A New Voice For International Students

The first issue of ISV means a new voice for international students at St Pat’s Campus.

ISV (International Student Voice) is the monthly newsletter for International Students at ACU, St Pat’s campus.

Its aim is to bring a voice to international students and provide them a medium through which they can both receive information and express themselves and their thoughts to others on the campus.

Each month’s issue will contain stories written by both staff and students, there will be a section for advertising second hand goods, a “featured student” section in which we will write about one student each month who has excelled in a particular area and regular articles from counsellors and other staff members aimed at providing useful information for you to enjoy your time here at ACU.

A team of student volunteers has been put together to assist in the production of this monthly publication. These students will become well known to you over the course of the year and will be involved in helping to write and research stories for the paper.

We want you to treat this publication as your own. It is YOUR voice, YOUR way of being heard. As such, we want you to feel free to contribute articles or opinions by writing in to us or speaking directly to one of the members of the team.

We will start off small, but there is plenty of opportunity to expand over time, depending on the level of demand from all of you. Please take this opportunity to be involved in your community and contribute to your stay at ACU—St Pat’s Campus.

Take advantage of the free advertising and the chance to have your voice heard.

Our contact details are on the back page of this newsletter. Please feel free to contact us at The Voice if you have any interesting story ideas or want to nominate someone as a featured student.

Once again, this is YOUR paper, so please get involved and let YOUR VOICE be heard!

John Crowder
International Student Adviser

Angels are waiting to hold your hand

They say we all have gypsy blood within our veins. But when it comes to meeting the unexpected, nothing can beat the jolt of a cultural shock. For me, it began with my first morning stepping down at Parliament Station – destination ACU National.

Jet lag was the least of my worries in 'no worries' land. Only a week after my arrival in Melbourne, I was in hospital for treatment of water retention in my body – the hospital bills causing my next major shock.

Trying hard to catch up with my studies, I felt disoriented and unable to cope. Homesickness almost made me decide on going back to my country. I had made the wrong choice starting anew in a land far away from my family and loved ones.

Australia was picture perfect, as far as I had seen last year. Long winding roads flanking endless stretches of foliage in the myriad hues of autumn and, country homes sitting pretty in dainty gardens.

This was a far cry from the city life I now saw. Overwhelmed with mixed feelings, my saving grace came in the moral and practical support I got from the Staff and Student Services team at ACU. They helped me to make the right choices and switch over to new ones.

One piece of advice should suffice then for all who struggle to adjust to a study environment and culture alien to their own. Ask for help when you cannot handle it by yourself. It is amazing to know that angels are waiting to hold your hand and lead you on.

Mary Hemant
1st Year Education Student
An ex-student’s perspective on life at ACU

Isn’t it always interesting to know the experience of our peers and get an idea about their opinions of various aspects of the university?

I had the opportunity to interact and get to know the experience of an ex-student, Abhishek Bose and want to relate some of his experiences here.

Abhishek graduated in June 2007 with a MBA (Accounting). He said of his time here at ACU that “It was unique in terms of the learning experience”. According to him, the main difference studying here was that there was a more informal relationship between the students and the teaching faculty, enabling a more interactive mode of education. Although quite challenging and difficult at first, he realized that the system of understanding concepts rather than mere rote learning, was actually more helpful.

Abhishek now works with Westpac Bank and has thoroughly enjoyed the experience of coming to another country and studying in a completely different environment.

Finding work was not as easy as he had expected it would be, however. Despite having previous experience, finding a job related to his course of study was quite challenging. The main reason for this, he feels, was the lack of Australian work experience.

Abhishek suggests not losing hope, as he did, and to have little patience. Just as not everything in life is simple, not everything is difficult either. Gaining Permanent Residence for him was a very easy process.

He consulted a lawyer who specializes in this, making his task much easier.

If you intend to apply for a job having PR (or at least having applied for it) makes things a lot easier!

Kunal Mehta
1st Year MBA (Accounting)

Dealing with Homesickness

“The best thing we can do is to make wherever we’re lost in Look as much like home as we can.”

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Kunal Mehta
1st Year MBA (Accounting)

Ten to Twelve - A humorous misunderstanding

In my 1st week at university, being a new and excited student all ready to start my course in Australia, I had just started making new friends both locally and from other countries. One of the first friends I made was Australian, and I realised that we were scheduled to have 2 lectures together.

Feeling excited to have made my very first Australian friend, we compared timetables and she informed me that the lecturer had told her that the time of our next class had been changed and was now scheduled to be from 10 to 12.

Of course what my friend meant was that the class was from 10am to 12noon. However, what I thought she meant was that the class was to start at 10 to 12, meaning, at 11.50am.

Seeing that it was then 9am, I strolled to the library to surf the net till my class was due to start. After a long and leisurely break in the library, I confidently entered my very first class at 10 to 12 – 10 minutes before 12, only to realise that the lecturer was already concluding the lecture.

Needless to say, I was the joke of the day!

Vanjitha Chantherakumar
2nd Year Bachelor of Social Science
April's Featured Student: Min Jung Choi

I interviewed a 3rd year nursing student, Min Jung Choi from South Korea. Min Jung works at a nursing home in Surrey Hills as a personal care attendant. She was chosen as this month’s featured student for her great academic performance - excellent academic records with HDs and Ds in most assignments and exams. So far she has admirably maintained a good balance between study and work. Here is what she had to say.

ISV: What did you do before coming to Australia?

Min Jung: I was an accountant when I lived in South Korea. I worked for the Samsung Electronics, taxation department.

ISV: Why did you decide to study in Australia and why did you choose ACU?

Min Jung: I liked Australia’s beautiful and safe environment. Its cultural diversity and laid-back and friendly people also attracted me. I chose to study at ACU because of its outstanding reputation in nursing education. Factors including a well-developed nursing program, the proximity to public transport, and the great support for international students contributed to my decision to study at ACU.

ISV: What made you choose to study nursing?

Min Jung: I think nursing is challenging and rewarding. I wanted the satisfaction of helping others and influencing their lives for the better.

ISV: Can you give us any study tips?

Min Jung: I try to review my notes right after class while it’s still fresh in my memory. For example, I write down a summary of the important ideas in a notebook during class and read it while sitting on the train before I get home. I also try many different methods to facilitate my memory. For instance, I use bright and colourful pens to highlight important concepts, and make index cards to prompt difficult concepts/definitions. Moreover, I allocate my study time each day, so I don’t have to study too much in one day and it ends up too late to study for the exam.

ISV: How long have you worked in the nursing home and how many times do you work per week?

Min Jung: I’ve been working in the nursing home for a year. I work 2 to 3 times a week including weekends.

ISV: How do you manage study and work?

Min Jung: I try to use my time efficiently. I don’t have a lot of time for study. So I get up early in the morning to study 1 or 2 hours before I start my day. I try my best to concentrate and focus my mind when studying. I also set some time aside for exercise to reduce stress and maintain good health.

ISV: What is your future plan after graduation?

Min Jung: If I work in Australia, I want to experience many different areas of nursing. Eventually, I’d like to be specialised in a specific clinical area or do further study in nursing management. I believe the skills and knowledge I’ve gained at ACU will be advantageous in my future career.

ISV: Lastly, how do you feel to be the first featured student of this month?

Min Jung: I’m very honoured and humbled to have been chosen. Thank you for giving me a chance to participate in our very first newspaper!

Sunny Gee
2nd Year Nursing

An Easy Recipe for cooking novices

Ingredients:
2 slices of goléemela bread
1 Tomato
Mozarella Cheese
1 Egg
Salt and Pepper
Mixed Italian Herbs (Available in all supermarkets)

Method:
1: Whisk the egg with SALT and pepper (according to your taste). Make an omelette.
2: Toast the slices of bread.
3: Cut the tomato into thin slices.
4: Sprinkle some Italian herbs (optional) onto the tomato.
5: Put the omelette on top of the sliced tomato.
6: Cover with Mozarella cheese.
7: Put in the microwave (or under the grill) until cheese melts.

Although simple, this is a nutritious and healthy meal. Much better than take away!

Sameer Vohra
3rd Year Nursing
Moving from one place to another is not easy, especially when you have to move across continents. All of a sudden you have to re-learn everything you have learnt since you were a child and re-adjust your thinking to cope with every day experiences. You have to start a process of adaptation.

As international students, it may be challenging to get used to a different education system, especially after attending more than ten years of the former one. How things happen in individual countries and cultures is very different. In most Asian countries like China and India for example, we are used to a one-way style of learning. Students spend most of their time attending lectures and taking notes. We are expected to memorise what we have learnt. Moreover, there will only be one final examination for each subject with no assignment to submit during the semester. The more we can remember, the higher marks we will get.

On the contrary, while studying in Australia, students are expected to be more independent with their study and their thoughts. In order to understand what we are studying, we have to find many resources and read a lot of articles. More importantly, we need to know the concept behind the material, not just the content, and then we should question what we read. Therefore, apart from attending lectures, students also have tutorials, in which we are encouraged (if not required!) to express our opinion.

Cultural Column - BIG differences in education

It will take a while to adapt to a different university life and a completely different system of education. We can actually use these different learning styles to help our study as each has its own advantages and disadvantages. It is difficult, but it is not impossible. It is not only a good brain we need, but a strong heart to be patient is our key to success.

Guo De Ying
1st Year Nursing

Hao Hongqiu
1st Year Nursing

Sisilia Tjandra
1st Year Diploma of Business

Thought of the month

“Speak or act with a pure mind and happiness will follow you as unshakable as your shadow. Speak of act with an impure mind and trouble will follow you as the wheel follows the ox.” (The teachings of Buddha)

Sharmalie Wijesinghe
3rd Year Nursing