International Newsletter

International Student Services

Table of Contents

Upcoming Events .................................................. 2
Stories ................................................................. 3
Traveling During Spring Break ............................... 3
Intercultural Communication ................................. 4
Star of the Month .................................................. 5
Information ........................................................... 6
Make Your Voice Heard ......................................... 7

Feature

Stories:
Yuhua Tao, an international student from China, is going to share her story with us.

Star of the Month:
Let’s get to know Dianna McIntyre, who is the Associate Director of International Student Services. Let’s hear what she wants us to know.

You Name Our Newsletter!
E-mail us an interesting name to win a $10 gift card.
lzeng09@georgefox.edu


For intercultural communication tips
Follow us to
This newsletter is published by International Student Services, George Fox University. Our purpose is to inform, educate and connect international students and our campus community.

Contact Information:

Office of International Students Services:
International Center/
Cultural House
George Fox University

Editorial Staff:

Editors in Chief
Alex Pia
Dianna McIntyre
Managing Editor
Lishan Zeng
Column Writer
Yaqin Long

Join the International Newsletter team to exercise your passion in media at lzeng09@georgefox.edu

A note to all the students, faculty, and staff:
We are inviting you to submit articles for publication. Share with us your cultural experiences. We would enjoy getting to know you more.

Upcoming Events

Hot Pot Party - Saturday, March 19, 5 p.m. at Elee Jen’s house. Cost is $5. Sign up to attend.

Fun, Games, and Food - Friday, March 25. 6:15 p.m. Sign up by e-mailing Dianna.

Trip to Salem - Contact Ping-Yi, pyshihor@gmail.com, for details.

International Christian Fellowship - Friday, April 1, 10:40-11:30 a.m. in the International Center.

Help with Tax Returns - Friday, April 1, 2-5 p.m., HVR 211. See email from Dianna for details.

Brown Bag Lunch Cultural Insight - Students sharing about Vietnam. Wednesday, April 6, noon-1:30 p.m. Cap & Gown room.

International Photo Contest Display & Voting - Wednesday, April 6, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Stevens Center 1st-floor lobby.
In time of difficulties and hardships, some people choose to run away and never face the challenges. Fortunately, there are some people who choose to face all the hardships with a positive attitude. Yuhua is one of them. Raised in a family without much love from her parents, Yuhua chose to love others with all she had. One of the several reasons she gives us for her love for others is that she understands the pain of being left out, alone, and helpless. And she does not want others to feel this way. It seems natural for her to love and care for others.

Yuhua is with us today at George Fox University because of unconditional love. When she was in China, Yuhua got to know an American lady, Ruth Wilcox, who taught at a Chinese school in her hometown. When Ruth did shopping or traveling Yuhua helped her with translation. One time when Ruth and her sister from America were traveling together, Ruth got injured and was sent to the hospital, to await a surgery. During that time, Ruth felt so helpless and desperate because no one around her could speak English. Then her sister called Yuhua and asked for help. Yuhua went to the hospital without any hesitation and took care of Ruth with Ruth’s sister. After the sister went back to America, Yuhua took the whole responsibility to take care of Ruth for 3 months, and she did not ask for anything in return.

Ruth was so touched that she wanted to adopt Yuhua as a daughter, but Yuhua had already passed the age limit for adoption. Ruth, however, did not give up. She told Yuhua that she could sponsor Yuhua’s study in America as long as Yuhua could come to America and stay with her.

This is Yuhua’s story, a story of love and thank-giving. There are few lessons we can learn from Yuhua: even if you are not surrounded by people who love you, it does not mean that you can not love others.

If you have stories that are inspiring and encouraging, please e-mail lzeng09@georgefox.edu to let us know.
Perception Checking in Intercultural Communication

During our communication with culturally different people, conflicts and misunderstandings occur more easily than when we are with our in-group members of the same culture. What are the major reasons that cause the conflicts and misunderstandings?

One of the reasons is that we tend to have the misperception that others are like us, that we have the exact same values or attitudes. Another reason is that we sometimes overemphasize the differences so that we neglect the same values that we share.

To deal with these two issues, we offer you the method of perception checking. Perception checking is a process to seek from the speaker the right understanding of the message being received by you. Generally, the perception checking process includes three parts: a description of the behavior you noticed; two possible interpretations of the behavior; and a request for clarification about how to interpret the behavior.

Let’s look at the interaction of two culturally different people to see how they can apply the perception checking. Jared is having a conversation with Lidan, a Chinese student. Jared asks Lidan, “You kept silent the other day when I talked to you about basketball (describe the behavior); I wasn’t sure if you were angry with me (the first interpretation) or just not interested in the topic (the second interpretation). How did you really feel at that time (request for clarification)?”

When we apply perception checking in our communication process, we don’t take it for granted that what we’ve perceived is the right interpretation for the behavior, but we seek clarification from the source. It also shows to the other person that you care about the relationship and you want to understand him/her.


Intercultural Communication tips
As international students at George Fox University, we experience intercultural communication everyday. The question is whether we are dealing with it effectively. Are we creating barriers that cause greater misunderstanding of our cultures? Let’s us examine our daily communication processes by applying the following principles.

1. **Be open-minded**: we need to show to the culturally different people that we are willing to be friends with them and learn from and with them.

2. **Practice active listening**: listen to what others have to say and tell people your opinion with the attitude of discussion in situations of disagreement.

3. **Seek understanding**: due to the fact that we are from different cultures, we might have some different values. Understand what the other person values and communicate accordingly.
Star of the month: Dianna McIntyre
Serving the Students with Love

What motivated you to be in this position?
I have always had an interest in people from other countries and cultures. My daughter is adopted from Korea. When she was a little girl we started serving as a host family for international students. I loved the interaction I had with these students, so choosing to work with international students seemed a natural thing to do.

What do you think about your experience with the international students?
I love it! In reality, international students are not that much different from American students. Yes, there are language and cultural differences, but we are all human. We are all created by God, and God sees value in all of us. We all have the same basic needs, desires, and difficulties. I look at the language and cultural differences as a way for me to learn/discover something outside my own understanding. I find if I am patient with myself and the students, we can usually understand each other.

What did you enjoy most working with international students?
My favorite part of working with international students is the opportunity to mentor – to invest in the development and personal growth of students. Secondly, I enjoy helping students be successful.

Who will be the star of next month? Make suggestions to us at lzeng09@georgefox.edu.

Dianna wants you to know:
• Remember God loves you.
• Be thankful for the opportunities you have.
• Take advantage of opportunities to learn and grow.
• Learn about the world around you, but also learn about yourself.
• Don’t be too hard on yourself.
• Remember you are here to study, but social opportunities are also a way to learn and grow.
• Reach out to other people. We all need each other.
• There are many people here at George Fox who, like me, love investing in students’ lives. Get to know some of them and allow them to help you grow and develop. Also, allow them to love you.
International Student Services has two opportunities for students to be in leadership positions.

**Orientation Leader**

We are expecting 30 to 40 new international students this coming fall semester. Orientation for new students will be August 22 to 28. 8 to 10 current students will be chosen to serve as orientation leaders from August 19 – 28. O leaders serve an important role because they are the first people new students meet and are a valuable resource for them. O leaders help new students understand what is being communicated during orientation. They also lead groups of students in orientation activities.

**International Student Services Interns**

We will be choosing 4 students to serve as interns in our office for the 2011-12 academic year. Interns are responsible for planning and implementing specific activities or projects they choose. The internship opportunity in our office is a great way to explore your leadership strengths. It is a voluntary position and can be taken for academic credit with approval of one of your instructors.

---

**Employment Corner**

Are you interesting in getting a job or serving as an intern at a business?

If you will be paid for your services, be sure to know what the immigration regulations allow. Immigration Regulations allow students to work in paid positions through the following opportunities:

**On-Campus Employment**

You may work part-time (20 hours per week or less) on the GFU campus during fall and spring semesters and full-time during the summer. No permission is needed from immigration authorities.

**Curricular Practical Training**

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) allows eligible F-1 students to engage in paid internship/employment, which is related to and is an integral part of their major field of study.

CPT is authorized by advisors in the Office of International Student Services, not the government. CPT employment must be a supervised, temporary position. CPT can be authorized for part-time (less than 20 hours per week) during school or full-time (more than 20 hours per week) during non-school times.

**Optional Practical Training**

OPT allows eligible F-1 students to engage in employment (both on-campus and off-campus) within their major area of study for up to 12 months per educational level.

For students in certain major areas of study there is an opportunity to extend OPT for an additional 17 months near the end of the 21 months of OPT.

Most students use their 12 months of OPT upon degree completion [post-completion OPT]. OPT is granted by the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. The processing can take up to 3 months and costs $380.

Students who intend to engage in post-completion OPT are encouraged to start the paperwork 3 months prior to the completion of all degree requirements.
The purpose for this page is to publish the audience’s opinions on certain issues or topics.

The topic for the next issue, which will be out on April 15, is: Do you like living on campus or off campus? What are the advantages and shortcomings for both living on and off campus?

Please feel free to email us your opinion at ylong09@georgefox.edu

Over the past month, we’ve asked the international students on campus what surprised them most when they first came to America and to George Fox University. We had much feedback and we are happy to share some responses with you here below:

Amalija (from Serbia): People (especially my host family) are very considerate, and I was really surprised about the public transportation in Newberg.

Liz (from Vietnam): I was surprised because the area where I stayed was very peaceful and there weren't many people. I realize that America is not what it is in the movies.

Jiangze Zhou (from China): I don’t know what is typical American food here. I am surprised the scenery here at GFU is very beautiful. I have never seen this before coming here.

Zhengyi Liu (from China): I am surprised that the public transportation here is not very developed so that every time I need to go to Portland I have to ask someone to give me a ride.

Yu He (from China): I used to think that there were many differences between America and China. I then found out that we had so many things in common.

Peng Ding (from China): I am surprised by the perfect environment here.

A Note from the Editor:

Thanks for all of your input to the newsletter. We are looking forward to hearing more from you.

If there is a specific issue or topic that you want to discuss with others, please e-mail us at ylong09@georgefox.edu to let us know.