

## Some different flavor: the international students of BC

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Staff Writer

Have you ever thought about how those Europeans know how to move to the ecstatic beats of techno music? What about the fashion sense of the Eastern Europeans? Or does the British accent somehow increase your blood-pressure and make you feel a bit excited?

If you felt a sudden epiphany, you have most likely met many of the 24 international students at Brevard College. The young women and men who decide to leave their homes behind to experience the American college life have a great deal in common with their fellow American students.

Junior tennis player Jarred Fisher from South-Africa said, "I wanted to experience the college life in a different culture and at the same time pursue a successful career with proper tools and inspiring environment." Students want to learn new and interesting aspects of life. So how do the international students impact the lives of the students here Brevard College and the Transylvania community?

As the international students come here to experience a different culture, they also bring

along their own culture, creating a mutually beneficial learning experience for all. This enables us to learn from each other and share some of the differences we might have.

For example, the custom of small talk is unknown in many parts of Europe. This challenges international students to improve this crucial skill in today's globalized world. What would be a better place to practice than the Campus Life events and activities?

Pauli Jussia, a freshman soccer player from Finland, admits that small talk is something that he was not used to in his home country. At the same time the international students have brought their customs here, so that we students could integrate in a sophisticated manner. Perhaps you might have seen how the international students greet each other in the cafeteria and possibly you have been shocked or felt violated.

When a Brazilian male student meets a Russian female student, giving a kiss on the cheeks is not an act of sexual harassment or discrimination; rather, it is a warm greeting. Similarly, in the Arabian culture, males greet each other by kiss on the cheek, something that is quite different in the culture of the United States.

Renato Barbosa, a senior B.O.R.G student from Brazil said, "It has been a pleasure to observe how this custom is spreading among the students at Brevard College and uniting our cultures in a very unique manner."

Upon graduation you might have the privilege to look at the world map and call your friends in Belgium, South-Africa, New Zealand or Peru to go visit them. Alicia Klochkova, a junior BC golfer said, "The importance of building strong friendships can not be underestimated, since our survival as individuals depends on the relationships we have."

The best time and place to establish these relationships, friendships, or romances is in college, because we are all here for one purpose: education. It is this goal that unites us in a very special way.

Author John C. Maxwell wrote: "Where you are in 10 years from now in your life depends on what kind of people you surround yourself with". So the international students wish to challenge you to surround yourself with different people from different cultural backgrounds. Freshman Sam MacNeil from Scotland said, "Enrich your global view to become a citizen of the world."

So have 2 hour dinners in the cafeteria like the French do, learn how to samba like the Brazilians in the recreational room, speak with overwhelming emotions like Italians in the classroom, make friends like Canadians and integrate all this with the values and customs of the United States. This could be the secret formula to success. In that regard, I encourage you all to participate or become members of the Brevard College International Student Club.

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