

International Friends Program 2011-2012 Executive Summary

What is the IFP?

For international students, coming to the U.S. to study is an exciting opportunity. At the same time, separation from family and home culture while trying to navigate the university setting can be a difficult and frustrating experience at times. In an effort to create a welcoming environment for international students, scholars and interns at FAU, The Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) has initiated the International Friends Program (IFP) to help international students transition to life in the U.S. The purpose of IFP is to promote friendship and cultural exchange by matching incoming international students, scholars and interns with other members of the FAU community. This program is funded by the FAU Student Government.

IFP Members 2011-2012

Bajracharya	Sumit
Barna	Charlotte
Cabezas	Jany
Connolly	Caitlin
Espino	Catheryn
Forman	Amanda Ruth
Gold	Rachel
Homor	Dana
Maragh	Shakeera
Medina	William
Mompremier	Tathia
Rohmaningtyas	Damayanti
Sanchez-Herrera	Pedro
Sawh	Zara
Schreiber	Karl
Stockdale	Amanda Leigh
Vincente	Zsak
Yap	Ka Kei
Zhang	Long

Fall 2011 IFP Sponsored Programs, Activities and Events

In addition to the events below, IFP Planning meetings were held on September 16, 2011, October 29 2011, November 30 2011, January 20 2012, February 10 2012, April 9 2012. (Average 7 members at each meeting)

1. IFP Peer Mentor Welcome and Training, Friday August 12 2011. The accepted IFP mentors were in attendance and engaged in a 2 hour meet and greet and training session, preparing them with information and resources for their role as IFP mentors.
2. IFP members were in participation at the international student orientation sessions on August 17 2011, August 19 2011 and August 23 2011. (Average 6 IFP members at each orientation session)
3. ISSS Welcome Reception August 31, 2011. (Total of 104 persons in attendance)

<u>Things Liked The Most</u>	<u>Areas of Improvement</u>
The atmosphere	Better/different times and dates, vary them
Chatting with Intl People	Have intl student alumni come and talk
Meeting New People	More fun events: singing/dancing
The food, talking and greeting	Have different cultural/national performances
Good conversations, information exchange	Introduce people who are present
Learning about the upcoming events, clubs	More Field Trips
Coffee and Snacks/Food	More Time to talk/meet with other students
Learning about fitness	More Ice Breakers
Talking to new students	More games, like language games
The informal atmosphere	Maybe make it longer to allow for more interaction
	More time for socializing
	Learn about other countries, not just the USA

IFP in the Future :

This summary of information has been taken from evaluations received from IFP peer mentor own suggestions for improvement of the program gathered at the end of year luncheon on April 20th:

It should also be noted, that for the 2012 to 2013 academic year, there were 37 applicants up from 28 applications in 2011.

1. Begin the matching process of matching incoming students with peer mentors at an earlier time (prior to August). This has already begun since the application process started much earlier and selected IFP applicants have already been informed of acceptance.
2. Last year we had approximately 10 very actively involved IFP mentors who participated more and came to the majority of events and programs. We are hoping to increase this to at least 15 consistently actively involved IFP members by accepting more qualified applicants and also being more supportive to IFP members. This would include ensuring that IFP members participate in Leadership trainings and programs on campus such as the ones provided by COSO and student government.
3. Make a "Person of Contact" list so that incoming students who want to reach out to other students specifically from their home country (in addition to having a peer friend) can reach such an individual. To date, this list has already been created.
4. Make attendance at international student orientations mandatory for all peer mentors as way to ensure that they are able to establish connections early in the academic year.
5. Invite official personnel at the university to be more involved in the IFP events and programs such as the university president.
6. Work more collaboratively with the International Student Organization and other student clubs at FAU to facilitate overcoming financial constraints as well as getting students more involved in all avenues on campus.
7. Greater variety of social events such as movie night, games night, language learning night. Also more outside field trips and cultural events off campus such as a city tour etc.
8. Develop a resource room in the ISSS office where IFP mentors can meet and discuss programs. This is already in the process and awaiting the set up of the computers in the resource room.

COFFEE HOUR EVALUATIONS AND FEEDBACK (2011-2012)

Date	Number of student in Attendance	IFP Friend/Mentors in Attendance
10/5/2011	11	N/A
10/21/2011	11	5
11/2/2011	19	8
11/15/2011	14	5
2/10/2012	22	N/A
2/22/2012	20	4
3/14/2012	15	2
3/28/2012	19	4

EVALUATION FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS:

Things Liked The Most

The atmosphere
 Chatting with Intl People
 Meeting New People
 The food, talking and greeting
 Good conversations, information exchange
 Learning about the upcoming events, clubs
 Coffee and Snacks/Food
 Learning about fitness
 Talking to new students
 The informal atmosphere

Areas of Improvement

Better/different times and dates, vary them
 Have intl student alumni come and talk
 More fun events: singing/dancing
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 Introduce people who are present
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 More games, like language games
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 More time for socializing
 Learn about other countries, not just the USA

Topics for the Future

Immigration
 Immigration/Alumni
 Politics in the USA

What they got from Coffee Hour

Friends

131/8
 12/21

28/6
 4.5