Academic Support, Residential Life, Dean of Students, Diversity Center, etc.) focused on student success - academic, social, health, etc. - regular meetings to address student needs. • “Specialist” on international student needs developed in each of the key units listed above; training for these individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing inter-office committee (maybe the next evolution of this Task Force?) • Appointment of a “specialist” in each unit. • Develop a broader campus internationalization and intercultural awareness and competence plan.
Social/Community			
Integration/segregation (group/collective)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segregation in campus res halls, orgs and groups. • Need opportunities for international students to meet US students. • Need for greater intercultural competence (lack of awareness of cultures, engagement, questions faculty and students). • Social disconnect between US and international students. • International students sit together in cafe, isolated from others. • Lack of connections outside the campus. • Lack of integration in anything including greater Gustavus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Friendship Family Program. • International Peer Educator Program. • International Cultures Club and other student organizations and their many events. • Jeff’s individual advising about integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of international student population done as part of a broader campus wide internationalization and interculturalization strategic plan. • Intentionally organize social events, trips, off campus opportunities for international students and domestic students. • Funding for International Peer Educator Program - student employment and events and activities • Programming to encourage international student/domestic student interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize choosing to room with someone from another cultural background (modest discount, paid for within the Residential Life budget?). • Idea for a series of events in which all students are invited to interact with people from the local community area (e.g., ice fishing trip in January, bowling league, Minnesota/Nordic folk dance), special invitation to international, intercultural, and non-Minnesota students • Organize a series of intercultural forums each year, where panels of

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
<p>community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to US cultural norms is difficult. • Need acceptance of differences by greater Gustavus community. • International students think cultural festivals are perceived by other students as internal parties, so other students don't tend to attend them. 			<p>students from different countries comment on social or cultural issues, leading to open discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student appointments with international student advisor each semester - more holistic advising regarding integration, rather than reactively dealing with issues (would need more staff or reduction in some other services) • More peer advising (expansion of IPE program and events) • Develop a broader campus internationalization and interculturalization plan
Isolation (individual, loneliness)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from families. • Not a lot of friendships outside of other international students. • Don't feel a sense of community during breaks and on weekends. • There are cultural norms around asking for/getting assistance. • Adjusting to US campus life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling center does groups and individual appointments for transition issues but there's a long wait on the individual appointments. • International Friendship Families Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for international student mental health. • Support for international students in times of crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a campaign to educate US students about the benefits of forming intercultural friendships (capture current student and/or alumni friendship stories; add to new student orientation a discussion of the unique chance in the College years to form lasting intercultural friendships). • Create an online system in which students looking for buddies for specific kinds of recreation, mini-excursions, trips to town, etc.
Mentorship			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need peer mentors (both international and domestic) to help with adjustment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Peer Educator Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of mentorship programs at other colleges are examples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolster the existing IPE program; use a core of paid student workers to serve as the main staffing; provide funding for events and programs.

Issues/challenges identified	Existing Services	Best Practices	Suggestions
Compliance with immigration and other regulatory matters related to international students and scholars at the college			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities for student, faculty, and institutional immigration and regulatory compliance are impacted by level of staffing and level of other responsibilities of advisor. • Gustavus has had very few students become out of status or have serious immigration problems, though that can become more of an issue as international student enrollment increases and advising support is spread more thin. • Not all international students are compliant with non-resident tax return filing requirements. • There are new Optional Practical Training (OPT) and SEVIS reporting requirements that take more time for DSOs (designated school officials) and communication with students (graduated students on OPT in particular). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time international student advisor responsible for advising students on immigration and maintaining legal status; advising students on petitions for immigration benefits; SEVIS reporting and compliance; PDSO (primary designated school official) and RO (responsible officer) responsibilities; SEVIS recertification; J-1 program redesignation; reporting to DHS; annual report to DOS; I-9s, W-4s, and SSNs for international students; tax compliance for international students; H-1B petitions • Gustavus is designated as a VITA site for non-resident tax returns and Jeff is trained to provide tax workshops and advise students on non-resident tax returns. Annually holding 8 VITA tax workshops for students and individual advising. Jeff spends approximately 30 hours with VITA workshops and non-resident tax advising • Estimate of 4-5 petitions per year (80 hours for Jeff) preparing and advising for H-1Bs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools are required by law to provide adequate staffing and sufficient support services to administer their J-1 or F-1 programs and to ensure that their employees are adequately qualified and appropriately trained to comply with regulations and immigration laws pertaining to the administration of those programs. • Unusual for H-1B petitions to be done in house at small schools. They are a separate area of expertise that requires continuous education and experience. There are liability concerns for the institution, including financial penalties for non-compliance with DOL and DHS requirements. • Most schools have moved away from a VITA tax preparation site to purchasing software for non-resident tax returns, and advising in collaboration with that software. Expertise and advising of students on non-resident tax returns is still necessary, even with tax software. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsource H-1B petitions to immigration attorneys. Estimate of 4-5 petitions per year at \$4,000 to \$5,000 per petition OR allot a similar amount of funding to hire a second CICE staff member (below full-time) to work with international student services. • Purchase a license for non-resident tax return software (GLACIER Tax Prep or Sprintax – estimate of approximately \$1,500).

Conclusions and Recommendations

International students have been part of the Gustavus community for a long time. The College has benefitted from their membership in the community just as much as international students have benefitted from their Gustavus educations. As long as the number of international students coming to Gustavus stayed relatively low, the college has been able to provide a basic level of support services for these students. Even without staffing comparable to other institutions, the willingness of employees to go the extra mile to help international students succeed at Gustavus worked fine as long as the number of international students stayed small. However, the rapid increase in the number of international students in the last three years and their needs illustrates how Gustavus has outgrown current structures for international student support.

The Task Force review also showed that one of the very real difficulties with providing adequate support to our international student population lies in the other tasks that the International Student Support Administrator now carries. The H1-B responsibilities also need to be covered for the College or we risk non-compliance with federal law. We offer two possible ways to address this at the end of the document.

The Task Force is cognizant of the college's resource limitations and so, despite many excellent suggestions, we have targeted our recommendations carefully—focusing recommendations on tangible, short-term (realizable within 6 months to 1 year) actions that are fairly modest in cost, but that will increase international students' quality of student experience. Several long-term priorities were also identified and are outlined later in the report.

Short-Term Recommendations

Short-term suggestions are listed in priority order within each area of concern:

Academic

Students

Strengthen orientation to liberal arts college culture and ways of learning by:

1. Strengthening international student peer orientation program by August 2016.
2. Developing by the end of spring 2017 an online orientation module for students to complete pre-arrival.
3. Installing an Online Reading and Writing Program by fall 2017 on computers in the renovated Anderson Computer Lab. Ensure that Writing Tutors and Peer Academic Coaches are trained to instruct International students in how to use the program.

Faculty

Make faculty development for teaching multilingual students in classes a priority in Kendall Center by:

1. Piloting and then implementing a "Developing Intercultural Competence" series for faculty and staff; opt-in basis; completion of minimum number of workshops and activities leads to a certificate; will include a mix of workshops, self-guided activities, and experiential activities. This is in early discussions now: CICE director, CBSL director, planning to work with KCEL and D-Center, too and should be implemented by Fall 2017.
2. Encouraging faculty awareness and use of open-access resources such as the Purdue Global Learning online module (aims to help faculty improve their own knowledge of the issues involved and their pedagogies) by December 2016. This could be done by a link to such resources on the KCEL website.

3. Considering as part of college wide efforts to enhance advising in the next year how best to support international students as student advisees.

Financial

Help international students control their own financial circumstances by

1. Offering a Financial literacy course or workshop series in or by January 2017 which includes medical financial literacy as well as general financial literacy.
2. Making financial information such as cost of attendance available for prospective students and their parents by fall 2017 in key target languages (e.g., Vietnamese, Urdu).
3. Identifying by Fall 2017 a list of on campus and off campus summer employment options for international students and publicizing it. This list will be updated every term.
4. Developing by Fall 2017 a set of targeted career development workshop(s) for international students. As part of this, we need to enhance connections and networking options for international students (e.g., international alumni, alumni abroad, with employers who highly value intercultural competence, language skills, and international perspectives).

Services

Help international students feel supported by:

1. Creating by fall 2016 a network or system to aid students with specific transportation needs (i.e., medical appointment, job interview, emergency).
2. Enhancing services and support offered during breaks by December 2016. This includes identifying a coordinator of resources for students on campus during break - transportation, activities, food, Lund Center access, campus center access. This also entails improvement of the kitchen in Southwest Hall Hostel (e.g., replace small fridge with two, full-sized fridges, better cooking equipment, serviceware, etc.) and ensuring that students have access to transportation for grocery trips during the break.
3. Enhancing community cultural growth through food by inviting an International student rep to sit on the Kitchen Cabinet and providing additional/ongoing training for Dining Service staff on cultural approaches to foods and nutrition.

Community

Strengthen international students' sense of connection to their peers by:

1. Bolstering by Summer 2017 the existing IPE program; use a core of paid student workers to serve as the main staffing; provide funding for events and programs.
2. Launching a campaign to educate US students about the benefits of forming intercultural friendships (capture current student and/or alumni friendship stories; add to new student orientation a discussion of the unique chance in the College years to form lasting intercultural friendships)
3. Create an online system through CBSL in which students looking for buddies for specific kinds of recreation, mini-excursions, trips to town, etc. can connect.

On their own, however, the short-term recommendations listed above will only partially address the issues this Task Force identified. The Task Force review also showed that one of the very real difficulties with providing adequate support to our international student population lies in the other tasks that the International Student Support Administrator now carries. The H1-B responsibilities also need to be covered for the College or we risk non-compliance with federal law. We offer two possible ways to address this below.

Finally, we also suggest some long-term recommendations which will help create the inclusive environment we want to be providing our international students.

H-1B Visa Responsibilities and Their Impact on International Student Services

The Task Force review showed that one of the very real difficulties with providing adequate support to our international student population lies in the other tasks that the International Student Support Administrator now carries. Yet, the H-1B responsibilities also need to be covered for the College or we risk non-compliance with federal law. We offer below two possible ways to address this problem.

Although H-1B petitions pertain to international faculty hires, the workload involved in preparing H-1B petitions and advising international faculty competes directly with the workload for international student services. H-1B petitions are for new faculty international hires, and are necessary for temporary employment authorization. The H-1B petitions are good for three years, and can be renewed for another three years. Tenure-track faculty normally apply for legal permanent residency (LPR), based on their employment, while they are in H-1B status.

At the moment, Jeff Anderson prepares the H-1B visa petitions and advises international faculty on that process. It takes approximately 20 hours of preparation and advising for each H-1B petition, as well as expertise and experience with H-1B petitions and immigration law and continuing education and best practices. It is unusual for H-1B petitions to be handled on campus. Many colleges use immigration attorneys to complete their H-1B petitions. Jeff has been preparing H-1B petitions and advising international faculty for many years, and has a background in law, which makes him more qualified to handle H-1B petitions than most international student advisors. Gustavus immigration attorneys prepare our LPR petitions, and Jeff serves as a liaison between the attorneys, faculty members, and the Provost's office to help with parts of the LPR process.

When there were around 45 international students enrolled at the College, and one or two H-1B petitions to prepare each year, the task fit much more neatly into Jeff's workload. As we have now topped 100 international students, though, and there may be as many as six H-1B petitions to prepare in one year (all of them during the late spring), the combination of duties is becoming untenable.

Moreover, there is significant liability involved. H-1B petitions are very complex: there are numerous laws and policies to observe, as well as the possibility of audits by the Department of Labor and the Department of Homeland Security. The best practice is either to employ external experts who are immigration attorneys, or to employ similar persons on the in-house staff in a specialized role (e.g., at the University of Minnesota).

To resolve these issues, one of two courses of action is needed:

1. Adopt a policy of using external immigration attorneys to handle this process, at a rate of approximately \$5,000 per application (up to \$30,000 per year).
2. Retain Jeff in this role, given his experience, and use the funds saved by not hiring an external attorney's office (as in option #1) to hire an additional staff member in International Student and Scholar Services (CICE) at Gustavus, thereby reassigning some of the international student advising work detailed in this document and ensuring that Jeff has adequate time to handle the H-1B petitions to the best of his abilities.

Duties for an Additional (Part-Time) International Student Advisor

The following duties – all of which are increasingly difficult for Jeff Anderson to fulfill in the face of rapidly growing numbers of international students, international faculty, and other international visitors to campus – would be reassigned to a new, part-time advisor in order to ensure that Jeff has adequate time to handle visa processing in all categories, compliance, reporting, H-1B petitions, crisis management, and other “higher level” duties.

- **International Friendship Families (IFF) program.** Recruit families, process applications from families and students to participate, match families and students, orientation for new families, communication with families and students regarding expectations and issues that arise, coordinate a full-group IFF gathering each semester.
- **International Cultures Club (ICC) advisor.** Attend ICC meetings, communicate with ICC leaders, advise on events such as international festival, guide ICC leaders and participants to become a better organization at advancing goals of better integration of international and American students and improved intercultural experiences.
- **International Peer Educators (IPE) program.** Planning and implementation of IPE program for international student orientation followed by additional programming throughout the academic year for first-year students and other participants.
- **International Student Orientations (ISO).** Assist with planning and implementation of international student orientation before the start of both fall and spring semester.
- **Immigration support.** Assist Jeff with the more basic immigration tasks: initial I-20s, travel signatures, SEVIS registration of students each semester.

Long-Term Recommendations

While the Task Force mostly focused on the type of immediate changes the college can implement to provide international students a positive and rewarding experience at Gustavus, we believe that it is just as important to consider what the college can do for this population in the long-run. As the school invests time, energy, and money on bringing to campus a growing number of international students, it is important to keep in mind that the success of these efforts hinges upon the quality of these students’ experience once they are on campus.

- At a time when we are creating a new strategic vision, we propose to involve international students in any discussion about inclusion on campus. As an immigrant college, our institution should embrace international students as integral to the future of the college;
- As the college discusses ways to globalize the campus and the curriculum, international students’ integration into campus life should continue to be a priority;
- The college should regularly assess international students’ experiences in light of best practices;
- As the number of international students increases, it is critical to have scalable services to correspond to their growth.