

International Student Newsletter



December 2011/
January 2012 Edition

Dear International Student,

In this Christmas edition you will find:



Interview: Dr Caroline Selai introduces UCL's Cultural Consultation Service for Students and Staff



Careers: Are you **LinkedIn**?



Plagiarism: How to avoid it



Part time work: Have you got some spare time over Christmas?



Culture: Boxing day



Story: A family Christmas in the UK



UCL Students Union: Events and updates



Your contribution: Third Culture Society

Interview:

Dr Caroline Selai
is a Senior Lecturer in
Clinical Neuroscience

DEFINITIONS:

Inter-personal issues –
issues relating to the
interactions between
individuals

Cross-cultural issues –
issues arising across
different cultures

Intra-cultural issues –
issues from aspects within
cultures

TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT:

Dr Caroline Selai &
Dr Sushrut Jadhav
can be contacted at :
culture.consult@ucl.ac.uk

Dr Caroline Selai - Co-director of UCL's Cultural Consultation Service



Q: Can you please introduce the Cultural Consultation Service (CCS) to our students?

The Cultural Consultation Service was launched on 1st November 2011 to provide support for students and staff experiencing a challenge to their learning and/or teaching, which they think may be due, primarily, to an inter-cultural conflict. They can contact the CCS to discuss the issue with someone who has the expertise and experience to help.

Q: How did the idea of setting up the Cultural Consultation Service come about?

In addition to my position as an academic member of staff at UCL (researcher, teacher, supervisor), for the last 11 years I have had an additional role, helping staff and students at UCL who are experiencing inter-personal difficulties. The issues are usually complex, and I noticed that there was often an inter-cultural dimension.

I shared my experience with a UCL colleague Dr. Sushrut Jadhav, an academic, clinician and medical anthropologist, with expertise in cross-cultural issues, who has addressed these issues in the clinical work and his academic research in various settings throughout the world.

He was also aware of these issues experienced by staff and/or students at UCL. As our conversations and ideas evolved, we decided to set up the UCL Cultural Consultation Service (CCS) through which we could provide advice and support to students and staff.

Send them an email with your name, email address and a brief outline of the issue(s) you would like to discuss.

They will contact you within 5 working days to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

Confidentiality:

All enquiries and advice provided are strictly confidential.

Q: What kind of issues can you help with?

International students coming to study in the UK face a number of challenges as they try to adapt to a different culture and education system and forge professional relationships with university staff and personal relationships with peers. When embarking on their period of study here, they may experience a range of inter-personal, cross-cultural, and intra-cultural issues, sometimes with additional complexities e.g. conflicts relating to social class, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

We have the expertise to help with all of these types of experiences. We can also be consulted on issues arising from feeling isolated, feeling unable to “fit in” with the peer group, feeling demotivated and needing some extra help to understand the UK education system.



CCS Launch 1st November 2011

Q: How does the service work?

We will usually offer an initial one-hour meeting with the student to discuss their situation in detail, in an informal and friendly atmosphere. In our experience, any situation brought to us usually has a number of aspects. The possible interventions are therefore many and varied.

To give just one example: that of a student who is experiencing a cultural conflict with their supervisor. We can help them (i) share their experiences; (ii) explore their perception of the situation and consider other possible perspectives; (iii) reflect on what the other person might be experiencing, bearing in mind a number of inter-cultural considerations and perspectives; (iv) consider improvements and possible cultural outcomes i.e. in what ways could things be better; (v) reflect on what they might do next, and consider alternative actions including any barriers they may perceive to taking action; (vi) help prepare for one of a range of possible next steps e.g. provision of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to inter-cultural learning in preparation for meetings with their supervisor; and (vii) facilitate improving the cultural relationship with their supervisor. These are just some examples.

To book an appointment email: culture.consult@ucl.ac.uk

Careers:

[LinkedIn](#)

Is a business related social-networking site launched in 2003.

Reportedly there are more than 120 million users.

[LinkedIn](#) operates in more than 200 countries.

[LinkedIn](#)'s website is available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian, Russian, Turkish and Japanese.

Further information on what [LinkedIn](#) can do for students and recent graduates is available on the company's [student webpages](#).

Are you LinkedIn?

Last year over 40% of international students from the University of London found their job through their own personal networks. Now if you are moving into a new industry or looking for a job where you do not know anyone who does it already, it can be pretty daunting to hear such a figure.

One way to up your game is to use online networking, and the biggest of these worldwide, is [LinkedIn](#). It is a bit like Facebook but far more professional. Do check however if this is a common networking tool within the country/industry you are interested in – for example as there is no Chinese version of LinkedIn, many national Chinese companies do not use it, although all of the multinationals who will have bases in China do.

So how do you get started?

- Make yourself a profile, filling in as many details as you can. It is worth spending some time filling your profile out fully, because you never know who can find you online – business contacts, old classmates, current colleagues and potential employers.
- Start building your network. Use the search and advanced search options to look for your old schoolmates, colleagues and current links. Any business cards you have collected at careers events, friend's parents, past internship colleagues – you will be surprised at how many people are on here and who they know!
- Join groups using the group's directory search. These are pre-established communities that use a forum style discussion board. For example, if you are interested in working in a Non Government Organisation (NGO), you could join the NGO World Group which currently has 3,701 members. Once you have got a feel for

UCL Career Services website provides career information dedicated to the needs of UCL [international students](#)

the group, you may wish to post up a question yourself.

- LinkedIn now has a jobs section so you can search for jobs directly.

For more information on using LinkedIn, with some examples, you can access a helpful document here:

<http://blog.sironaconsulting.com/files/linkedin-for-beginners-3.pdf> or go directly to the [LinkedIn](#) website and follow the help guide. You can also contact the [UCL Careers Service](#) to explore other methods of networking.

Plagiarism:

There is substantial evidence suggesting that plagiarism is more of an issue amongst international than home students.

Plagiarism often occurs as a result of misunderstanding as opposed to being an intentional act, in many cases because copying from textbooks is an acceptable practice in many students' home countries.

In the UK plagiarism is viewed as a serious academic offence and is not justifiable even when committed without deliberate intention.

Plagiarism: how to avoid it

Many thanks to those of you who attended the “*Plagiarism – How to Avoid It*” workshop on Wednesday 7th December, lead by Professor Mike Ewing and Mr David Ashton.

If you were unable to attend, do not worry, you can find some of the main points made during the workshop in the article below.

Professor Mike Ewing is Professor in Physical Chemistry and Chemical Physics and The Dean of Students (Academic); Mr David Ashton is the Director of Student Services, Registry and Academic Services.

Plagiarism – Definition

Plagiarism is most commonly defined as the presentation of another person's thoughts, words, artifacts or software as though they were yours.

To avoid being accused of plagiarism, you must ensure that any quotation from published or unpublished works of any other person is clearly identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks. Also, you should identify your sources as accurately and as fully as possible, following departmentally-specified requirements.

Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is the presentation of your own thoughts, words, artifacts or software previously submitted for the award of credit or for the completion of a course-unit or module.

Any quotation from your own published or unpublished works must be clearly identified by being placed inside quotation marks, and with sources accurately identified.

Other forms of plagiarism

“Ghost-writing” agencies

“Ghost-writing” agencies are agencies who offer to produce a paper on your behalf. The use of such agencies is strictly forbidden, as is submitting such work as your own. “Ghost-writing” agencies do not have the necessary expertise to produce work to the standard required from UCL students, and therefore lead students using them to receive poor marks.

Additionally, these agencies produce papers by cutting and pasting somebody else's work; therefore, you may submit an assignment for which you can be accused of plagiarising without even realising it.

Agencies which offer correction and improvement of the English language

The use of these agencies is also strictly forbidden. You can use the tools within Microsoft Word to perform spelling and grammar checks; even if the work you produce shows that you are not a native speaker, it can still read well and achieve high marks. Do not attempt to compensate for poor English by plagiarising.

The Internet

In the words of Professor Ewing – “the Internet is your best friend and worst enemy”. This is because it is very easy to download information from the Internet and forget to acknowledge this. You need to remember always to acknowledge your sources. To make sure you do this effectively, it is useful to keep a word document where you note down all of your research

sources as you collect them. Although you may eventually not need to credit them, it will save you time later if you do.

Collaboration with fellow students

Working with other students, exchanging ideas and opinions is strongly encouraged by UCL. However, when it comes to producing an assignment, you need to be able to write this in your own words. When reading your work, your lecturers are trying to understand your ideas and ability for critical evaluation, not somebody else's.

Plagiarism - a cultural dimension

UCL academic staff are well aware that some international students come from cultures where copying the work of others is a way of showing your respect for them. However, UK universities are places where students are expected to demonstrate their ability to think and evaluate critically in an independent way. As Mr Ashton explained in the workshop, "I copied somebody else's work because I could not write it any better" is not an excuse you can use if you have been accused of plagiarism.

Why do students plagiarise?

On the whole there are two main categories of plagiarism: unintentional and intentional. Both are considered an academic offence.

Unintentional plagiarism

The list of reasons below is not exhaustive but includes the most common reasons for unintentional plagiarism:

- misunderstanding your department's citation requirements
- over-reliance on the original source material
- not fully understanding when group work ends and individual work begins
- following practices accepted in previous educational experience or culture
- compensating for poor English language skills
- poor note-taking practice

Intentional plagiarism

The most common reasons for intentional plagiarism are:

- leaving your work to the last minute and then panicking
- thinking that it is easy to get away with it
- having problems with the workload
- sensing that the teacher will not mind

Extenuating circumstances

UCL has a student body of about 24 000 students. Lecturers are aware that at times students may have problems which could affect their academic performance. If you have a problem, discuss it with your tutor or other academic advisers in the first instance, but do not resort to illegally using the work of others.

Deadlines

One of the aims of UCL is to prepare you for work at the end of your programme. Conflicting deadlines are part of most people's work life; therefore consider having many deadlines close together as an opportunity to learn how to manage your workload successfully.

Modules outside of your department

The requirements on citation vary amongst the different UCL departments. If you are doing a module outside your department, take time to familiarise yourself with the requirements of the department which runs the module. If you are unsure you can always ask your module tutor for advice.

How would my tutor find out that I have plagiarised?

Your tutor will always find out if you have plagiarised; all UCL departments use *Turnitin* to check students work for plagiarism. *Turnitin* is a very sophisticated piece of software which has access to academic papers going back decades. You are therefore advised not to

challenge it.

Turnitin for students

UCL students have access to *Turnitin* via their Moodle account. You can run your work through *Turnitin* before submitting it to ensure you have not plagiarised. It is important to do this a few days prior to your course work submission due date in order to allow yourself enough time to re-work your paper if there is need for that.

Guidance for students submitting work via Turnitin in Moodle is available [online](#).

What happens when I get caught plagiarising?

If you are caught plagiarising, your department will build a case and will either invite you to a departmental meeting or a central UCL one, depending on the severity. You will need to explain yourself to a panel; this is not an easy experience to go through.

Depending on the seriousness of the offence different types of penalties may apply. Penalties will only apply if it has been proven that you have plagiarised.

Examples of Penalties

- informal warning
- formal warning
- work plagiarised excluded from the marking
- mark of zero for the piece of work or module/course unit
- delay in obtaining your degree
- expulsion from UCL

In conclusion

UCL considers plagiarism to be a serious academic offence that is not justifiable even when committed without deliberate intention.

To avoid plagiarism you need to:

- ensure you are aware of UCL and departmental rules about referencing and quotations
- manage your time effectively and allow plenty of time to complete all your course work
- use *Turnitin* to check your work a few days before submitting it and make changes if necessary
- listen to advice given to you by UCL academic staff and not by other institutions
- if you have extenuating circumstances, discuss your problem with an appropriate member of academic or support staff
- if in doubt always seek advice from your tutors

Further reading

UCL current students website:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/current-students/guidelines/policies/plagiarism>

Plagiarism Workshop [power point presentation](#).

Part time work:

If you need help with [writing a CV](#), UCL Career Services are there to help you.

UCL Career Services will be

Have you got some spare time over the Christmas holidays?

The Christmas holidays provide a great chance to visit home and family, but if you are planning on staying in London, why not use the time to build up your CV? There are lots of opportunities for part-time work as people head to the shops, or the restaurants to spend and celebrate. This leads to an increased demand for temporary staff. There are a few good ways to get some transferable skills and increase your UK work experiences:

open right up until Friday 23 December 2011 and then reopens on 3 January 2012.

To find out more information about the help available to you through the UCL Career Services, visit their website:

www.ucl.ac.uk/careers

- Find advertised part-time work through the [Careers Service website](#) jobonline or Going Global (search for part-time jobs in London)
- Join a retail or events recruitment company and let them find a job for you. You can find a good list of recruitment agencies from lots of different areas at the [Recruitment and Employment Confederation](#)
- Keep your eyes open next time you are walking around your local area – many retailers, bars and restaurants will post notices in their window when they are looking for staff. Or you could go in and ask if they need any help – but remember to take a copy of your CV!
- Volunteering is a great thing to do over the holiday season and just as beneficial for your CV as paid work. Talk to the [UCLU Volunteering Services Unit](#) or visit some of the national volunteering websites like [Volunteer England](#) or [Do-it.org](#).

There are also some good resources on the [careers website](#) or why not [book an appointment](#) to talk to a careers adviser.

Culture:

Places to visit in London over Christmas:

Covent Garden Christmas Market, Nov 24-Dec 24,

includes: Christmas food market, choirs singing traditional carols, and Santa's trusty sledge-pullers touch down for reindeer-petting sessions.

Hyde Park Winter

Wonderland, Nov 18-Jan 3 (10 am to 10pm), probably the biggest Christmas themed event in London, includes: a variety of rides and attractions such as the Giant Observational Wheel, and Winter Wonderland's ice rink.

Ice Skating in London:

Natural History Museum, until Jan 8 (Mon-Fri 10am–10pm, weekends 9am–10pm) the Alfred Waterhouse building provides a stunning backdrop for this 1,000-metre-square outdoor ice rink.

Tower of London Ice Rink,

until Jan 8 (10am–10pm) the Tower offers an amazing historical setting for seasonal skating sessions.

Look on [TimeOut](#) for more events taking place in London over the Christmas period. *Some of the events may be ticked.*

Boxing day

Boxing Day (or 2nd day of Christmas) falls on the 26th of December, and is celebrated as such in Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. In the UK it is a bank holiday, which means that if Christmas falls on a weekend the following Monday will be a public holiday.



It is not clear when this tradition originated, and there are several different versions of why it is called Boxing Day. It is said that during the 18th century, Lords and Ladies of the manor would “box up” the leftover food from Christmas day, together with small gifts (cloth, agricultural tools and practical tools) to give to the tenants who lived and worked on their lands. There are other stories which refer to

workers being given boxes from their employers; it is said that many poorly paid workers were required to work on Christmas day and took the following day off to visit family; in this case their employers would present them with Christmas boxes.

Other stories instead refer to giving money to the poor, it traditionally was the day in which the Christmas box was open and its contents shared with the poor. Gifts were also distributed to the poor of the parish by priests who would open the “Alm Box” which was placed in every church on Christmas day, into which worshippers placed gifts for those less fortunate than themselves.

Another story says that these boxes were used during the Age of Exploration by sailing ships setting off to discover new lands. A priest would place the box on the ship, and sailors wishing a safe return would place money in it. If the ship returned, the box would be given back to the priest who would open it on the 26th of December and share the contents with the poor.

Nowadays Boxing Day is a day to visit relatives, spend time together, relax, have walks in the country side and play board games. In recent years, many shops have also started opening up on this day to start their winter sales, so many people now spend their morning in queues in the hope of grabbing the best bargain.



In other countries the 26th is St. Stephen's day which is when the Good King Wenceslas looked out. St Stephen lived in Rome and was the first man to be killed by stoning for believing in the teachings of Jesus (the first Martyr). There is also an association with St Stephen of Sweden who is the patron saint of horses, which is why Boxing Day has long been associated with outdoor sports, especially horse racing and hunting.

Traditionally, horse riders dressed in red and white riding gear, accompanied by a number of dogs called foxhounds, would chase a fox through the countryside in the hope of tiring it out. However, since the 2005 ban on foxhunting, this tradition has been made illegal.

Story:

This article was written for you by Lucy Gaunt, recent graduate from University of Bristol & part of UCL's Student Centre Events Team

Christmas Cracker Jokes:

Why was Santa's little helper feeling depressed?
He had low elf-esteem.

What is white and goes up?
A confused snowflake.

What do you call a penguin in the Sahara desert?
Lost.

What did the Policeman say to the stomach?
You are under a vest.

Why is it so difficult to train dogs to dance?
They have two left feet.

What do you get when you cross a cat with a lemon?
A sour puss!

Why would you invite a mushroom to a Christmas party?
He's a fungi to be with. (fun guy)

Did Rudolph go to school?
No. He was Elf-taught!

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
Frostbite!

Which country has the largest appetite?
Hungary!

What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?
Claustrophobia!

A family Christmas in the UK



For many people, there is a feeling that Christmas begins long before the day itself. Little things - Christmas films on television, wrapping presents, putting up the Christmas tree (then watching your cat try to pull the Christmas tree down again) – all go towards giving us that festive feeling. Christmas Eve in particular is usually quite special, as many family and friends who are staying will arrive to stay the night. For children, Christmas Eve is when Santa comes down the chimney and leaves them a stocking full of presents; for adults, Christmas Eve is usually a time to be shared with close friends, as Christmas day is often a strictly family affair.

On Christmas morning, children all over the country wake up ridiculously early to see what presents they have been brought by Santa – for some, they will be left under the tree, others will be in a stocking, some may even have both. Traditionally, a stocking will often have an orange, and some nuts, as well as small presents and toys. The rules on when presents can be opened tends to vary from family to family, but will often be based on family custom; for example, in my family we are allowed to open stockings before breakfast, but no presents from under the tree until after all the family have arrived – which is extra frustrating for the kids, who have usually been awake since 6am!

The British Christmas, like in many cultures, has a big focus on food – because it is a special day, we let ourselves be indulgent. For many families, this will include a special breakfast, perhaps with smoked salmon or a cooked breakfast of eggs and bacon. Christmas dinner usually takes place mid afternoon, preceded by drinks and a few snacks. Most houses will have two or three courses, with a roast turkey for the main dish. Christmas turkey is almost always accompanied by roast potatoes, roasted parsnips, stuffing, and an array of vegetables (including the infamous Brussels sprouts which, if you have never had one, you really should try). All of this is usually topped off with cranberry sauce, loads of gravy and, in true British style, quite a lot of wine.



During the meal guests will pull Christmas crackers, which contain a paper hat (which you have to wear), a rubbish toy or present (which you will inevitably lose), and a ridiculous joke (which has to be told to the table). Cracker jokes are not very funny, which in the bizarre backwards world of British culture seems to make them hilarious. We know it is not funny, but we still laugh.

Typically, after everyone has eaten their own body weight in food, many families will play board games and charades, a popular British party game. Most people will also watch one of the many Christmas TV specials, for example Eastenders or Doctor Who. One of the most important Christmas television shows for many people is the Queen's Speech (officially known as the Royal Christmas Message). The first broadcast of the message was made in 1932 on the radio, and is broadcast on television across the commonwealth countries at about 3pm GMT. The reigning monarch (currently Queen Elizabeth II) will reflect on the year's events and send a message of goodwill to all her subjects.

And, after all the excitement, the day will usually end with most of the family asleep on the sofa.

UCL Student Union:

To keep up to date with the events organised for you by UCL Student Union, visit their events webpage regularly:
www.uclu.org/events

Events and updates

14 January 2012, London Bus Tours, starting outside the Bloomsbury Theatre on Gordon Street.

1hr bus tours leaving 10am, 12pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm. £5 advance from www.uclu.org/shop

14 January 2012, Language Café, 10.30am-12pm, George Farha Café.

Fancy learning a new language in the new year? Or, want to practice conversational English? Come along to the *Language Café* to meet new people, enjoy a cup of tea and try out or practice a new language. We welcome students from all over the world and this month's *Café* will feature English, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic and Russian. All levels welcome. Free

19 January 2012, Jack the Ripper Walking Tour.

Meet outside [Tower Hill underground station](#) at 6.50pm, £5 advance from www.uclu.org/shop

19 January 2012, International Students' Forum, 5.30pm start, Malet Place 1.04.

Drop by the ISF and share any issues you have come across as an international student. Help plan future events!

Your contribution:

DEFINITION:

A Third Culture Kid (TCK)

"TCK is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture.

The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership of any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background"

Third Culture Kids
by David C Pollock &
Ruth E. Van Reken

Third Culture Society



A big hello to everyone!

I'm campaigning for the creation of a UCL Third Culture Society.

UCL is such a global university that it attracts many students who have international profiles, either due to their parents moving around or due to attending international schools. What with today's globalization, the Third Culture Kids are becoming more and more common.

A Third Culture Society would enable Third Culture students, as well as any students interested in the phenomenon, to meet each other and experience London together. If you're interested in helping us make this happen or in becoming part of the committee, join us on the UCL Third culture Society Facebook group or email me at solene_vdw@hotmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Solene van der Wielen

Please email questions, comments and recommendations related to this newsletter to the [International Support Team](#).

Find us on 

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Happy Christmas everyone!

The International Students Support Team