2018

Ignite-ISM: Building an International Student Management Program to Improve Recruitment and Support Services

Hazim Naser Almomani
Gardner-Webb University

Recommended Citation

Consultancy Project
Executive Summary

Organization: Gardner-Webb University School of Education

Project Title: Ignite-ISM: Building an International Student Management
Program to Improve Recruitment and Support Services

Candidate: Hazim Naser Almomani

Consultancy Coach: Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton
DEOL Program Coordinator

Defense Date: November 6, 2018

Authorized by: Brian Cotton
Director of Executive Education

Amendment History

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1	02/18/2016	Initial version.
2	08/17/2017	Survey data collected.

Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Hazim Naser Almomani under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

_____   _____

Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton, Faculty Advisor   Date
Gardner-Webb University

_____   _____

Brian Cotton, Site Advisor   Date
Director of Executive Education

People, We have created you all male and female and have made you nations and tribes so that you would recognize each other. The most honorable among you in the sight of God is the most pious of you. God is All-knowing and All-aware. Verse (49:13) The Dwellings

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, thanks to God who has helped me to be in this place, at this time, and with these lovely people.

Words cannot appropriately describe the person who has helped me become what I am today. The person who spent his life increasing my foundation. The person whose soul still surrounds me. To you my first teacher, to you my first trainer, to you my wise friend, my beloved father.

I will not forget my lovely family who surrounded me with love and patience while I was away from them. In addition, I will not forget my teachers who taught me how to write and critically think.

I would love to say special thanks to my mother, the kindest person on the earth for keeping me in her prayers. Furthermore, it is always the right time to thank my brother Ashraf for his support to be what I am now.

I cannot forget my lovely wife Razan for her support and love and for being patient with my kids.

My warmest regards to the faculty members at Gardner-Webb University who have worked with me to make this happen, especially Dr. Gerald Neal, Dr. Steven Bingham, Dr. John Balls, Dr. Dale Lamb, Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton, Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, and Mr. Brian Cotton.

I am proud and honored to have all of you in my life.

Abstract

Ignite-ISM: Building an International Student Management Program to Improve Recruitment and Support Services. Almomani, Hazim Naser, 2018, Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University, Digital Commons/ Ignite-ISM (Ignite, International Student Management)/Valid and Good Information/Face Validity/Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)/ Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA)/Cost-Benefits Analysis (CBA)/ESL (English as a Second Language)/Marketing/Recruiting/Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The project aimed to discover an effective way to serve the international students who were already enrolled at a university in the southeastern United States and to provide a unique strategy for recruiting international students. In addition, this project aimed to improve online services as well as provide new services that could help international students in their engagement in the university community. This project is a map for a university to build a strong foundation in both marketing and serving incoming students. Ignite-ISM is a program that supports a new vision in the process of recruiting international students. The project was divided into three phases:
- ❑ Phase 1: Improving the existing services or creating new services.
- ❑ Phase 2: International marketing: What a university should do to attract international students.
- ❑ Phase 3: Evaluations: How the project can be improved.

The project used the existing data and the information that was collected in a special survey distributed to the international students who were already enrolled at a university in the southeastern United States. From this, I gathered data that could be used to build a marketing strategy for prospective students. One of the central outcomes of Ignite-ISM is a recommendation to build an ESL program at the university, especially in urban areas to serve as a new resource for recruiting international students who decide to continue their education. Furthermore, the project built a link between international students and the university as a tool for the marketing by using social media to monitor engagement of the students who are already enrolled.

Ignite-ISM is a way to make the international student population satisfied with being at the university. By creating satisfaction in the campus community through care, respect, and love, Ignite-ISM built a unique strategy to engage students with the university community.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose
It was not difficult to recognize the problem of the limited number of international students at this particular university. In this project, I investigated why there were a limited number of international students and what the university could do to attract more of them. Several reasons for this problem were found and alternative solutions were formulated. As an international student myself who has worked and studied at many universities in the United States, both private and public, I can understand perfectly what international students are seeking when they are studying abroad and what may attract them. The project will improve the quality of services that a university provides both on campus and online. Moreover, the project will create a map for a university to follow to build for the future. This will place the university on the successful path of better opportunities for international students by understanding and responding to their needs. Furthermore, the project had the prospect of attracting more international students and creating a pathway to create an additional revenue stream for the university.

1.2 Associated Documents
- Survey, Data collections.
- Milestones 1 – 10.
- Defense PowerPoint.
- SPSS analysis report.

1.3 Project Plan Maintenance
The project plan was updated and approved between the phases depending on the application process.

2 Project Scope

2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives

2.1.1 Objectives
- Building an International Student Program at a university in the southeastern United States for the purpose of improving recruitment and support services.
- Improving the quality of services both on campus and online using the university's website.
- Creating a better educational opportunity for international students by understanding their needs as well as building a map to develop future success.
- Supporting an additional financial resource for the university.

2.1.2 Success Criteria
The data collected through the surveys and the existing data were considered for improving the project and for measuring the success level. The intent of Ignite-ISM was to improve the existing services, which would be measured before and after applying this treatment.

After collecting the suggestions, the project is going to build a process which will evaluate the program and its intent by applying this formula,

$$OOOOOOOO$$
$$OOOOXOOOO$$

The O's are the semesters and X is the treatment (Ignite-ISM), so the evaluation process will answer the effectiveness of the project.

The process to deliver the project will be divided as follows:
- ❑ Phase 1: Improving the existing services or creating new services.
- ❑ Phase 2: International marketing: What a university should do to attract international students.
- ❑ Phase 3: Evaluations: How the project can be improved.

2.1.3 Risks

Risks	Recruiting	Campus
Description	The United States Visa process for students is in need of improvement.	The main campus is in need of infrastructure to accept many students.
Mitigation	Recruiting international students who are already on F1 visa by accepting them into our programs directly from other ESL institutions.	The satellite campus is a viable option for incoming students for ESL.

2.2 Outline of Student's Objectives

2.2.1 Objectives
In simple words, Ignite-ISM aims to develop the following:
1- Marketing.
2- Recruitment.
3- Services.

2.2.2 Success Criteria
The project aims to provide or improve the following:
- Provide <u>Good</u> and <u>Valid</u> information about the University on the website in multiple languages.
- Conditional admission.
- Provide the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International Language English Testing System (ILETS), and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) tests on campus.
- Ability to talk in multiple languages in the international office and the admissions office to contact prospective students overseas.
- Ability to pick up international students from airports.
- Forming an international committee among the faculty members.
- Establishing an ambassador for the students.
- Sharing with international students other international stories, pictures on the website.
- Engage students with events, parties, trips, etc.
- Shuttle service to Walmart, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), health department, etc.
- Health insurance for the international students and their families.
- Leisure activities.

2.2.3 Risks

Risks	Culture	Dorms
Description	The campus located in a little town somehow might be a problem for some international and national students for the limited resources in the town	The limited dorms at campus could be a problem
Mitigation	The required course for the first-year students should teach the new students how to acclimate to their new life.	Giving the students other options to live off campus

2.3 Definitive Scope Statement

Ignite-ISM aimed to create a link for the university to model a unique environment for international students by providing this formula (Almomani, 2018a).

Link is a person or a group and depends on the amount of the students. Their job is to create a unique environment for the students and make them happy (Almomani, 2018a). This will reflect positively on the three desired areas: marketing throughout social media, creating or improving campus services, and recruiting new students.

3   Deliverables

3.1   To Partnering Organization

Phases	Deliverables	Information Gathering/ Task delivered	Due Date
1	Internal Deliverables	Configuration Management	May 2016
	Improving Existing Services	Formal Presentation with The Vice President for Marketing and The Vice President of Enrollment Management	July 2017
	Marketing	Social Post (flyer)	December 2017
	Marketing, using the Chinese language	Connecting Chinese faculty with Chinese Office to recruit students	December 2017
	Improving Existing Services	Formal presentation with Vice President of Enrollment Management	May 2016, September 2017, December 2017, January 2018
	Improving the marketing through relations	Formal presentation with Assistant Vice President for Business Development and Partnerships	January 2018
	The Key Deliverable	A memorandum of understanding (MOU) With Chinese Partnership sent by Chinese office to the assistant Vice President for business development and partnerships	March 2018
2	External Deliverables, recruiting by using the student's language	Connecting prospective students with the university	December 2017 – May 2018
3	Assessment	Formative Assessments, Survey among students	May 2018 – September 2018
		Summative Assessments	October 2018

3.2   From Student
The students get the opportunity to share their ideas with the university through Ignite-ISM by interacting on the survey that was approved by the IRB.

4 Project Approach

4.1 Project Lifecycle Processes
After several presentations with the Vice President of Enrollment Management, the project was divided into three phrases:
- ❑ Phase 1: Improving the existing services or creating new services.
- ❑ Phase 2: International marketing: What the university should do to attract international students.
- ❑ Phase 3: Evaluations.

4.2 Project Management Processes
Ignite-ISM is an accumulated process that was reviewed each semester with the project advisor Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton and with the site supervisor Mr. Brian Cotton. In addition, each semester new milestones were added to the project to solve tiny issues and to do the formative assessments for the three desired work areas: marketing, services, and recruiting.

4.3 Project Support Processes
The project aims to provide new online services for the students. For this, data gathering is the main tool to decide which strategy to apply to the new services. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by the survey and the existing data that were provided by the Vice President of Enrollment Management. The desired information on the website for incoming students should be valid and accurate (Almomani, 2018b).

4.4 Organization

4.4.1 Project Team

Members of the team	Project Relations	Comments
Hazim Almomani	Project Coordinator	Doctoral Candidate
Dr. Gerald Neal	Project Advisor	January 2016-December 2016
Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton	Project Advisor	December 2016-December 2018
Mr. Brian Cotton	Site Advisor	Director of Executive Education

4.4.2 Mapping Between the university and Project Coordinator

Ignite-ISM played into two mapping areas:
1- Between the project coordinator and the organization as follows:

2- Ignite-ISM built connections with overseas education agencies to attract international students by connecting between the education agency and the organization as follows:

Education Agency

Education Agency

Education Agency

Ignite-ISM

The Assistant Vice President for Business Development and Partnerships

Education Agency
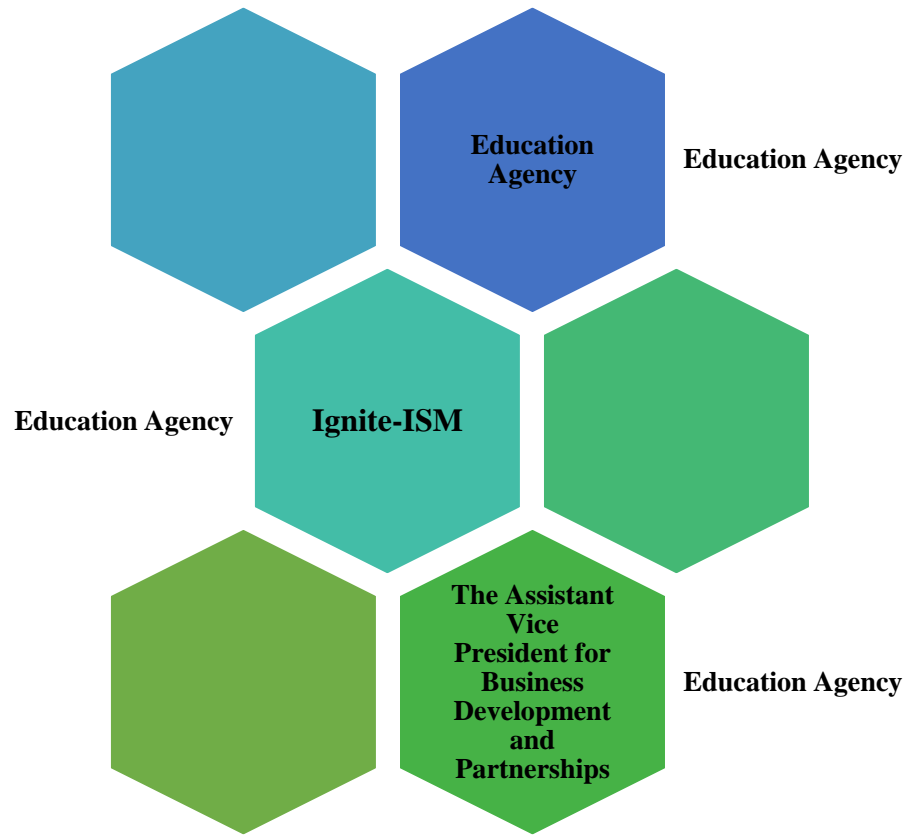
5   Communications Plan

Who needs information?	What information do they need?	Why do they need it?	When will they get it?	How they will get it?
Project coordinator Site advisor And project advisor	Survey results and SPSS analysis	To determine the services that should improve for students	October 2018	Online through Google forms
The Assistant Vice President for Business Development and Partnerships	MOU	To discuss it with the Provost.	May 2018	Email
Project coordinator	Flyer	Marketing through social media	January 2018	Meeting hard copy and email
Vice President of Enrollment Management	Ignite-ISM	Describing the idea	February 2016	Meeting, multiple presentations and emails

6   Work Plan

6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

Task	Tools	Process	Time	Goal	Comments
The Project Proposal	Existing Data Analysis	Multiple Formal Presentations	Vary	To touch the problem	
Marketing	Flyer	Using Social Media, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Facebook, etc.	Vary	Marketing the university to recruit students	Hold for FERPA regulations
Connecting the university with an agency overseas	A memorandum of understanding MOU	Email and phone calls	May 2018-July 2018	Recruiting international student from China, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand	Hold for infrastructure issues
Creating a mutual master's degree in leadership studies with abroad universities	Personal Connections with the faculty members	Vary due to the deference between the two universities	Year of 2018-2019	Exchange the students and the faculty members	Waiting for the curriculum from this university
Data Analysis	SPSS, Excel	Survey	May 2017-July 2018	Data Collections	The Institutional Review Board (IRB) was approved

6.2 Resources

Resources Types			
Primary	Existing Data Analysis	*Flyer*	*MOU*
Secondary	Personal Connections with the faculty members		
Tertiary	Survey		

7   Milestones

Milestone Number	Title	Forecast date
Milestone 1	Statement of Purpose	February 2016
Milestone 2	Develop SMART	June 2016
Milestone 3	Scope and Boundaries	July 2016
Milestone 4	Benefits	February 2017
Milestone 5	Risk Assessment	July 2017
Milestone 6	Assumption and Facts	August 2017
Milestone 7	Project Plan	October 2017
Milestone 8	Budget	February 2018
Milestone 9	Quality Assurance Plan	May 2018
Milestone 10	Performance	September 2018
Milestone 11	Final Product	October 2018

8   Metrics and Results

- Using the cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) in creating a mutual master's degree with other universities because some of the outcomes of Ignite-ISM have no monetary value to measure of effect.
- Using cost-benefits analysis (CBA) in the ESL program as the values are estimated and measured.

9 Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

9.1 Risks

Risk	Risk Description	Mitigation Plan	Contingency Plan	Impact	Likelihood of occurrence
Face Validity	Data collected among survey could be unmeasured what is supposed to be measured	Using existing data from many resources; quantitative and qualitative to have good and valid information	Creating many alternatives before making any decision	Hold to be fixed	High
Infrastructure	Limited dorms for prospective students	Off campus options for new students	No plan B for this problem; Ignite-ISM using formative assessments		Low

9.2 Constraints
1- Cultural issues.
2- Infrastructure issue.
3- Visa process.
4- FERPA regulations.

9.3 Assumptions
1- The project is a future map to help the university to determine student needs.
2- The project shows the services that need to be improved.
3- Each part of Ignite-ISM needs to be in a separate program.
4- As adaptive leadership one can learn and apply (Govindarajan, 2016), the university should start the organizational change by using leadership as a process (Kruse, 2013) toward the future success.
5- The accumulated process should be led by management not leadership process (Heifetz, 1998; Rice, 1965) and follow specific functions.

10 Financial Plan

- Estimated budget for 2018-2019 when applying the ESL program.[1]
  According to Glassdoor (2018), the average base pay for ESL teachers in urban areas is $52,383 annually.

Employees	Estimated Salaries	Total
International Student Recruiter	$52,400 (Glassdoor, 2018)	$52,400
ESL Teachers	$52,383 (Glassdoor, 2018)	$104,766[2]

- Estimated benefits for 2018-2019 when applying the ESL program:

Estimated International Students per semester[3]	Fall 2018 50 new students	Spring 2019 50 new students	Summer 2019 50 new students	Total for one year
Estimated Tuition[4] $6000 per semester	$300,000	$600,000	$900,000	$1,800,000
Room Rates[5]	$247,500	$495,000	$742,500	$1,485,000
Meal Plans[6]	$241,500	$483,000	$724,500	$1,449,000
Other Fees				
Total				$4,734,000

- Cost-Benefit Analysis

  Estimated cost benefits analysis for 1 year is shown in Diagram 1.

---

[1] It is much better to use the satellite campus for this program.

[2] We could start with one teacher.

[3] My suggestions to have five levels, two levels by semester and students can jump by passing an exam to the next level or students could repeat the level as well. So, students can finish in 1 year and do the TOEFL to meet the English proficiency for enrolling in the university.

[4] Must be competitive with other universities' tuition around this university.

[5] Must give flexibility for international students to move off campus after the first semester.

[6] Must give flexibility for international students to end the Meal Plan after the first semester.
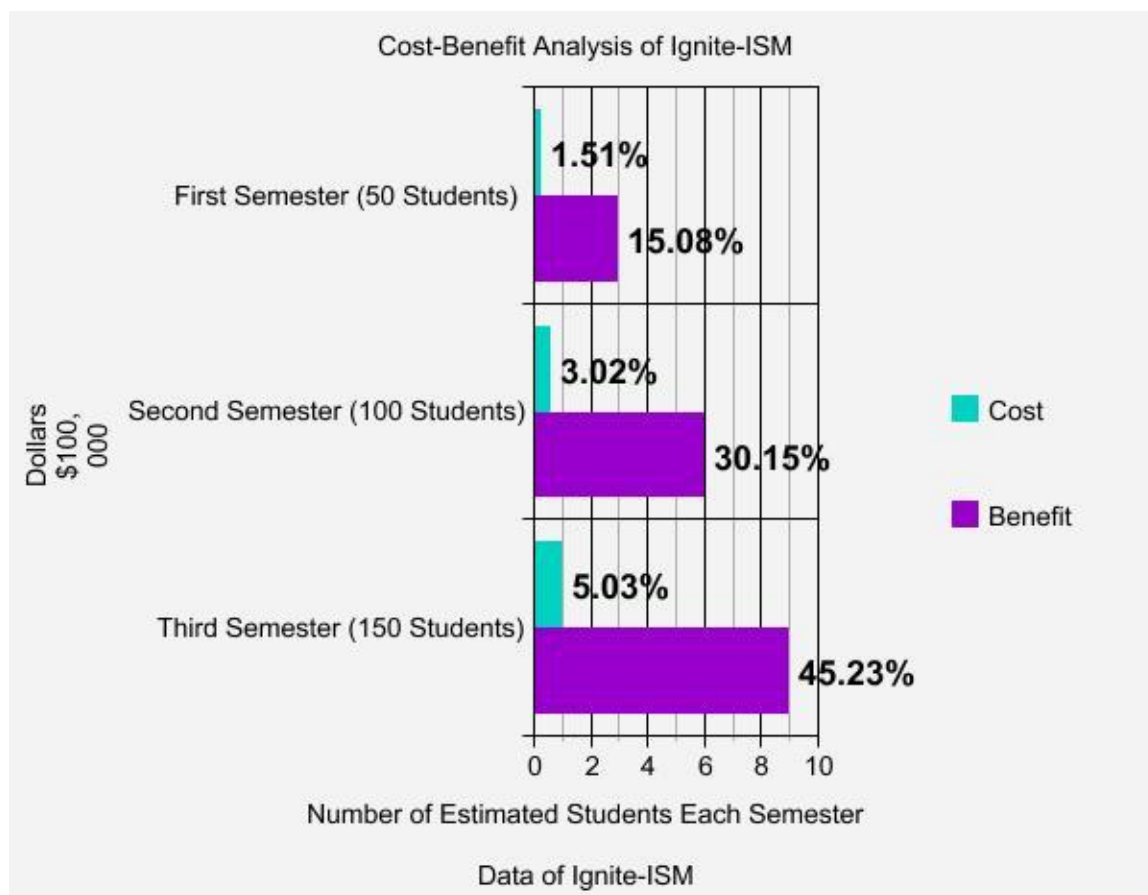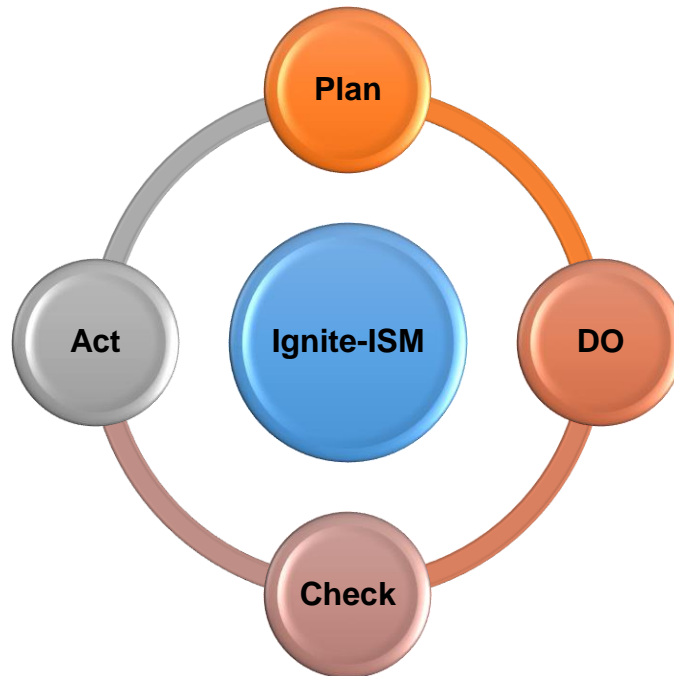
Diagram 1

11 Quality Assurance Plan

I used the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) process to build a unique quality assurance for the project, which could be valid to be implemented at any educational institution.

Plan:

There are many ideas that I could bring to the table as alternatives to the international student issue at the university: a limited number of students.

My project aimed to solve the limited number of international students to create a new source of income with a very low investment as inputs. So, the idea of Ignite-ISM is to maximize the outcomes of the university while keeping the inputs as they are at the least.

Ignite-ISM is the treatment for the evaluation process by the end of each phase of the three phases.[7]

Do:

The potential solution is the Ignite-ISM project as a whole or part of each level.
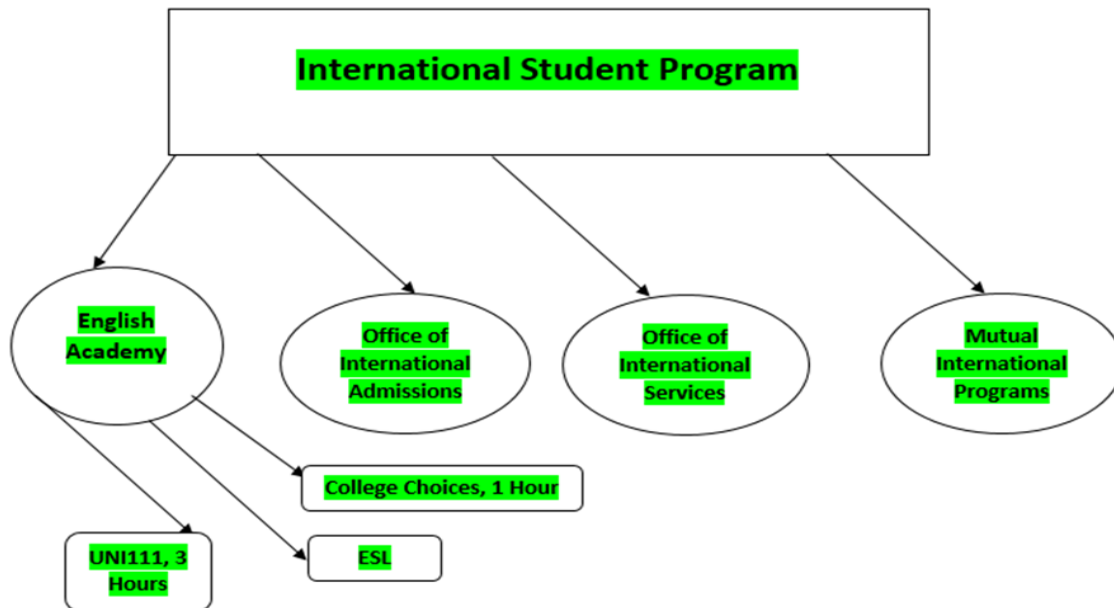
I can see the issues behind the accepting process of international students, all while I am working on agreements that are ready to be signed with an agency in China to start recruiting international students for the ESL.

The other part we can start over with is the mutual international program with a foreign university, which I am currently working on. This is a good start to build a unique program in a master's degree in organizational science or leadership studies. The exchange would be for students as well as professors.

Check:

While it is too early to check the results, I can see Ignite-ISM as a creative idea in identifying the problems that need to be fixed.

The good news in Ignite-ISM is that the project itself has the evaluation process as a tool of the inputs in the project itself, which has given the project the idea of generalizability.

---

[7] See 2.1.2 Success Criteria

In addition, Ignite-ISM is flexible. The university could apply one of the parts, as the current infrastructure could be a suitable environment for a good start. This is related to the idea of minimizing the inputs.

Act:

The implementation is important and easy when the university has valid and good information.

As a quality assurance plan, I can see that the survey given to international students is key to identifying the main problems. Because of this, Ignite-ISM could help decide which plan is easy to get what the project is looking for.

References

Almomani, H. (2018a). *It depends.* Amman. Retrieved from www.hazimalmomani.com

Almomani, H. (2018b). *The ideologism.* Amman. Retrieved from www.theideologism.com

Glassdoor. (2018, September 26). Retrieved from https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/charlotte-

      esl-teacher-salary-SRCH_IL.0,9_IM162_KO10,21.htm

Govindarajan, V. (2016, June 08). Adaptive leadership 101. *Leader to Leader*, 42-46.

      doi:10.1002/ltl.20244

Heifetz, R. A. (1998). *Leadership without easy answers.* Harvard University Press.

Kruse, K. (2013, April 9). What is leadership? *Forbes Magazine*. Retrieved from

      https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/#507aef1b5b90

Rice, A. (1965). *Learning for leadership: Interpersonal and intergroup relations.* Routledge.