

Texas Community College Teachers Association

“Building a Better Texas”

Social Responsibility Form

College: Lee College

Contact: Susan Cummings, International Education Coordinator

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Submission Category: International

The Lee College Multicultural Institute

In the Multicultural Institute, students have the chance to meet students from other nations while they learn about cultures from around the globe.

Students meet one Friday per month. Usually the seminars last from 9 AM to 4 PM and include lunch and an excursion.

The purpose of the Lee College Multicultural Institute is to provide students the opportunity to learn about and interact with various cultures and ethnic groups on campus, in Baytown, and in the greater Houston area.

International students and locally born students share aspects of their own cultures and experience the food, music, history and faiths of a different country each month.

Students who complete the institute will enhance their employment prospects by demonstrating their cultural diversity awareness. Recognition at the college spring Honors Day and a certificate are part of the program.

1. How did it come about / Who started it?
 - a. The Lee College Multicultural Institute is the continuation of a program originally funded in 2003 by a matching grant from NAFSA.
2. Who is charged with primary responsibility for the program?
 - a. The International Education program coordinator
3. What support does the program receive from the senior leadership of the institution?
 - a. After initial funding partnership with NAFSA ended, the college administration has supported the annual Multicultural Institute financially and with oversight through the academic dean's office. The philosophy of the institute is rooted in the college's mission statement and annual goals.
4. How is it sustained? What is its budget?

- a. The institute has an annual budget of approximately \$2,000, plus development and implementation by the International Education Coordinator.
5. How does this benefit your students, college, and community?
 - a. Local and international students are provided an opportunity to learn about each other as other cultures in an informal, though structured, setting.
 - b. Helps keep global perspectives on the radar of the campus.
6. Are there vendors or other outside resources you used that you would recommend to others?
 - a. NAFSA and other grant-making organizations
 - b. Local universities with speakers' bureaus
7. What advice would you offer to another institution that might consider implementing such a program?
 - Make use of local resources for speakers: faculty with expertise in world civilizations, history, religion, and those who have traveled globally; international students who are willing to talk about their countries; area World Affairs Councils
 - Ask students which countries they would like to study.
 - Local restaurants that serve authentic international cuisine are great sites to visit, as are mosques, temples, and museums.
 - Provide food and transportation.
 - Charge students a nominal fee.
 - Recognize students who complete the entire program.