

Barriers and Tips in Moving Toward a Globally Engaged Campus

An Interdepartmental Look at Global Citizenship

In the process of moving toward a globally engaged campus there are both a number of practical steps and barriers to overcome for U.S. colleges and universities. While this list is by no means exhaustive or applicable to every institution, it may begin to ask some of the right questions in creating an environment that is conducive to global understanding. Often times, there is a lack of coordination between offices that support international programs, community service and service-learning. The limited communication and lack of integration among these offices interferes with student awareness of opportunities for learning and serving internationally or interculturally. Students that pursue international experiences, both on and off campus, are often met with other insurmountable barriers involving financial aid, transferring or restraint of academic credits and time limitations. When beginning the work of creating a global campus, you will want to identify the departments and offices that have a role in its' creation. How best can their efforts be used to support an international initiative, whether it's service-learning, study abroad, faculty exchange or a lecture series? Many campuses have created a steering committee, drawing both curricular and co-curricular participants, to lead the work of internationalizing a college or university campus. Certainly, there are many steps needed, and many roads leading to the global campus. Below are some questions to start an interdepartmental discussion around global citizenship.

Admissions

What actions are taken to accommodate and promote the enrollment of international students?
How is the global learning environment promoted as one of the college or universities assets to potential students?

Financial Aid

What school-based aid is lost during a semester or study abroad?
What outlets are available for students looking to fund an international experience (internally and externally)?
What resources are available to international students in acquiring financial aid?
How aware are financial aid staff of the barriers and options for assisting international students in financing their education?

Academic Advising

Are advisors prepared to integrate international experiences into academic plan (course-load)?
What level of knowledge do advisors possess regarding international service-learning course, study abroad and service opportunities offered by university?
How can advisors recognize student interest/need of global skills? (i.e. language study, international business, etc.)

Registrar

How can they facilitate discussion among departments regarding the quality of international experiences?
What resources can they provide regarding the benefits and deficits of particular international programs and the transferability of credits?

Office of Community Service/ Service-learning

How can we integrate global reflection into local action (service)?
What training is needed by faculty and staff in order to lead global reflection
How can opportunities for service/service-learning be partnered with other international programs and initiatives on campus?

Faculty

Do faculty members on campus have misconceptions about the academic quality of international service-learning, study abroad?
Are faculty limited by disciplinary requirements and expectations that restrict or make impossible participation in international initiatives?
What opportunities (faculty forums, discussions and training on international service-learning, global reflection, etc.) are needed to promote integration of global perspectives into the classroom?
What efforts are made to attract international faculty or faculty exchange?

Administration

Is global understanding incorporated into the mission or institutional goals?

What steps are taken by the administration to implement these goals?

Is there any funding, staffing, or resources allocated to this initiative?

Language Departments

How can they partner with the service/service-learning office and International programs office in promoting global understanding?

Cross-departmental

Are there any lecture series that can incorporate global understanding?

How can we promote international perspectives through presentations by international faculty and students?

Is there a mismatch in academic calendars and international service opportunities? What opportunities are there for change?

How can we measure the success of our international initiatives? Can we implement tools for evaluating intercultural competence or global perspectives?