

INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN CANADIAN ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

In the 1990's, with support of the Canadian Federal Government, there was a strong push to attract international students to study in Canadian universities in their various colleges and programs. Funds were made available to the Canadian Universities to attract those students who were interested to come to Canada for one or more terms of study. The author of this presentation was Associate Dean of Research and External Programs in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba at that time. He was assigned the task to run this program in the Faculty of Engineering. This was the first engineering program that the Government of Canada was funding at a Canadian University.

The program lasted a total of 15 years and went through different phases. International students were initially recruited from European countries, including the United Kingdom, France and Spain, and from our North American neighbours of the USA and Mexico. It was extended to Japan, Malaysia and China. The next step was to align the prior knowledge in science and engineering by the international students with our existing curricula in the various disciplines, such as mechanical, electrical, compute and civil engineering. Grade conversion was achieved with discussions with the foreign universities where the students had initially studied.

In this presentation, shared experiences and discussion of problems are made. A case study of integrating international students in the study of materials science and engineering (the specialty of the author of the presentation) will be given as an example of the approach used in this study.

Keywords: Canada, External Programs, Engineering, International Students.
