



**International
Students Inc.**

*International Women's
Connection Manual*



ISI International Women's Connection Manual

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ISI's Mission Statement: ISI exists to share Christ's love with international students and to equip them for effective service in cooperation with the local church and others.

International Women's Connection (IWC) Vision: Reaching international women for Christ through relationship, service, networking, small groups, friendship evangelism, and discipleship.

Target group: International women temporarily residing in the US (NOT women who are permanently residing in the US, although they would never be discouraged from attending).

Reaching International Women



Why develop a separate International Women's Connection Ministry?

They're Available: In most cases, women who are accompanying their husbands to the US for study or other opportunities have much more free time and are more available for a variety of activities, especially during weekday hours while their children are in school.

They're Accessible: International women accompanying their husbands are often highly-educated, very intelligent women who have put their careers or education on hold while their husbands complete their goals. At times, their English is not at an acceptable proficiency level for them to work in their field or further their education while they are here, nor can they obtain a visa allowing them to work or study. In addition, they may have children and/or other circumstances which keep them fairly homebound during their stay in the States. As a result, international women don't have the time-consuming commitments their husbands do and are looking for opportunities to get involved with Americans or others while they are here in order to fill the void resulting from leaving much of their lives behind them in their own culture.

They Need Social Interaction: It is no secret that, in general, women are much more social creatures than men. With their husbands' commitments to long hours of classes, study, or research and their family and friends so far away, it is difficult for international women to get this very important need met in their lives, especially in a new country and strange culture.



They Face Isolation: Far from family or friends and with their husbands away so much of the time, international women find themselves feeling very isolated. That isolation is only enhanced by the fact that few of them speak English with any degree of proficiency and that comprehension is also quite a challenge. In addition, it is the husband who usually uses the family's car, leaving his spouse dependent on city transportation or rides from others. Even if a wife does have access to a car, it will usually be a while before she is qualified to obtain a driver's license. So especially early on in their US stay, when they know very few people (if any), the lack of transportation can often exacerbate international women's isolation and loneliness.

They're Responsive: Experience has shown that women (especially international women) are initially more responsive when approached by Americans to get acquainted and possibly develop a friendship in time.

They're the Key to Reaching the Family: The woman is the heart of the family. No one will debate the importance of both the mother and father's roles in the family, but it is the woman whose influence greatly shapes the lives and destinies of her children and even that of her husband. Her influence is profound. What family would not notice the changed life of the woman in their home—of the message that changed her life?

“If Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!!”

International Women's Connection Leader



It is important that this person recognizes her role as a leader, sees it as God's call (for however long He may keep her there), and that she takes her responsibility seriously. What is that responsibility? It is to initiate, develop, and lead a ministry to international women in order to share the love and life of Christ.



The leader of the IWC reports to the person responsible for ISI's ministry in their city.

Characteristics of an IWC Leader:

Demonstrates a Strong Walk with the Lord—It is imperative that the IWC leader spends time on a regular basis with the Lord and feels strongly (hopefully having this confirmed by other trustworthy believers) that God has called and gifted her for this ministry at this time. An IWC leader will demonstrate the following characteristics:



Initiates—While there will be training and equipping for this role, with resources and tools offered for those getting started, there is also a great deal of freedom in this ministry to tailor the IWC to meet the needs of the women in each particular city. So, though there will be ongoing support as to the leaders of each individual IWC, each leader will need to take the initiative in a variety of areas in order to give their ministry the best chance of success.

Leads—The IWC leader does not need to be an outstanding public speaker or even a good speaker. She doesn't have to be highly administrative or organized. However, she does have to have a heart for international women, know she has been called by God to serve Him in this way, and be willing to depend on and trust Him to guide her in this process. Along with that, it is important that she not see this as “her” ministry, but that she views herself as simply a very valuable part of a team that God has chosen to bring international women to Himself. She should recognize that she cannot do it alone. In addition to recognizing the value of a team, an IWC leader should recognize that a team working together will contribute to a more successful ministry overall.

Delegates—This is critical. Christ has equipped His Body with all the gifts necessary to do the work He's called us to do and part of the joy of serving Him is seeing how He uses all those gifts

through a variety of people to get the job done and bless others in the process. Don't deprive yourself or others of that joy.

Mobilizes Others—This goes along with delegation. Before you can delegate, it's important to have a team with whom to work. This doesn't require a lot of recruiting but it does require laying a foundation of prayer, asking God to bring those women to you (or you to those women), and then enthusiastically sharing the vision God has given you with them. Remember, as an IWC leader you're not recruiting them for a job, you're offering them an opportunity to join God where He is working in the lives of international women with the prospect of literally winning the world for Christ as a result.

Relates Well—It is highly unlikely that a leader who is not relational will enjoy, or succeed, in a ministry like this. Everything about it is relational, from developing the team to meeting with the international women. The ultimate goal of this ministry is to engage with these women in such a way that trust is earned and opportunities are created to share the love of Christ in a non-threatening, non-coercive manner. This won't happen without relationships.

Networks Well with People/Organizations—There are many people and organizations out there who are not necessarily affiliated with ISI who would make a valuable contribution to the IWC (e.g. nurses who could come to speak to the women regarding women's health issues, successful businesswomen sharing effective strategies, or opportunities to improve English competency).

Willing to persevere—While working with international women can be very rewarding and lots of fun, there will be times when discouragement may set in if you allow it. Verbal communication with some women may be challenging and with others it may not even be possible for a while. In those cases, you'll do a lot of smiling and gesturing.

Envisions Growth and Manages it—While the leader will have ultimate responsibility for this, it would be best served by a team. Input from a variety of people who are involved on a daily basis with this ministry will likely contribute much toward growing the ministry in the most effective way possible. It would also be beneficial to talk with others who have been involved in growing and managing other ministries successfully in order to glean from them what would be applicable for the IWC.



Locating International Women in the Community

One of the most important tasks of the leadership team will be to locate core groups of international women temporarily residing in the US. Some suggested sources are listed below:

- College or university campuses (primary source) or married housing areas
- Military bases
- Faculty wives
- Exchange programs (at the university level)
- Businesses (where the husband might be working on a temporary, contract basis)

- Ethnic markets
- ESL classes

Getting Started

Form a prayer team. (This is crucial.) As it says in the Psalm 127:1, “Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain” (NIV). Within the IWC team all have a role to play in forming a prayer team, but the leader is encouraged to extend the invitation to prayer intercessors outside of the team who can be available to pray while the meetings are taking place.



Recruit a like-minded leadership team with a variety of gifts such as:

- **Administrator**—maintains the IWC database and communicates messages regarding meeting dates, times, etc.
- **Hospitality coordinator**—responsible for coordinating activities that promote a sense of warmth and acceptance for international women.
- **Nurturer**—one who does specific things to make the women feel cared for individually, such as sending a birthday card or occasional note of encouragement.
- **Networker**—this should be someone who has lived in the community for a while and has connections (or knows how to connect) with others willing to contribute in some way related to their occupation/service or gifting.
- **ESL (English as a Second Language) Instructor**—or someone with other ESL-related experience, to lead a group in conversational English or provide actual ESL instruction.



Recruit like-minded, supportive churches (i.e. missions-minded churches with a strong belief in the power of prayer). It is also important that church members with whom you work are culturally sensitive, recognizing, for instance, that should the IWC meet in their church for their regular meetings they may be hosting Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus or atheists and respond accordingly with grace and kindness to those who may never before have walked through the doors of a church. This is also true for any childcare workers who may be caring for the children of international women.

Train volunteers. Training can be provided by the ISI training staff or by the IWC Leader herself, once she has been trained.

Determine key methods of and locations for promotion and advertising of the IWC. This is limited only by the creativity of the team. Methods used in the past include flyers passed out at various locations or posted on bulletin boards where international women are known to live or frequent. Flyers can also be given to international men to pass on to their wives. This is probably best done through the International Student Office on the campus, an ISI staff person, or through the Human Resources department at local businesses known to hire internationals. Ads can also be placed in campus newspapers. Often a church will allow announcements to be made during the church service encouraging the congregation to invite international neighbors or wives of co-workers to the local meetings. If announcements cannot be made in church services, then perhaps they can be made in small groups or women’s Bible studies. However, experience has shown

that word of mouth is the best tool since trust is an issue for many international women, especially those new to this country. Therefore, if you start with just a couple of women for a while, do not be discouraged. Internationals have amazing ways of networking with other internationals and if they feel comfortable and are enjoying their time at the IWC, it won't be long before they tell others about it and the group will begin to grow.

Invite women to an initial meeting. Determine the date, time, and place of an initial meeting and extend an invitation.

Initiate a regular group meeting time and place with international women for the purpose of meeting new women and building relationships as well as building and gaining trust with American women. Determine the needs of the women who participate. This is best done through a written or verbal questionnaire or a combination of both.

Plan programs and activities that meet those needs (remember to provide for the needs of the children also). Keep in mind that one of the greatest needs for the majority of international women is interaction with other women. Try to provide interaction geared at a variety of levels of English competency. There is no need to provide extravagant programs. Lots of conversation, especially with opportunities to talk about themselves, their family and their home will bring them a great deal of joy. Many also enjoy engaging in activities that are fun and interactive.



Continue recruiting new international women and then new volunteers as the group grows.

The key to a long-lasting, effective ministry is giving volunteers ownership!

Service Ideas

Conversational English—This works best when offered as a separate activity apart from the regular IWC meetings.

ESL (English as a Second Language) Class—Certificates provided at the end of these classes are greatly appreciated by some international women. Certificate forms can be acquired on the internet or purchased inexpensively at office supply stores. This allows a way of acknowledging that they attended and passed a basic, intermediate, or advanced level course. An ESL course can also help many of these women get better jobs when they return home—especially if their English has actually improved!

Shopping—lots of options here!

Cooking Classes—International women love learning how to cook American foods. One of the favorites in the past has been cooking a holiday meal, such as Thanksgiving dinner, complete with pumpkin pie. They also enjoy teaching Americans how to prepare their national foods.



Sightseeing—Visiting area attractions within a community is not only entertaining and relational, but will also help increase international women’s familiarity and comfort in their new environs.

Tours with a purpose—provide tours to places of interest such as:

- Driver’s license office
- Medical facilities
- Wal-Mart or similar stores
- Grocery stores
- Malls
- Recreational Areas
- Campus



Airport pickup—This is also a tremendous way of supporting the ISI city ministry in your local area and can be a great way to initiate a relationship with newly-arriving international women and their families.

Insurance info (health)—When applicable, international women may need to be directed to sources of information regarding health coverage or assistance in understanding existing medical coverage provided through their spouse’s school or employer.

Home visits—Hospitality is highly valued in most international cultures. It is often considered quite an honor when an American (especially a new friend) visits the home of an international.



Friendship Partners—These volunteers will need to be trained much like a Friendship Partner within ISI’s city ministries, but training will need to be adapted to the specific needs and opportunities presented when working with international women.

Safety presentation by police—Knowing how to protect one’s self and family in a variety of environments is crucial for international women in a new culture.

Community resources—Educational opportunities (e.g. women’s health issues)

Culture shock orientation—Helping international women (and thereby, their families) better assimilate and adapt to our culture will reduce their stress as they adjust to the US.

Professional partnerships—Providing professional international women the opportunities to meet with and learn from (and vice versa) US professionals is very valuable. For example:

- Medical professionals
- Business professionals
- Education professionals

Keys to Success

- **Prayer covering**—(*This has been mentioned previously but cannot be stressed too much.*) Intercession is crucial for the IWC.

- **Flexibility**—Time does not have the same importance in other cultures as it does in ours! Be aware that your meetings may not proceed by American time standards.
- **Observance of needs**—This will vary from city to city and from week to week within the same city.
- **Active listening**—Listening is no easy task at times with women who have learned English in their home country but have not spoken it with an American until coming here. Patience, Patience, Patience!!!
- **A strong volunteer base**—this, as well as, utilizing volunteers in their area of strongest gifting when possible is key.
- **Church involvement**—Encourage church members (including those on the missions committee) to visit the IWC meetings. They will be amazed at the “ministry to the world” happening right under their roof. Ask the pastor to allow periodic reports to the congregation regarding the exciting things happening at these meetings.
- **Teamwork!**
- **Ownership by the volunteers and international women**—Some IWC teams have successfully incorporated Christian international women into their leadership team. This is an excellent way to train them for leadership when they return to their countries and to gain better insight into how to minister more effectively to international women.



Challenges

-



Childcare—Meeting with and without childcare for the international children has pros and cons. Some international women do not feel comfortable leaving their children but may be inclined to do so over time, especially if their children are cared for nearby. However, due to differing child-rearing philosophies among the variety of cultures, the chances of conducting a meeting and accomplishing much of anything significant may be greatly reduced if childcare is not offered as an option to the women. When arranging for childcare, potential childcare workers should be made aware of the vital role they will play in the ministry to international women and that without them ministry can be greatly diminished.

- **Language barriers**
- **Other Groups**—Cults and other organizations may offer similar services to international women.
- **Transportation**—Part of the responsibility of the team and other volunteers will be to see that the international women needing it are provided transportation to and from the various meetings and activities or they may not be able to attend.

Volunteer Recruitment

ISI's staff are responsible for those coming into the ministry as volunteers: Ensure that they fill out the volunteer application, receive the proper training, and are encouraged and supported along the way.

Sources of volunteers:

- Women's ministries
- Small groups (Bible studies, Sunday School classes, cell groups)
- Existing Friendship Partner ministry leadership
- Recommendations
- Retired missionaries or others with cross-cultural experience

Methods of recruiting volunteers:

- Presentations to different Christian women's groups
- Pastoral support –i.e. announcements from the pulpit or at other church functions
- Church bulletins or websites
- Word of mouth
- Christian radio – public service announcements

Screening

- Application (see Appendix)
- Interview

Volunteer Training

- Women to Women/Friendship Partner Training
- Requirements/expectations for leadership team (see Appendix)
- On-the-job training



Recruitment of International Women

- Flyer (see Appendix)
- Develop a relationship with the International Student Office staff or Foreign Student Advisor (FSA)
- Get the word to the husbands to pass on to their wives
- Encourage church women to invite international women (and to bring the internationals with them to the meetings when possible)
- Word of mouth
- Orientation at schools (tap into existing orientation or offer to provide one)
- Ethnic places frequented by international women (e.g. specialty stores)
- Military bases
- Married university housing areas

Appendix

Appendix A: Statement of Faith

Appendix B: Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Appendix C: The ISI Approach to Ministry

Appendix D: Volunteer Application

Appendix E: Qualifications for IWC Ministry Team Members

Appendix F: Agenda examples/ideas for monthly meetings

Appendix G: Checklist for Starting an IWC

Appendix H: Sample Flyer

Appendix A

ISI's Statement of Faith

We believe in the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. By this is meant a miraculous guidance of the Holy Spirit in their original writing, extending to all parts of the Scripture equally, applying even to the choice of the words, so that the result is the very Word of God; the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Moreover, it is our conviction that God has exercised such singular care and providence through the ages in preserving the written Word, that the Scriptures as we now have them are in every essential particular as originally given, and contain all things necessary to salvation.

We believe in the one God revealed as existing in three equal Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in the Holy Spirit as a Divine Person, a personality as distinct as the Father and the Son.

We believe that as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, so death passed unto all people, for that all have sinned.

We believe in the death of Jesus Christ, as a true substitute, and that His death was a sufficient expiation for the guilt of all people. We believe in His bodily resurrection from the dead.

We believe that those who receive Christ by faith have a new life from God given to them.

We believe that people are justified by faith alone and are counted as righteous before God only by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ imputed to them.

We believe in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

We believe in the personal return of our Lord.

We believe it to be the supreme responsibility of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ to make His Gospel known to all people.

Appendix B

International Students, Inc.

ISI's Mission

International Students, Inc. exists to share Christ's love with international students and to equip them for effective service in cooperation with the local church and others.

ISI's Vision

To see every international student befriended, led to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and disciplined for His service.

ISI's Core Values

In everything we do, we will conduct ourselves in keeping with biblical principles through:

- *A Christ-centered approach to serving others*, applying biblical principles, standards, and practices as an organization and as individuals.
- *A student-centered ministry*, designing our ministry programs in response to the needs of international students and their families, treating every student with dignity, compassion, and sensitivity.
- *Full-cycle evangelism*, ministering to students so they move from a false knowledge of God to salvation in Christ, until finally they are equipped to reproduce the life of Christ in others.
- *A dependence on churches*, remaining committed to accomplishing our objectives through the mobilization of the people of God.
- *A national identity*, creating a ministry culture with local flexibility with which all ISI constituents can identify on a national basis through the use of common distinctives and operating procedures.

Appendix C

The ISI Approach to Ministry

ISI nationally has a code of ethics for working on campus. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of our concern here and agree to ISI's approach and ethical standards. We desire to have a respectful and cooperative relationship with the International Student Advisor's office. Supporting the International Student Advisor and even volunteering your services to assist him or her can help bridge the gaps of misunderstanding.

We must respect internationals and never pressure them. Be aware that internationals may not indicate directly to us that they have felt pressured; they may say it by never coming back to us. Below is a good list of guidelines adapted from material presented by Dr. Jack D. Burke, International Student Advisor at the University of Houston:

- ◆ Treat international students with dignity and respect, not as museum pieces or objects to be converted.
- ◆ Focus first on physical and emotional needs of students. Spiritual needs may not surface until mutual trust and respect are established.
- ◆ Students appreciate seeing the sights of the area and being invited to cultural events by Americans. Be cautious about inviting students only to church or other religious activities. Some students say "yes" to these invitations just to be polite. (Naturally, invitations to Christian internationals to attend church and Bible studies are very appropriate.)
- ◆ When inviting international students to any kind of Christian meeting or activity, be sure your invitation includes the name of the sponsoring organization and an explanation of the nature and purpose of the activity. No surprises!
- ◆ Do not pressure international students about becoming Christians. Internationals are often "turned off" by such encounters. Whatever religion they follow, internationals may be equally devout and may resent these obvious attempts to convert them. Even if they are not religious, you may be perceived as attacking their culture. Such attempts are usually counter-productive and will only serve to damage your and ISI's image and rapport with international students. It is best for religious discussions with internationals to grow out of natural situations.
- ◆ Be aware of and respond to the spiritual needs of Christian international students. Living thousands of miles away from home, they need the prayer support and fellowship of the Christian community.
- ◆ There is no substitute for tangible expressions of love and caring concern.
- ◆ Tread sensitively on issues where political or religious differences exist. Being critical of another's ideologies, either explicitly or implicitly, is not conducive to good relationships or to a loving witness.

Be a good listener to your international friends. We have much to learn. Besides, religious values are often caught, not just taught. Thus our approach is friendship evangelism, "earning the right to be heard." And always remember 1 Peter 3:15: *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."*

Appendix D

ISI International Women's Connection Volunteer Application Form

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Brief description of current walk with the Lord:

Church affiliation:

Provide two (2) personal references with phone numbers:

Why do you want to work with international women?

Appendix E

ISI International Women's Connection Ministry Team Qualifications

- Strong walk with the Lord
- Woman of prayer
- Awareness of spiritual battle within a cross-cultural context
- Flexibility
- Compassion
- Team Player
- Committed to regular attendance and promptness at meetings
- Agreement with ISI's statement of Faith and Code of Ethics
- Committed to required training
- Friendly
- Promotes unity within the ministry

I agree to serve within the context of this team for a one-year minimum term of service and affirm that I meet the above qualifications.

Volunteer

ISI Team Member

Appendix F

Suggestions for Group Meetings

The following is a list of ideas that were successfully implemented during an International Women's Connection meetings.

CRAFTS: This is limited only by the imagination of your collective group. However, following are some ideas that have worked well in the past.

HOT PLATE TILES

8"x8" or 8"x10" tile

Acrylic paint

Paint brushes



Pick a theme or allow the ladies to choose whatever they wish to paint using colors that match their kitchen or are to their liking.

You can use the time while the ladies are painting to engage them in fun conversation. Since this hot plate will be used in the kitchen, you could have them share what their favorite memory is related to the kitchen, their favorite food, or what food they miss about home. Many internationals are on a limited budget while in the States. Let them know that these hot plates make great, inexpensive gifts.



PAINTED POTTED PLANTS

Red clay pot and plate

Acrylic paint

Paint brushes

Potting soil

Pansies or other bright flowers that grow easily

This will take you back to your Sunday school days but the ladies loved it. If you do this late in the spring and don't meet during the summer, it could be a great reminder to them of their special times with the international women's group and encourage them to reconnect in the fall. It could also be a great reminder to them that they are not alone in this great big country of ours.

JOURNALING

Inexpensive journal

Pen

Copies of an example of a journal entry



For those of us who have done some journaling in the past, we know the tremendous benefits that can come as a result. Among other things it can be therapeutic, it can show us how much we've grown over a certain period of time, or it can remind us of special times and events that we may have forgotten. The same can be true for our international friends. Their time in the US can be one of the most difficult yet exciting and rewarding time in their lives. Often they won't have someone to share their experiences, pain or fears with as they're so far from family and friends. With a journal they can write many things down to help them process some of what they're going through, in addition to reminding them of all the things they'd like to share with loved ones when they return home.

HISTORY LESSONS ON MAJOR AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

Christian holidays and American celebrations (based on our Judeo-Christian values) provide an excellent opportunity to not only inform the women of our Christian heritage, but also to graciously weave in the truth of the Gospel as you share stories. It's often a good idea to give them equal time to share special holidays from their county/culture. At times, some excellent discussions can develop as a result of doing so.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Women love to talk and international women (for the most part) are no exception, especially when provided a safe and comfortable environment in which to do so. Talking to others about themselves, their families or their homeland goes a long way in helping to alleviate some of their loneliness and homesickness. Hearing others talk about similar things helps them to understand they are not alone in what they are experiencing. It can also be a great way to allow the leadership to better determine the physical, emotional, and even spiritual needs of the women without asking them directly. Speaking out loud in a small group of other international women allows them to practice their English in a non-threatening environment, something many of these women greatly appreciate.



The following guidelines will help to facilitate successful small group discussion;

- Considering that many of the women struggle with their English, each group's size should be limited to 4-5 women.
- Ask simple questions that can be responded to easily without creating a great deal of frustration (e.g. *"Tell us about one of your favorite childhood memories"* Or *"What do you miss most about your home country?"*). If you give them a couple of options regarding questions to which they can

respond to, the women can choose the one that's easiest and most comfortable for them to answer.

- Encourage everyone in the group to speak, even those women who speak English poorly, unless it's very clear they are too frightened to do so. It will make them feel more connected to the group.
- For those who struggle with their English, do what you can to help them. You don't want to use this time to teach English but if there are some willing to try to communicate and their English is proficient enough to say even a little, your encouragement will most likely be appreciated.
- Patience, patience, patience!

COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

Most internationals are proud of their country and love to be given opportunities to “show them off.” The IWC meeting is a perfect opportunity for them to do that. The women can share whatever they would like regarding their country, whether it's food, clothing, flowers, the government (highly unlikely), or a combination of them all. They can also;



- Bring their flag.
- Share some of their favorite food.
- Give a PowerPoint presentation sharing some of the highlights.
- Play some of their cultural music.
- Wear their national dress as they speak.

Often there are several women from the same country attending the meetings and it can be fun for them to work together.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD



The more the international women feel a part of your meetings, the more successful your ministry will be. Bringing their own food can contribute to that feeling of “ownership,” in addition to creating more of an “international flavor” for your meetings. Give them the option of bringing one of their favorite foods each time you meet.

Tell them they can bring the same thing every week or bring something different each time but always remind them it is not something they have to do. Experience has shown that when they have the time and the opportunity to fix something, they LOVE doing it. It also can be very meaningful to take some time prior to eating to ask the women to share a little about the dish they brought and what country they are from. Make this optional, of course.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Regular meetings with the international women provide a golden opportunity to help the women better adjust to our culture as well as provide important information that may improve or enhance their lives regardless of where they live. There are many Christians, professional and otherwise, within every community who can provide valuable information and/or services and would love to offer what they can to these women. (Of course, it doesn't have to be a Christian who comes and shares with the group. Many non-Christians can be invaluable in this role as well and in some cases only a non-Christian will meet the requirements of what you're seeking. However, keep in mind that the IWConnection meetings are ultimately a means to an end and that the ultimate objective is to share the love of Christ with them. So, if a Christian can make a presentation weaving into it truth that point the way to Christ, that is preferable.)



The following are examples of some presentations which may benefit the women:

- Nurses – address health concerns of both the women and their children
- Dieticians – discuss and instruct regarding healthy eating habits
- Police/firemen – address fire and safety issues
- Counselors – address relational issues within the family (this has been very popular in the past)
- Educators from local colleges and university – discuss classes available to help improve English and/or help with other needs the women may have. (Community colleges may be more likely to help provide in this area.)
- Local YMCA representative– discuss helpful services available for women and their children (e.g. swimming lessons, exercise rooms, day camps, etc.).
- Local transit representative – provide information as to how the mass transit system works in their city and how they can access it (Where applicable).
- Chamber of Commerce representative – provide information regarding what attractions and events are available to the international women and their families.

It is important to recognize that most people have little experience in speaking to internationals in a way that they are likely to be understood. Providing some insightful suggestions to the presenters might go a long way in seeing that their presentation is beneficial to the women and rewarding to them, thus making it a worthwhile time for all.

International Women’s Connection Lessons & Activities: *“Home is Where the Heart Is”*

Date	Topic	Main Point	Activity
9/13	The Entryway	A place to meet & greet friends and family as they enter your home	Small group questions getting to know one another better
10/11	Hallway	A place where we usually display pictures of family and friends. Talk about transition from home country to the US.	Pictures – scrapbooking, demo on collage and scrapbooking
11/8	Dining Room	Family traditions that happen around food, holidays, and Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving meal and share Thanksgiving traditions.
12/13	Living Room	Talk about Christmas traditions, other December holidays around the world, different ways of celebrating Christmas	Candle presentation with Christmas story We made a quilted Christmas ball
1/10	Exercise Room	New Year’s is a time for making new resolutions and goals. Questions about goals and growth in the New Year.	Decorate a flower pot/planted seeds – talk about growth, hope for the New Year
2/14	Family Room	Valentines, love, parenting classes	Craft about family game or activities to do as a family
3/14	Quiet Spot	Easter, “In my Father’s House there are many rooms” Talk about favorite books.	Share Gospel through the Easter story
4/11	Garden	Spring Ideas	?
5/9	Kitchen	Traditions mothers have passed down to us, new traditions we have for our families, Mother’s Day	Cooking class

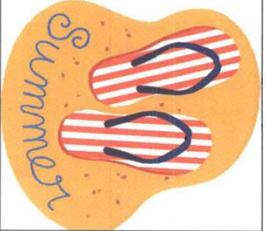
Developed by Connie Trautman & the Colorado Springs IWC Team

International Wives Club Lessons and Activities: 2007-2008

Seasons of Life

Date	Topic	Main Point	Activity
9/12/07		A NEW SEASON OF IWC Value of Relationships with Internationals	Small group questions for getting to know one another better
10/10/07		FALL SEASON God's beautiful creation	Park Outing Speaker/demonstration about Aspen leaves/trees Children's craft with leaves
11/14/07		HOLIDAY SEASON American Culture – Foundation - God	Thanksgiving meal Share Thanksgiving traditions (Internationals provided the food this year)
12/12/07		OUR FAVORITE SEASON – JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON The Real Meaning of Christmas – Jesus Sharing our Gifts with Others	Christmas Gathering Clip from <i>The Nativity</i> movie Leader talked about Jesus as the Light Craft – Christmas Glass Plate Ornament Exchange (Take it Away – like White Elephant game) Giving to the Food Shelf

1/09/08		<p>THE NEW YEAR Starting the New Year out with goals</p>	<p>Presenter – Clean & Organize Your Home Clutter Killers – Lisa Ruhnow</p>
2/13/08		<p>LOVE Love is from God</p>	<p>Valentine's Program Demonstrator – Stamping Greeting Cards "Love" verses on table to use in making greeting cards Ruth Myers-book <i>Perfect Love & The Satisfied Heart</i></p>
3/12/08		<p>Winds of change: time of reflection, transition (winter to spring) Easter time of redemption</p>	<p>Windchime made with old silverware/beads/washers</p>
4/09/08		<p>"bloom where you are planted" How have they put down roots here, how have they bloomed here?</p>	<p>Flower arranging</p>

5/14/08		<p>Treading on familiar ground, taking a new path Traditions mothers have passed down to us, new traditions we have for our families, Mother's Day</p>	<p>Cooking class</p>
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Classes are automatically cancelled if Academy District 20 classes are cancelled or delayed due to weather.
 Listen to the radio or TV if in doubt.

FOOD PREPARATION

FRUITS: Have you ever walked into an ethnic supermarket and wondered what all those strange looking fruits were? When are they ripe? How do you eat them? The international women involved in your ministry have the same questions when they walk into our American supermarkets. Buy one of each type of a variety of fruits available here and show the ladies how they are prepared and eaten. If they are familiar with a fruit, encourage them to share how they prepare/eat them. (It's great to pick up a few fruits available in an ethnic market so your volunteers can have a new experience too.) It is great fun sampling all the fruits and a great way to motivate conversation. There are all kinds of fruit salads that can be made as well. Another idea is to pick just one fruit and share with the group all the ways you can eat or cook with it.

For example:



FUN WITH APPLES

From caramel apples, to apple crisp, to good old fashioned American apple pie, pick and choose things made from apples. Here is a recipe to get you started.

APPLE CRISP

5 cups peeled sliced apples
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup light brown sugar
¾ cup sifted flour
½ cup butter or margarine

Arrange apple slices in greased 2-quart casserole dish.
In a separate bowl, mix all the dry ingredients. Then using a pastry blender, add butter and mix until crumbly. Spread mixture over the apples. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees until apples are tender and top is lightly browned (Approx. 1 hr.).

Now while your item is baking, you have a good opportunity for discussion or sitting and visiting with all the ladies. Remember when planning your event to allow plenty of time for cooking and eating no matter what you choose to make.

VEGATABLES: International women may have questions on how to cook with all the unfamiliar vegetables they see at the supermarket. As with fruit, pick a group of vegetables with which to experiment, like squash or salad ingredients. You may want to choose just one vegetable at a time to work with initially.

For example:



EVERYTHING POTATO

From mashed potatoes, to scalloped potatoes, to fried potatoes, to all the ways of garnishing a baked potato, it is all up to you. You'll want to choose several different ways to cook and prepare potatoes to make it more interesting. You can keep it simple or get as fancy as your cooking skills allow. Give the international women plenty of time to share how they may cook potatoes too. Remember it is not all about entertaining or leading as it is about sharing and making memories. So allow plenty of time for talking while your food is cooking.

BEVERAGES: There are many different things to drink in America that may be unfamiliar to women from other cultures. Simple, inexpensive, and fun to make/drink—and the preparation time for this activity is short. You will want to choose hot drinks in the winter and cold drinks in the summer.

For example:



SOME LIKE IT HOT

Hot chocolate, hot apple cider, hot spiced tea... just to name a few of the many drinks that are made and enjoyed by Americans. For recipes, ask women in your church or neighborhood, as well as your friends. Everyone has their favorite hot drink for the chilly days of winter.



SOME LIKE COLD

From fruit punch, to milkshakes, to root beer floats, to fruit smoothies, there are a great variety of cold drinks to share with your group. Make enough so everyone has a small (2 to 3 oz.) sample to taste. You may choose to limit your drink choice to one selection such as drinks made with fruit or drinks made with ice cream. Allow the women time to share about their favorite drinks as well.

SPECIALITIES:

JIGGLE WITH JELL-O

With a few boxes of Jell-o and some fruit, this will become one of your favorites to share with your international women and are great fun for the kids too. Try orange Jell-o with mandarin oranges, green apple Jell-o with fresh sliced apples, strawberry Jell-o with fresh strawberries, you get the idea. Mix the Jell-o using crushed ice instead of cold water and that will speed up the set time, even Jello “jigglers” can be made in less than an hour if put in the freezer to set up. Use metal cookie cutters to cut out different shapes by dipping them in some hot tap water to cut a smooth shape.

SUPER SALADS

With so many salads from pasta salad to fruit salad, Jell-o salad to three-bean salad, try a few or try several. They are fun to make and fun to eat. With lots of color, these are attractive to serve with every meal. Because of the expense of the ingredients, you may want to ask for a small donation of a couple of dollars per person.



CHEESY CHEESE

Cheese is an ingredient Americans take for granted. Asian cultures especially don't use a much cheese in their diet. Why not have a cheese tasting party? Or think of those things you make with

cheese and choose several to make with the women. For example: macaroni and cheese, grilled cheese sandwiches, cottage cheese salad, pizza, fondue, etc.

SANDWICHES GALORE



Nothing beats a good old fashioned peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch. What better way to share a little bit of American culture than by sharing favorites such as BLT's, egg salad or tuna salad sandwiches, hotdogs, hamburgers, hoagies and more. Choose a variety and cut them in small bite-sized pieces so everyone can sample them.

COOKING CORNER:

Individual participation is most important. Divide your class into manageable 4 or 5 person groups (with an American in each group) and have each group make something different. One person can read the recipe, one chop or prepare the raw ingredients, one to mix ingredients etc. so all have an opportunity to participate. Always make plenty so the women may take a sample home to their spouses and family. Have some blank recipe cards and pens available for the women to copy down the recipes in their own language. You may want to provide a conversion chart for measurements from ounces to kilograms, Fahrenheit to Celsius, etc. These are readily available online by searching Google or other search engine.

BREADS: There are many kinds of breads that are favorites in an American home. We take it for granted the ready-made loaves of bread available at the local grocery store but there are many other bread items that we make and consume as well. Granted most of us are used to those boxed mixes that make our lives simple and easy but international women may need to know such quick ways to shorten their time in the kitchen.

For example:

BISCUITS WITH A CAPITAL B

This quick and easy item is just the tasty morsel to start your cooking class with. There are many ways to dress up biscuits using honey, jam, gravy, or melted cheese. If you have ever wondered how they make those "Cheddar Bay Biscuits" at Red Lobster restaurants, you can find the recipe of copycat.com. Making biscuits from scratch instead of using a boxed mix, will allow the women the opportunity to duplicate the recipe in their own culture when they return to their home country.

QUICK BREADS



These breads are those that can be made without yeast so they are quick to mix and get into the oven, but be aware most take an hour to bake, so watch your time. You can choose small loaf

pans or cupcake tins to help reduce the baking time. There are many varieties from which to choose, whether apple nut bread, banana bread, zucchini bread, pumpkin bread, cranberry nut bread, or blueberry bread.

P IS FOR PANCAKES

Made from scratch or from a boxed mix, you can have lots of fun here. You can even demonstrate your artistic talents by making pancakes in different shapes as you pour the batter on the grill to cook. Of course, the toppings on your pancakes are what make them taste even better. Bring out the syrup and jam and whatever else you are used to serving and enjoy.

DESSERTS: Most internationals will learn quickly about America's sweet tooth. Thought we often do not realize it, our dessert recipes are very sweet compared to those from other cultures. Nevertheless, desserts are always the most fun to make and, if eaten in small amounts, the ladies are sure to enjoy tasting them.

CRAZY FOR COOKIES

I haven't met anyone who doesn't enjoy fresh baked cookies. There are unlimited possibilities here from brownies to s'mores, from lemon drops to chocolate chip cookies, from sugar cookies to macaroons—there's no way to list all the choices. You may choose to limit yourself to one kind of cookie like refrigerator cookies, rolled cookies, filled cookies, drop cookies, or bars.

For example:



BASKING IN BROWNIES

Fudge brownies are a favorite with internationals but not many have tasted blonde brownies, or buttermilk brownies, or even butterscotch brownies. These are great to make as there is always plenty for everyone to take home. Almost any cookbook will have a variety of recipes to select from.

CUCKOO FOR CAKES

You would have to be cuckoo not to try cakes. Pineapple Upside Down Cake is sure to surprise and please the women. Along with a good old fashioned chocolate cake, there is coffeecake, pound cake, angel food cake, and many more varieties. It is wise to avoid cakes requiring frosting as there is limited time for cooling a cake enough to frost it. You can, however, frost your chocolate cakes using chocolate bars or chocolate chips placed on the hot cake fresh from the oven to melt and then spread. Most international women do not have a taste for heavy frostings anyway.

PIES, PIES, AND MORE PIES



Who hasn't heard of "American Apple Pie"? You would be doing an injustice to your international women not to acquaint them with good old fashioned apple pie. This is the number one requested item on the list of foods internationals want to learn to prepare while in America (cheese cake comes in at number two). There are other fruit pies you can make as well so that there is a variety to sample. (In fact, you may want to incorporate a "field trip" with your women to pick local fruit you later use in your pies.) However, don't limit yourself to just fruit pies as there are meringue pies, cream pies, chiffon pies, and more. Mama says, "Don't forget the ice cream."

I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM, WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM

"You make your own ice cream?" On a hot day there is nothing better than homemade ice cream. Ask around and you will most likely find someone who has an ice cream machine. It is more fun to use the hand-cranked type so everyone, including the children, can have a turn at cranking the handle. Though nosier, electric machines may be used as well. Don't forget to include a few of the many toppings generally available with ice cream.

MAIN DISHES: Don't attempt fancy dishes that even you have a hard time making at home—the simpler, the better. There are lots of dishes out there that require little or no preparation beforehand. Make sure you allow enough time not only to prepare and mix the ingredients but for cooking and tasting too. It is wise to have something to drink with your dishes as well.

SOUP DU JOUR ANYONE



Soups are the number one food dish common to all cultures so take an opportunity to share soup recipes with your international friends. Choose from vegetable soups, meat soups, or cream soups. Be sure to enlist the help of everyone in making, preparing, and sharing favorite soup recipes.

PIZZA

With the many different toppings and types of pizza, this dish is sure to be a delight. You can use a ready-made crust, boxed mix, or make your own dough (make ahead before your group meeting). Make sure you have enough ingredients and that you offer a vegetarian pizza for those who do not eat various meats.

CASSEROLES

These mixed ingredient dishes are so colorful and tasty and most are very easy to make. Any recipe book has dozens of recipes to choose from, but you may want to try them out on your family first. Among those to choose from are vegetable casseroles such as green bean casserole or scalloped corn casserole or those made from meat/fish such as ham and potato casserole or tuna noodle casserole.

Appendix G

International Women's Connection

Checklist for starting an IWC ministry

___ **Form a prayer team**

- ___ Request that each prayer team member commit to one year
- ___ Set date for first prayer time and regular meeting dates thereafter
- ___ Develop list of specific things for which to pray (keep list current)

___ **Form leadership team** (minimum 3) *Request your prayer team to pray about this!*

- ___ Each recruit to fill out volunteer application
- ___ Complete interview process with applicant
- ___ Sign IWC Application Form (see Appendix D)

___ **Recruit church support**

- ___ Prayer
- ___ Childcare
- ___ Financial resources
- ___ Host meetings

___ **Meetings (elsewhere other than church)**

- ___ Determine place of meetings
- ___ Childcare
- ___ Financial resources

___ **Schedule training with ISI personnel for IWC leaders and volunteers**

___ **Determine primary locations and population of international women in your community (to assist you in determining best meeting location and potential group size).**

Resources to assist you in that:
Foreign Student Advisor
ISI Student Ministry leaders
ESL teachers throughout the city

___ **Plan initial IWC meeting**

- ___ Determine date, time, and location
- ___ Program (remember to focus on developing relationships through group interaction and small group discussions.)
- ___ Food (Int'l focus)
- ___ Confirm childcare
- ___ Determine budget and how expenses will be covered (ISI Ministry Reps are allowed to raise funds to cover these expenses)
- ___ Purchase supplies (Don't forget nametags)

- ___ Arrange to provide transportation if needed
- ___ Develop questionnaire as a tool to determine future programs and services

___ **Invite international women**

- ___ Create flyers to be distributed or placed in strategic places where international women frequent
- ___ Involve the Foreign Student Advisor if applicable
- ___ Women's groups/bible studies
- ___ Church bulletins
- ___ Ads in campus newspapers
- ___ Other: _____

___ **Develop supplemental meetings (i.e. cooking classes) and services (helpful "field trips") to be provided (base these on the needs determined through questionnaire as well as availability of staff and volunteers).**

Appendix H

Sample Flyer

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONNECTION

SERVING
LOVING
SUPPORTING
INTERNATIONALS



The **International Women's Connection** is made up of international women from different countries. American volunteers join together to serve the needs of the international women. We desire to make your stay here in the United States a happy, successful and enjoyable time. We want to help you make new friendships and learn about the American culture and lifestyle.

Services provided by International Women's Connection

- **Women's Wednesday Morning Class** ~ Starts September 10
9:00-11:30 a.m. Childcare provided! Please sign up by emailing Connie Trautman.
We meet at Woodmen Valley Chapel located at 477 Woodmen Road
Conversational English practice, homemaking demonstrations, crafts, lots of surprises
- **Conversational English Partners**
- **Cooking Demonstrations**
- **Parties, Picnics and Hiking**
- **Holiday Opportunities**
- **Bible Study**
- **Out to Lunch & Sightseeing Trips**
- **American Friendships**

Contact Connie Trautman at ctroutman425@msn.com to register and receive further information.

Contact Connie Trautman
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