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8-17-2009

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University Relations

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#### Recommended Citation

University Relations, "International Student Orientation underway" (2009). *Campus News Archive*. 1322.  
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### **International Student Orientation underway**

*Summary: Students from China, Libya, Sri Lanka, Japan, Egypt, Korea, and France learn about academic and social life on campus and about the Morris community*

(August 17, 2009)-Although fall semester is still a week away, new students have already arrived from afar for an early introduction to the University of Minnesota, Morris campus. For these students, getting ready for college began with travel arrangements from around the globe, including China, Libya, Sri Lanka, Japan, Egypt, Korea, and France. During the next week, International Student Orientation will prepare them for academics in the United States and life in Morris.

Orientation prepares international students for University life and studies. Acclimating international students to United States classroom culture before classes begin helps assure their success at Morris. Their orientation course provides an overview of classroom expectations. For example, on the Morris campus, students are expected to engage in interactive discussions with fellow students and faculty in the classroom. “This teaching style may be something new to many of these students,” shares Pilar Eble, International Student Program coordinator.

Eble also shares that in other classroom cultures, students are taught to use “expert” ideas instead of their own ideas when writing papers. Correctly expressing “expert ideas” as well as their own thoughts and opinions in their writings is one of the concepts taught during the English as a Second Language course during orientation. Students are introduced to the many campus resources available to assist and guide them throughout their Morris academic experience, including the Writing Room and the Rodney Briggs Library, whose librarians are eager to help students with papers and citations.

Orientation also provides international students the chance to experience American culture in the Midwest. The students will experience county fairs—unique to the United States—including enjoying the animals, exhibits, and deep-fried foods at the Stevens County Fair. They’ve also been learning about the community of Morris, shopping in nearby Alexandria, and enjoying Pomme de Terre Park.

Understanding how Americans live is important to the international students, which is why Eble is working hard with the Morris community to provide a host family or friend for each student—a new addition to International Student Orientation. Hosts are asked to stay in regular contact with their students throughout the academic year, continuing their introduction to life in west central Minnesota.

The international student population, currently 69 for this academic year, continues to grow at the University of Minnesota, Morris. The small campus is an important reason many students choose to attend, according to Eble, because the students and their parents believe Morris is safer than larger universities. And finally, Eble notes that international students are attracted to the support systems that will help them adjust and flourish provided by the Morris campus and the Morris community.

Photo above by Xuan Wang

Photo below: international students at the University of Minnesota, Morris

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu) or call 888-866-3382.