

## **iMentor Resource Guide**

International Peer Mentors (iMentors) help new international students adjust to life at UNT and in the United States, direct students to available campus resources, introduce students to local cultural traditions and norms, and assist with English language skills and fluency.

### **Goals**

- Increase social interactions among domestic and international students
- Foster friendship and understanding between peers from different cultures
- Encourage personal growth and academic success

### **iMentor Role**

- Listen to your mentees
- Serve as a mentor/advisor to 1 or more incoming international students
- Reach out regularly to your mentees
- Share campus resources with mentees
- Meet with mentees 30 hours each semester
  - Welcome Parties (required)
  - iMentor Program Mixers (required)
  - Thanksgiving Dinner (required)
  - Cultural Programs and Events
  - Campus Activities

### **Time Commitment, Requirements and Responsibilities**

- Attend mandatory Access peer mentor training
- One year of service (two long semesters)
- Attend required activities listed above
- Attend university programs and events with mentees as schedules allow

### **Benefits of Mentoring**

- Enhance leadership skills
- Build confidence and language skills
- Develop interpersonal and cultural skills
- Explore cultural differences and similarities
- Make a difference in the lives of others

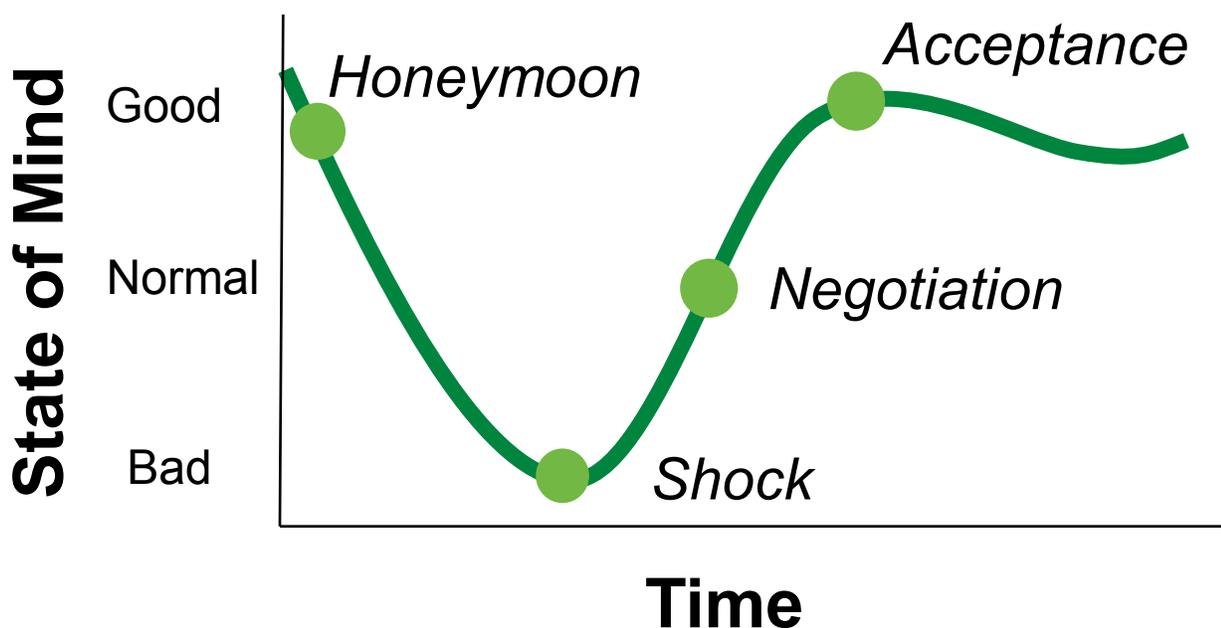
### What to Expect

As an iMentor, it is important that you understand the unique challenges faced by international students. International students are not only adjusting to life on a college campus, but entering into a new educational system and environment, they are exposed to different foods, cultural norms and expectations, and new living arrangements. What's more, many international students manage to navigate all of this while speaking a language they have most likely acquired through classroom study. English is often the second (or third) language spoken by international students.

Developing a support system and establishing friendships is vital to international students' success. Mentors play an extremely important role in both. International students may not feel comfortable asking for help for a number of reasons. Some cultures consider mental health a taboo topic. Some students may have a natural fear of authority figures based on lived experiences in their home country. In many cultures, it is the students' job to make their parents proud so even when they are struggling, students may hide it from their families and friends.

As you guide your mentee, please be aware of the cultural adjustment process and symptoms of culture shock. Be ready to guide your mentee to available campus resources like the Counseling and Testing Center and the CARE Team.

### Cultural Adjustment Process Timeline



During the Honeymoon phase, everything is GREAT. Students love everything about America, about Texas, and about UNT.

Shock settles in after dealing with the overwhelming and continual confrontation of cultural differences.

- Symptoms of Culture Shock
  - Extreme homesickness
  - Avoidance of social situations
  - Physical health problems
  - Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Irritability
  - Feelings of isolation

Students start to adjust to their new environments during the Negotiation phase. Finally, students accept and become comfortable with the cultural differences in the Acceptance phase.

As you get to know your mentee, you may want to research their home country and culture. Be aware of both cultural differences and similarities but be careful not to assign these differences and similarities any value.

- Unique Challenges Facing International Students
  - Family expectations and pressure
  - Stress when adapting to new culture
  - Communication/English language barrier
  - Asking for help may be frowned upon in home country
  - Class expectations may differ from home country

*Throughout each semester, UNT Counseling and Testing Services offers a series of workshops to address these challenges. You are welcome to attend and encouraged to bring your mentee.*

*A calendar of all programs and events with the Division of International Affairs may be found on our website at [international.unt.edu/studentactivities](https://international.unt.edu/studentactivities). You can also find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).*

## Building relationships with your Mentee

We hope that the International Peer Mentor Program at UNT will lead to invaluable, lifelong friendships. As you develop a relationship with your mentee, please remember

- Invite your mentee out for a meal on campus or in the Square
- Hang out in the Union and attend university programs together
- Answer cultural questions
- Be prepared to direct mentee to appropriate campus resources
- DO NOT offer your mentee legal, immigration, or mental health advice. Instead, direct them to:

Student Legal Services  
Union 411  
[StudentLegal@unt.edu](mailto:StudentLegal@unt.edu)  
940-565-2614

International Student and Scholar Services  
Marquis Hall 110  
[InternationalAdvising@unt.edu](mailto:InternationalAdvising@unt.edu)  
940-565-2195

Counseling and Testing Services  
Chestnut Hall Suite 311  
[counselingandtestingservices@unt.edu](mailto:counselingandtestingservices@unt.edu)  
940-565-2741

- DO NOT give your mentee money, and likewise do not borrow money from your mentee
- DO NOT begin a romantic relationship with your mentee

## Questions, Suggestions, Challenges

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