

Langara College

## Major Paper Assignment

*How can the Student Life program at Columbia College use recreation to help international students settle in Vancouver?*

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## Executive Summary

The number of international students pursuing higher education has been rising in recent years all around the world, and is expected to continue (Rivas et. al., 2019). Canada is no different; it welcomes record numbers of international students to the country each year. This major paper contributes to the growing population of international students in the City of Vancouver by answering the research question, *How can the Student Life program at Columbia College use recreation to help international students settle in Vancouver?*. A literature review revealed that leisure and recreation, most particularly sports and intramurals, provide numerous benefits to international students, such as facilitate social integration, increase sense of belonging and decrease stress and anxiety. Language and cultural differences are repeatedly proven to be the prominent barriers to recreation and social integration. The review also revealed a notable gap in literature: while a majority of research is available on the use of and benefits of recreation on youth, young adults and their positive development, there is a relatively limited focus on its role in supporting international students settle in a new country.

Four interviews, three observations and four content analyses were conducted as primary research. Findings presented that recreation plays an essential role in addressing certain challenges associated with international students, supporting many claims in current literature. Language barrier and culture shock were mediated by intercultural friendships formed through participating in recreation. By exploring with a specific focus on Columbia College, its Student Life program and the students, the primary research aimed to explore how recreation can assist with factors such as cultural adjustment, social integration, and overall wellbeing of international college students. Findings from both primary and secondary research are discussed in more detail in the paper.

To encourage positive change, the paper also makes actionable recommendations for Columbia College to refer to, adjust, and adopt. With examples specific to the City of Vancouver, the applicability of the recommendations can be extended to numerous other local colleges, contributing to creating a more inclusive,

welcoming, and supportive community. The recommendations are (1) Create Columbia College sport teams and if possible, participate in intercollegiate leagues, (2) Survey international students on their barriers to settlement and address them through recreation, (3) Provide clubs, activities and events as early as possible, (4) Aim for social ease through guided activities; be mindful of social anxiety, (5) Program activities and clubs to meet frequently and consistently, and (6) Partner with community organizations and associations to connect students to a wider range of recreational resources.

This research serves to be important to the field of community recreation because of the significance of its findings. Despite the growing presence of international students in Canada, there was a severe lack of proper support, leading to a temporary two-year limit on international student intake commencing February, 2024 (*BC strengthens*, 2024). This research paper has great potential to provide insight into how recreation can be a catalyst for international students' successful integration, which can contribute greatly to providing a supportive environment for students once the two-year pause is lifted.

## **Introduction**

The population of international students in higher education is growing around the globe (Rivas et. al., 2019). Canada also welcomes record numbers of international students to the country each year. There were roughly 252,000 international college students by the end of year 2022 (*807,750 international students*, 2023). More students are moving abroad to seek Western education, driving educational institutions in host cities to achieve and maintain high standards. In January 2024, the government of BC announced a temporary pause on new study permit approvals for the next two years. This decision was made to strengthen quality standards for international students in BC in order to ensure that post-secondary institutions can deliver high-quality education and “offer strong supports that students need to study and build a good, successful life in BC” (*B.C. strengthens*, 2024). This decision acknowledges the importance of planning support services to meet the needs of students, and strives to provide successful

settlement experiences for international students. This decision has acted as supporting evidence, that there is a call for research on the relevance of recreation in bettering international students' journey to life in Canada.

This paper aims to acknowledge this growing population of international students in the City of Vancouver by recognizing the barriers they face during settlement and exploring the relevance of recreation to the situation. The research took into consideration what international students need for acculturation and social integration, and worked to determine how recreation may be utilized to support them. The findings aimed to close the current gap in literature by focusing specifically on international students. The purpose of this paper is to contribute valuable information to the recreation field and provide a guideline of actionable recommendations that Columbia College and other local colleges in the City of Vancouver may apply to support their international student population. The research question is, *How can the Student Life program at Columbia College use recreation to help international students settle in Vancouver?*

A key concept of the research question is *international students*. In this research, *international students* are defined as students who (1) are neither Canadian nor Permanent Resident by status, (2) have been authorized to stay in Canada through a valid study permit, and (3) have come without parent(s) or any legal guardians. The first point establishes the background that they were born and/or raised in another country and are coming from a non-Canadian culture. The second point reminds readers that international students are legally permitted to reside in Canada and should be treated with support and respect. The third point reflects the situation of a typical international student, and shows how they are expected to be independent and responsible, and settle on their own. This operationalization is the best, most suitable definition as it sets and shows the realistic background and situation of a typical international student in Vancouver, especially one attending Columbia College.

The term *recreation* is defined as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being” (*A framework*, 2015). In this paper, it refers to the

extracurricular activities, clubs, and campus-wide events planned and delivered by the Student Life program at Columbia College.

Another key concept is *to settle*. This can be thought of as “to adopt a more steady or secure style of life”, “to make one’s permanent home somewhere”, or “to begin to feel comfortable or established in a new situation” (Oxford University Press, 2022). In the case of this research, successful settlement of an international student would mean that (1) typical, expected challenges such as cultural adjustment, social integration, and achievement of wellbeing are addressed, and (2) they are able to participate in the social and cultural life of Canada. This is the best, most suitable operationalization as it clearly defines what the Student Life program aims to achieve through recreation. Not only does it focus on the actionable purpose of the research, it also sheds light on its vision.

## **Background and Context**

Settlement into a new country is a period of significant transition in a person’s life (Lauckner et. al., 2022). This transition introduces many demands, such as making new friends, familiarizing different social and cultural norms, adapting to new cultural values, and when applicable, adopting a new language (Rivas et. al., 2019). For young adults who enter post-secondary education, travelling abroad and having to settle into a new society can be additional challenges (Gómez et. al., 2014).

The researcher has many years of experience facing the challenges of being an international student, having moved to and out of Canada multiple times during school years. To leave family and friends, change homes and make new friends repeatedly presented social and cultural challenges, affecting the researcher’s sense of identity and belonging for many years. With this background, and as an aspiring recreation professional, the researcher developed a desire to explore the benefits of recreation in facilitating international students’ settlement in Canada.

A local sponsoring organization was determined to derive actionable recommendations based on research findings. Columbia College is a local educational institution located on Terminal Ave. in Vancouver, BC. Established in 1936, Columbia

College is an independent charity that offers high school, university transfer and associate degree programs (*About*, 2024). The institution has a proud student population of over 2100 international students aged 16-21 years old, many of them from South Asia, the Middle East, and West Africa (*Our Strategy*, 2024). The vision of Columbia College is “an inclusive society where students can access the education of their choice and contribute to positive social change” (*Our Strategy*, 2024). The goal of this research and its findings discusses how to better support international students, which aligns with this vision. Zerlinda Chau is a Student Life Coordinator who is in charge of the Student Life program at the College. The program consists of extracurricular clubs, activities and events, and her main role is to coordinate and oversee the high school side of the program. She has been in this position for more than five years, and has extensive experience interacting with international students. She has agreed to be the Agency Advisor for this research, providing insight, guidance and assistance in facilitating the research through granting access to primary research methods such as observational settings and agency documents.

The research question proposed a risk of confirmation bias by asking how recreation can help students as opposed to whether it does. If unmanaged, this assumption that recreation is beneficial to international students would have led to selective information and the paper would have reported inaccurate and misleading data. Careful attention was paid throughout the research to make sure that contrary and/or ambiguous findings were acknowledged and noted clearly in a dedicated section. This ensured that the bias was controlled to the best ability, and that it did not affect research procedures or the results.

## **Literature Review**

The literature review provides a solid theoretical background and established the importance of the research topic to the field of recreation. Summarized below are key concepts from current literature connected to the research question, with a focus on acculturation and social integration, barriers to settlement, and the relevance of recreation.

## *Acculturation and Social Integration*

Acculturation is a process in which cultural and psychological change occurs as a result the interaction between two or more cultural groups (Berry, 2005 as cited in Gómez et. al., 2014; Kim et. al., 2023a). It is the process of adjusting to a different culture (Xiaochen et. al., 2021) and can take four forms: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry 2005, as cited in Glass et. al., 2014). Out of the four, integration demonstrated to increase sense of belonging and perceived social support. Integration is a process of accepting both the original cultural traits or values as well as the those of the hosting country (Kim et. al., 2023a; Lauckner et. al., 2022).

Despite having their own definitions, several terms were often used interchangeably under similar contexts. In place of *acculturation*, terms such as *transition*, *adaptation*, *adjustment*, *integration*, and *settlement* were used to express the same meaning. Throughout this paper, the terms *acculturation* and *social integration* are most frequently used to reflect the the specific operationalization of “to settle” used for this research.

Having moved away from their source for belonging, their circle of network such as friends and family, international students are motivated to seek a new sense of belonging (Caligiuri et. al., 2020). Social integration helps increase sense of belonging, as well as heightens perceived social support and helps develop meaningful relationships (Caligiuri et. al., 2020). Students who feel they belong to a social group such as a team or a club will rely on the group for instrumental, informational, and emotional support. Receiving such support promotes even more social integration, and thus a virtuous loop is created (Caligiuri et. al., 2020). Relatedly, international students with low social integration may face higher levels of anxiety and depression (Caligiuri et. al., 2020).

## *Recreation and its Relevance in Social Integration*

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council have defined recreation as “the experience that results from freely



chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being” (2015). It is often used interchangeably with the term “leisure”, especially in academic literature (Lauckner et. al., 2022).

In the context of international students’ settlement, leisure and recreation facilitate their integration and provide students with opportunities to strengthen language proficiency and communication skills, explore and learn the cultural norms and expectations of their host country (Gómez et. al., 2014; Lauckner et. al., 2022), interact with community members, develop a sense of belonging, attend to their psychological well-being (Xiaochen et. al., 2021) and adjust to college life abroad.

Factors related to recreation that are positively correlated to international students’ social adjustment to college campus and community include active participation in physical activity, campus clubs and leisure activities, sports, social events, and development of social networks (Gómez et. al., 2014; Kim et. al., 2023a, Lauckner et. al., 2022). The value of establishing a supportive social network within the host community and forming intercultural friendships, whether through recreation or to participate in it together, are also widely demonstrated in current literature (Glass et. al., 2014; Gómez et. al., 2014). Recreation is an important contributor to international students’ settlement and intercultural friendship formation, signifying how a culturally welcoming environment for recreation and leisure plays a key role in international students’ social integration and overall adaptation to college (Glass et. al., 2014; Lauckner et. al., 2022). Whether inside or outside a classroom, activities that encourage social interaction between international and domestic students (Caligiuri, et. al., 2020) and activities that promote personal, social and cultural connectedness to the host country (Lauckner et. al., 2022) can foster a sense of belonging and provide support for international students.

It has been repeatedly demonstrated in current literature that within recreation, participation in and identification with the college sports teams plays a powerful role in international students’ social integration (Allen et. al., 2010; Kim et. al., 2023a; Kim et. al., 2023b; Xiaochen et. al., 2021). Intercollegiate sports have the power to bridge together international and domestic students (Kim et. al., 2023b).

## *Barriers to Recreation and Successful Social Integration*

International students face many challenges when adjusting to life in an unfamiliar country, come across many barriers that hinder their settlement (Graham, 2013; Xiaochen et. al., 2021). Their acculturation process is complex, dynamic and multidimensional, and is often accompanied by feelings of anxiety, depression, isolation, confusion, frustration and stress (Gómez et. al., 2014; Kim et. al., 2023a; Kim et. al., 2023b). While language and cultural differences are repeatedly proven to be the prominent barriers to recreation and social integration (Caligiuri et. al., 2020; Glass et. al., 2014, Rivas et. al., 2019; Xiaochen et. al., 2021), there are also interpersonal, intra-personal, and structural factors that are widely known as competing settlement priorities or challenges. They include lack of time, lack of friends, financial challenges, priority on school (Glass et. al., 2014; Gómez et. al., 2014; Lauckner et. al., 2022), and racism (British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association, 2022). Other variables that play into the sociocultural adaptation of an international student include students' cultural background, and length of stay in the host country (Rivas et. al., 2019). International students face barriers to recreation, and thus successful social integration, both in and outside of the classroom (Zalaznick, 2014).

## *Areas of Controversy*

On the contrary to many studies' responses of international students reporting academics as a barrier to recreation and settlement, equally many studies have found that this was only a perceived barrier (Gómez et. al., 2014). There is literature that explain how recreation can actually help create supportive social networks, and prevent loneliness, depression, and acculturative stress (Glass et. al., 2014).

There also seems to be several opinions on the value of building meaningful relationships with co-nationals, peers from similar cultural backgrounds, and host national peers (Glass et. al., 2014). Some researchers say developing friendships with co-nationals and others from the same cultural background is essential for adapting to college, while others say doing so may impede opportunities to connect with domestic

students (Glass et. al., 2014). Many studies claim that students with a more successful social connection to domestic students are better adjusted to their new country (Poyrazli et al., 2004 as cited in Caligiuri et. al., 2020).

Another alternative view in literature was that, contrary to what may be a widespread opinion, recreation activities do not always have to be structured, organized and grand in scale to contribute to settlement; casual, low-risk, unstructured activities that can easily be incorporated into one's daily life can also bring positive benefits given they are fun and enjoyable (Lauckner et. al., 2022). In addition, these relatively informal and perhaps self-organized activities do not need to have any form of interactive component; they are still considered as meaningful experiences that foster sense of belonging (Lauckner et. al., 2022).

When it comes to the relevance of sports to the needs of international students, many studies have reported that college sport promotes positive social changes (Graham, 2013; Katz & Heere, 2016 as cited in Xiaochen et. al., 2021). However, there are opposing views of concern stating that identifying with college sport may (1) lead to smaller, more homogeneous subgroups instead of a larger, more cohesive community, and (2) be a "double-edge sword" where, as much as college sport fosters interaction between international and domestic students, it also promotes exclusion and strengthens intergroup biases that may already exist between them (Allen et. al., 2010; Xiaochen et. al., 2021).

### *Gaps in Current Literature*

There is an extensive amount of research present in current literature that present benefits of recreation on post-secondary students, strategies on how to utilize recreation to help students, and common challenges faced by immigrants during settlement. While there is also comprehensive information regarding the relevance of leisure and recreation to newcomers, more attention is needed on the same topic but for international students.

To add, the current literature explores the relevance of recreation (and sport) on international students by focusing on specific institutions and their respective

international student bodies. Because many studies took place under such specific circumstances, the generalizability of the findings is limited (Gómez et. al., 2014; Kim et. al., 2023a; Xiaochen et. al., 2021). Many variables such as the students' nationality, cultural background, intended length of stay in the host country, and level of language comprehension can affect their stress levels, needs, and barriers, and must not be overlooked. Future research must examine the effects of these variables on international students to better understand the relevance of recreation.

There is also a call for more research on the effects of recreation that occur outside of recreation programs and facilities. Current literature mostly shows the relevance of organized recreation such as sports teams, clubs and social outings established by institutions (Lauckner et. al., 2022).

## **Methodology**

Primary research findings provide valuable data from the field, which deepens the understanding of the topic and broadens perspectives. Interviews, observations from a "Special Status" perspective, and content analyses were chosen to be the primary research methods in this project. Each method presented unique strengths that would help add substance to the research. For example, the interviews connected the researcher to individuals with extensive knowledge or experience on the research topic, allowing them to ask probing questions and discover new insight. Observations from a "Special Status" perspective gave access to information and situations above and beyond what a member of the general public would have. It gave the researcher insider access, allowing them to capture bigger context and pick up smaller nuances during the observation. Lastly, content analysis helped determine whether the themes and patterns found in literature could also be found at Columbia College.

### Interviews

To help answer the research question of this assignment, four individuals were interviewed (See Table 1). All interviewees were contacted by the researchers via e-mail, introducing the project and requesting participation. Once accepted, the

interviewees were sent interview questions for prior review. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher re-introduced the project and asked whether the interviewee would like to remain anonymous, to which all four replied “no”. The researcher also asked interviewees for permission to record the interview for transcription purposes, mentioning they will receive a copy of the recording and transcription if they’d like. The researcher proceeded with the interviews after receiving verbal consent to continue.

Table 1. Interview

	Interviewee 1 (See Appendix A)	Interviewee 2 (See Appendix B)	Interviewee 3 (See Appendix C)	Interviewee 4 (See Appendix D)
Name	Zerlinda Chau	Nav Umed	Osman Savkuev	Chelsey Acierno
Position	Student Life Coordinator	Former Student Life Coordinator	Former student at Columbia College and Residence Advisor at University of British Columbia	Recruitment Manager and Refugee Resettlement Project Coordinator
Date	March 1, 2024	March 1, 2024	March 7, 2024	March 8, 2024
Time	2:59-3:29pm	4:56-5:40pm	12:03~12:29pm	12:30-1:00pm
Channel	In-person	In-person	via Zoom	via Zoom
Reason	To gain insight from the Student Life Coordinator overseeing the secondary program on the role and benefits of recreation	To gain insight from a former Student Life Coordinator who oversaw the post-secondary program on the role and benefits of recreation	To gain insight from a former Columbia College international student on international student life	To gain insight from an experienced expert on international student barriers

The interview questions focused on the main topics of the research question: the role of recreation in addressing new international students’ barriers and facilitating settlement. Gathering insight on international student life by learning about their unique barriers and their opinions on the current campus recreation opportunities aided in discovering ways to ease their social integration at school as well as life in Canada. However, the wording or the number of questions changed slightly depending on the

background, experience and position of the interviewee to ensure the right type of questions were asked (See Appendix A, B, C, and D).

### Observations from a “Special Status” Perspective

Three observations were conducted (see Table 2). Observing a weekly meeting of Badminton Club helped determine the relevance of intramural sports to social integration. Observing Day 3 activities of Spirit Week, a 5-day long initiative designed to boost school spirit and create a closer community, helped the researcher notice qualitative details that may be easily overlooked in formal studies, such as the participants’ facial expressions, tone of voice, and subtle nuances in interactions. The Student Life team meeting allowed the researcher to gain valuable information on (1) how recreation was currently being used, (2) what factors were considered when programming activities and (3) whether any barriers to settlement were addressed. An observation checklist was created to record findings (see Appendix E).

Table 2. Observations from a “Special Status” Perspective

	Observation 1 (See Appendix F)	Observation 2 (See Appendix G)	Observation 3 (See Appendix H)
Name	Weekly intramural Badminton Club meeting	Day 3 out of 5 of Spirit Week	Student Life team meeting
Date/Time	February 29, 2024 / 4:36-5:06pm	March 5, 2024 / 11:45am-12:10pm	March 8, 2024 / 10:10-11:02am
Location	Creekside Community Centre (via gym rental)	Columbia College North Campus	Columbia College Main Campus

### Content Analysis

Four types of content were reviewed and analyzed for this assignment and are listed in Table 3. The data and documents for content analysis were acquired by contacting the Agency Advisor. After explaining the goal of content analysis, the researcher and agency advisor brainstormed together to determine which content to analyze. After agreeing on the contents, the Agency Advisor handed them to the

researcher in paper format. A template with a checklist of what to look for was established for consistency (see Appendix I).

Table 3. Content Analysis

	Name	Reason
Content 1 (See Appendix J)	Student Life program activity posters	To look for ways the Student Life program attempts to aid international student's social integration through its activities, and to see how the program aims to position recreational activities into student life
Content 2 (See Appendix K)	World University Service Canada's Student Refugee Program Orientation Slides	To better understand the barriers that students may face when coming/settling into a new country and how recreation serves to be an important aspect in addressing those barriers
Content 3 (See Appendix L)	Event Feedback Survey	To see whether there are any student feedbacks saying the Student Life program has helped with their social integration (make new friends, feel sense of belonging, learn about Canadian culture, etc.)
Content 4 (See Appendix M)	Orientation Plan/ Schedule	To see how recreational opportunities are used/ planned at the College to facilitate new international students' social integration

Conducting four interviews with individuals of varying expertise in working with international students is a notable success. The interviews highlighted unique perspectives from different backgrounds and experiences, offering deep insight. The findings contributed to getting a comprehensive view on the research topic, which enhanced the credibility of the research. One significant challenge during primary research was analyzing the usefulness of recreation without surveying international students directly. Due to limited time and scope of the research, direct interaction with international students was not an option. Interviewing individuals of varying levels of experience and expertise served as a suitable compromise given the circumstances. Another acceptable solution was to analyze students' feedbacks from previous surveys.

## Research Findings and Analysis

Both primary and secondary research findings presented that recreation plays an essential role in addressing certain challenges such as language barrier, promoting personal and professional development, and facilitating social integration of international students. An analysis of research findings showed how beneficial it would be for educational institutions like Columbia College to use recreation to help their international students settle in their new city.

For example, Osman emphasized that participating in recreation helps international students make new friends, be a part of a community and find a sense of belonging. Zerlinda argued that it was the most important aspect of settlement, and Nav added that recreation helps students settle by connecting them to opportunities of professional development and financial independence. Chelsey voiced that recreation allowed international students to mature into a more confident version of who they already were, as well as who they can become in Canada. She also added that recreation is about building one's social network, which she believed was one of the number one indicators of successful settlement. Her belief aligned with many findings in literature claiming that development of social networks is positively correlated to international students' social adjustment (Gómez et. al., 2014; Kim et. al., 2023a, Lauckner et. al., 2022).

Several other themes emerged from the interviews. First, there were recurring mentions of how "personal touches" can work miracles. International students are deprived of the unique support that families typically provide such as reminding them to wear an extra jacket, take an umbrella, or eat their meals. Striving to fill that gap to the best ability was a commonly proposed goal for the Student Life program. Another repeated idea was that participating in recreation is a way for international students to take a mental and physical break from studying, volunteering and working. It's a distress tool that help students create a study-life balance. This is especially important to note, as all four interviewees mentioned that many international students could be facing pressure from families and even their home communities to perform. The importance of having a strong social network was also highlighted throughout the



interviews. “Peers can really help [international students] through dark days, just knowing they have a community they can lean on” (Acierno, 2024). Finding like-minded people and making friends were identified as one of the more important part of post-secondary experience.

The observations validated the power of recreation in facilitating the development of intercultural friendships. During Badminton Club, the student leader ensured that teams would rotate players, and every student would have a chance to interact with those not in their usual friend groups. Similarly, during Spirit Week, students were randomly assigned to “houses” so they could meet new people and partake in friendly competitions together. These findings supported the claim of many researchers in current literature, that recreation presents opportunities for students to interact with those from different backgrounds and cultures, helping them adapt to life at college and life in the host country (Glass et. al., 2014; Lauckner et. al., 2022). Naturally, this key finding contradicted a different claim in current literature that team recreational activities may lead to smaller, more homogenous subgroups. As an added bonus, this key finding contributed to answering the research question by suggesting to recreation leaders that diversity is key when using smaller groups in recreation, to ensure they do not prevent or hinder a larger, more cohesive community.

A common theme found during content analysis was the importance of “fun” in recreation. At Columbia College, the Student Life program posters promoted their activities and clubs to be a fun experience, the most popular events had students claiming they were fun, one of the main pillars of successful resettlement for refugee students was dedicated to delivering fun social check-ins, and their Orientation schedule incorporated many fun icebreaker activities throughout the program. This is a key finding as it contributes a new perspective to what facilitates social integration, and provides a base foundation to what recreational opportunities should aim for in order to maximize international students’ social integration. In order for schools to make the best use of recreation, they must incorporate the element of fun.

It is crucial to note that Columbia College will highly benefit from conducting additional primary research on the College students directly. Being able to analyze student’s opinions and perspectives would present great findings that are directly

relevant to the research question. Moreover, as mentioned previously, more research revolving around Vancouver international students and their barriers need to be conducted. With restricted information available on the implications of this specific city, current understanding on the research topic has its limits on applicability. Getting more data on international students' barriers in Vancouver, as well as data on what types of recreation is feasible in the city may present significant information on how to best use recreation for successful settlement.

## **Recommendations**

International students face reduced exposure to social networks when they move abroad, as they separate from family and close friends. Developing new connections is an effective way to deal with this detachment, and it can prevent adverse effects of stress, loneliness and culture shock (Furnham and Bochner, 1982 as cited in Graham, 2013). Below are recommendations that Columbia College can follow to use recreation in a way that (1) promotes the development of a new social network, (2) facilitates social integration, and (3) leads to successful settlement.

- 1. Create Columbia College sport teams and if possible, participate in intercollegiate leagues.*

To facilitate social integration and create a more positive college experience, the Student Life program should initiate sport teams and participate in intercollegiate leagues. Sport provides multiple benefits to international groups, such as opportunities to learn, develop professionally, and meet domestic students through a common interest. "I made a lot of friends through similar passion for soccer, which helped me adjust. We would train together, play, watch games, discuss, always be together," said Osman, an interviewee a former international student at Columbia College (2024). As demonstrated, international students can adapt easier to unfamiliar cultures by participating in familiar sport activities (Allen et. al., 2010; Graham, 2013). Currently, the Student Life program runs a variety of weekly intramural sports like Badminton and Ping

Pong. Creating a student sports team representing the College and participating in intercollegiate sport leagues will present opportunities to create bonding and bridging relationships, such as friendship with other international students in the city.

Furthermore, identifying with and cheering for a college team has also been proven to heighten sense of belonging and sense of community (Kim et. al., 2023b).

The Student Life program, in coordination with the Student Services Department and Marketing staff, should strive to engage international students in intramural and/or intercollegiate sport using specific communication strategies. Research should be done on which channels are familiar to international students to ensure effective marketing (Kim et. al., 2023b; Zhou et. al., 2021). For example, WeChat and KakaoTalk are mobile messaging applications similar to WhatsApp, and are heavily used by Chinese and Korean students respectively (Zhou et. al., 2021).

## *2. Survey international students on their barriers to settlement and address them through recreation.*

As noted throughout the paper, international students may face unique struggles during settlement. While language and cultural differences are repeatedly proven to be the prominent barriers to social integration (Caligiuri et. al., 2020; Rivas et. al., 2019; Xiaochen et. al., 2021), other factors such as financial challenges, loneliness, homesickness, and racism can also make settlement difficult (Glass et. al., 2014; Gómez et. al., 2014; Lauckner et. al., 2022). “The challenges that [international students face are completely different” (Suvkuev, 2024). Currently, the Student Life program asks students to provide feedback on activities and events, asking open-ended questions such as “How would you describe the activity/event to someone who did not attend?” and “What was your favourite part?” (Chau, 2024). Although this survey helps gather ideas for improvement, it serves a different purpose. As mentioned, the Student Life program would highly benefit from surveying its international students on a regular basis to gain and maintain a thorough understanding of the barriers they face. This will help in programming meaningful recreational opportunities catered to their needs. Doing so will enhance accessibility and ease the students’ settlement into Vancouver.

3. *Partner with community organizations and associations to connect students to a wider range of recreational resources.*

In the city of Vancouver, there are numerous community organizations and associations providing excellent programs and services to newcomers including international students. MOSAIC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., and the ISS of BC are reputable organizations that offer a variety of initiatives like ESL, peer leadership and social programs (Chau, 2024; Acierno, 2024). Other groups like the Take A Hike Foundation introduce youth to hiking trails around the city, connecting them to the natural environment. Municipalities and community centres offer Flexipass, Access 2 Card and OneCard that help students access recreation facilities. Neighbourhood houses often have programs for youth as well. There are also countless private companies that provide recreational classes or take patrons on tours around the city.

Unfortunately, many international students at Columbia College do not access the community resources due to several reasons: (1) students do not receive any information about them so they are not aware of them, (2) many of them require a fee when many international students already face a financial barrier, and (3) even though there is good will behind the community resources, many insinuate some sort of a commitment. “The programs would be attached to the specific organizations, and students have said that they felt like they had to join the organization as a member to access the programs” (Acierno, 2024).

The Student Life program should work to provide international students with information pertinent to the nearby communities’ resources. In addition to referrals, the program should consider partnering with community organizations and associations to bring recreational opportunities to Columbia College international students so they can get involved. Recreational facilities, community centres, public libraries, and heritage sites are just a few examples of community resources that can connect international students to recreation.

Below are further recommendations that other secondary and post-secondary institutions in the community can follow to help their respective international student groups.

#### 4. *Program more outdoor recreation opportunities.*

“The lack of outdoor experiential programming is really sad, considering where we live. I mean, we live in Vancouver!” (Acierno, 2024). From community green spaces to destination parks and feature gardens, there are more than 250 parks, ten oceanside beaches, a freshwater lake beach in the City of Vancouver (*Parks*, 2024). There is also an impressive range of outdoor recreation opportunities available, such as camping, hiking, cycling, canoeing, kayaking, skiing, snowboarding, and snowboarding (*Things to do*, *n.d.*). It is highly recommended for Student Life teams to adventure beyond touristy sites and take advantage of the outdoor experiences that the city can offer, as “being outside and in nature is really a part of Canadian culture” (Acierno, 2024). Furthermore, the outdoor environment can act as a unique space that brings positive impact on individuals’ physical and mental health, anxiety, social participation and cultural exchange (Brunette et. al., 2019).

#### 5. *Provide clubs, activities and events early, frequently, and consistently.*

Secondary and post-secondary institutions should provide opportunities for international students to interact with domestic students or each other as early as possible. Arriving into a new city and learning environment can be a daunting experience, especially with the additional challenge of having to navigate through alone. International students are vulnerable to heightened anxiety, and friendships can form as a “palliative way” to manage the stress (Caligiuri et. al., 2020). Osman also expressed in his interview, “From the very beginning you are able to share your experiences and get your first friends in a new place. This is something I benefit from a lot. These friends I’m still in touch with because we developed a connection from the very first day” (2024). Providing early recreational opportunities that spark connection can lead to positive, long-term relationships.

Social bonds are based and deepened by familiarity, and frequency, duration, and intensity of interactions play a significant part in developing familiarity (Schafer, 2015 as cited in Caligiuri et. al., 2020). Additionally, international students with less

social interaction face a greater tendency to isolate themselves, leading to a higher probability of suffering from low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (Darwish, 2015 as cited in Rivas et. al., 2019). The Student Life program should program activities that allow international students to interact with each other on a regular basis, to promote a greater likelihood of forming stronger bonds.

#### *6. Aim for social ease through guided activities. Be mindful of social anxiety.*

Secondary and post-secondary institutions should consider planning guided activities that provide social ease, not social anxiety. “Social anxiety that can come from not knowing how to access things or where to go. Just being a newcomer” (Acierno, 2024). International students may face higher levels of stress and social anxiety, starting a new academic program while having to adjust to a new life in a new city. It is important to understand and acknowledge that not all of them may appreciate group social activities or gatherings. Not *all* recreation opportunities need to be adventurous, about connecting with others or challenging oneself; low-risk, no-interaction activities are just as meaningful recreation experiences. Smaller, less intrusive activities that do not force students to independently initiate conversations will allow students to reduce their level of social anxiety. For example, “bodily oriented” stress management recreation such as yoga and guided walks in nature help reduce anxiety, and they can easily be individual pursuits (Gómez et. al., 2014). Informal recreational experiences that can be implemented into everyday lives and routines were also proven to be effective in developing sense of belonging for new students (Lauckner et. al., 2022).

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper is to contribute helpful information to the recreation field and provide a guideline of actionable recommendations that Columbia College and other local colleges in the City of Vancouver may apply to support their international student populations. The research question was, *How can the Student Life program at Columbia College use recreation to help international students settle in Vancouver?*

Both primary and secondary research findings presented valuable information. The interviews with the agency staffs validated one of the predominant claims found in current literature, that recreation plays a positive role in international students' social integration. The observations and content analysis showed that intramural sports are indeed powerful tools that foster senses of belonging and community, as also proposed by current literature. Other key findings were that recreational opportunities aid settlement by facilitating the development of intercultural friendships, meaningful relationships, and supportive social networks. The element of "fun" was also demonstrated to be crucial when programming recreation.

The Student Life program at Columbia College can use recreation to address barriers specific to international students and promote successful settlement by emphasizing the need for and facilitating social integration. By providing much-needed perspective into international student integration, this research benefits the sponsoring organization and by extension, the recreation industry. The findings and recommendations enhance the understanding of settlement needs and experiences of international students, which not only contributes to the government of BC's goal to enhance quality standards, but also creates a more inclusive, welcoming, and supportive City of Vancouver.

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## Appendices

### APPENDIX A - Interview With Zerlinda Chau

**Interview with Zerlinda Chau, Student Life Coordinator at Columbia College.**

**Friday, March 1st, 2024, 2:59pm to 3:29pm at “To Dine For”, a cafe/restaurant underneath Columbia College High School Campus.**

**May I record this interview for transcription purposes? Yes.**

**Would you like to remain anonymous? No.**

**1. What is your name and position? How long have you been in this role?**

My name is Zerlinda Chau and I am the Student Life Coordinator at Columbia College. I have been working in this role for 5 years. This is my 6th.

**2. What drove you to pursue this role and how is your experience so far?/What is your favourite part about your job?**

During my undergrad, I was involved in a lot of extracurricular activities at school. I was playing sports, I was part of clubs, I worked for the recruitment department and I volunteered for the student association. So I was very involved and was one of those active students. And because of that experience, I really believe in students doing that to supplement their career goals and because I know it's something I'm already good at, that's what I applied for. Originally I thought I would do it as a stepping stone to the next part of my career but I actually like it so much that here I am six years later. Very good experience so far. Personally, it would be student council. I like being on the ground with the students and having that personal relationship with them. Student council kind of fulfills that for me. Also just being able to directly impact students' lives and influence them to better themselves and learn how to be more self-driven and self-reliant, that's kind of what student council is about for me. I suppose other areas of student leadership as well. Student council would be the one I can pinpoint but we also do a volunteer program like orientation and other departments would also utilize me for their volunteer programs. Overall student council.

**3. Could you tell me about your experience working with international students?**

First thing that comes to mind is, before working with international students, I had this impression that they were all pretty wealthy or otherwise they wouldn't be able to afford education [abroad]. But something I learned is that they're not necessary wealthy; some of them could even be pretty poor, but they just find resources to allow them to access the Canadian education. One student I learned, their entire

community put money together to support this one student to come to Canada. So they are not only responsible to their immediate family but the rest of the community too. Aside from that, something I really was concerned about at the beginning of my time working with international students, was that they've been sent off to another country and left to their own devices. I was a little concerned about the lack of guidance because a lot of them live in homestay. I was worried because homestay parents don't have as much authority as natural parents. Parents have the most authority so was concerned about how to support students in things that parents would usually tell them. Like "wear an extra jacket", "leave earlier" or "don't skip meals" or those kinds of general life things that aren't exactly the place for teachers to step in to. How can we fill that gap? We have international students as young as the age of 15, that's our minimum age requirement. At that age, you're missing out on several years of parental guidance that's pretty important for your development. Most of the times students become independent at 18. I'm worried about 15, 16, 17 [year olds], they don't have that at all. So how can we help them balance having independence suddenly thrown on them but also be independent. For the older students who are in university, I think about culture shock and cultural acclimation, adjustment. Especially learning the differences between how things work in their home countries versus in Canada, Canadian customs and practices. I had to learn more about what their experiences are to really understand what it is I should deliver so that they understand Canadian culture. If I don't know the differences I don't know what to help them with.

#### **4. What would you say are the current goals of the Student Life Program?**

Right now, some of our goals are supporting students in socializing, making friends and having a social life, enjoying their life. The other goal would be self-reliance. How can we help you become better adults, to become more independent, to know how to take initiative and find the resources you need to support your goals.

- a. "To settle" can be described as "to adopt a more steady or secure style of life", "to make one's permanent home somewhere", or "to begin to feel comfortable or established in a new situation" for the purpose of this project. In your opinion, do you think the Student Life Program is helping international students settle in Vancouver? If yes, how?**

The incoming new students receive an orientation program under student life, so they get two day program that teaches them about our college particularly, but in terms of settling into Vancouver, we also include things like health insurance, transit information. some of the things we want to implement [in the future] is supporting students with the little life needs like bank account, cell phone plans, so we're looking into how to add those elements. We also have elements in orientation about EDI, so we have workshops that teach students what it's like to live in a "mosaic", as Vancouver has many cultures; [we help them] navigate moving from a homogenous culture in their home country to a multi-cultural setting. Indigenization is also a big thing.

- b. Recreation is described as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being”. In your opinion, do you think recreation specifically could help international students settle? If yes, how? Why do you think so?**

I would argue that it's the most important aspect of settlement because recreation always brings students to a way more casual setting. Being outside in your gym clothes on a field running around is a completely different atmosphere than the building in which they are learning, studying, taking exams, having all these expectations put on by teachers and staff. On the field, we're just playing soccer. There are also lower barriers for meeting people because you usually spend a lot of time in school with people who are in the same program as you or in the same classes as you, so in that setting they could be your network or peers in the industry. But then when you go and join recreational activities you get to branch out and meet more different types of people, and connect with students who are going to be in different industries when they graduate and get into their career. So that also helps with connections that somebody might need in the future. [Recreation] is changing up the pace of life, changing up the feeling, and changing up the types of people that you are exposed to.

- 5. Have you noticed/found/learned about any barriers the international students commonly face when trying to settle?**

We have an initiative called the Community Cupboard. It's run by our school nurses. They did a survey a couple years ago that kind of drove this project. Essentially, over 50% of our students replied to the survey that they face food insecurity. Because the students have international tuition to pay, [as well as] living expenses and probably rent, there is so much shelter and other needs that sometimes food gets put low on the priority list. [Students] just kind of forego meals or work with what they have. The Community Cupboard will help provide free grocery supplements. [Students] can pick up fruits and vegetables, or bread, frozen items. Money is obviously a big one. Money across the board is always an issue. Vancouver particularly is so unreasonably expensive to live in that most domestic students are struggling. It can only be more difficult exponentially for international students.

- a. What factors do you think help address these barriers?**

Money-wise, the fortunate thing is that on-campus work doesn't contribute to their restricted employment hours, which, based on IRCC standards, international students can only work 20 hours per week. If they get a job on campus it doesn't count so they can still have a job outside of school up to 20 hours. We have expanded a lot of student positions. Majority of our departments has few student employment positions. Students can work for the library, student services, science labs, so on.

- b. Do you think the Student Life Program currently helps address any of these barriers? If yes, how?**

It's our [Student Life Program's] goal basically to address these barriers. I think it will be insightful to know about these barriers because we haven't really been able to use more data driven approaches like surveys for our student body to learn what it is they personally experience. We're kind of going off of meta data or what other colleges are doing as well, following suit. For us it's more "How can we formulate our surveys or what methods can we use to find this information from students so that we know what needs to be addressed." But also, another the Student Life Program is addressing our students' needs is we've got our student association and the student council and both of them are peer-based programs. So the students are meant to advocate for the rest of the student body and learn what they have, don't have and how can we [Student Life Program] fill the gap.

**c. Do you know any other recreational programs/services/initiatives that help address the said barriers? If yes, how?**

For sure, yea. We try to refer students to external service providers. There are a lot of newcomer services in Vancouver like MOSAIC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., PICS. They have newcomer services/programs that immigrants or international student can join like language programs, social programs. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has something called the Youth Leadership Millennium, it's a free program that is geared towards new immigrants. It connects young people together and teach leadership skills and bring them to places to help them learn what Vancouver life is like and meet other newcomers too so you have a community. Some of them have ESL programs.

**6. If you could design a program/service/initiative to help with international students' settlement in Canada/Vancouver, what would it look like?**

The World University Services of Canada, or WUSC, we have a local committee at the College and they do a long-term program. They focus on refugee students which is different from just regular refugee students but I would say if we integrated Orientation and WUSC and other aspects of the SLP together, it would be the best program that I could design that would start [helping students] before students arrive in Canada. It will start then, when students have chosen Vancouver, then we would start with pre-arrival information. They should know how to pack for Canada, what kind of clothes they are going to need, "what's the climate like here", "how does Canadian money work? Look at all the colourful bills, how do I understand them?", transit system for sure. And when they arrive, connect them with a peer. Peer connection is an element that contributes to student success. Big goal of orientation is that at the end of the day of orientation, each student has made at least one friend, so they have a peer connection, and they've connected with one staff so they have a connection with an adult they can trust who they can go back to after orientation for support. Ice breakers and team building activities are important. And beyond the college, it would be things like banking, cell phone, transportation, grocery shopping, your neighbourhood community centre, health and wellness services, essentially set them all up for everything they need in life, like barber and salon! I think from that point onwards, students should become a little

bit more self-reliant and if they have any needs they have the resources. I'd say end the program with packages of resources, like a pdf document with pages of referencing other organizations that work with newcomers.

**7. In your experience and opinion, how do you think Covid-19 has affected specifically international students' lives/settlement into Vancouver?**

High school students were back in school physically since September 2020, so they only spent about 6 months online, only isolated for that long. There are worse students who were back in their home country and couldn't get visas. I have a limited scope of their [older students'] experience, but they haven't been [and are no longer] forced to online setting anymore. They are actually required to come in in person, there's no such thing as online opportunities for any of our programs now. This helps with people being less isolated and being forced to be around people. I can't imagine only having the opportunity to do classes and all social interactions online, because there's also the element of school services and school clubs and student association program offerings too. And so if a student is only online, they're missing out on like, 90% of the school experience. To live a really well rounded and enriched life, you really only should have a small portion of your [school] life dedicated towards academics. There's all sorts of other things you've got to do too!

**APPENDIX B - Interview With Nav Umed**

**Nav Umed, Campus Operations Coordinator at Columbia College.**

**Friday, March 1, 2024, 4:56-5:40pm. In-person in his office.**

**May I record this interview for transcription purposes? Yes.**

**Would you like to remain anonymous? No.**

**1. What is your name and position? How long have you been in this role?**

My name is Nav and I am currently the Campus Operations Coordinator at Columbia College. Previously I used to be the Student Life Coordinator. I worked in this position for almost, a little over, two years.

**2. What drove you to pursue this role and how is your experience so far?/What is your favourite part about your job?**

At the time, having worked as a Student Services Assistant with you as the Student Life Coordinator, it was pretty fun and whatever you were doing seemed interesting. When that position opened up, I thought it would be nice to apply. I thought it was very interesting as an employee to be able to interact with students in a very casual manner, not just verbal interaction but also taking students out for activities and

events. A different way of looking at it was, a lot of people once they graduate they end up working behind a desk between 9 to 5, whereas this job [Student Life Coordinator] would be constantly in motion and you wouldn't be always at the college or in your office area, you would be out of the college, taking students outside.

**3. What was it like working with international students? How would you say it is like compared to working with domestic/local students?**

99.9% of the students I worked with were international students. I would say the majority of international students, though they do their research, they have no idea what they are coming to in Canada or Vancouver. It's kind of tough to know what to expect but the research that [they] do is definitely not enough. Having been international student myself, and I thought I was very thorough [researching], when I arrived here it was still a culture shock. Interacting with students who just arrived, I could tell they had no idea what was going on. They do find it difficult to find help or where to go. A part of my job as a Student Life Coordinator was to make sure that new international students can get used to new life in a new city as quick as possible in an appropriate and timely manner.

**4. What would you say are the current goals of the Student Life Program?**

People think college/university is schoolwork, schoolwork, schoolwork. I don't fully agree with that concept; there is much more to a student's life than just studying. Some students have to work, and with studying and working comes stress, and I like to think the Student Life Program is a way to destress, a way to keep their minds off of their schoolwork and their professional work life.

**a. "To settle" can be described as "to adopt a more steady or secure style of life", "to make one's permanent home somewhere", or "to begin to feel comfortable or established in a new situation" for the purpose of this project. In your opinion, do you think the Student Life Program is helping international students settle in Vancouver? If yes, how?**

The Student Life Program works very closely with the other sub-departments in Student Services at the College. Settlement, like you said, is about making sure you feel ready in a new environment. Students tend to get stressed out, and whether it's me or sub departments, we've always worked with each other to help students figure out what's the best way to get used to the new environment. All the sub-departments such as mental health counsellors, career advisors, and immigration advisors, all of us help students settle or re-settle in Vancouver, or Canada. With the Student Life Program itself, there are seasonal community events we would take international students to show them what it's like to be a Vancouverite.

**b. Recreation is described as "the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being". In your opinion, do you think recreation specifically could help international students settle? If yes, how? Why do you think so?**



Absolutely. This question makes me think of a term I use with my colleagues: “The usual suspects.” [The “usual suspects”] seem to be the ones who participate or engage in Student Life activities on a regular basis. These are the students who also engaged in other services around the College as well, whether it’s in the library [or other]. Because they were willing to put themselves out there, they are noticed by the staff, it seemed to be easier for them to get on-campus jobs. Staff would notice them, interact [with them] and even though it would be very casual, in a way you still get to know them. A lot of them I notice get hired to student position. Recreation helps students settle by connecting them to opportunities of professional development and financial independence. I’ve also noticed that a big chunk of those “usual suspects” tend to do well academically. I cannot confirm direct correlation between participating in recreation and good grades, but one theory would be that they were able to destress and take break away from studies and professional work, and that kind of helped them create a work life balance. Of course, in theory.

**5. Barriers — Have you noticed/found/learned about any barriers the international students commonly face when trying to settle?**

Yes. One is something I understand but am not a fan of. It’s that international students would rather listen to their friends than professionals who have been trained or dedicated their time to this industry. Students don’t always get the best advice from their friends. A concrete example is how students would go ask their friends what courses to take, what are the “GPA boosters”, instead of listening to Academic Advisors to get course planning sorted out. Language barrier is a big one: not everyone comes from an English speaking country; a lot of students have to learn how to speak English, write English, read English. Even with the required english proficiency test before you get here, you do not need a perfect score to attend Canadian college. They get admitted, but they have a lot more of a difficult time to settle in. It’s harder for them to make friends. Let’s keep in mind that this is College; making friends is making friends is a part of the post-secondary process, part of the experience. Not being able to communicate is hard.

**a. What factors do you think help address these barriers?**

Making full use of the services that Columbia College has to offer definitely helps students. I can think of one example, a very shy student, when you speak to him he wouldn’t be able to put a sentence together, it took him a while. But within two semesters, I noticed he came out of his shell, and he applied for one of the student positions that would report to me. When I interviewed him I noticed the difference and I was really amazed. After the interview I asked him what happened and he told me he made use of all the good services (fix resume, mock interviews) which made him a lot more confident in speaking. Services are there to help and guide students, I highly recommend students to make full of them. And they’re free!

**b. Do you think the Student Life Program currently helps address any of these barriers? If yes, how?**

In terms of making new friends, which I mentioned is an important part of the post-secondary experience,

[I think] the whole point of making friends is not just finding people from your country or your community; it's always good to go out of comfort zone and meet new people from different cultures. There are many things to learn, but of course, you do what makes you comfortable. Yes, the Student Life Program is sort of designed in a way that promotes students being put in a situation where they have to meet new people. Of course, they do not have to engage with each other but they have to meet new people. For example, when we went to Tofino [as a trip] few years ago, we had high school and university students in the same bus together. Even though they did not have to talk to each other, they had to meet each other. I think that promotes environment to make new friends and be more comfortable. Another example is the Student Clubs. Sometimes you think you will not do anything you are uncomfortable with, which is fair. But soccer, for example, is a team sport, you will have to meet new people. You will have to play with other people, and you will eventually start meeting new friends. You start developing new relationships and I feel it does help in settlement. I will point this out [however]: there has been a big influx of students coming from India over the past few years, and what I've noticed is that students from India tend to only hang out or interact with other students from India. If you find someone who's from your country, your community, there's so many things you share already; it's easier to start a conversation, it's easier to communicate, easier to share stuff, so much easier to chat about cultural heritage. To a certain extent I understand, it makes sense, but this is one thing that I did find a little bit tough to deal with as a Student Life Coordinator because sometimes the group would sort of be divided into two: Indian students and non-Indian students. **It's interesting that you mention that because before this Primary Research assignment, I did a Literature Review assignment where I reviewed the current literature that spoke to the topics we're exploring today. There were a lot of literature that talked about how intercultural relationships helped settle[ment], and also a lot of literature that talked about how interactions with people from the same culture helped students settle better. So I'm glad you mentioned this as now I know what I read in literature is actually happening in real life too, with examples from Columbia College.** Yea, and with you mentioning that, I thought of something else as well. During orientation, for settlement specifically, to make them feel comfortable and let them know that Columbia College is a place where not only you can, but you should feel like you are at home, one of the activities is that at several points during the day, we divide students into smaller groups. I learned that smaller groups tend to help make long-term friendships, and that's something we do at the very beginning to help them settle.

**c. Do you know any other recreational programs/services/initiatives that help address the said barriers? If yes, how?**

I'd say Trek Tours. They do trips around Vancouver and BC, hiking stuff as well. They also organize soccer tournaments. Anyone can go sign up.

**6. If you could design a program/service/initiative to help with international students' settlement in Canada/Vancouver, what would it look like?**

I'd say it would have to start with the moment they land here. Does it not happen in the case of Columbia College Orientation? No, because you have to request. It's an optional thing. Orientation? Not orientation. Where you get picked up at the airport. I'm talking more about "personal touch". If there is personal touch, you feel more comfortable, and safer. When I came (as an international student previously), the friends I made at the time, who are two of my close friends, were picked up by the same vehicle [as me]. That tells me a lot about the experience. At the end of the day you are in a new country, no parents to take care of you. This "personal touch" is something that is lacking for many international students. Personalized touch is nice and students would benefit from that.

**7. In your experience and opinion, how do you think Covid-19 has affected specifically international students' lives/settlement into Vancouver?**

I can tell you from personal experience: when I was the Student Life Coordinator, students reached out to an email address we referred to as the "Hub" where students would get redirected to the appropriate staff/department. Through there, I would get so many emails where students ask "How do I make friends?". [Covid] was very tough, when students returned to campus a lot of students did not know, nothing to refer to, nothing to base behaviours off of. For example, they would not know how to use the [water fountain] tap. There was this disconnect between new and old students because new students did not get to watch and learn. There was no "continuation". The information was not passed along. There is no peer-to-peer connection. And as someone who went to school during Covid, I don't have school friends because I started classes online. I don't have a "batch" I came in with.

**APPENDIX C - Interview With Osman Savkuev**

**Interview with Osman Savkuev, Financial Advisor at Seaspan.**

**Thursday, March 7, 2024, 12:03~12:29pm. Via Zoom.**

**May I record this interview for transcription purposes? Yes.**

**Would you like to remain anonymous? No.**

**1. What is your name and position?**

My name is Osman, I'm currently working as a financial analysis at a shipping company called Seaspan.

**2. What was it like being an international student settling down in Vancouver? For the purpose of this project, "to settle" can be described as "to adopt a more steady or secure style of life", "to make**

**one's permanent home somewhere", or "to begin to feel comfortable or established in a new situation".**

100% it wasn't easy for me because when I first came to Canada in 2015, I was 17 years old. And even though I was coming from Russia, I was coming from a region where we spoke our own language with our own culture. So even though I'm going from Russia, ethnically I'm not Russian. So I couldn't even relate to other Russians coming from abroad. Me not having perfect English as well didn't help. Definitely felt lonely. It was difficult because I didn't know anyone. I haven't even travelled outside the city once on my own before so it was quite a shock of an experience. But I was lucky because put in homestay family with other international students. My homestay family as well wasn't born in Canada, they're from the Philippines. So they all helped me adjust and from then on my life went upwards.

**a. Did you face any barriers? If yes, what were they?**

Language barrier, culture shock, and having no friends.

**b. Can you remember what helped you the most in addressing these barriers, or when settling in to the city?**

Homestay family and then Columbia College did a great job when it came to integrating me to the college through orientation program, activities and events. They helped me interact with other international students. There was a really good foundation in place when I came in Canada. It was just up to me to grab those opportunities and re-adjust and become integrated.

**3. Did you work in any roles where you would regularly interact with international students? If yes, what drove you to pursue this role and how was your experience? Do you have any experience participating in programs, services or initiatives that had a goal to help international students settle?**

As mentioned when I came to Canada for the first time, all those programs provided by the College, clubs and activities helped me settle and make new friends. I wanted to give back, and that's why in my second semester I went and signed up to volunteered to help international students. On top of that, after volunteering and participating in clubs, I also became a Student Services Assistant as a next step to give back to international students even more. During Orientation, I would be the first person they see, and because I was [also once] in their shoes, it was easy for me to relate and understand what kind of questions or problems they had. I was also a student at the time, so I would see students around the College along corridors and when they ask me questions and I help them it felt very rewarding which I enjoyed. That's why after I transferred to UBC, I applied and became Residence Advisor (RA) to continue to give back to the community and also help international students settle. During my interview process for the RA position, I even asked to be placed in a residence where there were predominantly international students. What does an RA do? There were two parts as a RA. First part was to organize events for students in the community. So they could come make friends and enjoy a break from studies. Second part

of the job was to help solve their problems like roommate conflicts, mental health concerns. Whatever kind of problem they have they would come to me and I would direct them to different resources. Because I was an international student myself, international students felt that connection and asked me questions no problem. There wouldn't be a barrier between them and me. I heard from a lot of them that they wouldn't be able to relate that much to Canadians who were born here because the challenges they face are completely different.

**4. Did you participate in any program/service/initiative that involved recreation? Recreation is described as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being”. If yes, what types of recreational activities were involved?**

When I was a student, I wanted to join clubs to find like-minded people. I signed up for Soccer Club and in my second semester I became the club leader. I made a lot of friends through similar passion for soccer, which helped me adjust. We would train together, play, watch games, discuss, always be together. One really good program that stood out to me throughout my college and university life is what was organized by UBC when I just transferred. Because I transferred into the third year, a lot of people would already have their friend group. UBC anticipated that transfer program students might have trouble making friends. So they organized a week-long program called Imagine Day, and Jump Start, where you are able to be with people from your program. From the very beginning you are able to share your experiences and get your first friends in a new place. This is something I benefit from a lot. These UBC friends I'm still in touch with because we developed a connection from the very first day.

**a. In your opinion, do you think recreation could help international students settle? If yes, how? Why do you think so?**

Yes, 100%. Because especially when you're international student, there are so many more pressures on you to deliver, perform, be on your own. Being part of recreation helps you find a sense of belonging, a part of community. It's essential and it's very important to note as well that it's up to the person to grab those opportunities. We can't force them to participate in activities.

**5. Barriers — Have you noticed/found/learned about any barriers that international students commonly face when they first arrive in Canada (or when trying to settle)?**

Making friends. Language. It all comes down to not having friends, your language being not as good as domestic friends, missing home. For domestic students it's so easy to go see family but if you're from other side of the world, you might not see family for two, three, four years.

**a. What factors do you think would help address/combat these barriers?**

Colleges and universities being more proactive by providing programs to international students so they have a choice to attend them. And having a foundation for people to take part of.

**6. If you could design a program/service/initiative to help with international students' settlement in Canada/Vancouver, what would it look like?**

I think I would design it fairly similar to what UBC did when I transferred in my third year. Trying to organize events where people would connect with people from similar programs or similar backgrounds, and events that are specific for international students. For example, UBC has the International House where you can ask questions about visas, work permit, study permit. There would be counsellors as well who are designed to interact with and help international students on a daily basis so they would know what kind of support they need. I would design it to contribute to specific needs that international students have.

**7. In your experience and opinion, how do you think Covid-19 has affected specifically international students' lives/settlement into Vancouver?**

International students faced loneliness because of isolation. It was definitely difficult because for a majority of the day, week, month, people would be isolated on their own. And so my job as an RA was very important to contribute to the sense belonging and community. I would organize events outdoors, where people would be spaced out and still be able to connect with others. Luckily, we had technology like Zoom which we utilized a lot. RAs tried to help international students as much as possible so they don't feel lonely, isolated. Residence events and activities would be the only way for them to see other human beings. And through those connections, they can make friendships, go for walks, grab coffee together. It was very rewarding to see those connections and I knew that the job I'm doing it is worth it.

**APPENDIX D - Interview With Chelsey Acierno**

**Chelsey Acierno, Recruitment Manager, Refugee Resettlement, Education Program Development  
Friday, March 8, 2024. 12:30-1:00pm, via Zoom.**

**May I record this interview for transcription purposes?** Yes.

**Would you like to remain anonymous?** No.

**1. What is your name and what was your position? How long were you in this role?**

My name is Chelsey Acierno, and at Columbia College I was the Recruitment Manager and Refugee Resettlement Project Coordinator. I was at the College from 2014 to 2023, adding on the role of Refugee Resettlement Project Coordinator from 2016 to 2023.

**2. Do you have any experience working with specifically international students? If yes, what was the role and how was it?**

Yes, I was involved on the recruitment and admissions side of helping international students choose Columbia College as their preferred destination for high school and college programs. I was also the primary sponsor for the College's first Refugee Resettlement Program called World University Services Canada (WUSC). I also acted as the manager for resettled refugees to help them plan out their life and education goals while they were under the sponsorship/bursary program. Even though a lot of my experience is with refugees specifically, I believe the difference between refugees and international students is found more in the barriers to access to education. How they gain this access may look different, but essentially when they arrive in to the country, they are the same in that they are all equally newcomers and students adjusting to new life.

Working with international students is always exciting but equally challenging. I think they have really high set of needs compared to domestic students in the beginning in their arrival phase. I think access to services and access to peer groups and activities and opportunities really impact their journey in the long run. The early access to opportunities can greatly impact it.

**3. For the purpose of this project, “to settle” can be described as “to adopt a more steady or secure style of life“, “to make one’s permanent home somewhere”, or “to begin to feel comfortable or established in a new situation”. Do you have any experience participating in programs, services or initiatives that had a goal to help international students settle in Vancouver/Canada? If yes, what was it and what did you do?**

Half of my entire job was a resettlement program where international students and refugees were working together to build a community on campus for students who came from conflict regions of the world. It was sort of a partnership between students and new students to help resettle and build a whole new life in Canada.

**a. Did any program/service/initiative involve recreation? Recreation is described as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being”. If yes, what types of recreational activities were involved?**

One entire portion of the Student Refugee Program is dedicated to “social”. We have four dedicated pillars of resettlement. One of them was “social”. The social side was all about bridging the gap between activities and events, athletics, community connection, religious groups, and the students. Depending on what their social network was, we tried to build activities around it. And in working with resettlement, and particularly students coming from conflict regions, access to strong social network is one of the number one indicators of successful settlement. So it's more important than finances and other sorts of things in the long term.

**b. In your opinion, do you think recreation can help international students settle? If yes, how? Why do you think so?**

Absolutely. As someone whose entire role was international student-focused, I think as a staff what I saw when people engaged in recreational activities, was you saw them mature into themselves and become more confident versions of who they already were as well as who they can become in Canada. And I think what's different for international students compared to domestic is that a lot of them come to be who they are, or express themselves, for the first time through activities they might not have access to in their home countries. I think that recreation is a way for newcomers to find their people. Recreation programs bring down the barriers between the differences in students, bring them together navigate through the newness.

**4. Barriers — In your experience and opinion, what are some barriers that international students commonly face when they first arrive in Canada (or when trying to settle)?**

First and foremost, it's the unfamiliarity with how things work and the social anxiety that can come from not knowing how to access things or where to go. Just being a newcomer. Also a huge barrier is affordability. A lot of students want to do things but the affordability impacts their free time and ability to spend money. A lot of their time is spent on working or volunteering so they can become employed in Canada or have tangible skills to move forward in life. I would also say a huge barrier is transportation because it costs money, and time, and time is money for students. Students who don't live near the community they are studying, that extra time of commuting is definitely a barrier in using the opportunity to make best of recreational opportunities. Language is a huge barrier for some students in the beginning. It can impact confidence, and students may have higher social anxiety to join something alone for the first time if their language skills aren't as strong. In terms of refugees, their barriers are a little bit different, because trauma. Younger kids are dealing with a lot more trauma than we know about in their day to day. I really can't imagine what it's like to be a student in Vancouver. I don't know how they're doing it. We know some of them are living in terrible situations, like housing can be terrible. I think that's why recreation is so much needed is because their living situations has deteriorated a lot. They get stuck into their own patterns and having recreational opportunities available helps them get out and into the diversity of the community and learn new things.

**a. In your opinion, do you think recreation can help address these barriers? What other factors help?**

Yes, I think Recreation is one of the simplest tools to help international students gain access to community, and in my opinion community is all that matters in a newcomer's journey. Having access to peers can really help them through dark days, just knowing they have a community they can lean on. When you make social connections early on, everything becomes easier after.

**b. Do you know any recreational programs/services/initiatives in the community that help address the said barriers? If yes, how so?**



There's a really good organization, more for youth at risk, but it's called Take A Hike Foundation. For students who come in on a resettlement or refugee program, cities like Vancouver and Burnaby have discounted programs to access pools and gyms. I can't remember the name right now but there are passes like Flexi-passes, ACCESS Cards and the One Card that helps students access community centres and the gyms. Community organizations like ISS of BC and neighbourhood houses also have good programs. I do think there is a gap however, because the programs would be attached to the specific organizations, and student have said that they felt like they had to join the organization as a member or so to access the programs. Or like UrbanREC, they're a good organization too but they require payment and that's a big challenge for students. I also think international students are not really tapping in or accessing the community resources at all. There's so much out there but they don't know where to find it. They rely on their schools for information and schools may not have enough range of information on the resources. Students can feel really lonely.

**5. If you could design a program/service/initiative to help with international students' settlement in Canada/Vancouver, what would it look like?**

The biggest thing that's missing in Vancouver is accessibility to trails. I was shocked at the number of students who have never been on a hike! I mean, we live in Vancouver! That sort of access of information beyond the touristy sites. We live in one of the most accessible areas for outdoor recreation! That's why I really like the Take a Hike Foundation because it's getting people to facilitate hiking, not just for social part but also for the therapeutic part is great for stress management. And being outside and in nature is really a part of Canadian culture. One thing I'm starting to work on actually, is an Outdoor Experiential Learning Program. It's kind of like the UrbanREC multi-sport thing. I think it would be such an amazing endeavour for international students can sample a variation of outdoor leisure activities like kayaking, canoeing, swimming, hiking, camping. These sorts of things are good initiatives for students because they're cheap, and if you want to invest in something, it's one piece of equipment. It's an investment for long-term. And they're not community sports and this can be good because people also need an outlet that is individual that they can do on their own, yet has access to a community. Speaking from my experience, in all the times working with international students, the lack of outdoor experiential programming is really sad, considering where we live. And in that, getting people together to take public transportation together also helps because many hiking trails in Vancouver are public transit accessible but far and transiting alone would be such a slog.

Yes, I think having variation of recreational activities, like making sure there are different types of activities, so that different types of students and cultures can access them is also important. Student Services departments really have to pay careful attention to gender-based requirements, religious requirements, that might affect participation. Need to make sure activities are done in a way that is safe for students and they can access them.

**6. In your experience and opinion, how do you think Covid-19 has affected specifically international students' lives/settlement into Vancouver?**

I think it's two-fold. Students who are coming now, they missed out on high school experiential learning activities that in normal circumstance they would have experienced. They're coming into the college space not experiencing many social anchor opportunities which affects their desire or confidence to join on their own now. I think there is a real confidence issue here. And I think some have never gotten over the social anxiety. But then there is the other side of the table too where they go crazy in a good way! They're doing everything and they're not taking anything for granted. They join all the clubs and activities. I think in one way it's been beneficial for young people for them to have realized nothing should be taken for granted. The tendencies of each student either got worse or better depending on how they landed on the social spectrum. All in all, a lot of young people, they just moved on.

**APPENDIX E - Observation Checklist**

1. What is the observation?
2. What is the reason for this observation?
3. What seems to be the purpose/goal of what is being observed?
4. Are there any obvious emotions from participants of the observation?
5. Do there seem to be any barriers addressed? (E.g. language barrier, financial barrier)
6. Are there any opportunities for social integration?
7. Is there anything about the observation that is specific to the City of Vancouver?
8. Are there any signs of successful settlement?
9. Any additional notes?

**APPENDIX F - Field Observation Notes 1, Badminton Club Meeting**

**Observation 1, Badminton Club meeting**

- to see whether what I found during literature review seems to be true for this club (relevance of sport/intramurals to social integration)
- observed from 4:36-5:06pm Thursday Feb. 29th, Creekside Community Centre
- students seem to have come after classes
- students arriving together in groups, but quite a bit of individual students too
- they are playing in groups of 4, taking turns into court when necessary
- they seem to be laughing and having fun
- sharing water bottles
- sense of belonging to the badminton club

- a smaller community (badminton club) within a bigger community (CC)
- words of encouragement, “hype”
- they started playing with students they were familiar with at first, then started “diversifying” their group
- signs of intercultural friendships: mixed races (playing with students from many other countries) as well as some students hanging out with students from their own country (speaking the same language); this aligns with what I found during lit. review: “Some researchers say developing friendships with co-nationals and others from the same cultural background is essential for adapting to college” + “identifying with college sport may (1) lead to smaller, more homogeneous subgroups instead of a larger, more cohesive community”

## **APPENDIX G - Field Observation Notes 2, Spirit Week**

### **Observation 2, Spirit Week**

- to see what types of activities/events the student life program runs/has in plan, how they are marketed, how students interact with the student life program
- Observed from 11:45am-12:10pm Tuesday, March 5, Columbia College North Campus Student Lounge
- Day 2 of Spirit Week, theme is Smash Bros
- Students were randomly divided into houses: Donkey Kong, Super Mario, PacMan and Pokemon (every term they are randomly assigned to a team, different from before to ensure students have a chance to meet everyone + new people)
- Teams also included staff and faculty
- sense of belonging, sense of team, community
- Game of the day: Balloon Race; teams of three would blow balloon into cup and carry it over to the table and stack it.
- whoever wanted to participate in the game came to the Student Lounge on time, with some students joining last minute -> unexpected participation combined with willingness to try led to a fun time.
- students of difference races and cultures in one team, friendly competition against others
- cheering on (clapping, verbally), loud in the student lounge room, hard to hear instructions but I think that’s good because it means the Spirit Week is doing it’s job; the atmosphere is great. The activity yesterday heads and shoulders, knees and cups. different students of the student council lead each day. The activity for tomorrow is card memory game using Pokemon cards.
- Verbal reminder of the spirit week tomorrow. Students helped student council members clean up.

## **APPENDIX H - Field Observation Notes 3, Student Life Team Meeting**

### **Observation 3, Student Life Meeting**

- to see how activities/events are planned, to see what factors are considered, to see whether barriers are addressed or whether students' settlement is taken into consideration
- Friday, March 8th, 10:10~11:02am
- w/ Zerlinda, Student Life Coordinator; Sylvanna, Student Life Coordinator; Gabrielle, Student Services Manager
- Trip to Mount Seymour was good, 23 ppl sign up including student staff; dealt with few students who did not show up morning of, students had fun, "10 out of 10", enjoyed the hike, nobody got hurt. Slid down instead of hiking down the steep trails.
- Survey sent out to students who attended to get feedback, collected to add to testimonials
- Check-in with club leaders after securing new venues, usually students email in if there are problems but none received
- Trying to get more students involved in Cricket Club; when only a small number of students show interest, subsidizing fees becomes a "personal endeavour, vs. college endeavour"
- If the Student Life team can genuinely say they've tried their best and turnout is still low, then comes a point to cut losses.
- Staff and faculty can apply for a grant to Mark and the Collab Committee for up to a \$5000; ex. a Student Services grant to Mark to support Dragonboat with. This makes Dragonboat more feasible and accessible to students.
- Finding alternative solutions to student requests to benefit a larger group/the whole College student population (ex. knee pads for Volleyball Club; personal knee pads vs. knee pads for the club that all students can use)
- behind budget means they need to reschedule better impact, or reallocate budget
- student leadership development is "a big aspect of what we want to develop more of"
  - a big part of it is using a "better impact" platform that manages student leadership teams
  - good for departments to post opportunities; students can only what they are eligible for
  - in order to adopt the software, need to have a college conversation about "how do we approach developing student leaders" and "how do we want to create a holistic student leadership program across the board"
  - all funnels into this event that they want to host, a recognition event that celebrates students who have contributed to the CC community (CCSA, Student Council, volunteers, SEAs, etc)
- students' schedules taken into account when planning programs (ex. holiday weeks)
- Qualm about having a bigger prom event for both high school and post-secondary students (mixing minors with adults); but, combining would allow financial support from post-secondary side and high school can participate in more ceremonies.

- “what is the best way to deliver convocation?”: considering North American culture, budget (cake and drinks, canapés), what students might want (private family time at dinner before joining a prom party with friends)

## APPENDIX I - Content Analysis Checklist

Content Type	
<i>Reason for Analysis</i>	
What kinds of activities/clubs/events are involved in the content?	
What seems to be the purpose/goal of the content?	
Any words/terms frequently found?	
Any barriers addressed? (E.g. those found during literature review)	
Any opportunities for social integration?	
Anything specific to Vancouver?	
Additional Notes:	

## APPENDIX J - Content Analysis 1, Student Life Program Activity Posters

Content Analysis 1, Student Life Program activity posters	
<i>To look for ways the student life program has attempted to aid international student's social integration through their activities, and to see how the student life program aims to position recreational activities into student life</i>	
What kinds of activities/clubs/events are involved in the content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- off-campus activities</li> <li>- clubs are diverse, though many say “TBA” for location</li> </ul>
What seems to be the purpose/goal of the content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to welcome individuals</li> <li>- to help students have fun or destress</li> <li>- to get students engaged in extracurricular activities</li> </ul>
Any words/terms frequently found?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lots of words of encouragement to join</li> <li>- common words: “have fun”, “destress”, “relax”</li> </ul>
Any barriers addressed? (E.g. those found during literature review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appeal to financial barriers</li> <li>- advertises that fees are subsidized or activity is free</li> </ul>

Content Analysis 1, Student Life Program activity posters	
<i>To look for ways the student life program has attempted to aid international student's social integration through their activities, and to see how the student life program aims to position recreational activities into student life</i>	
Any opportunities for social integration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- yes, but not always; many seem to welcome individual registration</li> <li>- some activities catered to different cultures, different international holidays</li> </ul>
Anything specific to Vancouver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- activities for touring around Vancouver, exploring the city, many seem to be for touristy sites</li> </ul>
Additional Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- almost all of them direct students to Student Life Coordinator in case of question or trouble</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX K - Content Analysis 2, World University Services Canada (WUSC)'s Student Refugee Program (SRP) Orientation Slides

Content Analysis 2, World University Services Canada (WUSC)'s Student Refugee Program (SRP) Orientation Slides	
<i>To better understand the barriers that students may face when coming to a new country and to look for ways the SRP at Columbia College has used recreation as a way to address these barriers</i>	
What kinds of activities/clubs/events are involved in the content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within the SRP, there is a "social pillar"</li> </ul>
What seems to be the purpose/goal of the content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the social pillar aims to connect students to clubs and volunteer opportunities</li> <li>- provide regular social opportunities on and off campus</li> <li>- provide regular social check-ins</li> <li>- connect with community organizations based on student needs</li> </ul>
Any words/terms frequently found?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "welcoming", "social", "community", "engagement"</li> </ul>
Any barriers addressed? (E.g. those found during literature review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- language barrier, culture shock, financial challenges are listed as key barriers</li> </ul>
Any opportunities for social integration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- yes, refer to "purpose/goal" above</li> </ul>
Anything specific to Vancouver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N/A</li> </ul>
Additional Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 main pillars of resettlement: academic, community and social engagement, events and outreach, post-sponsorships preparation</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX L - Content Analysis 3, Event Feedback Survey

Content Analysis 3, Event Feedback Survey	
<i>To see what students have reported about the Student Life program, and whether any reported social integration benefits from participating in the program (make new friends, feel sense of belonging, learn about the Canadian culture, etc).</i>	
What kinds of activities/clubs/events are involved in the content?	- paintball, kayaking, Victoria tour, high school prom
What seems to be the purpose/goal of the content?	- provide fun activities/events for students to enjoy with friends, meet new people
Any words/terms frequently found?	- “fun”, “exciting”, “make friends”, “experience”
Any barriers addressed? (E.g. those found during literature review)	- financial barrier: activity fees subsidized
Any opportunities for social integration?	- “opportunity to learn a new hobby/sport and make new friends” - “getting to meet people and make friends”
Anything specific to Vancouver?	- N/A, except for tour activities like Victoria trip
Additional Notes:	- open-ended questions to get qualitative data; can be used as testimonials

## APPENDIX M - Content Analysis 4, Orientation Schedule/Plan

Content Analysis 4, Orientation Schedule/Plan	
<i>To see how new student orientation is scheduled, to include what types of resources, what barriers are addressed, and to see how recreational opportunities are used/planned</i>	
What kinds of activities/clubs/events are involved in the content?	- campus tour, introduction to different departments and staff, different resources (course planning, career, mental health, immigration, student ID card, library, IT, school nurse and accounting, homestay services), class registration, off-campus social activity
What seems to be the purpose/goal of the content?	- to welcome students to College/campus and city - to help students meet new people and mingle, orient them to services/resources
Any words/terms frequently found?	- “support”, “introduce”, “join”
Any barriers addressed? (E.g. those found during literature review)	- language barrier

#### Content Analysis 4, Orientation Schedule/Plan

*To see how new student orientation is scheduled, to include what types of resources, what barriers are addressed, and to see how recreational opportunities are used/planned*

Any opportunities for social integration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 2-3 icebreakers scheduled each day during orientation week (ex. human bingo)</li><li>- bowling activity at REVS at the end of the day</li></ul>
Anything specific to Vancouver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- immigration Q&amp;A, indigenous land acknowledgement, MSP help, EDI workshop, homestay services</li></ul>
Additional Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- N/A</li></ul>