

# The Institute for Learning and Teaching

## L2 Learners Task Force



### 3. What instructional challenges face instructors of these students?

Cultural Differences: More later. Example: students who arrive sleep in mid-September might be observing Ramadan. Avoiding stereotyping, while recognizing likely differences in educational experiences.

Academic Integrity: “What is plagiarism?”, while explained frequently at CSU through orientation and in class, is a perennial problem. And with some groups, some colleges, there have been problems with academic integrity. Inconsistent responses send mixed messages. Should students be allowed extra time to take a test or not? How to draw out international students in class discussions, especially in large sections, when they are culturally unaccustomed to our teaching methods and student participation expectations. How to help international students fit in with group projects, e.g. they are often left out due to their language ability, shyness or unwillingness by domestic students to involve them in the group, grade competitiveness, etc.

Use of ITAs: We have consistently seen reports of difficulties understanding some (generally, a small number each year) International Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Adjusting Expectations: Is it appropriate to adjust expectations (including assignment of grades) due to student’s L2 status? Should we offer test-taking accommodations (issues of fairness and logistics)? Is it appropriate to expect to spend more time outside of class (e.g., during office hours, in the hallway, on email and class discussion forums) explaining course content, processes, and assignments?

Listening and Comprehension Skills: Is it appropriate to admit L2 students (including those who have a clear admit to CSU) who cannot understand lectures?

Class Participation: L2 learners often participate less frequently than native speakers.

Group Work: See question 2.

Use of Electronic Dictionaries: More later.

Student Expectations about Grades: Reports have been made that international students will come right out and say that they want, need and expect an “A” grade from a professor and ask the best way to accomplish this end.

Professional Development of GTAs and TAs: Since GTAs often teach classes that are taken by international undergraduates, we need to be sure that any support we provide for faculty is also provided for the GTAs. In some cases, it is also important to work with undergraduate TAs.