ORIENTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENT LIFE AT HAVERFORD

POST-CONVERSATION TRANSCRIPT

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
AN OMA/CPGC COLLABORATION
International Student Life at Haverford

[re]ACT: Community Conversation Series
Sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and Center for Peace and Global Citizenship (CPGC)

Friday, November 20, 2015
CPGC Cafe, Stokes 104

SESSION OVERVIEW

This discussion addresses two broad topics framing issues faced by the Haverford international student community:

Social:
- Understanding American cultural references (e.g. sports, tv shows)
- Integrating into the American lifestyle - overcoming the language barrier
- Sharing similar hobbies/interests with American peers

Academics:
- Comparing the classroom environment in America to those of other countries
- Communicating with professors about academic performance and grades

[re]CC COMMITTEE

- Stephanie Zukerman, CPGC Program Coordinator
- Tamar Hoffman '16, CPGC Intern
- Benjamin Hughes, OMA Program Coordinator
- Oluwatobi Alliyu '16, OMA Intern
- Clara Abbott '18, OMA Intern

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- Matthew Liu ‘18, ISS Intern
- Nicholas Kyriakoglou ‘16, ISS Intern
SESSION NOTES

- Introductions of international students in panel
- Jumped right into discussion/powerpoint

- What assumptions are made here about what is and isn’t “universal” cultural knowledge?
- What are differences in TV and other media between America and other cultures?
- What are differences in how we talk about sports between America and other cultures?
- How does customs week and the customs program as a whole privilege certain cultures over others?
- What assumptions are made about what it means to be an international student?

- American TV is extremely violent and sexual and does not have clear moral points behind it.
- Sports like soccer can be a way to find cultural middle ground.
- Can be more difficult to have “Haverford style” confrontations as an international student
- Can be difficult to find solidarity/relate to other international students on the hall if they come from radically different countries/cultures
- The honor code, small classes, relationships with professors, and other academic expectations are very specific to Haverford culture.

1. Importance of not making assumptions about someone's cultural background or knowledge
2. Importance of not making assumptions about what international student status means
3. Acknowledging that American culture is not the “default” and that it is one culture in the context of many others that matter