

# International Students: The Intersection of Immigration Advising with Mental Health and Well-Being

Halifax 2017



# Presenters

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# Advisors to Presentation

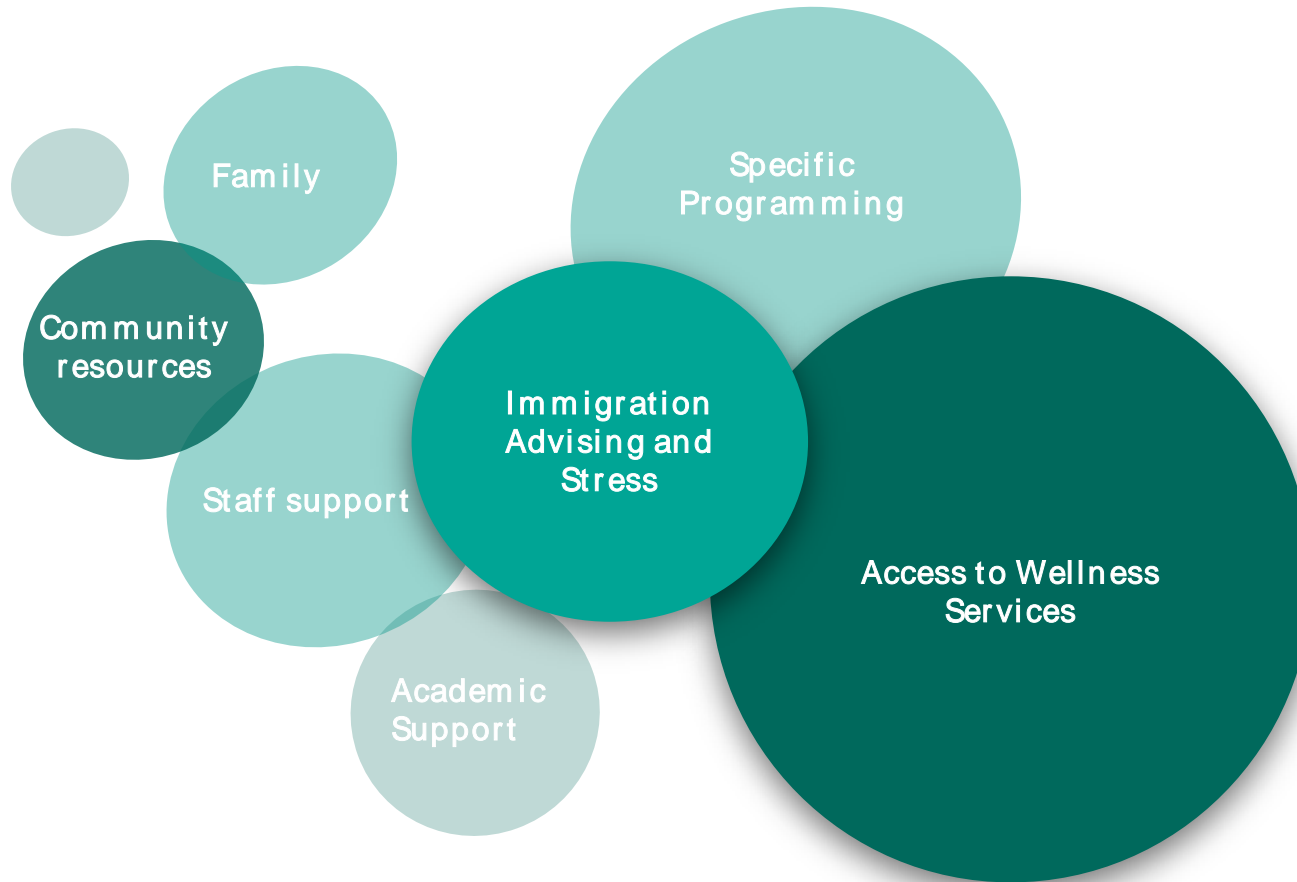
**Philipp Reichert, RCIC**, University of British Columbia -  
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# Agenda:

- Introduction to Topic
- Preparing to Study
- During Studies
- Post Studies
- Managerial Perspective
- Discussion
- Closing Remarks

# Immigration Advising, Mental Health and Well-Being



# UCalgary: Preparing to Study

- **Scenario:** International Student A, has a delay on the processing of his study permit.
- He is concerned that he is going to miss orientation and potentially the first two weeks of classes.
- He is leaving behind his spouse and children.

# UCalgary: Preparing to Study (cont.)

## Immigration Considerations:

- Within average processing times?
- What is currently occurring in that country which may cause a delay?
- Possibility of Deferral?
- No guarantee that Study Permit would be issued on time, or at all.
- CBSA considerations upon entering Canada
- Was his family included on the application, why or why not?

# UCalgary: Preparing to Study (cont.)

## Wellness Considerations:

### Pre-arrival:

International  
Student  
Mentorship  
Program

### Arrival:

Welcome Centre  
Orientation

### Post-Arrival:

Global  
Friendship and  
Families  
USpeak Global  
UCalgary  
Meetup

### Throughout:

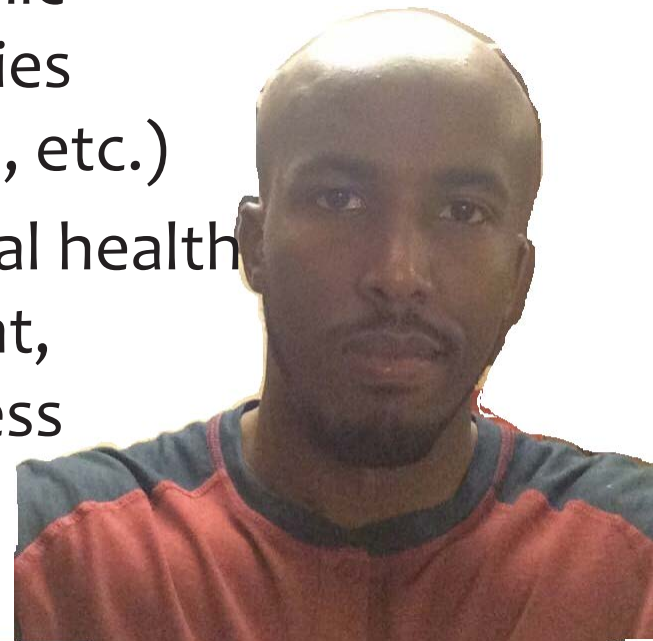
- Transitional and immigration advising
- Referrals to campus-wide support staff and resources



# UCalgary: Preparing to Study (cont.)

## Wellness Considerations:

- Awareness Outreach - share key resources and services to address any distress or missed material (eg. extended orientation, Welcome Center, etc.)
- Case management support for academic considerations and goal setting priorities (i.e. missed course work, SMART goals, etc.)
- Referral to culturally competent mental health supports regarding stress management, adjustment/transition and homesickness



# UBCO: Progressing Through Studies

- **Scenario:** International student B experiences financial setbacks when he arrives to Canada
- Student found out that his tuition and housing are unpaid due to the bank in his home-country, Ecuador, sending his fund to a different bank account
- The bank took a few weeks to transfer the money back to the student's bank account in Ecuador, but the government, due to recent and past corruption issues is being diligent and not releasing all of the funds again at one time. The student's father can only send the funds in small increments
- The student's uncle is also severely ill in Ecuador and his family may need to use the funds saved for his education to pay for his uncle's medical treatment

# UBCO: Progressing Through Studies (cont.)

## Immigration Considerations:

- Student's study permit needs to be amended as it says he can't work on or off employment. Student believes that employment will help him pay for his tuition.
- Student also has to return to his home country during the winter break to retrieve bank loans for his education, however if he is unsuccessful in receiving the funds, a conversation regarding academic deferral is also required
- What happens if he can't pay for his tuition? Possible deferral?
- CBSA considerations upon re-entering Canada

# UBCO: Progressing Through Studies

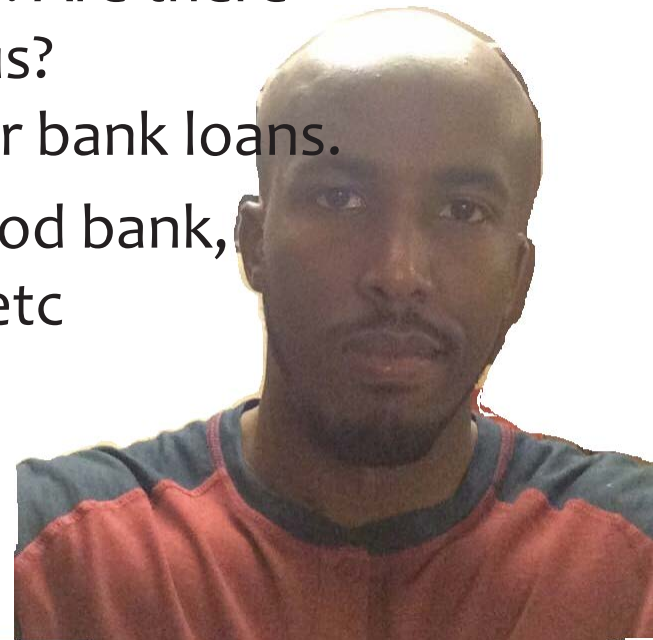
## Wellness Considerations:

- Is the student experiencing stress and anxiety because of his financial situation?
- What resources on campus is the student using?
- What is the student doing to take care of himself?
- What referrals can be made?

# UBCO: Progressing Through Studies

## Wellness Considerations:

- Case management support to de-escalate student stress or anxiety. This will provide a confidential safer space to address complex concerns while ensuring well being
- Determine appropriate financial supports. Are there emergency bursaries and loans on campus?  
Sharing best best practice for applying for bank loans.
- Provide referral to basic needs such as, food bank, free furniture depots, donated clothing, etc
- Connect with a counselor to debrief (grief loss, stress management, self-care strategies)



# TRU: Transitioning Out of Studies

- **Scenario:** Sponsored student from Saudi Arabia, about to graduate and is worried about the possibility of not getting a PGWP due to not being continuously enrolled in full-time studies
  - Took a semester off to help take care of child after wife was hospitalized) &
  - A previous refusal of his SP extension due to a driving ticket issued in the USA (student disclosed information on SP application)
- Student engaged services of a lawyer and the subsequent application was approved.

# TRU: Transitioning Out of Studies

## Immigration Considerations:

- Should I assist this student or advise him to seek the services of an RCIC or immigration lawyer?
- Was the leave from TRU to look after his family authorized and/or noted, and does he have his wife's hospitalization records/doctor's notes
- Should TRU issue a letter to support the student's application
- Emphasis on documentation

# TRU: Transitioning Out of Studies

## Wellness Considerations:

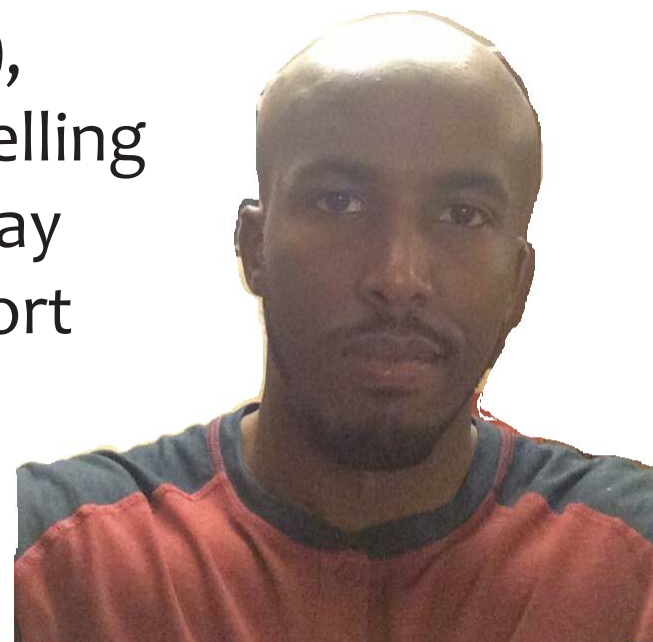
- Student struggling with classes - connect with Early alert ?
- Student is stressed - connect with wellness office?
- What is the situation at home? How is the family coping? connect with a counsellor/case worker?
- Financial well being - student indicated not being in a position to pay a premium for legal services



# TRU: Transitioning Out of Studies

## Wellness Considerations: Connection to Community Resources

- Brief counselling support at the Wellness Centre
- Transition to community resources, after graduation
- Immigration Services (non-profits), Legal aid, low to affordable counselling agencies in the community who may provide ongoing counselling support
- Family support



# TRU: Managerial Perspective

## Scenario:

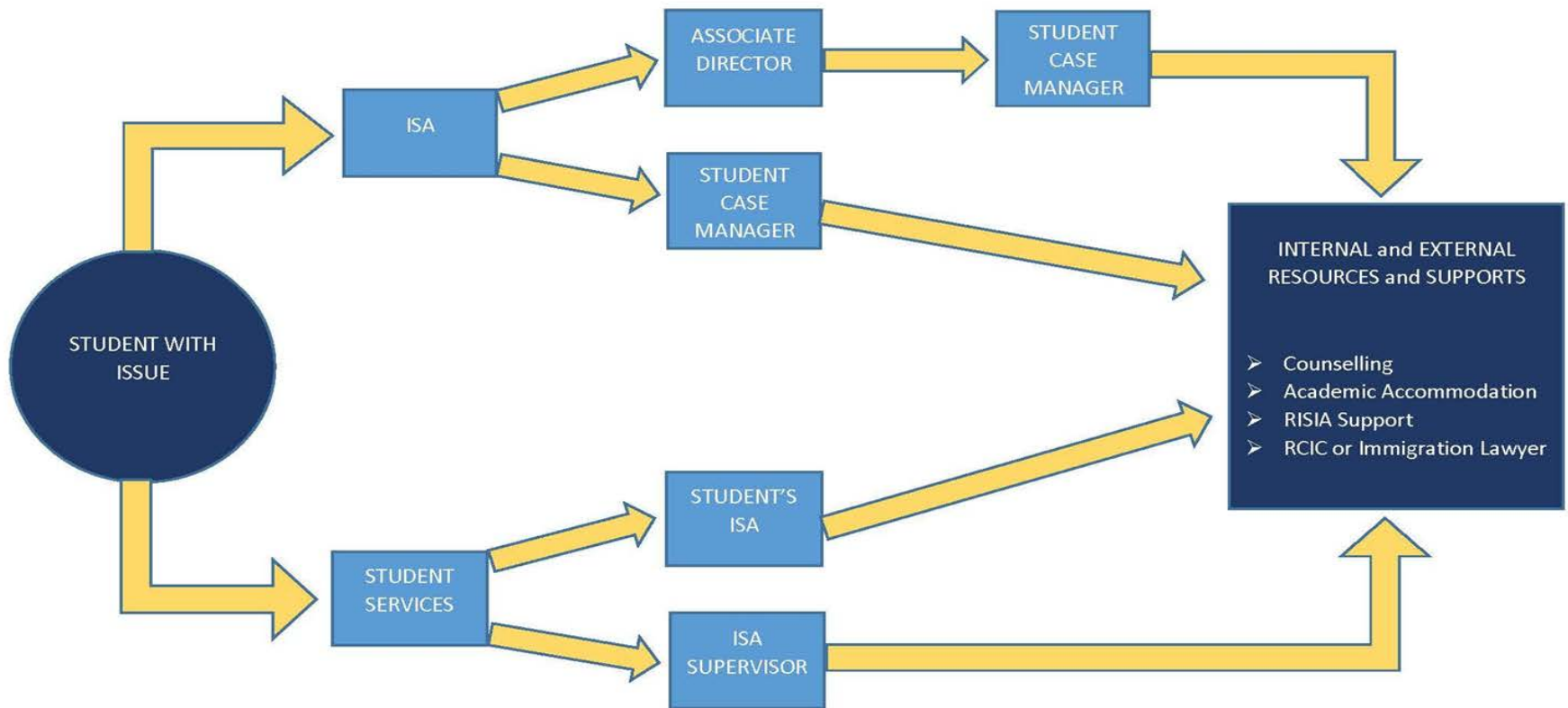
An ISA team member brings a student case forward to the Associate Director...this can be anything!!

- Is the student at risk?
- What is the type/level of risk?
- Immigration Regulations
- University Policy and Procedures
- Health and wellbeing of my team

# TRU: Managerial Perspective

## Immigration considerations

- IRCC regulations- is there critical timeline for action
- University Policy and Procedures- exemptions in case management
- TRU student case manager
  - report to Border Security?



# TRU: Managerial Perspective

## Wellness considerations

- first priority- student in distress
- ISA versus a case manager-severity
- TRU student case manager
  - Counselling
  - Academic Accommodations
- Right to privacy versus student safety
- Supporting team members well being when dealing with difficult student cases

# Discussion

# Discussion Prompting Questions

- How does your institution address late arrivals?
- What programming do you have for student wellness services?
- Do you have international student advisors for different services on campus?
- How do you maintain communication across different portfolios to support intl' students?

# Your feedback is important to us!

Please take a moment to submit the evaluation for this session.

Evaluations are found on CBIE's Conference app.

**Thank you!**