

Montana State University - Bozeman

Recommendations for an Internationalization Action Plan

MSU Internationalization Committee

November 3, 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a partial completion to Provost Potvin's charge to the MSU Internationalization Laboratory Committee (Dec 23, 2011), the Committee has prepared this report which presents a set of findings and recommendations to grow and strengthen international programs and related efforts at Montana State University – Bozeman. This effort was stimulated by interests of MSU faculty and students and greatly enhanced by participation in the American Council on Education's Internationalization Laboratory program. Other elements of the Provost's charge have been met, or scheduled for completion, and summarized in other documents. Findings and recommendations contained in this report aim to achieve the goal of "comprehensive internationalization" in which the diverse set of international activities such as faculty international research, international content in the curriculum, students studying abroad, international students on campus, etc., are all interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The report includes an analysis of the international dimensions of MSU's new Strategic Plan which contains international objectives across the breadth of MSU's vision and mission. An Action Plan has been proposed and includes a number of specific recommendations to address how these objectives can be attained. These are highlighted below:

- A key recommendation is to establish a new, standing International Council made up of a broad representation of the MSU campus, to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and internationalization efforts, integrating these into the current governance structure at MSU.
- Adoption of a set of specific student international learning outcomes which define concrete international skills and knowledge the University aims to impart to our students to prepare them for increasingly 'borderless careers'.
- A set-aside or expansion of faculty development funding for faculty to create new courses, or greatly enhance existing ones, featuring international content.
- To promote permanence and comprehensiveness of faculty engagement in international efforts, the Committee recommends that international programmatic activities be recognized for promotion and tenure in either teaching, research, or service criteria.
- Adoption of an international course requirement within the undergraduate core curriculum to help ensure that our students have a base level of knowledge and understanding about the increasingly global dimensions of human society in the 21st century.
- Review and revise the requirements for the Global Studies Minor offered by the Office of International Programs to resolve problems limiting its availability.
- Review and address barriers tending to prevent MSU students from participating in study abroad programs, seeking to both make study abroad more affordable and integrate study abroad more tightly into the curriculum.
- Strengthen MSU's international student recruitment efforts, recognizing that the global higher education marketplace is increasingly competitive. The Plan also includes several ways to increase the integration of our international students into the campus community.

- Several strategies to raise MSU’s international profile are presented.
- Greater visibility of opportunities for faculty and students within the OIP which can be greatly enhanced by identifying a location for OIP services within the core of the MSU campus.
- The impact of globalization is already being felt across Montana. It is critical that new outreach activities help address the needs of Montana citizens and businesses to understand and succeed in this new global reality.

INTRODUCTION

Montana State University is a global university deeply engaged in teaching, learning, research and service throughout the world. Among its many recent international accomplishments:

- MSU President Waded Cruzado has been appointed by President Obama to serve on the Board for International Food and Agricultural,
- MSU’s Engineers Without Borders Chapter was awarded the C. Peter Magrath University Community Engagement Award by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities for its work bringing clean water to rural communities in Kenya,
- The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities has established the Michael P. Malone International Leadership Awards in honor of the international leadership of the late MSU President Mike Malone,
- The United States Department of State has selected MSU for the last 9 years as a site for the Middle East Partnership Initiative Student Leaders Program,
- The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology has selected MSU to administer the Long-term Education Administrator Program to provide training on U.S. higher education and international programs for Japanese university administrative staff for 15 years and,
- The Institute of International Education awarded MSU the Andrew Heiskell Award for Campus Internationalization for its work in developing the innovative U.S. Arabic Distance Learning Network.

MSU can be justly proud regarding these achievements and those of many other student and faculty leaders.

However, these international initiatives are the outcome of the efforts of individual faculty, staff and students and are not the result of strategic thinking about the place of international education at Montana State University or how these individual initiatives fit into a comprehensive program. This does not in any way diminish the value of these international activities in relation to their intended goals. It does, however, pose the question of whether or not a more systematic, strategic approach to internationalization is needed, one in which individual activities reinforce one another and achieve a more powerful overall impact on Montana State University. This approach to the development of international education is called “comprehensive internationalization.”

COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONALIZATION

Comprehensive internationalization attempts to follow a systematic, coordinated approach to developing the international dimensions of a university. Olson, Green and Hill provide a useful definition of comprehensive internationalization in *A Handbook for Advancing Comprehensive Internationalization* published by the American Council on Education:

“By [comprehensive internationalization] we mean a strategic and integrated approach to internationalization in which institutions articulate internationalization as an institutional goal (if not priority), develop an internationalization plan driven by sound analysis, and seek to bring together the usually disparate and often marginalized aspects of internationalization. . . . It is the synergy among the various elements – at home and abroad – that promotes comprehensive internationalization.”

Comprehensive internationalization attempts to create a mutually-reinforcing cycle of related international activities. For example, international research activities on the part of the faculty result in infusing the curriculum with international content as faculty apply their research to their classrooms. Exposing students to international content in the classroom, in turn, increases the interests of students to engage in study abroad as well as internships, group service projects and other overseas activities. Having more students and faculty abroad results in increased interest on the part of international students to come to the campus on exchange. Expanding international student enrollments increases the contact of U.S. students with other cultures, and this, in turn, promotes interest in going abroad. This interest motivates the faculty to take student groups abroad. These activities motivate academic

colleges and departments to establish international certificate programs and international options within their majors, etc. Thus, if properly aligned, all the elements of international activity should be mutually reinforcing.

This Action Plan from the MSU Internationalization Committee seeks to establish a framework for the further development of international programs at Montana State University as a systematic whole and the achievement of comprehensive internationalization.

THE ACE INTERNATIONALIZATION LABORATORY PROJECT

The Action Plan has been developed within the framework of the American Council on Education's Internationalization Laboratory project (IL).

The IL project is a program offered by ACE to assist universities and colleges to adopt a strategic approach to international program development. Each year ACE selects a set of institutions to go through a two year process of systematically reviewing their international programs, defining the international knowledge and experience they hope to impart to their students, and preparing an action plan which provides a roadmap to go from the institutions' current programs to educational programs which achieve the defined international learning outcomes. The premise of IL and MSU's participation in it, as formulated by Olson, Green, and Hill, is that "a high quality undergraduate education must prepare students for a world in which they will be called upon to be effective workers and informed citizens who can think and act with global awareness and cross-cultural understanding."

MSU applied to participate in the IL project in July of 2011 with the strong encouragement of President Waded Cruzado, who had participated in the IL program when she was at New Mexico State University. In August 19, 2011 ACE President Molly Broad welcomed MSU into the IL Project and Provost Martha Potvin formed an International Laboratory Project Committee co-chaired by then Engineering Dean Robert Marley (who is now Interim Vice-President for Student Success) and International Programs Executive Director Norman Peterson.

Over the next academic year the Committee gathered data on international activity at MSU. This included collecting data already available about different international programs, as well as conducting

surveys of academic departments, the faculty and the student body. A highly successful “open space” meeting was conducted February 7, 2012 which allowed the university community to provide input regarding international programs at MSU.

In addition, a subgroup of the IL Committee chaired by School of Music Director Greg Young, began work on a set of Student International Learning Outcomes to define specific knowledge, skills, and experiences MSU wants to impart to its students to be successful in their careers in today’s globalized context. Another subgroup chaired by Ms. Jo Packham, Assistant VP of Human Resources, was organized to focus on collecting data needed to establish key benchmarks of international activities.

Midway through these activities a change of leadership was required, when Dean Marley was selected to be an ACE Fellow and left MSU for the year to be in residence in the President’s Office of Texas A&M University. Professor Ada Giusti of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures took over as Committee Co-chair.

In February 2013 the Committee produced the initial report for the IL Project, identifying international activities in 12 key performance areas.

In May of 2013 the Office of International Programs produced the second major document for the IL process, a report on the Financial Structure of the Office of International Programs, as requested by the Provost in her charge to the IL Committee.

This report is the culmination of the IL process, providing an Action Plan to take MSU from its international activity level at the inception of the IL process to the level of international activities which allow it to achieve the international goals and objectives in the MSU Strategic Plan and the international learning outcomes identified for students to attain.

MSU wishes to express our appreciation to the ACE Internationalization Laboratory project and to IL director Dr. Barbara Hill for her leadership and support.

INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN THE MSU STRATEGIC PLAN

The MSU Strategic Plan, *Mountains and Minds: Learners and Leaders*, adopted in 2012, sets forth specific international objectives regarding learning, discovery, engagement, integration, and access. The Plan includes the following specific references to international activities (emphasis added):

- In its Vision statement the Strategic Plan describes MSU as “... a welcoming, adventurous community of students, faculty and staff distinguished by its commitment to *address the world’s greatest challenges.*” It fosters “... collaboration and open communication, which in turn *create productive local, regional and global communities.*”
- Within its commitment to student learning the Plan commits itself to “*prepare students to be world leaders.*”
- The Plan calls upon MSU to “... *raise its national and international prominence* in research, creativity, innovation, and scholarly achievement,” and for faculty to “... *achieve national and international reputations in their disciplines.*” The University will “*attract and retain faculty of national and international recognition.*”
- The number of MSU’s graduate students “*presenting at national and international meetings,...securing prizes at national and international competitions...*” will increase.
- Members of the MSU community “...*will be leaders, scholars, and engaged citizens of their local, national and global communities.*” MSU will foster “*cultural attunement to better understand and engage diverse communities here in Montana and around the world...*”
- “MSU graduates will have “*global and multicultural understanding and experiences.*” The percentage of MSU students “... *participating in cross-cultural study, work, or service... will double.*”
- MSU will “*improve the world through integration of education, research and outreach.*”
- MSU will “*nurture students from around the globe...*” It will “*increase international students by twenty percent,*” bringing their “...*distinctive perspective*” to the campus.

Thus, the MSU Strategic Plan calls for an Action Plan which:

1. Increases MSU’s ability to address the world’s greatest challenges and foster creation of productive global communities, encouraging the MSU community to be leaders and engaged citizens,
2. Promotes global solutions through integration, of education, research and outreach,
3. Fosters cultural attunement to increase engagement with diverse global communities,

4. Raises MSU's international prominence,
5. Prepares students to be world leaders, enhancing their global and multicultural knowledge,
6. Doubles the number of MSU students in cross-cultural study, work, or service,
7. Enables MSU faculty to achieve international reputations,
8. Attracts and retains internationally recognized faculty,
9. Increases graduate students presentations at international meetings, and
10. Increases and nurtures international students and the distinctive perspective they bring.

Accomplishing these goals calls for the elements in the Plan to be mutually reinforcing. In other words the Action Plan needs to be based on comprehensive internationalization. In the following sections the essential elements of an Action Plan are developed. But in addition consideration must be given to the governance structure which is needed to accomplish the integration of these elements into the University.

A NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONALIZATION

A cornerstone of the Action Plan is a new governance structure to guide MSU international programs. For comprehensive internationalization to become a functional reality at MSU, a governance structure is needed for international programs that will integrate international programs into the fabric of MSU. To accomplish this, the Internationalization Committee recommends the establishment of a new International Council integrated into MSU's overall governance structure.

Currently OIP gets input from faculty, students and staff through an International Programs Committee (IPC), which serves an advisory role. This has worked adequately during the entrepreneurial stages of OIP's development. It has not, however, proven itself to be effective in moving international programs along a path of comprehensive internationalization or in building strong connections between OIP and the major academic units of MSU.

Meanwhile, through the leadership of President Waded Cruzado a strong governance structure has been built on the campus to provide for shared and transparent governance. At the top of this structure is the University Council which is the ultimate policy body for the MSU system. Organized under it is a Budget Council (concerned with financial and budget matters), a Planning Council (responsible for creating and updating the MSU Strategic Plan), a Deans' Council (focusing on academic affairs), a

Research Council (to deal with research activities). Most recently an Outreach and Engagement Council has been established to focus on these two critical areas of activity.

The mission of the proposed International Council would be to promote vision and leadership concerning MSU international programs, ensuring that programs serve MSU's academic colleges and other major campus units. These responsibilities would include reviewing MSU international partnerships around the world, international student recruitment and retention, review of MSU faculty led study abroad programs, and semester and academic year program options. Maximum impact of international programs would be ensured through implementation of comprehensive internationalization programs through which activities are mutually supportive. The Council would encourage and promote the development of international certificates and other degree options by MSU's academic colleges and departments. The International Council would coordinate with the Budget, Planning, Deans, Research, and Outreach and Engagement Councils. The Council's membership would be parallel to other MSU councils, including representatives of each of the academic colleges, the library, faculty senate, staff senate, professional council, ASMSU, and a representative from the community.

DEFINING STUDENT INTERNATIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

A critical foundation for the Action Plan on the ACE internationalization model is the formulation of international learning outcomes that MSU hopes its graduates will acquire. What knowledge, skills, and experience will our graduates require to succeed in the 'borderless careers' they will enter in the 21st century? The Strategic Plan offers a start toward identifying these outcomes. MSU students should have "global and multicultural understanding and experiences". However, this formulation is too vague to be of much assistance in identifying specific educational experiences MSU needs to provide to its students.

To address this missing foundation, a Subcommittee of the Internationalization Committee took up the task of developing a set of more specific learning outcomes. The results of their deliberations outline a set of outcomes for a globally competent student body:

Students will:

- (1) Describe the international dimensions of their own discipline

- (2) Explain their own cultural identity
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of other cultures (including beliefs, values, perspectives, practices, and products)

Students will:

- (1) Apply intercultural communication skills to engage with people in other communities
- (2) Reflect upon diverse cultural frames of reference and alternate perspectives to think critically and solve problems

Students will:

- (1) Accept cultural differences and accept cultural ambiguity
- (2) Advocate for and support positive international relations
- (3) Seek out international or intercultural opportunities

Activities that would indicate or support the development of such knowledge, skills and attitudes by students at Montana State University would include:

- Successful completion of course(s) that examine the international dimensions of the field of study,
- Successful completion of foreign language courses that develop proficiency in a foreign language and culture (intermediate Mid-Level – as defined by ACTFL guidelines, 2012 – in the four modalities: speaking, listening, reading, writing),
- Attain a passing score on an internationally recognized and accepted language proficiency test to attest and certify language skills,
- Successful completion of a course that meets the University diversity core requirement,
- Participation in a study-abroad program,
- Fulfill requirements of an international certificate,
- Participation in a student organization with an international or intercultural focus (e.g. Engineers without Borders, international student clubs, etc.),
- International work experience (e.g. internships, service projects, cross-cultural research, etc.),
- Develop and participate in cross-cultural arts programs (e.g. international film festivals, etc.),

Finalizing and maintaining the list of student international learning outcomes should be the responsibility of the International Council recommended above.

FACULTY INTERNATIONALIZATION INITIATIVES

These learning outcomes can only be achieved through an academic program with strong international content. A key element in the proposed Action Plan is a new approach to incentivizing faculty to enhance academic offerings that allow students to achieve the student international learning outcomes. To encourage developing new international learning opportunities, the Committee recommends the establishment of a Faculty Internationalization Fund. The Fund would provide small grants to MSU faculty to enable them to expand international learning outcomes in the areas listed above such as adding new international content to a course, developing a new partnership abroad to serve the needs of students in the faculty member's field of study, etc.

The proposed Fund would be under the supervision of the International Council, and the Office of International Programs would serve as the secretariat for the Fund. The International Council would present a proposal annually to the Planning Council and the Budget Council requesting funding. In collaboration with the Office of International Programs, the Council would release an RFP, requesting faculty members to submit proposals for internationalization initiatives.

Although the funding needed is often small, it is needed for the activity to take place. A relatively small amount of funding – e.g. \$25,000 per year – can generate a lot of activity and can leverage support from other sources.

The Office of International Programs has experience conducting programs like this. To support faculty international initiatives, the Office of International Programs established a Faculty International Research and Program Development Fund in 1996 that has assisted over 50 faculty members. The fund has been successful in helping faculty to launch productive international projects. However, the Fund's source of revenue was indirect cost dollars (F&A) earned from OIP grants and such returns are not currently available as MSU policies have changed and funding agencies have cut back on grants and restricted allowable indirect costs.

ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF PROMOTION AND TENURE ON INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

The promotion and tenure process is the fundamental driver of MSU's faculty through the early stages of their academic careers. Do current promotion and tenure policies encourage or inhibit faculty from engaging in international activities? Do current promotion and tenure policies support the international

goals in the Strategic Plan? If not, how can they be adjusted to encourage faculty to engage in international research and teaching? These are significant questions with important implications regarding achieving comprehensive internationalization. The answer to these questions is not clear or obvious. This is an area that needs investigation. A good place to begin would be to survey faculty currently going through promotion and tenure or having recently completed the process.

CORE CURRICULUM

The international content of MSU's Core Curriculum is a key building block in comprehensive internationalization. Probably no other single component in the complex of factors influencing internationalization has as much impact. The issue of requiring an international element in the undergraduate core curriculum came up early and frequently in the IL process. It was first raised by participants in the "Open Space" meeting held at the start of the project.

An international requirement is a missing component in MSU's core curriculum as it currently exists. Since the revision of the undergraduate core curriculum in Fall 2004, when the CORE2.0 curriculum was adopted, there has been no international core requirement at MSU. At the time CORE2.0 was put in place, the existing "multicultural global" requirement, which could be fulfilled by participation in a study abroad experience and was deemed fulfilled by international students at MSU, was dropped. In its place, a new "diversity" core requirement was established. The concept of diversity embedded in the new core requirement is fundamentally different than international diversity. So a for-credit study abroad program does not fulfill the diversity requirement established by CORE2.0, and international students studying at MSU are not deemed to fulfill the diversity requirement through their cultural experiences as foreign students at MSU.

The Committee recommends that the MSU Undergraduate Core Curriculum be modified to include an international requirement. No college or university can claim to have an internationalized institution if it does not include an international requirement in its undergraduate core.

The most straightforward way to accomplish this would be to combine the international requirement with the existing diversity requirement, to create an 'international and diversity' requirement. Students could choose to fulfill the requirement with an international course or a for-credit education abroad option, or through a diversity course. International students enrolled as MSU undergraduates would be

deemed to have fulfilled the international requirement by virtue of their immersion experience on campus.

GLOBAL STUDIES MINOR

Several years ago the Office of International Programs established a Global Studies Minor. The Minor was developed as a way for students in any major to develop their international skills and experience. It requires students to earn at least 6 credits studying abroad, develop proficiency in a modern foreign language at least through the first semester of the second year, and complete at least 14 semester hours of courses having substantial, contemporary international content. Although the minor has been of interest to many students, it has been limited in its usefulness because a proposed required Capstone Seminar has not been offered due to lack of funding. As a result of this problem, students electing the Minor have needed to complete an independent study with an international focus under the supervision of a faculty member. This problem has restricted the number of students that can be accommodated and has prevented OIP from promoting the minor broadly to MSU students. The Committee recommends that the International Council, in cooperation with the Office of International Programs develop a modified set of requirements for the minor, dropping the requirement of the Capstone Seminar, so that the minor can be actively promoted to MSU students.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ABROAD

While the core curriculum is essential to provide a base level of international knowledge to MSU undergraduates, in-depth experience abroad is essential to develop the sophisticated knowledge of other languages and cultures defined in the Strategic Plan and the proposed international learning outcomes.

As discussed above, the Strategic Plan calls for doubling the “percentage of students participating in cross-cultural study, work or service experiences . . .” While such cross-cultural experiences may be obtained domestically (e.g. programs on the Native American reservations in Montana), as well as internationally, it is certainly the case that education abroad programs offer students great opportunities for such learning.

Currently approximately 350 MSU students study abroad each year throughout the world. Trying to double MSU student participation in education abroad programs poses substantial challenges. A diverse array of factors influences the ability of MSU students to study abroad – motivation, ability to earn credit toward the student’s degree program, fear of delays in graduation, family attitudes, faculty encouragement, funding, experience of friends and fellow students, access to information, etc. This topic is worthy of an Action Plan of its own. However, two factors stand out: 1) lack of financial resources, and 2) concerns about credit transfer and applying credit to students’ degree programs.

Funding issues are the most challenging. However, the Committee believes that three initiatives to make study abroad more affordable are worthy of consideration:

1. One way to make study abroad more affordable is to expand study abroad programs based on the exchange of tuition and fees. On this program model, outbound students pay their regular bill for tuition and fees at MSU, paying for a place for an inbound student to study at MSU. The inbound students from partner universities similarly leave behind funding to cover the costs of attendance at the international host partner. As a result, everyone gets to study abroad while continuing to pay costs as if they were enrolled at their home institutions, (plus additional travel costs and differences in costs of room and board).
2. The second initiative to address financial barriers is to establish a scholarship fund based on student fees. The idea, first initiated at the University of Texas at Austin, is to establish a small study abroad scholarship fee (e.g. \$3 to \$5 per semester) all students pay each semester. The resulting pool of funds is used for small scholarships to assist needy students to study abroad. Since its establishment at the University of Texas the idea has been replicated by many institutions with great success. Of course, support for the idea by the Associated Students of Montana State University (ASMSU) would be essential. A \$3 per semester fee at MSU Bozeman would create a pool of \$45,000 per semester. Distributed in small scholarships to financially needy students wanting to study abroad would have a major impact.
3. Finally, many activities associated with internationalization are consistent with MSU’s comprehensive campaign under student and faculty excellence. Thus, opportunities exist for academic colleges to seek support from private donors who share these interests. For example, many alumni studied abroad while at MSU, and have fond memories and tremendous learning experiences as a result. Many of these alums would like to help students to also have a study abroad experience. Awards in the range of \$500 - \$1,000 would be extremely beneficial in

allowing students to study abroad, and scholarships at this level are financially affordable for many alumni.

Credit concerns are also a major barrier that restrict many MSU students from studying abroad. These concerns can take any of several specific shapes -- uncertainties regarding course offerings at the student's host institution, lack of detailed information about the specific content of available courses, lack of information about course equivalents for required courses, etc.-- and result in lack of confidence regarding the credit transferred to a student's MSU degree. Lack of detailed information often leads departmental faculty advisors to discourage students from going abroad. These problems are compounded for students majoring in professional programs such as business, engineering and the sciences due to the demanding curricular requirements in these disciplines. However, these problems can be effectively addressed in most cases.

Many of these barriers can be overcome through a substantial curriculum integration initiative. Study abroad curriculum integration can take several forms:

- A Pre-approved Courses List can be initiated to identify courses already evaluated for their applicability to home institution major requirements.
- Study Abroad Information and Advising Sheets can be developed to provide detailed information for students and advisors about studying abroad by students in individual majors. The University of Minnesota has developed an extensive series of such Information sheets in each major offered at the University. These information sheets discuss the value of study abroad for students in a specific major, and provide detailed information about study at specific study abroad locations.
- Another way to further study abroad curriculum integration is to identify a faculty or staff member willing to serve as the Study Abroad Advisor for that department. These advisors work closely with OIP's Study Abroad Advisors to provide guidance for students majoring in their field.

SUPPORTING FACULTY LEADING STUDENT GROUPS ABROAD

Faculty-led group programs abroad are growing rapidly both at MSU and across the nation. They are an important component in comprehensive internationalization because they offer significant international learning opportunities for both students and faculty. They often can be planned to allow faculty

members to further their research interests in conjunction with the program. If planned as an experience for younger undergraduates, these programs motivate students to undertake a more intensive study abroad experience later in their undergraduate programs.

However, planning and conducting an intensive program for a group of students in a foreign country is a complex task. Much responsibility for student safety and health comes with the job and most faculty members are not prepared to handle program emergencies in other countries.

MSU needs to provide a strong base of support for faculty taking student groups abroad. Presently OIP's staff responsible for supporting faculty-led groups is funded on a soft-money, fee-for-service basis. So OIP can only provide substantial administrative support for programs that build funding into the program budget to pay for the OIP support. Many faculty members, legitimately concerned about making their programs more affordable, are reluctant to agree to add these costs to the program budget, and opt to try to get by without OIP support.

MSU should encourage faculty to take student groups abroad because it directly addresses the goals of the Strategic Plan, both for building student international skills and enhancing faculty international exposure. MSU should provide essential administrative support for faculty leading approved group programs abroad, including program planning, budget development, program health and safety planning, program promotion, orientation, etc. Faculty wanting a higher level of support from OIP could obtain it on a fee-for-services basis.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND INTEGRATION

Issues regarding international students were another subject of discussion throughout the IL process and occupy a prominent position in the Strategic Plan. As emphasized in the Strategic Plan, international students bring unique cultural perspectives to the campus, and their influence is a critical element in the process of campus internationalization.

MSU has been successful in attracting students from around the world in recent years, increasing international student enrollments from 353 in Fall 2009 to 581 in Fall 2013. An additional 118 newly recruited students are attending the A.C.E. Language Institute to increase their English proficiency before joining the academic program. This success is due to many factors – the growing reputation of the University in many fields of study, an energetic and well-designed recruitment program, the

development of innovative dual degree programs. Like many areas of activity at MSU, this success has been attained on a “shoe-string budget.”

The global higher education marketplace in which we must compete for students is growing more and more competitive. Not only are more U.S. universities looking to fill their budget shortfalls by recruiting international students, universities from around the world are entering the international student market. MSU must expect that remaining competitive in this important area will require larger investments of time, money and personnel in the future.

In order to recruit a diverse and stable international student body in an ever-changing global market, MSU needs to employ a mix of strategies and initiatives. We must work in primary, secondary and niche markets. International travel by MSU recruitment staff and faculty to represent the university at educational fairs and institutions is essential, but other important recruitment initiatives include maintaining strong relationships with sponsoring governments and organizations; continuing the development and use of our network of recruitment agents; and building attractive programs that bring flows of students to MSU such as dual diploma programs.

The Action Plan calls for OIP to generate a formalized, comprehensive international marketing and recruitment plan to be reviewed by the International Council. The International Council would recommend to the Budget Council an appropriate level of funding. We must also be creative in developing our ‘brand’ and making sure we satisfy the students we have to ensure they will be strong promoters of the MSU advantage in their home countries. The Action Plan also includes a review of the MSU brand for the international marketplace, and a detailed survey of international student satisfaction.

Integrating international students into MSU was one of the most popular discussion subjects at the Open Space meeting at the kick-off of the IL process, and many ideas were generated by attendees. These included:

- Increasing opportunities for international students and Americans to get to know each other through dialogue nights, cultural presentations in the residence halls, and an expanded peer mentoring program.

- Offering training opportunities to familiarize international students with American culture and to provide them with information about how to get involved and to interact at MSU.
- Communicating more effectively across the campus and increasing the visibility of the world cultures that are present here via an “international corner” in the Exponent and better use of University Communications tools and OIP’s website. The comment was made frequently that many people are eager to develop friendships and connections with the international student community, but lack information about how to meet international students and to develop interactions beyond a superficial level.

RAISING MSU’S INTERNATIONAL PROFILE

The Strategic Plan calls for MSU to raise its prominence internationally. No doubt MSU’s profile internationally does not measure up to its academic excellence. It is a well-kept secret among America’s major research universities. One of the primary goals of the Action Plan needs to be to identify a set of specific steps to raise MSU’s profile internationally. Doing so will result in pay-offs in recruiting international faculty and students, as well as in developing partnerships with highly respected institutions abroad.

The most articulate voice for MSU is President Waded Cruzado and her communication skills should be a prominent component in the effort to raise MSU’s profile around the world. The Committee recommends that the President lead an MSU delegation to at least one world region each year, beginning with Latin America and including East Asia, Europe, and Africa. Each trip needs to be carefully planned with clearly defined goals, including contact with alumni, visiting established partners, exploring new partnerships. Each trip should feature at least one major speech to attract attention from local media.

Another important step in raising MSU’s global profile would be to be listed in the rankings of the major international ranking schemes. Although often held in contempt and accused of presenting a misleading portrait of universities, international university ranking schemes are of growing importance. Prospective international students and their families, in particular, use the rankings as a source of important information about universities. The best known of these ranking schemes are: 1) the Academic Ranking

of World Universities, published by the Center for World-Class Universities at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 2) the QS World University Rankings, published by Quacquarelli Symonds Ltd, and 3) the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. While peer institutions like Colorado State University, Washington State University, Oregon State University and the University of Montana are included, MSU is not listed in the latest editions of any of these rankings.

MSU relies heavily upon our position in the Carnegie Foundations' classification of U.S. universities and colleges (RU/VH), being ranked among the top 73 public research universities in the U.S. This is certainly impressive, but the Carnegie Foundation rankings are complex and not generally understood internationally. The major university rankings are, by contrast, simple and straightforward.

MSU should establish a task force to investigate the various international ranking systems and formulate a strategy to move MSU up in their rankings.

Each year many MSU faculty members travel internationally to conduct research, lecture, attend professional meetings, etc. and MSU hosts many scholars from around the world. These internationally mobile scholars represent an opportunity to enhance MSU's international profile which the University is only partially utilizing. The Committee believes that OIP should be tasked to develop a plan to recruit and equip our faculty travelling internationally and visiting scholars from abroad to be ambassadors for MSU around the world.

Another opportunity to increase MSU's international profile would be to be recognized with a Paul Simon Award for campus internationalization awarded each year by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Receiving a Simon Award would also be a high-value recognition that would raise MSU's international profile. The application consists of a cover letter, an essay discussing the applicant's accomplishments, and completion of an on-line application form and the application deadline is October 15 each year. A team formed from OIP and Communication Services should be tasked to put together an application for the 2014 competition.

LOCATING INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS IN THE CORE OF THE CAMPUS

The Strategic Plan calls for MSU to produce graduates who have had rich global and multicultural experiences, graduates who have the skills to be world leaders, able to engage global communities in solving the world's greatest challenges. However, the main support center for this effort, the Office of

International Programs, is tucked away on the top floor of Culbertson Hall on the periphery of the campus. OIP's isolated location is not only inconvenient, it communicates to students and faculty that international activities are not an MSU priority. Greater visibility is needed. International Programs needs to be located somewhere in the main corridor of the campus, in a location that is both highly visible and easily accessible. Although we tend to think mainly of the "software" issues we face in making comprehensive internationalization effective, the "hardware" issues, such as the location of International Programs, is also an important component in making comprehensive internationalization a reality.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH AND EXTENSION

MSU's Outreach and Extension programs provide great services to people across the state of Montana. However, all the reasons why internationalization is important to the MSU campus apply to the people served by Outreach and Extension throughout Montana. Globalization trends reach into the most remote areas of the state and Montanans need support in understanding how globalization impacts them and in developing the knowledge needed to function effectively in today's global context. The Committee recommends as an important new element in the Action Plan that the proposed International Council work with Outreach and Engagement Council to develop new outreach and extension activities that support the interests of Montanans to function effectively in today's interconnected global context.

CONCLUSION

Montana State University can be justly proud of the international accomplishments of so many of its students, staff, and faculty. These individual achievements are of great value in furthering the expansion of knowledge, addressing the world's pressing problems, preparing individuals to contribute to their professions, and improving the lives of people throughout the world. They should be encouraged and recognized by the University.

However, now is the moment for MSU to embrace the concept of comprehensive internationalization and to put in place a well-conceived plan that creates a synergistic international environment in which all the diverse elements of internationalization are mutually reinforcing. This report presents a preliminary set of recommendations toward realizing the goals of comprehensive internationalization at

MSU. The Internationalization Committee has compiled a set of steps to move MSU toward this vision outlined in this report.

There may be members of the University community who will find concerns with some of these recommendations. This is a natural and healthy part of the dialogue that can move the process of internationalization forward. The important point of this report is not found in each of its individual recommendations, but in understanding the importance of identifying the individual elements that are involved in achieving comprehensive internationalization and embracing the task of fitting them together in a mutually reinforcing way.

The Committee wishes to thank all the individuals in the MSU community interested in furthering the goal of making Montana State University a great global institution dedicated to the betterment of Montana, the United States of America and the world.

Appendix A

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