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The Education Newsletter



Learning Together:

**The Power of
Peer Mentorship**

Perspectives from a
Global Education Career

**Building Careers in an
Age of Global Complexity**

Supporting International Success
at UCR (University of California, Riverside).

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We would like to invite our readers to participate in our exciting Photo Contest by sharing powerful moments that reflect learning, mentoring, and student life. The winning entry will be featured on the cover of our newsletter. Please send your entries to write@uconnectworld.com. Submissions must be in portrait format.

Meet the **Photo Contest Winner**

This edition's photo contest winner is **Aashna Bhartiya**, DPS RK Puram alumna and Krea University Year 1 student. While the world pointed at well-worn roads, Aashna quietly mapped her own. Today, she is exactly where she always knew she would be, diving headfirst into Biological Sciences, her dream major.

This photo is from Shoolini University's Summer Patent School, where she swapped city noise for mountain air and spent her days studying genetic analysis through Gel Electrophoresis and PCR, and peering into the nanoworld through Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy (FE-SEM).



Contributors

- Ashish Ilwadia (Illustrator)
- Charushilla Narula (Curator)
- Dr. Marko Princevac
- Namrata Sharma (Editorial Coordinator)
- Prof. Prakash Gopalan
- Sandeep Bhalla
- Shanaya Soans
- Shalini Gumber
- Sruthi John



COVER STORY

Reflections on a Global Career: Navigating the Shifts in International Education

By Sandeep Bhalla, Regional Manager – South Asia,
Center for International Education, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio

Two systems, two philosophies,
and a question about what education should ultimately serve

When I transitioned from Australia’s international education sector to the United States, I expected to find different procedures in different time zones. Instead, I discovered a fundamental shift in philosophy. Moving between these two systems has reshaped my understanding of how we, as professionals, can either manage a student’s path or empower their potential.

From Fluidity to Friction: The Converging Policies of Australia and the U.S.

Australia’s ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) framework has long prioritized institutional stability through a "six-month rule," a mandate that requires a complex negotiation for a Letter of Release and often prioritizes retention over a student’s academic or cultural fit. Conversely, the U.S. is currently retreating from its traditionally fluid SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) model, with 2025 DHS (Department of Homeland Security) proposals introducing first-year transfer limits and replacing "Duration of Status" with fixed program-end dates. This global shift toward heightened oversight and compliance indicates a narrowing of student mobility, as both nations increasingly prioritize visa integrity over the open-ended flexibility that once defined the international student experience.

Recruitment as Strategic Advising

In the Australian model, my role often felt defined by parameters, fitting students into established pathways within a rigid framework. It was efficient, but the scope for creativity was limited by the transfer rules and fixed course structures. In the U.S., recruitment evolved into something more like **strategic consultancy**. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the degrees and the ability to pivot, I found myself "architecting" futures. The accountability is higher because you aren't just filling a seat; you are matching a student’s evolving potential to an opportunity. It transformed the recruiter-student relationship into a genuine partnership.

Beyond the Metric: The Xavier Story

The most profound difference is how we define "qualified." Australia’s **ATAR system** (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) is remarkably efficient, but it is **binary**.



You either meet the rank, or you do not. The United States practices holistic admissions, and according to a 2019 NACAC survey, 55% of US colleges and universities use holistic review in their admissions process, up from just 35% in 2014. This approach evaluates the full breadth of a student's profile:

extracurricular involvement, personal essays, recommendation letters, life experiences, obstacles overcome, leadership qualities, and community contributions. This year at Xavier, I had a student with a GPA of 2.33; this was well below our typical requirement of 3.0. In Australia, this student would have been automatically rejected by any ATAR-based system. But we looked at the complete profile. **We saw the gaps, understood the circumstances that created them, and recognized the potential underneath.** We decided to give this student a chance, backing that decision with a \$26,000 scholarship. That's unprecedented in Australia, where the system simply doesn't allow for that kind of individualized assessment and institutional belief in a student's potential beyond grades.

The Economic Reality: Why America Still Leads

There's East Coast versus West Coast, and then there's the Midwest, each with its own economic character and opportunities. The US job market is vast, and the numbers tell the story. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, real GDP increased at an annual rate of 4.4% in the third quarter of 2025, following 3.8% growth in the second quarter. This is the world's largest economy, and even at its worst, it outperforms other economies at their peak. This explains how a dynamic and diversified economy provides institutions with the confidence to take calculated risks on students whose potential may not be immediately reflected in traditional metrics. No matter who you are, no matter what your background, you find a place for yourself in the United States. That's not rhetoric, that's what the economic diversity and opportunity structure make possible.



A Vision for the Future

Moving from Australia to the US wasn't just a geographical shift, it was an epistemological one. I moved from a system that values standardization and compliance to one that, at least for now, values potential and possibility. From a system that asks "do you meet our requirements?" to one that asks "who can you become?"

The irony isn't lost on me that as I write this in January 2026, the US is proposing to adopt many of Australia's restrictive practices. Perhaps that makes this reflection even more urgent. I've now seen both models, the locked-down approach and the flexible one, and I know which one allowed me to do better work as a recruitment professional and which one served students more humanely. For me, working in a system that allows a student with a 2.33 GPA to receive a scholarship because we believe in their story, their resilience, and their future, that's not just a different approach to education. That's a different vision of what education can be. I only hope that vision survives the regulatory changes ahead.

If you're an educator who has a perspective or insight to share, we'd love to hear from you. Please write to us at write@uconnectworld.com

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of University Connection, UCONNECT, or its constituting team of Research Counselors

TOP 10

Indian Cities Attracting Global University Campuses

In our very first release of 'Top 10', we would like to take you on a tour of the Top 10 Indian cities that are targeted by foreign universities to establish their global campuses.

A steady demographic decline of university age students coupled with budget constraints, ranking pressures and international student barriers have motivated global universities to set their sights on countries like Italy, China, Malaysia, UAE, and now India. With NEP (National Education Policy) 2020 opening Indian borders to internationalise the Indian education system, international universities are enthusiastically eyeing this opportunity to attract Indian talent.

A collaborative report published by **Deloitte India and Knight Frank India (2025)** identifies the following as Top 10 cities based on parameters such as Connectivity, Socio-economic factors, Industry connections, Demographics opportunity and academic ecosystem-

1. Delhi NCR

Topping the list is none other than the national capital region primarily because of international connectivity, embassies of other countries and administrative prominence.

2. Bengaluru

Not too far behind and still shining as the leading IT exporter of the nation, Namma Bengaluru, has out ranked all other cities on industry linkages.

3. Mumbai MMR

The financial capital of the country, where fame and fortune drive its pulse, is indeed a Gateway to India and to opportunities!

4. Hyderabad

The city is not just serving delicious biryani, exporting technology, trading diamond and pearls but is also ready to scale the Indian education sector!

5. Pune

Distinguished by its focus on culture, wellness and nature and with a stronger push from the right stake holders, Pune can emerge as a thriving international city!

6. Chennai

Hosting several automobile players and establishing itself on the global manufacturing map, Chennai is not just Carnatic music and Chettinad food, but a force to be reckoned with.

7. Ahmedabad

With its architectural marvels and festive celebrations, India's first UNESCO World Heritage City and Gujarat's former state capital is a lot more than traditions, textiles and tasty treats!

8. Chandigarh Tricity

Integrated hub comprising the union territory of Chandigarh along with satellite towns of Mohali (Punjab) and Panchkula (Haryana) is fast emerging as an educational hub because of excellence in governance and liveability.

9. Kochi

The Queen of the Arabian sea not just houses the world's first fully solar-powered airport and India's first water metro system, but has also indicated strong international connectivity, IT ecosystem and infrastructure readiness making it a stellar addition to this list.

10. Jaipur

As one of India's first planned cities, Jaipur, with its regal architecture, blue pottery and bazaars makes it to our list because of its proximity to Delhi NCR and growing demographic opportunities!





Learning Together: The Power of Peer Mentorship

By Shanaya Soans, student at Krea University,
CAAS 2025 student, UC Peer Mentor 2026

Guided, Not Directed: The Subtle Strength of Mentorship



**STUDENT'S
Corner**

When I was applying to universities, I was under immense pressure. It was my parents' first time assisting with the process as I am their oldest child. In the beginning, I felt like I was in over my head. There was so much work to be done such as collating documents, writing essays, filling out admission forms, and much more. There were also several instances when my mind would go blank as I sat down to write an essay.

However, I knew that one of my aunts, a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Denmark, would be able to help me understand the expectations of an admissions team. So, I reached out to her, and I am so grateful that I did. **In her, I found my mentor.** Granted, she wasn't a peer mentor, but she helped me understand the college experience from her perspective. She reviewed and edited my essays as a college professor would. She also helped me prepare for interviews and, most importantly, consoled me after my first university rejection. Mind you, this university had been my goal even before high school! I was absolutely crushed.

Eventually, after several ups and downs, I got into Krea University in Andhra Pradesh, India. My aunt asked me to take a closer look at the faculty, campus, and courses offered there. Krea wasn't my first choice or even my second, to be perfectly candid. My aunt guided me towards making my final decision, not by pushing me, but by encouraging me to do my own research and make my own choices. All she did was be there for me, offering her unconditional support and advice. **This is why I can confidently say that having a mentor is invaluable; my mentor made my admissions journey far less overwhelming.**

A mentor also helps after the admissions process is over. I entered Krea quite set on pursuing Literature. However, when I asked my aunt to look over the course catalogue with me, our conversation helped uncover my true interest in Sociology and the advantages of studying it instead. **University life is unpredictable.** You never know what might change or what factors might influence those changes, perhaps the people you surround yourself with, a

A peer mentor shapes how you grow within your environment, not against it

relationship, or even how you handle academic anxiety. **Having someone, who has been through a similar experience, simply listen to your struggles can bring immense solace.**

Through our conversations, I have strengthened my critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. My aunt taught me how to approach interviews, how to prepare, what kinds of questions to ask, and how to structure my responses. At the same time, she made me mindful of balancing the different aspects of my life. She is also someone I celebrate my wins with.

Now that I'm in my second year, I've had my own experiences such as failed friend groups, academic stress and success, musical recognition, and homesickness. The list goes on. And as I mentioned before, you never know what the future might hold. It becomes especially important to have someone you can call to ease your mind when you're not in the right headspace. That is exactly what a mentor does. They teach you how to deal with problems and how to learn from your mistakes.

The Ripple Effect of Mentorship

Now that my younger brothers are about to go through the same process, I've become their peer mentor. Since they want to pursue STEM and I'm a humanities student, I mainly guide them in improving their communication skills and building confidence. **A mentor is someone who coaches you to become a responsible individual, empathetic and adaptable to different situations.** They play a significant role in moulding students into the best versions of themselves so they can thrive in the real world.

Studying at a university is a major leap from high school. Both the highs and the lows can feel overwhelming to a seventeen-year-old. Academic years are not just about navigating coursework, but about learning to make your own choices and dealing with their consequences. A peer mentor shapes how you grow within your environment, not against it. They help you accept your failures and, in doing so, help develop a growth mindset. They cultivate both academic and interpersonal skills; these skills extend far beyond university life.

Academic life at any level is not only about acquiring knowledge or earning a degree, but also about discovering yourself as an individual. This is the quiet power of mentorship. A mentor becomes your steady support system, ready to anchor you and, at the same time, celebrate you.



Counselor's Perspective

At University Connection, our peer mentoring network lies at the very heart of our student community. Having a friend who has been in the exact same shoes as our students can bring them much-needed relief and comfort as they navigate their challenging academic and admissions journeys. A peer mentor is not just there to offer tips and suggestions on schoolwork and academic goals, but also to share ideas, help students adjust to new academic environments, and build a sense of belonging. The best part about the peer mentoring network is that it is a two-way street, benefiting both the mentee and the mentor by enhancing their communication and time management skills. Read more about the UC Peer Mentors [here](#).

Global Shifts Reshaping Higher Education

Change is the only constant; no sector is immune to changes rippling through it. With that in mind, Orange Pulse seeks to educate its readers about the current happenings in the educational world, along with closely associated global trends.



Indonesia: the next popular choice on the horizon

According to **THE PIE (Kennedy, 2026)**, Indonesia is positioning itself to attract foreign university campuses to its shores, thereby becoming a key player in the transnational education (TNE) market.

With ongoing educational reforms, recognition for UK universities, and a strong ambition to strengthen its education landscape, the world's fourth most populous country is striving to compete with regional players such as Singapore and Malaysia in the TNE market. This shift signals opportunities not only for Indonesia's growth and economic progress but also for the UK. Economic and cultural engagement between the two nations could boost British soft power, develop additional income streams, and enhance trade relationships. Furthermore, establishing around 10 new campuses by UK universities in Indonesia could promote strategic research and career-focused collaborations with domestic universities, while also improving the quality of education in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. With the expectation of a significant reduction in currency outflow, Indonesia hopes that such initiatives will help limit brain drain and ultimately contribute to stronger economic growth in the long run.



Gen AI's rapid erosion of critical thinking

According to **University World News (Greenfield, 2026)**, the exponential rise and popularity of generative artificial intelligence like ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini have caused students to heavily depend upon them, thereby hindering the growth of their own critical thinking capabilities.

Whenever technological advancements arrive, alarm bells ring loudly, supposedly forecasting the anticipated unemployment rate. However, with generative artificial intelligence, one of the loudest concerns was regarding the depleting levels of critical thinking skills among students. Excessive dependence on AI has decreased students' attention spans as well as critical thinking skills, as they are not actively engaging with the content themselves but relying on AI. Learning is not a simple process that gets accomplished by disburdening tasks elsewhere; rather, it requires active and focused engagement along with intellectual struggle with the tasks at hand to truly engage one's mental faculties. It's precisely these processes that are getting hampered when students rely unquestioningly on Generative AI models. On a side note, it is important to recognise that it is not just cerebral infrastructures that are being conquered by over-reliance on AI models; IT companies that develop SaaS and even water resources (required to cool AI data centres) are facing the heat!



Huge foreign funding to Top 5 US Universities

By securing a sum of approximately \$1.02 Billion, Carnegie Mellon University tops the list of US universities that received the maximum funding from foreign institutions. CMU was followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford University, Harvard University and University of Pennsylvania (**Times of India, 2026**)



Understandably, universities require funds to conduct their cutting-edge research, recruit scientists and set up overseas campuses. But when funds are too large and are provided by foreign governments, then a closer inspection is needed. That is exactly what the US government hopes to do: a tighter scrutiny and closer surveillance on incoming funds and donors. Indeed, foreign funds have played a significant role in granting scholarships to needy students, but at the same time, these funds dictate what needs to be researched, the direction of the research and many times, even if the research should be published or not, thereby affecting academic independence. In fact, the inflow of cash can also influence the curricula taught within the university's walls, along with impacting the university's policy frameworks, and eventually its core vision and mission!

Canada's McGill University spreads its wings across the Atlantic.



McGill's collaboration with Indonesian educational institutions is not new; for more than 50 years, McGill has worked with Indonesian universities to enhance academic engagement and research partnerships. However, this time, McGill is joining hands with not just Indonesian universities, but also with Emirati educational institutions to promote skill development and professional training (**El Qirem, 2026**).

Today's educational sector is no longer hindered by geographical borders and boundaries; rather, we see a growing emphasis on TNE (Transnational Education), global partnerships, and this collaboration evidences the same. The \$12.8 million cross-border engagement provided by the UAE's Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation marries together McGill's academic expertise and the UAE's benevolent nature with Indonesia's developmental agendas. The inflow of educational and academic resources hopes to build Indonesia's educational landscape, along with providing advanced training to students in Indonesia. It is certainly commendable to observe that one of the aims of this five-year engagement is also to support the Indonesian educational system from the grassroots level as it is expected that the knowledge and support received by Indonesian college students will flow to local communities and schools as well.



Building Careers in an Age of Global Complexity

By Prof. Prakash Gopalan, President, NIIT University, Rajasthan, India

How interconnected global challenges are reshaping workforce demands and redefining what it means to build a meaningful career

In an era defined by unprecedented interconnectedness, the world's most pressing challenges have outgrown beyond national borders. Climate change, public health crises, technological disruption, economic inequality, and geopolitical instability are no longer isolated phenomena; **they are global in both cause and consequence.** As a result, the nature of work and the concept of a career itself have undergone a profound transformation. Today's professionals are increasingly called upon to operate across cultures, disciplines, and jurisdictions, giving rise to what may be described as global careers: professional paths shaped by international exposure, cross-border collaboration, and a commitment to addressing complex global problems.

Global challenges are, by definition, multifaceted. Climate change, for example, demands scientific innovation, policy coordination, financial investment, and social adaptation across continents. Similarly, managing pandemics requires integrating medical research, data analytics, logistics, public communication, and international governance. These challenges cannot be solved by single institutions or countries acting alone. They require globally minded professionals who can navigate complexity, reconcile competing interests, and translate local insights into scalable solutions.

This reality has significantly reshaped the workforce markets. Organisations in both the public and private sectors increasingly seek individuals with international competence; professionals who combine technical expertise with cultural intelligence, ethical awareness, and strategic vision. The expansion of multinational corporations, the strengthened mandates of international organisations, and the growing impact of non-governmental actors are collectively increasing the demand for globally oriented talent. Careers in sustainability consulting, international development, global health, cybersecurity, supply chain management, and digital policy exemplify this trend, blending specialised knowledge with a global scope of action.

At the same time, technology has lowered many of the traditional barriers to global work. Digital platforms enable professionals to

collaborate across time zones, manage international teams, and access global markets without permanent relocation. Remote work, virtual diplomacy, and cross-border entrepreneurship have become integral features of the modern professional landscape. This technological shift has democratized access to global careers, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to contribute meaningfully to international efforts, provided they possess the requisite skills and adaptability.



However, global careers demand more than technical proficiency. They require a mindset attuned to complexity and uncertainty. Professionals must be comfortable operating in ambiguous environments, where cultural norms differ, regulatory frameworks conflict, and solutions must be continuously adapted. Linguistic ability, intercultural communication, and emotional intelligence are no longer ancillary skills; they are central to effectiveness and leadership in global contexts. Equally important is ethical responsibility. Decisions made in one part of the world can have far-reaching consequences elsewhere, underscoring the importance of integrity, inclusiveness, and long-term thinking.

Education and professional development systems are beginning to respond to these demands. Universities increasingly emphasise international curricula, interdisciplinary programs, and experiential learning opportunities such as study abroad, global internships, and collaborative research projects. Employers, in turn, invest in global leadership training and mobility programs to cultivate talent capable of addressing transnational challenges. Lifelong learning has become essential, as professionals must continuously update their skills to remain relevant in rapidly evolving global industries.

In conclusion, global challenges and global careers are deeply intertwined. As humanity confronts problems that transcend borders, the demand for professionals who can think and act globally will only intensify. Global careers offer not merely personal advancement, but the opportunity to contribute to collective solutions that shape the future of societies and the planet. For the next generation of professionals, success will be measured not only by individual achievement but by the capacity to collaborate across boundaries and create sustainable impact in an interconnected world.

Thinking global?

Here's a quick exploration exercise to get you started:

A prompt to explore:

What are three global challenges (for example, climate change, public health, digital security, or economic inequality) that interest you and which careers are actively working to address them? Identify real roles, organisations, or multinational companies involved in solving these issues. What skills do they consistently look for?

You'll likely uncover a wide range of roles that cut across disciplines and borders.

Now take the next step: speak to someone who can help you connect the dots between your interests, academic pathways, and long-term impact: a College and Careers Counsellor, of course.

Disclaimer

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The “Hidden” Career Office: The Advantage Students Don’t See in the Brochure

By Shalini Gumber, Higher Education Growth & Enrollment Expert

Understanding the Invisible Infrastructure of Career Success

When students and parents browse brochures and evaluate universities, they naturally tend to focus on visible career metrics such as placement percentages, average and median salary packages, top recruiter logos, internship conversion rates, campus recruitment drives, number of companies visiting, highest salary figures, and industry tie-ups. However, what often goes unnoticed is the significance of the **most powerful driver** of long-term career success: the Hidden Career Office. It is here that real professional advantage is built within universities, quietly behind the scenes. This humble establishment is responsible for sowing seeds of clarity, creating an ecosystem for connections and driving growth. It is important to note that the **Hidden Career Office** is not simply the placement cell that becomes active during recruitment season. It is the quieter, strategic framework operating behind the scenes throughout a student’s academic journey. Often modest in visibility and tucked away from the spotlight, it plays a crucial role in nurturing growth long before graduation day.

The Power of Bespoke Networking

While brochures prominently highlight formal recruitment channels, structured hiring pipelines alone do not guarantee meaningful career success. The strongest outcomes frequently emerge from personalised professional networks cultivated by the career offices within the institution.

These include:

- One-on-one faculty introductions with industry leaders
- Curated alumni connections for specific career interests
- Closed-door networking opportunities with founders, CXOs and investors
- Invitation-only industry roundtables and private forums

Such bespoke networking is rarely advertised because it is relationship-driven and highly selective. Yet time and again, it unlocks opportunities that never appear on public job portals.

Shadowing: The Career Accelerator No One Talks About

Another overlooked contribution of the Hidden Career Office is the facilitation of **meaningful shadowing experiences**. Unlike conventional internships that often begin later in a student’s journey, shadowing provides early exposure to real decision-making environments. Such experiences also provide students with direct exposure to real executive decision-making and problem-solving. Students may shadow startup founders during high-growth phases, observe board-level discussions and

strategy sessions, work alongside senior professionals on live projects, or accompany leaders to client meetings and negotiations. **These experiences offer an unfiltered view of leadership in action.** Such an immersive learning environment, developed due to the efforts of the career office, builds commercial acumen, confidence and industry fluency assets that traditional classroom learning cannot replicate.

Why These Opportunities Remain “Invisible”

If these initiatives are so powerful, why are they rarely highlighted? The answer lies in their very nature. These opportunities are intentionally tailored rather than standardised. Access is typically extended to students who demonstrate initiative, proactiveness, and sustained commitment. Many of these engagements are built on relationships rooted in trust and discretion, particularly when students are exposed to sensitive discussions or high-level strategic decision-making. As a result, outcomes depend heavily on individual readiness and performance, and they cannot always be captured through simple, quantifiable metrics. Because they resist standardisation and scale, these experiences rarely fit neatly into marketing brochures. Yet, time and again, they shape some of the most successful and differentiated graduate journeys.



The Real ROI of a University Experience

For any parent or student carefully browsing university catalogues, often adorned with impressive recruiter logos and salary statistics, it is worth pausing to look beyond the surface. The true return on investment in education is not defined solely by the first salary package after graduation. It is shaped by early professional exposure, the depth and quality of industry relationships, access to meaningful mentorship, clarity of career direction before graduation, and the foundation for long-term mobility and leadership growth. The Hidden Career Office is the quiet engine that drives this enduring value.

Conclusion

The most transformative career advantages are often the least visible. Universities that invest in bespoke networking, immersive exposure, and meaningful industry engagement do more than help students secure jobs. They cultivate graduates who enter the workforce prepared, connected, and strategically positioned for long-term growth. **For students who learn to look beyond headline statistics, the Hidden Career Office may well be the most valuable department on campus, even if it rarely appears in bold print.**

If you’re an educator who has a perspective or insight to share, we’d love to hear from you.
Please write to us at write@uconnectworld.com

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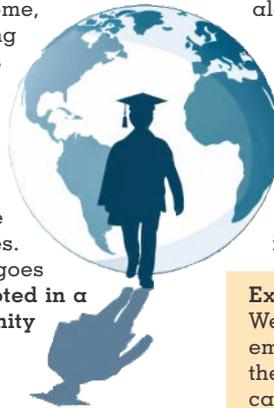


Walking the Journey Together: UCR's Commitment to International Student Success

By Dr. Marko Princevac, Vice Provost of International Affairs,
University of California, Riverside

Strengthening global talent through comprehensive support and inclusive excellence

At the **University of California, Riverside (UCR)**, international students are not simply welcomed: they are understood. Many of us in leadership, faculty, and staff once stood where our students stand today: preparing to leave home, navigating a new education system, and building a life in a different culture. **Those experiences shape how we design our programs and define our responsibility to every student who chooses UCR as their academic home.** UCR is proud to be one of the leading public research universities in the United States, recognized for excellence in engineering, business, life sciences, sustainability, and the social sciences. But our commitment to international students goes far beyond rankings and laboratories. **It is rooted in a simple principle: talent is global, and opportunity should be accessible.** Our role is to remove unnecessary barriers and ensure that students can focus on what truly matters: learning, discovery, and personal growth.



Our support begins long before students board a plane. Through dedicated team members and trusted partners in India and other regions, we provide pre-departure guidance that addresses both academic preparation and practical concerns. From visa and documentation support to travel planning and packing advice, we aim to reduce uncertainty and replace it with confidence. We understand that the transition to a U.S. university can feel overwhelming, not just for students but for families as well. Clear communication and personalized support help ensure that everyone feels informed and reassured.

Dedicated academic advisors work closely with international students to help them navigate course selection, degree planning, and university policies.

Arrival is a defining moment, and we treat it as such. At UCR, international students are met with a structured, welcoming experience that includes airport guidance, campus orientation, and immediate access to housing resources. **Our orientation programs go beyond administrative checklists.** They introduce students to campus life, academic expectations, health and safety resources, and the cultural environment of Southern California. We want students to feel a sense of belonging from their very first day.

Once the academic journey begins, our focus shifts to sustained success. Dedicated academic advisors work closely with international students to help them navigate course selection, degree planning, and university policies. Faculty mentors and research coordinators open doors to hands-on learning in state-of-the-art laboratories and interdisciplinary research centers.

Whether a student is interested in artificial intelligence, sustainable energy, public health, or entrepreneurship, UCR offers pathways to engage in meaningful, real-world projects alongside leading scholars.

Cultural immersion and campus life are equally important. **A university education is not confined to the classroom.** Our international student organizations, cultural events, leadership programs, and community service opportunities create spaces where students can share their heritage while building friendships across cultures. These experiences foster global perspectives, an essential skill in today's interconnected world.

Experiential learning is a cornerstone of the UCR experience. We actively connect international students with on-campus employment, internships, and industry partnerships that allow them to apply classroom knowledge in professional settings. Our career services team provides resume workshops, interview preparation, and networking opportunities tailored to the needs of international students navigating the U.S. job market. For those interested in global exposure, our Education Abroad programs offer opportunities to study in other countries, further enriching their academic and cultural horizons.

Throughout every stage, safety and well-being remain central to our mission. From comprehensive health services to counseling, legal guidance, and campus security, we strive to create an environment where students feel protected and supported. We recognize that adjusting to a new culture can bring moments of stress and uncertainty. Our staff is trained to listen, respond, and guide students toward the resources they need.

What truly distinguishes UCR is empathy. We do not view international students as visitors; we see them as integral members of our academic community. Their perspectives, ideas, and ambitions strengthen our classrooms and research initiatives. In return, we commit to minimizing the logistical and emotional hurdles that often accompany international education. To all our prospective students and families, I want to emphasize

We do not view international students as visitors; we see them as integral members of our academic community.

this: choosing UCR means joining a community that walks with you every step of the way. From pre-departure preparation to graduation and beyond, our team is devoted to ensuring that your transition is smooth, your experience is safe, and your education is transformative.

At UCR, we do not simply prepare students for careers. We prepare them for leadership in a global society. And we are honored to be part of your journey.



Your Education Digest: Snapshots of events that matter

Are you hosting an event for your institution?
Send us details, and we will be happy to feature relevant events
within this section of UCONNECT

Shifali Mehta, the representative from AIIEC India, recently shared that being part of the community has been both a learning rich and deeply productive experience. They highlighted how the opportunity to share ideas, engage in meaningful discussions, and focus on professional development with like-minded education professionals has proven to be truly invaluable.

The session was described as highly insightful, noting that with every conference attended, participants find themselves growing stronger in both perspective and purpose. During the event, discussions centered on AI disruption and the shifting geopolitical landscape, which were noted as being especially insight-driven. These conversations reinforced how rapidly the education ecosystem is evolving and underscored the critical need for professionals to remain informed, agile, and reflective. Ultimately, it was noted that this collective wisdom is what creates a real, lasting impact in education. Looking ahead, there is a strong commitment to carrying these learnings forward and continuing to grow alongside this incredible professional community.

Dr. Priya Malik recently led an insightful session titled "A Journey to Become a Doctor," offering a comprehensive exploration of the dedication required to enter the medical profession. She described the path as a blend of academic rigor, curiosity, and compassion, beginning with a strong foundation in Biology and Chemistry and the focused preparation required for competitive entrance exams such as NEET. She emphasized that the transition into medical school is where theoretical knowledge of the human body and disease begins to merge with the high-stakes reality of clinical training and patient care.

She highlighted that the journey extends far beyond textbooks, noting that years of internships and residency are crucial for developing the practical skills, rapid decision-making, and emotional resilience required on the front lines of healthcare. The session concluded with the takeaway that while the road to becoming a doctor is challenging, it offers the reward of making a tangible difference in society and contributing to human well-being.

The Founder and Director of University Connection recently celebrated a significant professional achievement, being named the Lifetime Counselor Winner for the 2025 Lumiere Excellence in Counseling Awards. Reflecting on the honor, they described the recognition less as a lifetime achievement and more as a half-a-lifetime milestone, emphasizing that the work of educators is a continuous evolution that shifts with every student story. She highlighted their commitment to the International ACAC community and their impact at ACS International Schools in the UK. While the journey began in 2013, the representative was quick to share the credit, stating that the award belongs equally to the #UCOrangeTeam. They emphasized that the recognition reflects a collaborative culture where students remain at the center of every decision and where the trust of families is held as both a responsibility and a privilege. The key takeaway was a call to action for the entire educator community to continue growing alongside the shifting needs of students.



Excellence in counselling endeavours to bring neutrality, research, and structure to what can otherwise be a really confusing journey for a young person. Delving into human conscientiousness as a guiding principle for all my interactions with high school and college students, with trust and shared growth as central to building foundations in this process.



**CHARUSHILLA
NARULA BAJPAI**

University
Connection

**Winner
Lifetime
Counselor Award**

A true mark of excellence is when an application makes you want to meet the student – that's how I felt reading about Charushilla!
- Awards Judge

Proven innovator, ecosystem builder, and trusted partner with strong credibility among families and institutions.
- Awards Interviewer



UPCOMING EVENTS

Frankenstein Sustainability Debate
on Planetary Governance
in the Age of AI



Startup Summer School '26
NMIMS



AI Scholars Live Online
Inspirit AI



Summer Patent School
at Shoolini University





Check your Orange Quotient (OQ)

The Campus Confession Booth



Welcome to the Campus Confession Booth.

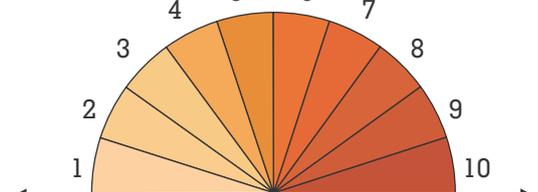
If campuses could talk, they'd brag a little, debate a lot, and definitely drop hints about who they are. Each riddle below is a university introducing itself.

Decode the clues and guess the institution behind the personality. Let's see how sharp your university radar really is.

- Q1.** If universities had personalities, I'd be the one who reads world politics for fun, questions everything, and still finds time for late-night canteen gossip. Named after India's first PM, who am I?
- Q2.** Not in a big city, but impossible to ignore. Presidents studied here, Nobel Prizes practically visit often, and the guy behind $E = mc^2$ once roamed nearby with legendary hair. Who am I?
- Q3.** More than a campus, I'm a collective legacy. From Bombay to Kanpur to Madras, I've built a reputation for turning relentless problem-solvers into world-class innovators. Who am I?
- Q4.** Kings studied here, prime ministers emerged from here, and a certain Isaac Newton once turned a falling apple into a law of the universe. Historic, elite, and unmistakably British. Who am I?
- Q5.** Born from a philanthropic vision rather than profit, I am an Indian university that measures success not in packages but in impact. Backed by a powerful foundation, I prepare students to solve real problems in education, development, and public systems. Who am I?
- Q6.** Think canals instead of quads, bicycles instead of buses, and lecture halls older than many nations. Founded in 1575 as a reward for resilience, I'm the oldest university in the Netherlands, established by William I, Prince of Orange, and I'm famous for my history, law, and social science faculties. Who am I?
- Q7.** From Indore to Rohtak and beyond, I open my doors through the fiercely competitive IPMAT exam for those ready to dive into management straight after school. Here, leadership is trained early, and placement season feels like the grand finale of corporate India. Who am I?
- Q8.** Founded in 1701, I've perfected the art of secret societies, formal dinners, and songs that have been sung for generations. History here runs deep, traditions run deeper, and even the mascot has a legacy. When your bulldog is practically campus royalty, you know you're somewhere special. Who am I?
- Q9.** Lawyer, designer, manager, media pro – my students come in many forms. Born to welcome students from across India and around the world, I turned Pune into a hub of youthful energy, professional degrees, and legendary college festivals. Who am I?
- Q10.** From a modest beginning in 1905 as a medical school serving my community, to becoming one of Asia's top-ranked universities. I sit in a city that's small in size but massive in ambition and global outlook, in the heart of Singapore. Who am I?

The Orange Meter

- Answers**
1. Jawaharlal Nehru University
 2. Princeton University
 3. Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)
 4. University of Cambridge
 5. Azim Premji University
 6. Leiden University
 7. Indian Institute of Management
 8. Yale University
 9. Symbolists International University
 10. National University of Singapore





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We are proud to be connected with a diverse network of individuals and organizations that resonate with our mission of empowering career choices one student at a time. We welcome and value insights from students, parents, partners, and educators on a wide range of topics and issues, and look forward to sharing their perspectives.

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