Foreword

I am delighted to be writing the foreword for this very welcome Campus Support Services, Programs, and Policies for International Students. This book confirms that research relating to international students has come of age as a significant and contemporary body of literature relating to the dynamic social dimensions of international higher education. This coming of age signifies the important role that international students play in an increasingly mobile world.

My curiosity relating to international students began when working in a research centre in Melbourne, Australia. A group of international students had seen the Monash University sign in the street and came in seeking help with an essay they needed to write for their studies. They wanted to know the correct answer to the essay question and I spent quite some time trying to explain that there was not one correct answer, but many ways to respond to the question. I was impressed by their determination to succeed academically. What they did not realise was that they sparked my curiosity about their experiences living and studying in a foreign country. For more than a decade I have focussed my research on issues relating to international students across major higher education host countries including the USA, the UK and Australia as well as China as a major source country. As a consequence, it has become increasingly apparent to me that for host countries providing higher education, international students are integral in terms of economic gain, institution and national reputation and cultural enrichment. For international students, undertaking higher education in a host country has the potential to provide opportunities and present challenges that may not otherwise come to pass.

The importance of this book is that it addresses many previously overlooked aspects relating to international students. The contributors have drawn on research-based findings from different perspectives to inform those concerned with international students and the associated service provision and policy formation. The topics range from discussions about who comprises the international student cohort and their mobility trends to considerations of international students’ choices, expectations and experiences. The authors discuss the crucial elements of predeparture cultural preparation, help-seeking behaviours, racism, and notions of inclusion and exclusion. The collection of topics that form the chapters of this book have culminated in a major publication that presents a unique and important addition to the existing literature.

Doctors Krishna Bista and Charlotte Foster are to be commended for bringing together in one book a vast collection of topics from many scholars across numerous nations, including Australia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Finland, Ghana, Greece, India, New Zealand, South Korea, UK, USA and Zimbabwe. This book exceeds all expectations and no doubt will prove to be an invaluable aid that serves to further the understanding and progress of student mobility and international education in a global context.

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Helen Forbes-Mewett, PhD, is a social scientist at Monash University. Helen is also Research Associate of the Research Center on Violence at West Virginia University, USA. For more than a decade she has researched and published widely on international student safety and security. In addition to her extensive work in Australia, Helen has gained international recognition. She has conducted interviews with many international students and stakeholders and delivered presentations across Europe, the USA and the Asia-Pacific region. Helen is the first educator to introduce the topic of ‘International Students in Australia’ into the university curriculum. In recognition of her ongoing work relating to international education, Helen was honoured with a Monash University Vice-Chancellor’s Social Inclusion Award 2012. Her most recent work is a comparative inquiry into international student safety and crime and associated support services in Australia, the UK and the USA. She is co-author of International Student Security (Marginson et al. 2010) and lead author of International Students and Crime (Forbes-Mewett et al. 2015).