

Academic & Language Transition Year for International Students

Strategic Plan Theme: Student Success

Funding Level: Below \$1 million

Facility Needs: No new facilities will be needed

Submitting Unit: College of Arts & Letters/English Language Center

Collaborating colleges/departments/units involved with this proposal.

The ELC will endeavor to work closely with the Office of Admissions, the Office for International Students and Scholars, and other international outreach entities on campus. For the STEAM-focused elements in the program curriculum, the ELC will endeavor to work closely with student focused groups and interested faculty in the following colleges: Arts & Letters, Engineering, International Studies & Programs, and Natural Sciences. The ELC will also reach out to international alumni/student organizations for help to reach the intended audience.

What is the proposal's big theme or idea?

This program aims to provide a high-quality, caring foundational year experience to exceptional international students who are from communities who, due to circumstances outside of their control, generally do not have access to educational opportunities internationally. These prospective students will spend up to two semesters in an immersive environment preparing them to apply to MSU degree programs which best match their interests.

What is the proposal's goal?

Our proposal's goal is to provide prospective international students from less represented countries or cultures an opportunity to pursue higher education in the United States. In turn, we would be able to identify exceptional students for consideration for admission to degree programs at MSU and help prepare them for this pursuit.

Prospective students will be placed into ELC Intensive English Program (IEP) courses based on their MSU-ELT (MSU English Language Test) results and progress through the program based on course grades and subsequent MSU-ELT results. The total weekly classroom hours for the program courses will be 20 hours per week. In addition, program participants will have the opportunity to engage in workshops, excursions, and academic activities. The ELC will host sessions on general admissions to U.S. universities and work with the MSU Office of Admissions to answer prospective students' questions and provide mentoring as they begin applying to their degree of choice. The ELC will ensure that these prospective students take part in all opportunities provided by MSU to take part in an official campus visit, in Office of Admissions presentations, and in a campus tour. To the extent possible, visits will be arranged with MSU departments based on the students' intended majors.

The overall English language and STEAM curriculum will also be supplemented by community, social, and cultural enrichment activities. ELC faculty will provide bimonthly extended orientation sessions that the prospective students will be encouraged to join. ELC faculty will also work with LiLAC faculty to provide language and culture exchange opportunities for the students, and it will provide regular updates on upcoming campus activities that the prospective students will be welcome to take part in, including weekly Coffee Hour meetings sponsored by MSU's Office for International Students and Scholars. Finally, ELC faculty will work

with the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement to provide the students with opportunities to volunteer and interact with people in the local community.

Define the significance, or impact of your big idea.

The ELC proposes a program which would target exceptional international students across the world who have recently completed a high school diploma or its equivalent and who have an interest, but who have not had opportunities or guidance in their home countries, to pursue higher education in the United States.

The ELC can offer such students up to two semesters of immersive study to help them develop their English proficiency and prepare them for U.S. academic coursework and culture. This transition year would include intensive English programming and a STEAM-focused curriculum supplemented with admissions support, life skills, university mentoring, and cross-cultural learning. With rolling admissions, prospective students can join the program at a time that works best for them.

Successful students in this program can apply to MSU degree programs, generating international enrollment at MSU from underrepresented areas of the world

Who will be impacted?

The main impact will be felt by the prospective students who are given time to develop their English language proficiency and academic skills in preparation for pursuing a degree program. By giving them the opportunity to prepare themselves for academic study, the prospective students may enter their degree programs ready to be successful and complete a degree in a timely fashion. During their time in the initial program, and in their respective academic college, these international students will be ready to contribute to and be a part of MSU's neighborhoods where they can provide new perspectives, aspirations, and worldviews.

What does sustainability for your proposal look like?

This is the big question. Success of the program is contingent upon continued financial support for the prospective students transitioning from the ELC program into a degree-program at MSU. Without this the program would not be sustainable long term. The ELC has been approached by multiple organizations to run a similar program for this population. With each request, we have noticed that there is a demand for this type of programming, especially for prospective students who were unable to apply to MSU because of academic calendar differences, limited opportunities in their home country to be ready for a university education, and situations that have created a break in their education through no fault of their own