Thank you, Global Engagement Advising Community!

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Bringing the World Together: How to Support Third Culture Kids in Advising

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“In truth, our hearts are neither white nor black. Our hearts are shredded between worlds: Shaved away, place by place, piece by piece, Until they belong everywhere and nowhere, And we cannot get the pieces back. (Jung, 2016, p. 29)”
Session Agenda

● Introduction
● Definition of Third Culture Kid (TCK) Groups
● Challenges for TCKs in Higher Education
● Theoretical Frameworks to Be Utilized Within TCK Advising
● TCK Advising Best Practices
● Scenario
● Closing
Introduction

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My Connection to TCKs
As of 2014, there were an estimated 6.8 million Americans living abroad (Costanzo & Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2017).

272 million people migrating between countries in 2019, 3.5% of the world's population (United Nations, 2019).

In 2017, 20% of the 4.5 million students attending the 8,000 international schools globally, attended an international school outside of the culture of their parents (Wechsler, 2017).
Definition of Third Culture Kid (TCK) Groups

- Traditional TCK groups:
  - Military kids
  - Missionary kids
  - Corporate kids
  - Foreign service kids
  - Other


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Cross-cultural Kids

- Domestic TCKs
- International Adoptees
- Children of refugees/child refugees
- Children of immigrants
- Children of minority groups
- Educational CCKs
- Children of Borderlanders
- Mixed-heritage children
- Bi and Multicultural children
- Traditional TCKs
- Other

Challenges for TCKs in Higher Education
Culture Shock

“There’s definitely like a couple of cultures here that I’ve never been exposed to, like the gay community and the Jewish community. I mean, like every country I lived in, not one of those were present. It particularly took me a little while to get used to that, like Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah rolled around, and I’d never even really heard of it. I had no idea what was going on. I had no idea like what the rainbow flag meant and all that kind of stuff, and I saw them on like every other person’s door. I was like, “What’s going on?” It’s weird to think that after living in such different places that you still come back to like technically your home country and discover new cultures” (Weigel, 2010, p.73).
Establishing Identity

“I definitely don't feel ownership of any of the cultures that I belong to or have lived in,” (Espada-Campos, 2018, p. 46).

“When I tried going to the Asian Cultural Society the first thing I noticed was that there were a lot of Asian Americans. And, the feeling around them was completely different from the feeling I have from internationals. We had a term we called them, ABC, American Born Chinese...they were very American... their values are different, the way they speak, what they consider important.” (Espada-Campos, 2018, p. 44)
Cultural Balance

“...willingness or acceptance of the fact that I’ll never really be able to say that I’m 100% Texan or that I’m 100% Minnesotan. I’m never going to have any one culture anywhere where I really belong. Just that flexibility to be like, I’m a little bit of all of them and just kind of take the goods things and be able to recognize how there were good things here that shaped me and these memories, or these things I learned from it and just take the good from all the different little places. Kind of make it like a little crazy quilt - put all this together and it’s me.” (Sellers, 2011, p. 59)
Need for Connection

“When I talked about like my experiences [living overseas], I felt like they couldn’t relate to it. I felt like I was just talking about something that they weren’t interested in at all. I guess the hardest thing is that people were close-minded and weren’t interested in learning about the world outside of their little life, their little area of where they’d been. Even if they were from different states or something, like living in other countries hadn’t even occurred to them” (Weigel, 2010, p. 68).
Theoretical Frameworks to Be Utilized Within TCK Advising
Weaver’s Cultural Iceberg Model (1981)

Weaver believed that our world is so predicated on understandings of values and identities.
Pollock’s Transition Challenge Matrix (2013)

Phinney’s Ethnic Identity Model (1993)

Three stages:
Unexamined Ethnic Identity
(Diffusion-Foreclosure)

Ethnic Identity Search/ Moratorium

Ethnic Identity Achievement

TCK Advising Best Practices

- Create an opportunity for TCKs to self-identify
- Create connection opportunities
- Attend professional development focused on TCKs
- Be well versed on what’s going on in the world
- Allow for longer advising appointments
Beth is a new student at a midwestern large university. On her application to this university, she applied as an international student, since she is a citizen of South Korea. Due to her international student status, she initially was sent to the international student’s office to answer any questions. During her first semester, she struggled with feelings of homesickness and fitting into such a large institution.

When she met with her academic advisor for mandatory advising, she expressed how she was feeling and how this might impact her final grades. Her academic advisor noticed on her record that Beth was an international student. The advisor next referred the student to international student services to see if they can help her acclimate. The student kindly agreed, but decided not to go to international student services.

Beth is not an international student in the way her advisor assumed.
Scenario

Although Beth is a Korean citizen, she spent a few years of elementary school growing up and attending school in Ohio. She also spent three years of her high school career in Las Vegas. Beth’s sister, Jane, is an American citizen, since their father completed his doctoral degree in the United States when Jane was born. Beth understands American culture, having grown up and having friends in the Midwest. That is why she chose to attend this particular institution, but now she feels ostracized by an advisor’s lack of understanding of her identity.
Thank you! Please email me at millett@hawaii.edu.


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