

INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

**SEVEN WAYS TO INFUSE
INTERNATIONAL LEARNING ACROSS CAMPUS**



TERRADOTTA

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Preface



No longer is study abroad a one-and-done experience for domestic students. And attending a U.S. school isn't just a one-way opportunity for international students to soak up American culture. Over the last two decades, colleges and universities have made internationalization at home a strategic goal as they set their sights on bolstering their institutions' international competitiveness and providing every student with the cultural competencies they need to succeed in a global workforce.

Internationalization, as NAFSA: Association of International Educators, defines it, is the **“conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of postsecondary education.”**

“To be fully successful,” the association states, “it must involve active and responsible engagement of the academic community in global networks and partnerships.”

Stated another way, internationalization at home is the “purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments,” according to **Redefining Internationalization at Home**.

But purposeful integration of a curriculum and engaging an academic community take more than a handful of annual events or a few one-off courses. It means including international themes in coursework, ensuring international students are active participants in campus life, making international opportunities accessible to every student and cultivating a community where all students are learning from each other.

TO-DO LIST



ENROLLMENT AND INTERNATIONALIZATION IN THE U.S. AND U.K., AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

THE WHY FOR CHARLOTTE




AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE, while the term “internationalization at home” has not been long used on campus, the university has been providing these comprehensive experiences for more than 45 years, said Joël Gallegos, assistant provost for international programs. Despite the increasing number of students studying abroad, so many more do not, and **these opportunities provide all students with international experiences and exposure**, he said.

“For us, internationalization at home is really an approach, a philosophy, a directive within our office to develop a purposeful and a very intentional integration and **embedding international, intercultural and global dimensions, not only in the curriculum, but in the co-curricular activities on campus,**” Gallegos said. And he’s eager to build on the campus’s existing programs to bring more opportunities to its students and the broader community.

“This is an opportunity, a moment for us. There are so many wonderful resources out there to actually advance the work that we do and to partner with so many more on our campus to effectively connect more lives to international education opportunities.

—JOËL GALLEGOS



AS LIFE RETURNS TO A “NEW NORMAL” ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES, STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS BEGIN RETURNING TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TRAVEL BACK TO THEIR U.S. CAMPUSES. **HERE ARE SEVEN WAYS TO INTERNATIONALIZE YOUR CAMPUS AND ITS PROGRAMS.**

1 BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

THE GLOBAL STUDIES OFFICE shouldn't be the only on-campus home for international students. Build partnerships across campus to introduce them to faculty and staff and **ensure their diverse needs are met.**

TIP On campus, international students may be focused on earning their undergraduate or graduate degree. But **their end game is gainful employment**, Gallegos said. At Charlotte, they've developed workshops about optional practical training and partnerships with the Center for Graduate Life and Learning along with various university career center services to **create an ecosystem of support for them.**



2 INTEGRATE THROUGH CO-CURRICULARS

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CAN BE LASER-FOCUSED, spending hours studying and socializing mostly with other international students. Through programs big and small, **encourage their integration across campus life** to kindle relationships with a wide range of students, faculty and staff.

TIP

Charlotte offers a slate of events aimed at bringing people together. Its annual international festival draws 20,000 people for food, fun and connection. In the classroom, as part of its cultural ambassadors program, faculty members invite international students for a panel discussion about specific topics such as perspectives on religion or racism. Its Global Gateways House is a co-ed residential program that mixes both domestic and international students. And the World Affairs Council of Charlotte, a university outreach program, brings in a series of prestigious speakers and offers other programs to students and the community.

Through strategic planning, leaders also are working on **new ways to integrate international students into campus life and increase their sense of inclusivity and belonging**, Gallegos said. “We have a portfolio of programs that we’ve offered for a long time, but we’d like to do even more.”





MORE ENGAGEMENT = MORE SUCCESS

RESEARCHERS HAVE LONG TIED student engagement and a sense of belonging to academic success. Mentorship programs, peer networks, transparent policies and easy access to information about resources and opportunities can boost engagement and belonging, according to a study in the **International Journal of Doctoral Studies**.

And that's another reason why it's so critical to cultivate opportunities for connection, learning and understanding with international students across a campus.

"There is longitudinal research done that regardless of the nature of the student, whether it's an international or domestic student, **those students who are more engaged are the ones who find themselves more successful**," Gallegos said.

"There is a sense of belonging, the likelihood of succeeding, the likelihood of graduation, the likelihood of doing well in your classes. The more engaged you are, the greater the likelihood of success."

3 CONNECT THE CURRICULUM



SENDING DOMESTIC STUDENTS ABROAD is a great way to connect them to other cultures. But global education shouldn't end when they return to their home institutions. And international travel isn't possible for every student.

International themes should be infused across an institution's curriculum. Encourage faculty members to find ways to tie international material into their courses.

TIP

Charlotte's new strategic plan makes explicit references to international education and global learning, including the internalization of the curriculum. **The goal, Gallegos said, is to bake it into the institution's DNA** over the next decade. One big step forward: The institution has updated its general education program to include "global" as a theme and "intercultural" as one of its three competencies.

"We're really focusing on the fact that all of our undergraduates are going to go through this general education program and will have an even stronger introduction and foundation for appreciation of differences, and understanding a little bit of cultural development," Gallegos said. "Hopefully, we'll continue to build on that throughout their academic career."

In a similar vein, Baylor University surveyed faculty to find out how many teach courses with an international component. The answer: one-third. Now, said Jeff Hamilton, vice provost for global engagement, they're **exploring how those themes are built into the classes, how faculty members can be supported in their work and how they can do more.**

4 USE SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS



TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS who study abroad, offer more short-term trips that tie directly to a course or academic program. **Shorter programs are more accessible for students who might not be able to afford traveling abroad for a semester or longer.** And incorporating the travel into a course or academic program ensures discussions about them continue on campus.

TIP To build on the opportunities for learning and engagement during short-term programs, Charlotte faculty members who lead education abroad programs developed a new set of student learning outcomes for them. Now, all faculty who lead these programs incorporate a consistent series of learning outcomes within those experiences.

Compared to more traditional study abroad programs, some international educators may downplay the value of these programs due to their short term nature. But Gallegos said they provide an important opportunity for many students. **“If it’s the one opportunity that our students have to actually get a passport, board a plane and have an international experience, it could either whet the appetite or be the introduction to something wonderful,”** he said. “So we stand by that.”

5 OPEN UP PIPELINES

DON'T RELY ON THE USUAL SUSPECTS for study abroad programs and international student recruitment. Find pipelines to a broader array of countries and connections by **creating new partnerships for research and international students.**

TIP Charlotte has allocated travel money for faculty to initiate relationships with new institutions that hopefully will encourage their international colleagues and students, particularly graduate students, to travel to Charlotte for research and education, Gallegos said. "We're identifying how we can begin, in small ways, to **diversify our source populations to include countries that we haven't focused on before** through expansion of our partnership networks."



6 SPREAD THE WORD



DON'T LET INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS study in obscurity. Let the campus know how important their presence is and help faculty and staff develop productive relationships with them.

“There’s still a great need to acknowledge and to really give credence to the work of the international scholars and international students,” said Grace Semple-Paul, Baylor’s assistant director for International Student & Scholar Services. “In other words, to **acknowledge the strengths that they are bringing to the campus**, and how the campus cannot be considered internationalized without, not just the presence, but the work and the acknowledgement of the work of these groups.”

TIP Baylor recently developed a faculty and staff tool kit that provides a central source for **cultural information about particular countries, including how to pronounce names and which trigger words to avoid**. The goal, Semple-Paul said, is to help faculty and staff feel more comfortable interacting with an international student.

INTERNATIONAL **IMPACT**



**U.S. VOTERS AGREE THAT
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
PLAY A VITAL ROLE ON
COLLEGE CAMPUSES.**

68%

said U.S. college students benefit when they have close and regular contact with students from other countries.

58%

said international students are valuable additions to college campuses because they bring intellectual talent and energy.

64%

said encouraging international students to attend a U.S. college or university promotes goodwill.

2021 ACE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SURVEY

7 THINK VIRTUALLY



SEEK OUT WAYS TO EXPAND ACCESS to international learning through online programs such as COIL, or Collaborative Online International Learning, and homegrown initiatives. These programs can be incorporated into coursework and **ensure every student is exposed to global thinking and practices.** Embraced during the pandemic, virtual learning is another way to make international education affordable.

TIP

Charlotte developed its Globally Networked Learning program during the pandemic. The program offers a collaborative approach to research and teaching, **enabling students, instructors and researchers from different locations across the globe learn and work together.** The program deepens connections with faculty and students across borders and creates high impact, low-cost international experiences, among other benefits.

“While we never want to promote virtual experiences as a second option for those who are unable to afford study abroad, we are certainly going to offer the virtual opportunities as **a promise to provide all of our students with some minor introduction to global and comparative content,** and then hopefully, identify creative ways through fundraising measures to support more study abroad scholarships in the future,” Gallegos said.

CONCLUSION

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC dealt plenty of devastating blows to international education—scuttling study abroad programs and putting up devastating barriers for international students. But it also revealed a stark reality: **We live in a global community, and our actions impact the world.** Now, more than ever, **internationalization at home is a critical part of any education**—and higher education institutions that want to stay relevant will need to ensure they're graduating students who are ready and able to wade into this new world.



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