

Faculty Development Approaches: Preparation and Strategies

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Preparation for facilitating students' global awareness and/or international travel is an ongoing developmental process with multiple stages. This preparation can be seen as a 3-5 year process (or longer). Below we suggest some potential short-term, intermediate, and longer-term goals centered first on self-education and then on more general issues in preparing to internationalize the curriculum.

Faculty Self-Education

1. Contribute to faculty interest groups that may be region specific (e.g., an Asian interest group or Latin America interest group) or start a reading group that focuses on a specific region of the world.
2. Take advantage of short-term travel/study opportunities for faculty members. Examples:
 - ACM/GLCA grants (e.g., Japan Study Faculty Travel Grant)
 - East-West Center summer faculty programs, which include the China Field Study faculty seminar and the Hawaii-based 3-week seminar on Infusing East Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum
 - International Faculty Development Seminars (www.ciee.org/ifds, 1-800-40-STUDY)
2. Take advantage of "ambassador" exchange possibilities. Many liberal arts colleges have collaborative/sister relationships with other institutions around the world. These relationships may allow for short exchanges that allow faculty members to visit the sister institution to present their research. These exchanges may also provide opportunities to take small groups of students abroad for shorter periods of time (e.g., a week to 10 days) outside of formal classroom context or to allow your institution to sponsor small groups of international students for a similar short term visit to your campus.
3. Apply for short-term researcher exchange positions in another country (e.g., 2 weeks through 3 months). Institutions with which your college has relationships may be able to facilitate researcher exchanges. Research exchange programs often require interested faculty members to gain sponsorship on the part of a faculty member at the host institution. Although a stipend is not generally provided, cooperating institutions often provide access to low cost housing, library privileges, and office space. Waseda University, which maintains relationships with ACM/GLCA programs through the Japan Study Program is one example of a major Japanese university that encourages short-term researcher exchanges. Other resources are available through the International Professor Exchange (<http://professorexchange.com>) and Sabbatical Homes (<http://sabbaticalhomes.com>).
4. Apply for internal and external grants designed to support faculty-student research and travel (e.g., Freeman Foundation), or group faculty travel.
5. Serve as an advisory board member for a consortium study abroad program.
6. Attend conferences or participate in professional organizations and networks that emphasize presentations and information that support faculty development. Several examples include internet resources available through www.facultyled.com or AsiaNetwork materials and conferences, which often feature "reports from the field."
7. Teach in another country. Opportunities to teach in another country range from short-term summer courses to longer term teaching options.

Examples:

 - Short-term summer teaching, which often involves the teaching of one course in an intensive one-month period.
 - Resident director/teaching opportunities related to ACM/GLCA study abroad programs.
 - Fulbright sponsored teaching/research opportunities (www.cies.org).
8. Develop new language skills. Learning a new language is a complex and time-consuming process, and finding the time to develop high levels of proficiency is most likely unrealistic for the typical busy faculty member. However, developing even limited language skills can facilitate communication substantially, and sends the message to hosts in other countries that one is willing to invest effort in developing cultural competence.

Other Steps To Prepare For Internationalizing the Curriculum

1. Self-Assessment

- Non-experts can play important roles in teaching about international content and sponsoring study-travel abroad. Although persons with country-specific expertise have the advantage of extensive content-specific background, the skills and perspectives of non-experts can be invaluable. Take time to assess personal qualities and skills that can lend themselves to furthering global consciousness and international study. For example, sociologists are trained to examine behavior in social-structural context, and the questions and skills that flow from this perspective have wide applicability in multiple contexts. Psychologists often have training in multicultural communication skills, or are trained to be attentive to the stresses of entering and encountering another culture.
- Choose opportunities that allow you to examine your academic disciplines through new lenses. Individuals often observe that the most valuable learning from study and travel abroad is the acquisition of new perspectives for viewing their cultures of origin. Mindful travel abroad often leads to the questioning of “taken for granted” assumptions as well as greater awareness of subtle forms of ethnocentrism within academic disciplines. This outcome is relevant to both faculty members and their students.
- Further, while in the process of self education, take time to reflect on the learning process itself. How are you learning about this new culture? This practice can provide valuable insight about how to facilitate your students’ cultural learning.

2. Partnerships and Collaboration

- While considering possibilities for taking students abroad for study and travel, consider partnering with another faculty member on your own campus and/or another campus. Interdisciplinary partnerships are likely to be especially helpful for testing ideas and concepts. Collaboration with faculty members from another campus can lead to the co-sponsorship of study-travel experiences, which can allow groups from multiple colleges to share resources (e.g., special areas of expertise, guest speakers in a host country).
- Build collaborative relationships with faculty members from other countries. These relationships may lead to a variety of research and writing projects. Alternatively, these faculty members may be willing to offer guest lectures or other supports if/when you lead a class to this person’s country.

3. Participate in campus activities by hosting international students (e.g., short-term homestays), contributing to multicultural/international programming, or serving as a campus representative for off-campus programs.
4. Deliver public campus and conference presentations about international research findings.
5. Integrate content relevant to the cultures you study within existing on-campus courses.
6. Connect students on your campus with students at international universities through social networking (e.g., e-mail) and assignments.
7. Investigate off-campus course development funding options. Consider applying for internal or external grants to “field test” ideas for off-campus courses. At present, the FaCE grant program (ACM) encourages/supports collaborative projects that bring together faculty and students from several campuses.

Developing skills and background for internationalizing the curriculum and leading study abroad groups is a time consuming, never ending, but highly rewarding process. Patience and persistence are crucial skills for doing this work. The list above is a work in progress. We invite observations, additions, and examples.

Questions

- What additional opportunities have you utilized to prepare yourself? What additional opportunities are needed to help you prepare for integrating cross-cultural learning into your on and off campus courses in meaningful ways?
- What do “non-experts” need to know to prepare student for on campus or off-campus study experiences and to help students integrate these experiences with their ongoing education and lives?