

Module Three Video - Creating Communities – Part 1

Firstly, opportunities for social and extra-curricular activities are important, as life doesn't end for the students once they walk out of class and social interaction and feeling like they're 'fitting in' is essential. It's not so much about how much you spend on activities but how much they are of interest to the students, as opposed to what you think they might be interested in, how many people have the opportunity to be involved and how well you promote them. Students who are able to make friends or study partners will start to feel more integrated, suffer less from culture shock and are more likely to be happier and want to keep studying. When problems do arise, which they will to certain extent, students with a support network will have someone to turn to and are more likely to seek help, which will prevent problems from escalating and students from failing or dropping out of their studies.

Students want to be part of the wider community that they're studying in. It can help to use public holiday, sporting events, cultural and community festivals and any local events to help students learn more about where they live and give them ideas about what they can do in their free time.

Charity or corporate social responsibility projects can also help to bring a centre together, perhaps provide students with volunteer opportunities that may benefit them in the future or allow students to use some of their skills and experience from previous work, study or other interests. Opportunities might include environmental projects, fundraising activities, fun runs or volunteering time.