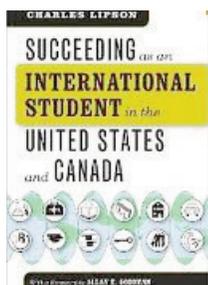




## Succeeding as an international student in the United States and Canada.

Charles Lipson (2008). Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press. ISBN-13:978-0-226-48479-2. \$17.00 pp. 379



Reviewed by  
Amrita Bhandari, *International Faith Theology Seminary (USA)*

*In Succeeding as an International Student in the United States and Canada*, the author, Charles Lipson, provides an informative guide to campus life for both undergraduate

and graduate foreign students who are interested in pursuing their studies for the first time in the institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada. His intention is that this book can serve as “a friendly, informative guide, one that helps you succeed in your classes, labs, and everyday activities” (p. xvi).

The book is organized into three parts with several chapters that focused on one or two issues that international students in the U.S. need to consider. Part 1 “Moving Here,” covers the first three chapters discussing how international students come to the U.S. or Canada, what they should bring with them, which things they will need to purchase shortly after arrival, and who they should meet just after arrival.

Chapters 1 and 2 suggest a list of things that international students need to know, such as tips for preparing for visa interviews, packing carry-on bags and regular luggage, and bringing essential college documents, health records, passports, and traveler’s checks with them. Chapter 3 discusses the first ten things international students should do after they arrive in the U.S. or Canada, such as arranging housing, meeting with the international student advisor, getting college identification cards, setting up a bank account, obtaining phone service, and so on.

The next six chapters in Part 2, “Succeeding at Your University,” discuss the most important college issues. Improving English proficiency is the most important aspect for many international students if English is not their first language. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss faculty-student-staff relationships on campus and proficiency in the four essential skills of English language—listening, reading, writing, and speaking for academic success. Lipson writes, “Speak up, even if you speak with an accent.” (p. 32).

Chapter 6 explains the importance of creativity for students in U.S. and Canadian educational settings. Creativity includes expressing their own viewpoints in papers, class discussion, research, and learning the rules of academic dishonesty. Chapter 7 discusses opportunities for graduate international students to work as teaching assistants, research assistants, or graduate assistants, and their responsibilities in teaching course sections or assisting faculty with research in the university settings.

Chapter 8 deals with how students should avoid plagiarism, cheating, and improper work documentation while writing research papers. Academic honesty is a major concern for everyone at the university. This section also describes the expectations of faculty in a university setting. Chapter 9 describes the academic culture in higher education in the U.S. and Canada, discussing topics such as informality, faculty office hours, faculty-student relationships, showing up on time, academic ranks and hierarchy, study groups, individual creativity, same-sex relationships, diversity, and so on. This chapter helps international students understand how to deal with new academic environments.

Part 3, “Living in the United States and Canada,” includes 16 chapters. Each one deals with a specific issue, such as how to get an identification card, set up a bank account, find a doctor, use public transportation, work on and off campus, learn to drive a car, and deal with problems. The last section of the book includes a college glossary, acronyms, nicknames, holidays, and clothing sizes that are mostly used in the U.S. and Canada. For example, “adjunct professor” is the title given to those who are not regular faculty but hired to teach specific course; ABD stands for “all but dissertation.” The author also includes a table of U.S. and Canadian holidays, with brief explanations of how and when they are observed.

*Succeeding as an International Student* is a well-written and essential handbook of information for international students. Lipson provides very detailed practical advice to help students truly immerse themselves in their campuses and communities.

### About the Reviewer:

Amrita Bhandari is a graduate international student at International Faith Theological Seminary in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (M.Ed.) program. Her research is on English language anxiety among bilingual speakers in Asian countries. Her email: bhandari.amrita@gmail.com.



**Tibetan Mustang**  
From the top: *Buddha Amoghasiddhi, Mani Wall, Sheaves and Window, Tibetan Village, Tibetan Chortens*  
*Cave Temple Prayer Flags*. **Source:** Kenneth Parker with permission (kennethparker.com)

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The Office of International Programs  
*Arkansas State University*

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