Supporting International Students In Your University Class

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University instructors have many options for supporting international students in classes.

Here are 10 suggestions.

1. Structure classes mindfully.
   - Have a goal and post a plan.
   - Preview the topic and encourage student prediction.
   - Include a variety of methods.
   
   These steps help your internationals stay oriented during class.

2. Promote a community atmosphere.
   - Be aware that internationals are easily isolated or segregated.
   - Use collaboration and teamwork.
   - Provide opportunities for internationals to share from their perspectives, if willing.
   
   These suggestions help your students feel welcomed and comfortable.

   - Encourage the use of graphic organizers.
   - Add a link for a technical dictionary to your class e-learning page.
   - Remind students to focus on the relationship of ideas.
   
   These ideas assist less-than-fluent readers to read more effectively and efficiently.

   - Include previews: “Today’s lecture will have 3 parts: __, __, and __.”
   - Use signal language: “Now let’s move on and take a look at my second point.”
   - Teach generally accepted abbreviations for technical words.
   
   These tips help your students manage the dual tasks of listening and writing.

5. Vary the discussion formats.
   - Use the “jigsaws” model to build expertise.
   - Use online discussion boards so students can capture language and form a response.
   - Include a few group roles that are less language focused.
   
   These suggestions promote engagement by non-native students.

6. Build confidence for speaking up in class.
   - Wait at least 10 seconds when you ask questions or ask for questions.
   - Assign peer practice partners before important speaking assignments.
   - Seek feedback from students more frequently.
   
   These actions allow students the time to communicate more fluently.

7. Offer support for important writing tasks.
   - Provide a model or basic template.
   - Offer tools (i.e. library page, links).
   - Encourage use of Writing Center or library. (Arrange for a specific contact person).
   
   These steps provide resources to help students meet assignment objectives.

8. Develop a variety of assignments.
   - Use groups assignments with multiple roles.
   - Assign projects that allow students to use their creativity.
   - Plan multi-media assignments.
   
   These methods provide ways for students to engage that are less language-based.

9. Reconsider your assessment methods.
   - Use more frequent tests over a smaller amount of information.
   - Use a variety of testing methods.
   - Ask the student to explain how he thinks he is doing.
   
   These strategies allow students to demonstrate what they have learned.

10. Give feedback frequently.
    - Give feedback in writing.
    - Provide a key for editing or correction marks.
    - Include the correct answer.
    
    These methods help students see their challenges and their progress.

Don’t be surprised if these tips help your domestic students too!