

**A Training Seminar to Assist International Student Ministry Staff
Regarding Post Academic Transition**
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ABSTRACT

Ministering among university students involves many challenges. A major concern of international students deals with transitioning to their post academic lives. Cultural issues, entry, and re-entry stresses, and the effort to practice newly developed spiritual disciplines result in real concerns. Students who have become Christians while in their host culture face an added concern of understanding their role in God's global mission and how their faith will be reflected in their lives while in post academic transition.

Consequently, the purpose of the project was to train staff of international student ministries to help international students prepare for a positive post academic adjustment. The project seminar for international student ministry staff regarding post academic transition, with accompanying resource materials, had the following goals: (1) to increase awareness of God's mission, (2) to inform staff of available resource tools, (3) to increase awareness of and provide contact information for global networks to assist in post-academic transitions, and (4) to heighten awareness of the needs of international students during this transition.

The seminar was presented to ninety-five international student ministry staff at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois. The seminar was intentionally designed to follow a conference of the Association of Christians Ministering among Internationals (ACMI) to maximize the training opportunity. The project design involved the administration of a pretest and posttest instrument for gaining evaluative data to determine the effectiveness of the seminar to meet the stated goals. Additional evaluations were administered after the seminar to provide feedback for the entire seminar and each individual seminar component. The seminar components included the

following sessions: (1) discovering a role in God's mission, (2) understanding issues involved with transition and international students, (3) re-entry issues, (4) issues of preparation for departure and methods of follow-up after the student's new placement, (5) identifying opportunities for connecting international students with global networks, (6) identifying visa and immigration issues, and (7) a panel of former international students.

The findings of the project confirm that the seminar successfully attained each of the stated goals, and resulted in a resource and network for assisting international students experiencing post academic transition.