

**Memorial Student Center  
International Student Association  
I-Week  
Spring 2022**

**Purpose of Assessment**

The International Festival, known as I-Week, is a weeklong festival and Texas A&M's largest cultural celebration. It is designed to bring cultural awareness to those attending as well as to serve as a platform for cultural organizations and individuals to share their home cultures with the Texas A&M community. This year, I-Week took place on March 28-April 1, 2022, and consisted of a variety of events including I-Exhibit, I-Story, I-Dinner, I-Show, I-Art, and I-Awards. International Student Association (ISA) wanted to assess attendees for any activity during the weeklong event. This is the second year that Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research (formerly Student Life Studies) worked with the International Student Association to assess this annual program.

**Key Findings with Recommendations**

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research (SAPAR) identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations the organization may take based on the results. However, I-Week student leaders and advisors may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the community. Student leaders and staff members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences.

- Part of the mission for ISA is to promote cultural awareness through programs and community engagement and to represent international Aggies. I-Week seems to have been successful in achieving this part of its mission. Over three-fourths of respondents reported increasing their awareness of one or more cultures different from their own and having a greater appreciation for the international cultures at Texas A&M. Furthermore, students attending individual programs also agreed that they have a greater understanding of celebrations of different countries around the world and experienced a new art technique from a culture different than theirs.
- Respondents were provided the opportunity to give suggestions to improve certain aspects of I-Week. One suggestion that was shared by many who wrote a comment was for I-Dinner to be more organized. I-Week being organized was also the lowest rated statement for I-Week overall. Another suggestion was about doing more marketing, especially to increase U.S. students attending.
  - International Student Association may want to look at the logistics for all events, especially I-Dinner. Maybe there could be additional student leaders managing the lines at this event or work with the staff at University Center & Special Events on managing a large crowd. ISA may also look at options to encourage tickets purchased in advance to be more prepared for the number of people attending in terms of space and food.
  - ISA is encouraged to look at its marketing and see if additional marketing could be done to increase attendance. This could include ISA going to student organization meetings a few weeks before I-Week to promote it, contacting faculty members of classes that may be related to see if extra credit could be offered for those who attend, and making a video to increase attention to events held during the week. ISA may also want to compare attendance for the last two years to see if it may be beneficial to continue offering a virtual option to attend certain events.
- International Student Association is also encouraged to consider how they collect information on who is attending different events and maximizing the use of MaroonLink for swiping student ID cards.

## **Method and Sample**

A survey was developed using Qualtrics®, a survey design software used for creating web-based forms and databases. The electronic survey consisted of 31 questions (five fewer than in 2021); 28 were quantitative and three were qualitative. All attendees responded to questions about the overall I-Week experience and then were asked to respond to questions based on the events they reported attending. Due to branching technology, not all respondents received all questions. The survey link was emailed to 397 individuals who attended at least one event during I-Week on April 12, 2022; however, two email addresses were not valid. Non-respondents received up to four reminders before the survey closed on May 11, 2022. Of the 395 attendees who received the survey invitation, 57 responded to at least one question, yielding a 14% response rate (a decrease of 9% compared to 2021). The data were analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package and Microsoft Excel®.

## **Results**

Results are reported as means, standard deviation (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Tables are in descending order for the 2022 mean or frequency unless otherwise specified. Comparisons to the previous year are made where appropriate. Summary themes are contained in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document.

Attendees were asked a series of questions about their level of agreement or disagreement about I-Week overall. Table 1, on the following page, demonstrates that almost all attendees felt that learning about different cultures than theirs helps them to live and work effectively in a diverse and global society. Additionally, this was the only statement that increased when compared to 2021. Less than half of all attendees felt that I-Week was well organized. U.S. students agreed slightly more that I-Week allowed them to explore ideas, perspectives, and cultures different than theirs and that they increased their awareness of a culture different than their own more than international students. Disaggregated results based on citizenship can be found in a separate document.

<b>Please respond to the following statements about I-Week hosted by International Student Associations.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
Learning about cultures different than my own helps me live and work effectively in a diverse and global society.	91%	9%	--	2.91 (.29) [n=43]	2.88 (.35) [n=52]
I increased my awareness of one or more cultures different from my own.	84%	16%	2%	2.79 (.67) [n=43]	2.90 (.30) [n=51]
I have a greater appreciation for the international cultures at Texas A&M after attending I-Week.	79%	16%	5%	2.74 (.54) [n=43]	2.88 (.32) [n=52]
I-Week allowed me to freely explore ideas, perspectives, and cultures different from my own.	70%	28%	2%	2.67 (.52) [n=43]	2.71 (.46) [n=52]
I have a greater understanding of the international cultures at Texas A&M after attending I-Week.	67%	33%	--	2.67 (.47) [n=43]	2.71 (.46) [n=52]
I am likely to attend other ISA events in the future.	74%	16%	9%	2.65 (.65) [n=43]	2.88 (.32) [n=52]
I-Week met or exceeded my expectations.	56%	26%	19%	2.37 (.79) [n=43]	2.71 (.46) [n=52]
I-Week was well organized.	48%	25%	27%	2.20 (.85) [n=44]	2.67 (.51) [n=52]

Table 1: I-Week Outcomes

When asked what they learned by attending one or more I-Week events, 10 attendees shared several thoughts. Respondents mentioned learning about different food, music, clothing, dance, and art from other cultures. Some also mentioned learning about the similarities or subtle differences between cultures. A few respondents commented about learning that Texas A&M was open and accepting and a place one can express their identities in different ways. One person also mentioned learning about the cultural representation at Texas A&M.

Respondents were asked to share which I-Week event(s) they attended. The results are displayed in Table 2. Similar to last year, I-Dinner was attended the most; however, more attendees reported attending I-Dinner this year than last year.

<b>Which I-Week event(s) did you attend? (Select all that apply)</b>	<b>2022 Frequency [n=44]</b>	<b>2021 Frequency [n=51]</b>
I-Dinner	84%	53%
I-Show	36%	45%
I-Art	21%	20%
I-Awards	14%	12%
I-Exhibit	14%	8%
I-Story	5%	18%

Table 2: I-Week Attendance

Respondents saw different questions depending on which event(s) they attended. Those reporting that they attended I-Exhibit (n=6) were asked about it. During I-Exhibit international organizations set up tables to show their cultures and share about their home country. Table 3 shows that over three-fourths agreed that I-Exhibit was engaging; however, this was a little lower than the previous year.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Exhibit specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
I-Exhibit was engaging	84%	17%	--	2.83 (.41) [n=6]	3.00 (.00) [n=4]

Table 3: I-Exhibit

I-Story provides an opportunity for students to share short informative presentations on any culture. Two respondents indicated that they attended I-Story, and both responded very positively to all statements in a series of questions about this event, as seen in Table 4. This was similar to last year.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Story specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
I have a greater understanding of celebrations from different cultures around the world after the I-Story presentations.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
The hosts of I-Story did a good job leading the event and providing information.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
The student presenters did a good job providing information about their home culture.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
The production was high quality.*	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	2.89 (.33) [n=9]

Table 4: I-Story

\*In 2021 the statement was "The production and live stream were of high quality."

Attendees at I-Dinner had the opportunity to try food from the Middle East, East Asia, Latin America, and more. Those attending I-Dinner (n=37) were asked about their experience. Table 5, on the following page, reveals that over two-thirds of attendees agreed with all three statements. There was a slight increase in response for attendees trying a new cuisine or food than they had before compared to last year.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Dinner specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
The purchasing process for I-Dinner was easy.	75%	14%	11%	2.64 (.68) [n=36]	2.88 (.43) [n=26]
I tried a new cuisine or food that I had never tried before at I-Dinner.	72%	14%	14%	2.58 (.73) [n=36]	2.48 (.87) [n=25]
I enjoyed the meal I received at I-Dinner.	69%	11%	19%	2.50 (.81) [n=36]	2.77 (.59) [n=26]

Table 5: I-Dinner

Respondents were asked to share any suggestions they had to improve I-Dinner in the future and 18 shared a comment. Over half of the comments suggested there be more organization with I-Dinner, especially in managing the lines, directing the crowds, having more signage, and having more food. Another common suggestion was to allow attendees to try more than one entry to experience food from multiple cultures. This could be by ordering more food or cutting portions in half to allow someone to get more than one entry. Additionally, attendees wanted to know what they are getting before buying tickets and that it should not be offered as a buffet if you can only select one entry. One person also would have liked a to-go option.

Performance groups or individuals can perform music, dances, or other talents during I-Show. All 16 attendees who reported they attended I-Show responded to the series of questions regarding that event. Table 6 indicates that attendees enjoyed the performances and fashion shows the most. There was a little less agreement that the groups were representative of the diversity of international students at Texas A&M. Most of the statements were more positive or the same compared to 2021.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Show specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
I enjoyed the performances at I-Show.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=16]	3.00 (.00) [n=23]
I enjoyed the fashion show at I-Show.	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.34) [n=16]	2.78 (.52) [n=23]
The performances/cultural groups were inclusive.	81%	13%	6%	2.75 (.58) [n=16]	2.74 (.54) [n=23]
There was a wide variety of different types of performances (group dances, singing, fashion show, etc.).	63%	25%	13%	2.50 (.73) [n=16]	2.70 (.64) [n=23]
The performances/cultural groups were representative of the diversity of international students at Texas A&M.	69%	6%	25%	2.44 (.89) [n=16]	2.78 (.52) [n=23]

Table 6: I-Show

Additionally, respondents who attended I-Show were asked for any suggestions they had to improve the event and four people shared ideas. Two people felt there needed to be more countries represented and participating in I-Show. One person suggested ideas to market I-Show more to increase attendance, especially from domestic students. One person felt that nothing needed to be improved.

There were two follow-up questions for those who attended I-Art (n=9), which is an art class designed to be an educational program. Both questions changed compared to 2021 so there is no comparison. Table 7 illustrates that attendees were extremely positive about their experience at I-Art.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Art specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
I saw/experienced a new art technique from a culture other than my own.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
I learned about a culture other than my own.	89%	11%	--	2.89 (.33) [n=9]

Table 7: I-Art

The last event specifically being assessed was I-Awards. Those who attended this event (n=6) were very positive about this event as seen in Table 8. All statements increased or stayed the same when compared to last year.

<b>Please respond to this statement related to I-Awards specifically.</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Neutral (2)</b>	<b>Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2022 Mean (sd) [n]</b>	<b>2021 Mean (sd) [n]</b>
The other speakers of I-Awards were engaging and interesting.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=6]	3.00 (.00) [n=6]
I learned more about International Student Association and I-Week by attending this event.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=6]	2.67 (.52) [n=6]
The production was high quality.*	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=6]	2.67 (.52) [n=6]
The host of I-Award did a good job leading the event and providing information.	83%	17%	--	2.83 (.41) [n=6]	2.83 (.41) [n=6]

Table 8: I-Awards

\*In 2021 the statement was "The production and live stream were of high quality."

Student demographics were gathered from the university's student information system using students' Universal Identification Numbers (UIN). The results are displayed in Table 9, on the following page in descending order by each category. Almost two-thirds of the respondents were international students. Additionally, respondents were largely female students and graduate students. First generation status is often unknown for international students, which would be why it is almost two-thirds of the respondents.

2022 Frequency [n=41]	
Sex	
Female	54%
Male	46%
Ethnicity	
International	61%
Hispanic or Latino	24%
Asian	10%
Multi-Rational (excluding Black)	2%
White	2%
Citizenship	
Not U.S. Citizen	63%
U.S. Citizen	37%
First Generation	
Unknown	63%
Not First Generation	27%
First Generation	10%
Classification	
Masters	51%
Sophomore	17%
Doctoral	12%
Junior	10%
Senior	7%
Freshman	2%

Table 9: Demographics

### **Department Background**

According to its website (<https://isa-aggies.tamu.edu/>), the International Student Association “includes students from throughout the world who strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all Aggies. ISA members are proud of their home countries and want to share their cultures with the Texas A&M Community. ISA provides a safe space for international and U.S. students to interact, unleash their creativity, and share their cultural identities.”

### **Project Details**

The Department of Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research provides quality assessment services, resources, and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research can be found at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/results/>. Additionally, anyone can follow Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research on Facebook.

To work with Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/aqform/>.

Report Prepared for:	Valerie Wilson, Memorial Student Center
Report Prepared by:	Kelly Cox, Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research
Report Prepared on:	August 30, 2022
Survey Designed by:	Kelly Cox, Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research
Analysis by:	Judith Barrera, Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research