

## **International students get intro to UWO**

by Mandy Potts - Tuesday, August 28, 2012

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/20609/international-students-get-intro-to-uwo/>

The first day of classes usually feels a little nerve-racking for students.

Now, imagine experiencing that first day in a different country.

That's what about 100 students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh are prepared to do in one week. And it's nothing unusual, said Sarah Christensen, international student adviser at UW Oshkosh.

Annually, students from all over the world come to UW Oshkosh as part of both degree and study abroad programs. This year, students from Korea, China, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Croatia, Haiti, Russia and more will become a part of the student body.

"A lot of times, it is the first time these students are in an all-English environment," said Christensen. "When you are fully immersed, it can be really overwhelming."

With the help of the Office of International Education and people like Christensen, a new student orientation, which takes Aug. 27 through 31 on campus, aims to help make the experience and adjustment a little less overwhelming, Christensen said.

From campus tours, to presentations at the UW credit union, to meetings with campus support services, University Deans, online services representatives -- even a campus scavenger hunt -- the orientation schedule is packed to get the international students ready for their first day of classes on Sept. 5.

Beyond the line-up and introduction to UW Oshkosh, Christensen also constantly works with students behind the scenes, helping them get a visa and coordinating travel to the United States. She also navigates them through the logistics of insurance and internship and employment coordination.

"There are so many things these students need that they don't even know they need," said Christensen.

While in Oshkosh, the international students live a fairly normal college-style life. They set up home in Gruenhagen Conference Center, many of them with American roommates, they dine at Reeve Union and Blackhawk Commons and they get involved with organizations such as the International Student Association, which introduces them to social activities like ice skating, laser tag and trips to different parts of Wisconsin.

The students from abroad also participate in many of the same classes as their American peers.

It is just as valuable an experience for traditional students at UW Oshkosh, Christensen said.

"Oshkosh isn't always the most diverse place. This brings a global perspective to the classroom," said

Christensen.

Historically, many of the international students studying at UW Oshkosh have chosen majors or programs within the College of Business, but Christensen said other programs, such as radio-TV-film, nursing and education, are also benefiting from international students this year.

While much of Christensen's work this time of year centers on getting international students safely to Oshkosh, into their new homes and comfortable attending their new classes, she also works throughout the year to help UW Oshkosh students travel to other countries as part of UW Oshkosh's study abroad program.

A Study Abroad Fair will be held Sept. 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Reeve Memorial Union Ballroom for UW Oshkosh students who might be interested in traveling to other countries.

Learn more:

- [Office of International Education](#)