

**Memorial Student Center
International Student Association
I-Week
Spring 2023**

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 February 27-March 4, 2023, 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 of any activity during the weeklong event. This is the third year that Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research 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 with 88% of the respondents reporting they increased 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, at least two-thirds of students attending individual programs also agreed that they gained a greater understanding of a culture different than their own.
- Respondents were provided the opportunity to give suggestions to improve individual events of I-Week and a range of ideas were provided. Three of the six events attendants indicated they started late. This was most noticeable with I-Dinner.
 - International Student Association leaders and advisors may want to look at the preparation for events to start events at the advertised time.
 - Since I-Dinner is the largest event, planners may want to specifically look at the logistics of this event. They might include working with the staff at University Center & Special Events to assist with the crowds and effectively manage the lines. This is the second year in a row that attendees of this event commented the most about the long lines and not starting on time.
 - ISA may want to look at each event to explore options to improve the organization of it. Respondents provided several ideas to consider for next year.
- For a second year in a row, attendees for several individual events indicated that more marketing is needed.
 - ISA may want to look at the marketing, and specifically individual events, to see if additional communication would increase attendance. There are a variety of methods to increase marketing including 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.

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 40 questions (nine more than in 2022); 33 were quantitative and seven 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 on March 7, 2023, to 423 individuals who attended at least one event during I-Week; however, two email addresses were not valid. Non-respondents received up to three reminders before the survey closed on March 28, 2023. Of the 421 attendees who received the survey invitation, 99 responded to at least one question, yielding a 24% response rate (an increase of 10% compared to 2022). The data were analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Tableau®, a data visualization software, 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 2023 mean or frequency unless otherwise specified. Comparisons to the previous years are made where appropriate. Summary themes are contained in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. This report is divided into eight sections: Overall, E-Exhibit, I-Story, I-Dinner, I-Show, I-Art, I-Awards, and Demographics.

Overall

Using a select all that apply formatted questions, respondents were initially asked how they heard about I-Week events. Table 1 illustrates that bulk emails were the most common way people learned about I-Week. By contrast, classroom announcements or extra credit were the least selected. Those selecting the “other” response option were given the opportunity to write how they heard about I-Week. Eight shared various methods including colleagues or friends who attended previously, a website search, and Graduate and Professional Student Government.

How did you hear about I-Week events? (Select all that apply)	2023 Frequency [n=96]
Bulk emails	55%
From my friend participating in I-Week	25%
Social Media	21%
From my organization participating in I-Week	19%
Flyers	14%
Other	8%
Walked by	5%
Yard signs	4%
@TAMU Instagram Takeover	4%
Classroom announcement or extra credit	1%

Table 1: I-Week Marketing

Attendees were asked a series of questions about their level of agreement or disagreement about I-Week overall. Table 2, 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 and that they gained a great appreciation for the international cultures at Texas A&M. Additionally, 70% of all attendees agreed that I-Week was well organized, which is a notable increase from 2022.

Please respond to the following statements about I-Week hosted by International Student Associations.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
Learning about cultures different than my own helps me live and work effectively in a diverse and global society.	88%	10%	2%	2.86 (.42) [n=84]	2.91 (.29) [n=43]	2.88 (.35) [n=52]
I have a greater appreciation of the international cultures at Texas A&M after attending I-Week.	88%	10%	2%	2.86 (.42) [n=84]	2.74 (.54) [n=43]	2.88 (.32) [n=52]
I am likely to attend other ISA events in the future.	80%	18%	2%	2.77 (.48) [n=84]	2.65 (.65) [n=43]	2.88 (.32) [n=52]
I increased my awareness of one or more cultures different from my own.	80%	17%	4%	2.76 (.51) [n=84]	2.79 (.67) [n=43]	2.90 (.30) [n=51]
I-Week allowed me to freely explore ideas, perspectives, and cultures different from my own.	75%	20%	5%	2.70 (.56) [n=84]	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.	69%	27%	4%	2.65 (.55) [n=84]	2.67 (.47) [n=43]	2.71 (.46) [n=52]
I-Week was well organized.	70%	21%	8%	2.62 (.64) [n=84]	2.20 (.85) [n=44]	2.67 (.51) [n=52]
I-Week met or exceeded my expectations.	63%	30%	7%	2.56 (.63) [n=84]	2.37 (.79) [n=43]	2.71 (.46) [n=52]

Table 2: I-Week Outcomes

When asked what they learned by attending one or more I-Week events, 18 attendees shared several thoughts. Attendees mentioned learning about different cultures through food, performances, music, art, and clothing. Some also said they learned about different students and expressed an appreciation for international students at Texas A&M. A few students said they learned about other student organizations they had never heard of before. One student shared the following about the differences and similarities between cultures:

“By attending I-Week, I learned that although cultural practices vary across the world through religion, cuisine, and dance among other things. They all share a singular appreciation for beauty, taste, and art, so although they are different, they are rudimentary the same.”

Respondents were asked to share which I-Week event(s) they attended. The results are displayed in Table 3, on the following page. Similar to last year, I-Dinner was attended the most but by a smaller margin compared to last year.

Which I-Week event(s) did you attend? (Select all that apply)	2023 Frequency [84]	2022 Frequency [n=44]	2021 Frequency [n=51]
I-Dinner	58%	84%	53%
I-Show	35%	36%	45%
I-Story	11%	5%	18%
I-Awards	10%	14%	12%
I-Art	7%	21%	20%
I-Exhibit	5%	14%	8%

Table3: I-Week Attendance

I-Exhibit

Respondents saw different questions depending on which event(s) they attended. Those reporting that they attended I-Exhibit (n=4) were asked about it. During I-Exhibit international organizations set up tables to show their cultures and share about their home country. Table 4 shows that all respondents agreed that they gained a greater understanding of different cultures around the world after attending I-Exhibit. Note that one respondent equals 33%.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Exhibit specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
I have a greater understanding of different cultures around the world after attending I-Exhibit.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=3]	*	*
I-Exhibit was engaging	67%	33%	--	2.67 (.58) [n=3]	2.83 (.41) [n=6]	3.00 (.00) [n=4]
It was clear how to participate in I-Exhibit (picking up and returning a passport for prizes)	67%	--	33%	2.33 (1.16) [n=3]	*	*

Table 4: I-Exhibit

*Question not asked

Respondents were asked to share any suggestions they had to improve I-Exhibit. One person provided a comment suggesting having the passports by the entrance, holding the event in a larger room or outside, and increasing the number of organizations and interactive activities.

I-Story

I-Story provides an opportunity for students to share short informative presentations on any culture. Nine respondents indicated that they attended I-Story. Those responding were very positive to all statements in a series of questions about this event, as seen in Table 5 on the following page.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Story specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
The student presenters did a good job providing information about their home culture.	100%	--	--	3.00 (.00) [n=8]	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
I have a greater understanding of friends and family from different cultures around the world after the I-Story presentations.	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.35) [n=8]	*	*
The hosts of I-Story did a good job leading the event and providing information.	75%	25%	--	2.75 (.46) [n=8]	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
The production was high quality.**	71%	29%	--	2.71 (.49) [n=7]	3.00 (.00) [n=2]	2.89 (.33) [n=9]

Table 5: I-Story

*Question not asked

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

I-Story attendees were asked to provide any suggestions they had to improve the event. One participant wrote a comment expressing some dissatisfaction with the judging criteria and recommend improving the rubric to match the theme and what participants are encouraged to do. This student also expressed appreciation for International Student Association for hosting I-Week.

I-Dinner

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=49) were asked about their experience. Table 6 reveals that just over three-fourths of attendees agreed with all statements. Additionally, there was a slight increase in responses for all statements compared to last year.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Dinner specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
I enjoyed the meal I received at I-Dinner.	90%	4%	6%	2.84 (.51) [n=49]	2.50 (.81) [n=36]	2.77 (.59) [n=26]
I tried a new cuisine or food that I had never tried before at I-Dinner.	84%	8%	8%	2.76 (.60) [n=49]	2.58 (.73) [n=36]	2.48 (.87) [n=25]
I gained a better understanding of different cultures through I-Dinner.	80%	16%	4%	2.76 (.52) [n=49]	*	*
The purchasing process for I-Dinner was easy.	78%	18%	4%	2.73 (.53) [n=49]	2.64 (.68) [n=36]	2.88 (.43) [n=26]

Table 6: I-Dinner

*Question not asked

Respondents were asked to share any suggestions they had to improve I-Dinner in the future, and 26 gave a comment. Almost half of the comments referenced the long lines, and that food was quite late being served, causing the line to get longer. Some suggestions to improve this included having a time when you purchase tickets to spread out when people come, having more than one serving line, and more space or spread out the different courses (entrées, sides, desserts, and drinks). Other ideas included describing the food on the menu rather than just listing it, identifying which options are vegan and vegetarian, and having smaller servings with the option to try more than one of the different courses. One person expressed frustration that tickets were not being collected allowing some to attend without paying. A few encouraged planners to have more signage and food. A few also expressed appreciation for the organizers or gave praise for the event.

I-Show

Performance groups or individuals perform music, dances, or other talents during I-Show. Attendees who reported they attended I-Show (n=29) were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the series of questions regarding that event. Table 7 indicates that attendees enjoyed the performances the most, and felt the performances were inclusive. There was a little less agreement that there was a wide variety of different types of performances. Most of the statements were more positive or the same compared to 2022.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Show specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
I enjoyed the performances at I-Show.	96%	4%	--	2.96 (.19) [n=27]	3.00 (.00) [n=16]	3.00 (.00) [n=23]
The performances/cultural groups were inclusive.	93%	7%	--	2.93 (.27) [n=27]	2.75 (.58) [n=16]	2.74 (.54) [n=23]
I-Show was high quality.	89%	11%	--	2.89 (.32) [n=27]	*	*
I enjoyed the fashion show at I-Show.	82%	19%	--	2.81 (.40) [n=27]	2.88 (.34) [n=16]	2.78 (.52) [n=23]
There was a wide variety of different types of performances (group dancers, singing, fashion show, etc.)	74%	19%	7%	2.67 (.62) [n=27]	2.50 (.73) [n=16]	2.70 (.64) [n=23]

Table 7: I-Show
*Question not asked

Eight I-Show attendees provided suggestions when asked how to improve the event in the future. A few shared that it was a wonderful event and that they appreciated the intermission. Some suggested advertising more, vetting the performances for appropriateness, and trying to schedule when there are not as many events in Rudder Tower. A couple of people also commented on the event starting late.

I-Art

There were three follow-up questions for those who attended I-Art (n=6), which is an art class designed to be an educational program. Table 8, on the following page, illustrates that attendees were generally positive about their experience at I-Art; however, both statements were less positive than last year.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Art specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]
I saw/experienced a new art technique from a culture other than my own.	67%	17%	17%	2.50 (.84) [n=6]	3.00 (.00) [n=9]
I learned about a culture other than my own.	67%	--	33%	2.33 (1.03) [n=6]	2.89 (.33) [n=9]

Table 8: I-Art

Respondents were asked to give suggestions they had to improve I-Art in the future, and two gave their thoughts. One suggested increasing the advertising for the event. One commented that they thought you looked at art, rather than create art, as well as noted that there were few stalls.

I-Awards

The last event specifically being assessed was the I-Awards. Those who attended this event (n=8) were positive about this event as seen in Table 9. However, there was a slight decrease in all statements when compared to last year.

Please respond to this statement related to I-Awards specifically.	Agree (3)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (1)	2023 Mean (sd) [n]	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]
The other speakers at I-Awards were engaging and interesting.	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.35) [n=8]	3.00 (.00) [n=6]	3.00 (.00) [n=6]
I learned more about International Student Association and I-Week by attending this event.	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.35) [n=8]	3.00 (.00) [n=6]	2.67 (.52) [n=6]
The production was high quality.*	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.35) [n=8]	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.	88%	13%	--	2.88 (.35) [n=8]	2.83 (.41) [n=6]	2.83 (.41) [n=6]

Table 9: I-Awards

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

Those who attended I-Awards were given the opportunity to give suggestions they had to improve the event for the future. Two responses were provided, with one indicating it was a great event and one stating that it started late.

Demographics

Student demographics were gathered from the university's student information system using students' Universal Identification Numbers (UIN) for all students who attended an event during the week and those who responded to the survey. The results are displayed in Table 10, on the following page in descending order by each category for the survey respondent column. Additionally, respondents were largely female students and College of Engineering students. First generation status is often unknown for international students, which would be why it is almost half of the respondents.

	2023 Survey Respondents [n=68]	2023 I-Week Attendees {n=336}
Sex		
Female	72%	55%
Male	28%	45%
Ethnicity		
International	32%	45%
Asian	25%	21%
Hispanic or Latino	21%	16%
White	16%	14%
Multi-Racial (excluding Black)	4%	3%
Black or Multi-Racial (including Black)	1%	1%
Unknown or Not Reported	--	1%
Citizenship		
U.S. Citizen	65%	51%
Not U.S. Citizen	35%	49%
First Generation		
Unknown	40%	49%
Not First Generation	44%	39%
First Generation	16%	13%
Classification		
Masters	28%	34%
Senior	22%	21%
Sophomore	16%	10%
Doctoral	16%	16%
Junior	10%	12%
Freshman	6%	7%
Vet School	1%	<1%
College/School		
Engineering	46%	48%
Arts and Sciences	21%	24%
Agriculture	13%	10%
Business	6%	8%
Architecture	4%	3%
Education	4%	2%
Public Health	3%	2%
Bush School of Government	1%	1%
Veterinary Medicine	1%	<1%
Other	--	1%
Exchange	--	1%
Qatar	--	<1%
Performance and Visualization	--	<1%

Table 10: Demographics

When asked if they would like more information about International Student Association, 41% of the 70 respondents said yes, and 59% indicated no. Those who stated they would like more information were asked to provide their email address to be contacted, which can be found in a separate document.

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/>.

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