Fall 2019 Pre-arrival Webinar: 
Achieving Success: On campus Involvement and Cultural Adjustment

Lin: Good morning everyone and welcome to the Pre-arrival Webinar Series “Achieving Success: On-Campus Involvement and Cultural Adjustment.

Lin: So a little bit about the webinar series for those of you who are attending the webinars for the first time. The pre-arrival webinar series is an optional webinar series provided to incoming international students before their arrival to Iowa City. The hope is that after participating in the webinar you will be able to arrange your plans to travel and live in Iowa City, to understand our orientation expectations and responsibilities. And to transition to student life and academics at the University of Iowa. All of our webinars will be recorded and posted on our website. So if you want to listen to it again, or if you miss any other webinars that we have so far you can always go back to our website to listen to those again.

Lin: During the webinar if you encounter any technical difficulties please let us know in the chat function. If you have any questions related to the day’s topic please use the Q and A function to post your questions. We will answer them live at the end of the webinar as time permits.

Lin: If you have not received your I-20 or DS-2019 yet if you must pay e-ShipGlobal fee for us to mail your document. Once you have your document then you can apply for your visa. And the information is also contained in Pre-arrival Checklist in iHawk. If you have any questions about this please contact us at ISSS-orientation@uiowa.edu

Lin: Some important days before we go into the content. Um, so May 1st has just passed and that’s the undergraduate admission acceptance deadline. There are mandatory orientations as well. For the undergraduate one, for undergraduate international student orientation is August 19 to August 23 and then for August 26 is the first day of class for the fall semester.

Lin: And now let’s do some introductions. And so my name is Shuhui Lin but I go by Lin, my last name, and I’m the coordinator for international student support and engagement.

Brandon: Hello. My name is Brandon Paulson and I’m a senior adviser for international students and scholar services.

Andrea: My name is Andrea Siebenmann. And I am an ISSS advisor and I am a webinar moderator as well.

Emily: My name is Emily Gumal and I’m one of the current international student panelists.

Ken: I’m Kenneth Mende, I’m a senior and also international student from Germany.

Mishma: My name is Mishma and I’m an international student from Sri Lanka, and I’m a student panelist.

Lin: Great. So today’s goals are, we’re going to talk to little bit about the Pick One involvement opportunities, and then understand how involvement supports cultural adjustment and enhances
undergraduate experiences. And then as you just heard from introductions, we will have some of our current international students share their actual involvement experiences. And then we will have a little bit of time for questions and answers at the end.

Lin: So a University of Iowa student you will become part of the Hawkeye family. Students and alumni are transformed by the experiences at Iowa. The University asks you to follow their example, and rise to the challenge of these five expectations: excel, stretch, engage, choose and serve. You will hear more about the Iowa challenge as you will get into campus but today will focus on the engage part of the Iowa challenge.

Brandon: What matters in college? You'll be adjusting to a new culture whether you're arriving for the first time in the U.S., or whether you're transferring from another U.S. institution. Research shows that you'll be more successful student enjoy yourself more if you spend your time and energy on activities that matter. As some of our current students will probably tell you, you will learn and grow from your involvement experience. You will meet some lifelong friends, you'll better learn and understand yourself and your passions, and you will have the opportunity to apply what you learn in the classroom and to practice your involvement. Involvement on campus can help with your cultural adjustment and transition to college. You will learn and grow from your involvement experience. And again, better understand your own yourself and your passions.

So there will be definitely some challenges as well as many resources to help support you. Here at the University of Iowa. One of the things we’d like to introduce is the five R’s of culture change model which talks about the five different R’s that actually change when you go to a new culture. So those R’s are: roles, routines, relationships, reactions and reflections about yourself. After coming to the University of Iowa, many will take on new roles such a student leaders, and cultural ambassador, you will be adjusting to new routines because of the new academic structure. You’ll make new friends and build relationships through your involvement on campus. You may react to the new or weird or good or bad things that happen, and you will be challenged to reflect on who you are and what you value and how you learn from your experience. The University of Iowa offers almost limitless opportunities and resources to help you become a leader in and out of the classroom. Take advantage of them.

Lin: Because we value and encourage student involvement, the Pick One program was created specifically to encourage first-year students to pick at least one out of the nine categories to get involved in. We will talk about that category one by one. After introducing each Pick One category we’ll have our panelists share their involvement experienced and how those are related to culture adjustment. There will be information on the slide highlighting the connections of how involvement can help with the culture adjustment using that my five R’s of culture change model. So first of all, the performing arts. The performing arts is one important category for involvement at Iowa. there are a lot of student organizations related to performing arts. there are auditions for orchestra, Band, Choral, Jazz, Chamber and Percussion. The dance department also has opportunities if you are interested in dance. You can also participate in organizations that bring entertainment such as comedy, movies or other types of entertainments for campus. Hancher is an auditorium on campus, also brings in well known artists around the world for performance. Mishma, can you share a little bit about your experience?
Mishma: Sure. I'm an English and creative writing and dance double major and even though I'm a freshman I've been involved in 6 performances already this year in my freshman year, not counting one that I've already been cast in for the upcoming academic year 2019-2020. My dance productions, they were in collaboration with other departments. One was with the theater department, one was with the school of music and one was with engineering department. So if you were to get involved it wouldn't just be exclusive to the one department. you can get involved with a multitude of departments and cater your interests accordingly. The performing arts are a huge deal here at the University of Iowa. There are over 400 productions put on every year and you don't have to be a major or minor to be involved in the performing arts. For example, the collaborative performance. One of the dance performances that I was involved in was not exclusive to the dance department. we had a student from, I think she was a Biology student that was involved in it. And then there are also clubs for it. There is the UI Dance Club, there’s ballet club, there’s Ui breakers, there’s Iowa Andi, there’s like so many performing arts opportunities. You just have to go out and audition.

Emily: There’s also a lot of opportunities on the event planning side of performing arts. So if you are not someone who wants to perform you can also be the one putting on those events. So there is a lot of organizations that put a lot of work into programming. I'm part of the campus activities board, so we show movies every weekend, and we do a lot of nighttime events, we bring stand-up comedians, we put on a lot of cultural events. So you can also be in a lot of organizations that are on the event planning side of it. And I am in English and creative writing and cinema major, and one of my favorite things about the University here is also the film programming. So there’s the Bijou, Which is an organization that brings very unique films to campus, and there’s filmscene, an independent film theater in downtown Iowa City. So no matter what your major is, or if that's your major not you can always be a part of performing arts whether it’s on the performing side of it or the planning side of it.

Brandon: Academics and honors. The University of Iowa curriculum is largely based on the on a liberal arts curriculum which provides the breadth of education. Therefore participating in academic and honors related activities is definitely a way to deepen what you've learned in the classroom. There are a broad range of student organizations related to academics, there are also organizations and Honor's Societies within your college. there are a lot of activities within the University of Iowa Honors program, But you can do research or study abroad as undergraduate student. There are staff positions in academic program offices that you can get involved in, such as honors peer advisor, engineering peer advisors, and more. I’d Like to hear from Emily, if you can share more about academics and honors.

Emily: Sure. I’m an honor’s student and I really enjoy taking classes with other honors students because we all care about our studies. not to say students who aren’t in honors don’t care. But we tend to like being more concerned about our grades, and therefore we get more involved in the classes which makes discussions obviously more interesting. Besides that I've also been involved in courses that I didn't originally think that I would be interested in. So, for example, on my first semester I was involved in the honors green room, which involves helping host a speaker from anywhere really. and we set up the experience and it’s in the Englert theater. And I never thought I would be involved in something like that. But I really enjoyed it and I really think it’s a good way to get yourself Involved in something that you might not necessarily always be involved in.
Mia: Yeah. And I think I'm in my opinion honors classes really provide you a lot of opportunities as well, you have really great chances to connect with professors. And there are a few classes that I have taken is with the professor himself or herself, and you make a really great connections in those discussion sessions. That's what we call, they are like a smaller sections other than the bigger lectures, and it really provides you a closer chance to get connected with your instructors or professors. And I really had fun with a lot of my honors classes, and there are a lot of opportunities to get involved.

Lin: So next is on campus employment. There are many jobs available on campus in various departments such as the recreation services, Iowa Memorial Union, University Housing and Dining, International Student and Scholar Services, and so on. You can work up to 20 hours per week on campus as an international student. You can apply for those positions from an online system called HireaHawk. Do you want to share you on-campus employment experiences?

Emily: I'm teaching ballet for the University of Iowa youth ballet. I both teach and assistant teach. and it was really interesting the way I got myself involved. originally, I hadn't thought it was going to be working on campus. But I ended up doing it because it was a job that I wanted to do as opposed to a job that just gave me money, because if you want a job that just gives you money There are other jobs that are better. Namely driving the busses - that pays a lot. Or being an RA. That pays really a lot. But I would just choose a job that you want because then you'll enjoy it more. And personally I now have a great connection with the students I teach. when they heard that I wouldn't be with them over the summer there were like Oh, Emily! And then they came and gave me hugs, which was really nice.

Mia: That is definitely really nice. I can share a little bit as an RA too, because I've been working as a resident assistant for two years now, I lived in the honors house, it's called Daum, And it's one of the smaller residence halls on campus. I really enjoyed my experience living on campus my first year and then I decided to become a resident assistant my second year, and now I'm in my junior year and I still work as a resident assistant in Daum, and it's really, I really love my job, and I really think it's a really wonderful position. Not only in terms of how much you paid but also like, Emily has said, it's more of a personal impact because you really make great connections with the residents or like, first year students most of them are. and then you organize events for them and you help answering their questions. Or provide resources. So that's really helpful especially when first year students come to campus, it's really an opportunity for me to help them. to make sure they're transition goes smoothly to college. So I really enjoyed that job position, and I know there are like many other job positions on campus. Especially as international students, you should work for the University, the University is so big and has so many departments and they really offer different internships or part time job.

Mishma: I would also say that it is fairly easy to find a job and it's very easy to find a job that you like. HireaHawk, that's the website that you find a lot of job opportunities at. And it's actually very user friendly. And the career center works with you very closely with in terms of building your resume. So even though it's just not campus job, afterwards It also helps you apply and interview for other jobs in the future as well. This semester I worked at the admissions visitor center. So when you do arrive on campus, you will see that place. It's in the Pomerantz center and my job was to give Info session presentations to admitted students who visited campus, and it's something that I really enjoyed because it also gave me more knowledge about the university because I had to give these presentations about the University and talk to prospective students about it, and it was something I really enjoyed. and next
semester, I will be working at the honors center. So that’s also something that I’m also very excited about.

Brandon: Intramurals & sports clubs is another way to not just get involved but be active. There are over 35 intramural programs in campus, you can sign up with friends or be a free agent. And the fee is the same for all sports. There are also over 40 sports clubs, you learn more about intramurals and sports clubs from the recreational services website before you arrive on campus. Kenneth, can you share with us your experience?

Kenneth: Sure. If you’re interested in sports at all, there is a sport for you on campus, I’m sure. I know that there are over 35 intramural programs and 40 sports clubs. I myself have been playing volleyball this season, and season means the semester, and I’ve had a whole lot of fun with it. It was a group of 6 of us who got together pretty spontaneously and decided to join intramurally. And the way it works most of the time on the weekend in the evening hours, you have one or two games depending on the sport you sign up for, and you just spend an hour or so with friends, get to meet the refs get to meet other people. And if you don’t have a group of friends yet, as Brandon mentioned you can sign up as a free agent. What that means is you just pay the registration fee, which is I think $25 per semester and you just sign up. And then players on the team can pick you up and have you on their team then you’re going to meet people that way as well. I thought it was a really good way to get involved because again, if you want to be active it kind of gives you a time slot. Your week is going to be busy one way or another, so just get together with friends and have some fun. Again there’s a lot of variety in intramural sports to see. There’s a biking club, there’s intramural soccer teams, I played volleyball, there’s flag football, there’s pretty much every sport you can think of there is an intramural team or sport on campus.

Lin: So next is multicultural activities. Coming to Iowa you have the opportunity to learn from students who are coming from all around the world, also from different cultures within the US. There are over a hundred multicultural organizations on campus, for culture and resource centers to be a home away from home for students. And events, such as Martin Luther King Day of service, Powwow, Black student Union talent show, multicultural showcase and the cultural heritage celebration months at the University of Iowa. There are also training programs such as the Bridging Domestic and Global Diversity for student leaders who want to learn more about what can we expect from different backgrounds. Can you share a little bit about your experience?

Mishma: And so I mentioned that I was part of the campus activities Board. I’m the cultural director of the campus activities Board. So most of the events that I put on are very culturally related. One of my favorite things that I worked on this semester was called Taste of Asia. It was a big event, just a celebration of Asian food from different countries and different regions. And I really enjoy the cultural events on campus because it really represents the really diverse community here. I’m also part of the south Asian student alliance which also just tells you that there are a lot of organizations based on different communities on campus. So you can always find that one community or that one that really fits that you’re interested in. And there’s also a lot of orgs that are not very culturally specific can still put on a lot of cultural events, so you can always go for them as well. And I really work because of my position as cultural director is to really work very closely with the cultural resource centers, I would say that they are very welcoming. You are always welcome to go there and it’s a community that you will be able to build. And I know being an international student it might be a bit hard to come here and feel like you’re not in touch with your home country back home or your culture.
back home. But you can always find the people here and you can always find the right events and the right opportunities to be part of your culture once again.

Mia: Yeah. And I personally really enjoy attending different cultural events as well. On-campus they hold different events for different festivals or celebrations from different cultures. And I really enjoyed just attending those celebrations either from other cultures or just go with some friends to celebrations from my own culture. And also I want to share a little bit about Martin Luther King Day. I know they do the day of service at the University. I really have had a really great time participating in those service activities and making like those small reading kits for kids. So you can help them read better. And I can help them go through vocabularies and things like that. So you get to meet wonderful people doing those activities. So it's not just Cultural or like multicultural activities, but it's also about your contribution, you kind of volunteer doing those events as well.

Brandon: Fraternities and Sororities are another way to get involved on campus. Fraternity and Sorority life at Iowa celebrates over 150 years of history and brings people together on the basis of scholarship, friendship, service, and leadership. as of this spring semester, there are 49 fraternity and sorority chapters at Iowa and over 3500 members in the fraternity sorority community.

Lin: Student organizations. we have mentioned student organizations quite a bit in the Webinar already. there are over 550 registered student organizations on campus ranging from all kinds of themes, you can also participate in hall associations which are the positions within the residence hall if you are staying in the residence halls to provide input on the experience and resident’s homes. Emily can you share a little bit about your experience?

Emily: Yes. Like Lin just mentioned, there’s a lot of different student orgs. And I would like to say that there is a student org for people of every kind of interest. So if academic related orgs are something that you want to be in, there’s so many of them, there something for almost every major. since I mentioned the cinema related org, I'm in English and creative writing major as well and there's a lot of applications that can be involved with and there's very academic major specific orgs that are on-campus as well. and we also talked about the multi-cultural events, and there’s also a lot of service related organizations. I myself a volunteer with the Iowa youth Writing Project. It's an organization that teaches students public school kids from Iowa City’s Creative Writing. and it was a really fulfilling experience and experience, and there’s a lot of volunteering opportunities if service is something that you're interested in as well. And I'm also involved with the homecoming counsel, and that that organization is all about Putting on the homecoming week, which would be a very big tradition or celebration of the university. and I would also like to say that it's also very easy to get a leadership position, even as a freshman because I'm a freshman and I've already had leadership positions in almost all of my student organizations. So don't be hesitant to apply, don't be hesitant to go forward and try out for leadership positions because they always available, even though you're a freshman.

Mia: Yeah. And I think it depends on your major and interest of studies. and you can also get involved with very major specific organizations. I'm involved in the multicultural business student association. And we just took a trip to New York City actually this past spring break, and it's really good networking opportunity. And we get to visit different companies and really have that professional development perspective.
Brandon: Leadership and Strengths is another aspect of involvement. The Be Better initiative at Iowa helps undergraduate students to develop as student leaders, citizens and employees by supporting their personal pathway to leadership and success in and out of the classroom. You will also have the opportunity to take additional academic courses on leadership if you’re interested in those. In addition to academic courses, there are workshops, retreats, institutes such as Leadershape Iowa and Strengths-based workshops that students can attend. Kenneth and Mia, I know that you both have experiences in this area, do you mind sharing your experience?

Kenneth: Sure. I can go first on this one. I’m on the swim team here in Iowa, and I have had different leadership positions on the swim team throughout the years. This year probably the most leadership I have had because I got involved with the so-called ISAAC, which is short for Iowa Student Athletic Advisory Council. So to be a part of that we have to put on different events, for example, we put on the annual award show, and different events involved in the government here in Iowa. And it’s a great opportunity to get to know yourself, get to know how to represent a team, get to experience how to build a linkage between the cultures in my case and a team on the other. And so I represented our team and helped communicate with the coaches and the administrative staff, and got a lot of good experience and good contacts through that.

Mia: Yeah. And for my part, I actually participated in the Leadershape program here in Iowa. It’s like a 7-day experience and you get together, so it’s almost like a small retreat. So you go to a different place somewhere in Iowa and you spend a week with those people who are inspired to become leaders, and who really have a vision that they want to share with everyone. So it’s a really inspiring experience and you get to discover yourself like what are you really passionate about, and how can you potentially put your passion into something that is bigger. For example, the dance marathon initiative. So the founders of dance marathon, which is really big student organization on campus here and they fundraise for the hospital, For the Children’s Hospital, they have done truly amazing things. But the founder of Dance Marathon was actually a part of Leadershape. So I think it was just a very inspiring experience to be able to fully discover what your vision is and how you were able to put your passion into action, then potentially make it something bigger.

Lin: Alright, so last but not least, service. There are a lot of opportunities that you can participate in in terms of service and volunteering. The Hawkeye Service Team is a course that takes students to different places in the US during Spring Break to learn more about service, and also serve at communities. The volunteer fair will connect with other students who are interested in serving their local community. There are also service-focused organizations, and also programs students can get involved in. Mishma, do you mind sharing your experience in this area?

Mishma: I would go back to what I said earlier about volunteering with the Iowa Youth Writing Project. There’s also a lot of other volunteer opportunities. I myself have never been on Alternative Spring Break but I have known a lot of people who have gone and just had the most fulfilling experiences ever. And there’s also a volunteer fair. So the fair will give you the opportunities for volunteering and you can volunteer with your major, your department. So that’s mostly related to academic related volunteering but you always just volunteer with service and philanthropy. But one of my favorite things is that most student organizations do have a service part in them even if that’s not their focus. So, for example, I am part of the South Asian student alliance and we have a philanthropy director and part of the student
organization works on community service even though that’s not the major focus of the student organization. So we help out with shelters, we help out with the children’s Hospital and we even help out with cleaning up with the football programming. So there's all these opportunities to volunteer even through student organizations that are not specifically service-centered.

Mia: Yeah absolutely and I think, actually there are a lot of student organization opportunities in terms of like fundraising service and philanthropy, I’m involved with the student advancement network, which is like a network of students that interact with alumni of the University, and you really have the University family. And It's like a truly wonderful to be able to become a part of Philanthropy here on campus and it’s really exciting experience to be able to involve more students and to tell them what philanthropy Is and how you can potentially give back to the University. It's just like a very fulfilling experience, I Absolutely agree. because it really makes you feel fulfilled as a person because you're giving back to the University.

Brandon: We have spent quite a bit of time having you share about your experiences in different types of involvement on campus. I want to bring these back to talk more about how did you get started, why did you become interested in getting involved, how did you manage your time, and how has that involvement helped you adjust and learn about the University of Iowa culture? And with this discussion before we go in to the Q&A, would anyone want to start?

Kenneth: Yeah I can go ahead and get started. The question of how I got involved is a little bit of a new for me. Because my first two years here I really didn’t feel like I got involved, and I tried different things but I just didn’t find the right thing for me. and then my junior year, I finally got involved in the athletics department and got my hands-on stuff, and I realized how fulfilling it was to me. And I think that was the point when I was old and mature enough to realize how much it means to me and to the people I’m getting involved with to get involved. in that was something that I found very fulfilling and I had a lot of joy doing so. How does being involved help adjust you to the University of Iowa culture? It helped a very big deal. I had to realize after I got involved because sometimes international students find themselves feeling lonely and not knowing who to talk to and who to address with issues. But once you get involved you get to meet so many people, and sooner or later find somebody who you can rely on and trust. And that helps a great deal to me.

Emily: I will personally say that being involved on campus helped my transition from school to campus also from one country to another very easy, because I was very involved in school and I wanted the same atmosphere in college, so I feel like it is the same. And that’s what happened. Because after I became very involved on campus it almost felt like it was just the same, there is nothing very much different about being in college. It didn't see that scary anymore. And it's also very easy to find opportunities because I guess by now in a few weeks time you will start getting a lot of emails from the University. At one point you'll be tired of all the emails, but they'll be all these emails about various student organizations pitching to you what their student org is about, so you get an idea of what they Are. Even after you come on campus there will be a student organization fair and they'll be a lot of booths with different student organizations. So you can just walk around and pick what you want. But that's just when you come in but he can also still keep on adding or dropping student out as you go, as you get a better understanding of what you really want to do. and I think being involved really helped me personally to adjust because like Kenneth said, you meet a lot of people. You make a lot of friends
and it makes you feel like you belong here, and also you'd be able to find new interests that you probably never knew about yourself because that's not the things that you focused on back in school. So you would be probably able to rediscover things about yourself, and I will always tell everyone to pick one student org that makes you challenge yourself, that's not part of who you are. for me that was a homecoming council. It's based on football, I still have no idea how Americans play football. So I just cheer and many people cheer but I still have no idea what's happening. But that was one student org that I told myself that I would challenge myself with, because it's not something that I'm very used to. but I love it now because it's making me learn new things. So try to pick student orgs that speaks to you, that's for you, but also just try out things that seem very, very weird or very interesting, but you might actually end up loving it.

Mia: Yeah, absolutely. And I think it's really a growth process too, you learn a lot and you discover who you are on the way and you really kind of realize who you can get along the most with, which organization is your favorite. And also which ones are those ones that helps you grow, and helps you explore yourself. and I’ll talk a little bit about managing my time because my freshman year I was very adventurous, and I was involved in a lot of student organizations and I have to pay attention to my classes as well. And I think it's really important to realize what's most important to you. And then to kind of prioritize what's the most important task. For example, if you want to focus more on school, then school work is always my top priority, and I'll finish all of my assignments before I get involved with activities, but sometimes if there are some really great and wonderful activities, like, if I am helping to plan events for my student organizations, or if I help coordinate a trip to a different city, that's more time consuming and that's more like prioritizing in terms of time sensitivity. So I think it's really kind of figuring out what works the best for you, and using the calendar. and now I live on my calendar, I cannot live without my calendar. So, yeah, absolutely.

Lin: So Emily had to go early to go to class. So I'm going to share her response. So as someone who's taking 27 semester hours, that’s a lot of classes. So definitely time management is really important to her. she dedicated to homework, stay up late sometimes, do homework over the weekend and try not to procrastinate. She mostly wrote all of her homework and essays in her planner, and she never really skipped any classes the entire semester. And I guess one thing that helped her is that she also read all the books for one of her classes over the winter break. So that instead of reading everything for the first time for class, she was re-reading it which made things a lot easier. If you are planning on taking a lot of classes make sure that you have everything online, So that you are able to manage your time well, and then she was also in a lot of performances because she liked to be seen and be challenged. And then it is her belief that you should get involved in what you want to be involved in because that will make it more fun. And then involvement is where you can make closest friends, people get involved because they want to be, and then other people on the Literary Magazine team were in her classes as well, so don't be afraid to try out new things no matter how scary they seem.

Brandon: Then I just want to ask the final question to make sure everyone has an opportunity to share. Do you have any words of advice for future international students at the University of Iowa?

Kenneth: I would say get involved but don’t rush it. You have plenty of time to try new things. And if you get involved with something that isn’t a good fit for you then don’t be afraid to leave that opportunity behind and look for the next opportunity to be involved.
Mia: Yeah, I would say know your limits, because a lot of times I think everyone has their own definition of success, and when you first come to university you’re very adventurous and maybe you just want to try out everything and really want to like be as high achieving as possible which is always like a really positive mindset, but the same time as self care is also important especially in the university. you are taking classes, and it really does not help when you’re burned out at one Moment and you kind of like fall behind. So I think although being really involved and adventurous is really a great point, but at the same time know your limits and know what you are really passionate about.

Mishma: I would say your four years of being here or how many years you’re going to be here, it’s all about how you make it, so it’s just a matter of what you want to pick. You can always try out very different things throughout the whole of the time you're here. you can try one student org for a semester, it’s all up to you and definitely never compare yourself to anyone else because again, it’s all about you and your success. It’s like no ones going to have the same academic life or the same sort of life as you, it’s all about you. So pick the things that you really want to do and feel free to push yourself to do things that you think You couldn’t do, but also don’t hesitate to step back and say OK this is it. It’s all about you and make sure you’re true to yourself.

Lin: This is from Emily, she says don’t be afraid to try, otherwise, you will probably won't be able to get to experience what you would never thought that you would be able to get in, and then don’t be afraid to put yourself out there and try for things that you want. The University if all about exploring in the best way possible.

Mia: I really want to add one more thing because I was talking to one of our residents who is a first year student, and he was sharing with me that he’ll never have a second freshman year again. and it's kind of like an interesting concept of think about, Because every year of college is so unique. So it's really like what you make out of it, but I also like, it's true. You only have one year of your freshman year, your sophomore year. So they make a unique and really about yourself.

Q&A

Lin: Great, so now we have time for Q&A.

Andrea: We did receive some questions for our panelists today. And so I will read them in the order that we receive them and there are couple that I'm seeing that we can actually bundle together to answer. So the first question was, if the student was interested in being part of the band like a musical band, can they apply to be part of the band before they arrive on campus.

Mishma: I think the band processes is actually an audition, so they'll probably have to come here and then audition, but it's also very easy to do that. Band is actually considered a class. So it gives you one credit hour. So you come here during orientation, you'd be able to talk to your advisor about it too. So you will add the class and then you audition and then It goes on from there, and band also has different opportunities. There’s University band, and pep band, that's like the band that plays at games, but there’s also marching band. So there's different opportunities in band. So it would be probably be easier to come here and see what you really want to do and pick one of them.
**Andrea:** Great. Thank you. Thanks for answering. next question was about sports involvement. So that might be in for Kenneth maybe. So what is the difference between intramural and sports club? And then at the other question in that same regards, speaking about the club, is it difficult to start a new club?

**Kenneth:** Is it difficult to start a new club? I’m not sure on that one. and the difference between intramurals and sports clubs is that intramurals just get together to play a sport on game day, whereas clubs actually have arranged practice times that they get together or practice with one another. And then they participate in meets or competitions depending on the sport together. And I know that some sports only have sports clubs and not intramurals. that is sometimes for safety reasons. Like I know water polo for example, you can’t just get in the water and play the game if nobody knows how to actually swim. That’s why water polo as an example of a sports club that is not an intramural.

**Mishma:** Also, it’s actually very easy to make a club yourself. all you need is five more people and one faculty member you can make your own student organization. A few weeks ago, I got an email for a Game of thrones club people just started where they’re going to watch the final season together. So there is no limits of what you can do on campus. you can always start your own.

**Andrea:** Thank you. Those were excellent answers. Appreciate that. there is a question about honors, and the question is can engineering students apply for honors as well?

**Mia:** So they have changed the process in the past few years, and I think for this upcoming year you do need to apply to get into the honors program regardless. So if you apply to become a student at the university you do need to fill in application to become a part of the honors program, and absolutely engineering students you are more than encouraged to apply for the honors program and even if you’re not admitted as honor students, there is always a chance to apply either by semester or by school year. And sometimes they would offer you like a membership into the honors program if you have an outstanding GPA and they do see that, and it’s regardless of your major you can always choose to become a part of the honors program. The GPA requirement for when you are studying here I believe is 3.33. so if you have a GPA above that you can fill in the application and you can apply to the honors program.

**Andrea:** Thank you so much. So the next question is whether there is a list of cultural organizations at the University? Is there a place where students could go to as a nice resource about that?

**Mishma:** Yes. There is an engage page, so that is the university’s official website which will have all the 600 odd student organizations listed on there, and he can always filter them out based on what kind of student organization you are looking for, and most of the student organizations on campus also have their own website. So you’d probably be able to find their own website and all them have Facebook groups most probably. And I’m also pretty sure that the university website of multi cultural Programming and one of the department also had a list of all the student organizations specific to that culture. they speak a lot of resources where you can find a list of them, but once again, when you actually arrive on campus it will be much easier to see what you actually want. and like I said, you will get a lot of emails.
Lin: Yeah. So definitely the engage platform is still the place to go if you want to look at any events. But I know that not a lot of the organizations are updating that site frequently. So definitely when you are on campus, there will be an equal involvement fair. So go to the involvement fair, and then you'll be able to actually meet the people who are in the organization in person and then talk to them and see if you would like to join them.

Andrea: We actually have other questions regarding some work experience, and there are a couple of questions. One of them is that student doesn't have much work experience because they are just leaving high school. And so they're asking whether they still can get any on campus jobs, and in that same regard there was a question, somebody heard that international students need permission to volunteer. Would you like to take that on?

Mia: I can talk a little bit about the work experience. For me when I first started college my freshman year, I did not have any work experience. But I really understood the RA Resident Assistant position from my own residence, and I ended up applying to become one for my sophomore year, and that's really my first official on campus job, and I'm still holding it until today. And I know there are plenty of opportunities within housing and dining especially because they consider students that don't have much experience. You can potentially work on the residence halls, for example, as a resident assistant, I know there are a lot of opportunities even though you have much experience coming out of high school, but they can still like offer training programs or have a period of time for you to familiarize yourself with different duties and responsibilities. So I wouldn't think that a lack of experience would be like a barrier per say for a lot of on-campus job opportunities just because they do understand that freshmen students especially really don't have much work experience.

Brandon: Also, I can add on to this question too - in addition to the student employment too, I know we will have upcoming webinar specifically about employment international students, so make sure to attend the webinar if you're able to or do that. In terms of international students having permission to volunteer, they are able to volunteer. They don't need specific permission if it really is a volunteer position. We have information on our website about that. But you if you have questions about an experience or a position, you can always come in and talk to ISSS advisor and we can kind of clarify once we learn a bit more about the position to you have any questions about it.

Andrea: Thank you so much. Thank you that was wonderful. So hopefully we have addressed that question for our participant. Another question was about the sports games and whether students, any student or international students attend games for free.

Kenneth: Depends on the sport. So the University has a lot of sports, I think it is double digits but less than 20. I'm not entirely sure - some sports are free, like track and field is free. I think volleyball is free. Swimming and diving is free. So there’s lots of sports that are free. But the bigger sports on campus like football, basketball, baseball, have a small fee that is significantly reduced for students, and as for the regular audience, I would say it's definitely worth it to go to at least one football and basketball game. I myself have never made it through an entire baseball game because the sports just too long for me. And if you don't know what baseball is it's not unusual for you for five hours to just sit there in the sun watching people swing and miss.
Andrea: Thank you. We have another question. And I would like to encourage participants, we still have some time to address more questions. If you have any, so feel free to post them in Q and A function of our zoom software here. And there is a question for pretty much all of you which would like to know, what was your most favorite experience so far in college. It's a big question.

Kenneth: OK. So I'm going to give this a try. So I mentioned earlier that this year I got involved in the association of student athletes annual show and that was definitely the biggest event I've been involved with. I think at the end we had about 400 people in attendance between student athletes donors and all the VIP's, which is code for major sports. And there was something super satisfying to me because I was involved with the entertainment, so stage design, and what we're going to do at what time, And all that. And it was super satisfying to me seeing that go smoothly and seeing people have a good time with that answer. So it's just satisfying knowing that you did a good enough job and that people can enjoy themselves there.

Mia: Yeah. And I think for me I stayed here during the summer between my freshman year and sophomore year and I took some summer classes. That's my very first time taking French class. I've never taken French before. And it was definitely a challenge. So I had 2, 3 hours of French classes from Monday to Thursday, and it's such a wonderful experience too because it really kind of emerge yourself into that language, so that you don't really have to worry about anything else. But just French, and I remember that summer I would get up early in the morning, I had my bike with me, so that I will go down to bike around the river earlier in the morning when it's like the sun is out but it's not too hot yet. So I would bike down the Iowa River and it was such a pleasant experience. And then I will go back and shower and go to class and do a lot of French homework and I really learned a lot about that language, and I still have a really good relationship with my Instructor actually. So she will be staying this summer and I was we were planning on going out and getting lunch together or dinner together sometime. so that's a really wonderful experience that I have had just like normal, but like super nice.

Mishma: I would say that my favorite experience was actually the event that I put on this semester that was Taste of Asia, which I mentioned earlier, too. that event was a lot, because it took me, the event was on April 12, and i was working on it ever since the first day of semester. That was back in January. the event itself is so huge, they have so much food. There is so much work. And there was like 950 people in total who came and my favorite thing about that with the fact that a lot of people came up to me personally and said thank you for doing this because I saw food from my home country. And it was amazing. And that was just really great because all you want from an event like that is for people to actually find themselves represented, and the next day I couldn't walk - my voice was lost completely. but it was all worth it. I slept for so long. it was just all worth it because it was just a Great experience. And even though I have worked on events in high school before, I don't think I've ever worked on an event that's here in college. So that this goes back to the advice part of this. The fact that you actually realize that you are able to do much more than you ever thought.

Andrea: Thank you very much. It's was fantastic and excellent answers too, to that challenging question. quite a bit. But it sounds like you have experienced a really great time here at the university, so far. Thank you again, for our organizers of this presentation, for putting this all together, and let's move on. Before we move on I would like to remind you that there are a few contact information that we have for you in regards in regard to pre-arrival checklist or if you have any other issues about your arrival or
before arrival please don’t hesitate to contact our orientation team at the email provided on the slide. And if you have any other questions or if you need to tap other resources we always have the ISSS website for new students and again the weblink is here on the slide. I would like to also encourage all of you, and I shared this through the chat function, please complete our survey for today's webinar we will really appreciate your feedback on this webinar. So please use the link that was sent to you through the chat function. And finally a reminder about our upcoming webinars. the next one will be about off campus housing. If you are interested, feel free to register. There is still time. And then we will have, also I would like to mention since we talked about the international student employment, this webinar is scheduled for June 28, so you still have time to register. Also as undergraduate students I would encourage you to look at webinars on July 12 and 26, because these are specifically geared towards undergraduate students in preparation for in terms of your academic expectations as well as the orientation. So we hope you will be able to register and attend these webinars. Thank you so much your attendance today, and have a wonderful rest of the day or evening.