

## TUPals program eases transition for international students

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International students enjoy a game of Scrabble at the weekly Global Café, held every Tuesday from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Lavin-Bernick Center. (Photo provided)

TUPals is a program designed to introduce returning Tulane students to international students experiencing their first semester at Tulane.

The program's mission is to help new international students feel welcome at Tulane and also to encourage the Tulane community to develop a global mindset.

“We are trying to make the whole environment welcoming for international students so that their transition is easier,” said second-year student and TUPals organizer Claire Wei.

Doctoral candidate Sophie Capmartin also assists with organizing the TUPals programming.

“We create a small group for them to hang out,” said Capmartin. “We try to pair up or group people who are similar ages or have similar areas of study.”

The TUPals program has great significance to Capmartin and Wei as both are international students who know well the importance of making these students feel included. For domestic students it’s also a great way to meet others from abroad and learn about different cultures.

If nothing more, Capmartin said “It’s just really a great way to meet different people with different backgrounds.”

TUPals is an initiative that came out of the [International Student Advisory Board](#) and the program is open to any Tulane student — undergraduate or graduate — from anywhere in the world. TUPals accepts applications each semester for any Tulane student wishing to become a “pal” to a new international student. Visit the [TUPals website](#) to find out more about the program and to apply to be a TUPal.

“When I started at Tulane five years ago, one of the first things I did was to establish the International Student Advisory Board (ISAB),” said Kristy Magner, director of the Office of International Students and Scholars. “I wanted to make sure that our office was in touch with the needs and interests of the international student community and to empower international students to take action themselves to improve their Tulane experience. The TUPals program is a great example of how the students on the ISAB help to make Tulane a more welcoming place for all students.”