EducationUSA Training Institute: Enhancing Advising Expertise (Level 2)
On-Campus Adviser Training Modules

Overview of EducationUSA’s Adviser Competencies

EducationUSA’s “Adviser Competencies” provide a common definition of what it means to be an adviser. Developed by REACs and EducationUSA professional development staff, these core competencies set forth the key duties of an adviser and encapsulate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to perform these duties effectively. The competencies are used to design trainings and help EducationUSA staff strengthen the skills and capacity of advisers to serve prospective students and the U.S. higher education community.

There are five overarching competencies:

- Competency 1: Help Students Have a Successful Study Experience in the U.S.
- Competency 2: Advocate for U.S. Higher Education
- Competency 3: Manage an Advising Center
- Competency 4: Represent and Advocate for EducationUSA
- Competency 5: Build Professional Competence and Contribute to the Knowledge Base of the Network

Each competency is further divided into Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. When advisers are engaged in level 2 training, they have already mastered most of the level 1 competencies.

- Level 1 competencies focus on working with students and building knowledge of U.S. higher education, the State Department, and EducationUSA policies and procedures.
- Level 2 competencies focus on advising center management duties, strategic planning, and advocating for and representing EducationUSA.
- Level 3 competencies focus on serving as a resource for peers, developing specific areas of expertise, delivering training, and contributing to the knowledge base of the network.

For your reference, see the full list of adviser competencies in the RFP package to help prepare your proposal.

On-Campus Adviser Training Modules

The on-campus training modules below outline the content required for a level 2 Training Institute and should guide how you design your proposal. Proposals should include training on most or all of the content areas highlighted in these modules.

Specialized Topics in Undergraduate Admissions

Suggested training staff: Undergraduate admissions officers and faculty and staff who review international applications, anyone else involved in the decision process (e.g. if a dean is involved in reviewing certain types of applications)

- Writing an effective personal statement/essay
- Common pitfalls in international student applications
- Differences among international admissions offices structurally and operationally and how to navigate these different types of structures
- Community college admissions versus four-year degree granting institution admissions processes and requirements
- Transfer agreements
- Activities/exercises – Please develop and describe at least one activity for this session

**Specialized Topics in Graduate Admissions**

*Suggested training staff:* Graduate admissions officers and staff who review international applications, faculty who review graduate applications, anyone else involved in the decision process (e.g. if a dean is involved in reviewing certain types of applications)

- Models and structures of graduate admissions at different types of institutions
- Writing an effective personal statement/essay
- Common pitfalls on international student applications
- Activities/exercises – Please develop and describe at least one activity for this session

**Specialized Topics in Financing and Financial Aid**

*Suggested training staff:* Financial aid officials and staff, international student office staff, representatives from graduate departments, graduate students

- “Sticker price” vs. actual cost of attendance
- Making the finances work
  - Scholarships
  - Loans
  - Graduate assistantships and on-campus jobs for undergraduates – what is available, and how do students get them
  - Case studies/international student panel
- Helping students develop financial aid plans/budgets for the duration of their studies
- Activities/exercises (please describe, if applicable)

**Marketing, Recruitment, and Outreach (Domestic and International)**

*Suggested training staff:* Graduate and undergraduate admissions officers and staff, others involved in student recruitment, e.g. faculty, alumni office

- “Target markets” – identifying and reaching the types of students they want to recruit
- How institutions market themselves to attract students in their target markets
  - Use of alumni and current students, virtual and print media, outreach and recruitment travel
- How institutions market themselves and reach out to underrepresented and rural populations
- Use of social media in the marketing and recruitment processes
- Creating a marketing and recruitment strategy
- Activities/exercises – Please develop and describe at least one activity for this session

**Networking with the Higher Education Community: Mini College Fair**

- Admissions and other representatives from area institutions talk with advisers, one-on one and in small groups, to answer questions about their institutions and programs
- Advisers provide higher education reps with information on the outreach efforts in their country to promote U.S. higher education and reach students

**Meet the Academic Programs: Department Visits**

- Individual/small group visits to departments of particular interest to each adviser
- Meet with faculty and staff
- Visit classes rooms and labs
- Tour facilities

**Academic Integrity**

- Definitions
• Potential consequences
• Situation case studies
• Activities/exercises (please describe, if applicable)

Beyond the Classroom: Student Resources
Suggested training staff: Student support staff from appropriate offices
• International student support services, including integration into campus life and role in on-campus internationalization initiatives
• Career counseling
• Accessibility – resources for disabled students
• Alumni relations and resources
• Other activities designed to enhance student life on-campus and in the surrounding communities

Public Speaking and Presentation Delivery
• Interactive workshop (e.g. half-day) conducted by faculty or staff specialists in this area (e.g. in a business school, communications department, career services office, etc.)
• Speaking to different audiences/stakeholders
• Giving “elevator speeches” to promote services and expertise
• Activities/exercises – Please develop and describe at least one activity for this session