



## Parenting an International College Student



Parenting an international college student presents the challenge of supporting your student's development and independence from a distance. In addition to some of the more common challenges that students experience when living away from home, your student may experience additional adjustments to U.S. culture, English language difficulties, different academic expectations, loneliness, and issues with travel or study documents. You may have a comprehensive understanding of the U.S. educational system and know how best to support your student or you might find that much of what your student is experiencing is new to you. **The two most important steps that your student can take are:**

**1.** Gain a comprehensive understanding about the admission and acceptance steps and requirements through the Office of International Admissions at Berklee.

**website:** <http://www.berklee.edu/admissions/international/default.html>

**2.** Connect with International Advising at Berklee's Counseling and Advising Center to gain assistance and recommendations specific to you. **website:** <http://www.berklee.edu/counseling/internationaladvising.html>

**Did You Know?** 20% of the degree-seeking students at Berklee College of Music are international and they are from as many as 80 different countries.

### Consider These Parenting Tips:

**Think together and identify other resources**, outside of what the college provides, that might serve to support your student's specific adjustment needs -- connecting with a cultural or religious community, accessing preferred foods, arranging to have a mentor who has already been successfully living in the U.S. etc.;

**Use video email or Skype to communicate** -- being able to see each other may give you a better sense about how your student is doing;

**Learn about the various campus offices and how each can benefit your student** -- then let your student know how smart he or she is to access resources and/or administrators to gain assistance, etc.;

**Encourage your student to connect with other international students** -- especially students further along in their studies that have successfully adjusted;

**Don't think "solve"** -- but if and when your student reaches out to you to be involved offer to partner to brainstorm options and possible next steps -- resist fixing the situation;

**Share positive feedback** when you notice that your student makes good decisions, communicates effectively, takes initiative, and talks with you about something that is difficult to share;

**Reinforce your student's adventurous nature** -- chances are that he or she came to Berklee College of Music because he or she saw it as a place of opportunity, desired excellence in education, and wanted to experience new situations, cultures and people;

**Help your student to think of things he or she might enjoy doing to reduce stress** -- Boston has many cultural and entertainment offerings. Additionally, Berklee offers a range of health and wellness programs, opportunities to participate in sports, student-run enterprises, etc.