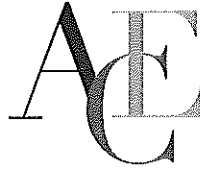


American Council on Education



International Initiatives

December 14, 2007

Lola Lopes, Interim Provost
Office of the Provost
111 Jessup Hall
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA

Dear Provost Lopes:

We are pleased to send you the report of the peer review visit of the American Council on Education's Internationalization Laboratory to the University of Iowa, conducted on October 28-30, 2007. The peer review team appreciated the seriousness and candor with which your administration, faculty, and staff approached the University of Iowa's participation in the Internationalization Laboratory.

As the report indicates, the ACE team was very impressed with the effort that the Internationalization Laboratory Task Force put into the self-study and the extremely thoughtful report it produced. Our aim in the Laboratory was to support your institution's efforts and to provide feedback and suggestions to the University as you forge ahead with your internationalization efforts. The accomplishments to date are substantial, and we hope that Iowa's experience in the Laboratory and the reflections of the peer reviewers proved to be useful.

We very much enjoyed working with William Reisinger and Diana Davies and supporting their fine leadership in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Madeleine Green'.

Madeleine Green
Vice President

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Barbara Hill'.

Barbara Hill
Senior Associate

Enclosure

cc: Sally Mason, President
William Reisinger, Associate Provost and Dean, International Programs



**Report on the University of Iowa
Internationalization Laboratory Self-Study
By the American Council on Education Peer Review Visit Team
October 28-30, 2007**

I. Introduction

This report is based on a two-day site visit to the University of Iowa (UI) by an American Council on Education (ACE) peer review team on October 28-30, 2007 and Report to the Peer Review Team sent to us by the University's International Programs. This document included an extensive self-study of International Programs situated in the context of the University's mission, strategic plan, and core values; current activities; best practices and peer comparisons; themes emerging from extensive faculty and staff surveys; an analysis of current issues facing International Programs; and 25 supporting appendices. The site visit included meetings with Interim Provost Lola Lopes; Associate Provost for Faculty Susan Johnson; Special Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity and Diversity Marcella David; Vice Provost and Dean of University College Tom Rocklin; Dean of the College of Engineering Barry Butler; Dean of the College of Public Health James Merchant; Dean of the College of Dentistry David Johnsen; Dean of the Tippee College of Business Curt Hunter; Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Raul Curto; and staff from International Programs.

The review and site visit are part of the ACE Internationalization Laboratory, 2005-2006 Cohort, a project that builds on the learning from several ACE multi-campus initiatives, including its *Promising Practices in International Education* project and its *Global Learning for All* project. In addition to Iowa, other institutions participating in the 2005-2006 Laboratory are Arcadia University (PA), New Mexico State University, and Park University (MO).

This is a confidential report to the University of Iowa, designed to assist the institution with its internationalization efforts. We encourage wide distribution of the report internally so that it can assist the university community in these tasks. The contents will not be published or made public unless UI chooses to do so or gives ACE permission to do so.

II. Review Team

Gene Allen, Former Associate Vice President for International Programs and Distinguished Teaching Professor, University of Minnesota.

Barbara Hill, Senior Associate and Director of the Internationalization Laboratory, Center for International Initiatives, American Council on Education, Washington, DC (team leader).

William B. Lacy, Vice Provost, University Outreach and International Programs, University of California, Davis.

JoAnn McCarthy, former Assistant Provost for International Affairs, University of Pennsylvania.

III. Overall Strengths

The University of Iowa is at a propitious moment in time to broaden and deepen its internationalization efforts. Iowa has long had a history of strong administrative support for internationalization and broad faculty interest and activity. In addition, Iowa has had International Programs (IP) and a Dean for over a decade, along with a strong cadre of IP affiliated faculty, and the existence of a strategic plan for International Programs that is aligned with the priorities of the university's strategic plan.

The peer review team was impressed with the comprehensive review of international activities and climate that Iowa undertook during its engagement with the Lab. We commend International Programs both for the amount and quality of the work it accomplished during the year. While the report is comprehensive and suggests many areas in which the institution needs to do work, the *peer review team has chosen to focus only on those issues we found to be most salient and critical.*

Clearly, much international activity is occurring, even if it does not have much strategic focus. Iowa has good grants support and coordination in the international area, and the seed money awards, a kind of venture capital, are encouraging to faculty members who have not yet been involved internationally. The total amount of seed grants needs to be expanded with more devoted to interdisciplinary and international initiatives. *We encourage the institution to consider how its current resources might be allocated to have greater international impact.* The institution has especially strong staff development and training in serving an international community, and an excellent, well-written newsletter conveying good international messaging.

Iowa recognizes that certain pressures, both internal and external, are making imperative further internationalization. To respond to their accrediting organizations, the professional schools are developing greater international capacity. Similarly, the Iowa business community, responding to multinational corporations, is expecting Iowa graduates to be able to function more effectively in an interconnected global economy. All units on the campus need to recognize that there are significant outside factors like the above examples that are driving the need to internationalize programs. Internationalization is not a concept that was invented by International Programs. The most recent example is the just released NASULGC publication on "A National Action

Agenda for Internationalizing Higher Education.” Most importantly, students themselves are demonstrating their increased interest in a global education. *The phenomenal rise in both the number of International Studies undergraduate majors and the number of undergraduate students studying abroad gives clear signals that the institution must continue to internationalize in clear and strategic ways.*

During the peer review visit, the meetings involved a wide spectrum of the campus community, including high level academic officers and representatives of important constituencies. This implies that the conversations about internationalization have been strengthened by the activities undertaken by International Programs during the past year. *While there was no consistent agreement about what internationalization means, the commentary included in the Report to the Peer Review Team suggested that internationalization can shape everything the university does, and clearly a committed core of faculty and staff have the willingness to work to achieve it.* In general, we observed that many administrators, faculty, and staff of the University of Iowa are expending productive energy on internationalization.

IV. Strategic Issues: Observations and Recommendations

ARTICULATED COMMITMENT: MISSION, GOALS, AND VISION

*The peer review team urges the senior leadership of the University of Iowa to articulate and champion internationalization as necessary for a quality education. The peer review team urges the senior leadership of the University of Iowa to reframe the institution’s core values in 21st century terms. What does it take to produce a “valued” graduate who can live and work in the current world? The recent reaccreditation sub-committee reports on “Becoming a University of Iowa Student” (June 2007) and “Learning Environments” (September 2007), for example, **make no mention of international education, international students, study abroad, or International Programs.** The peer review team considers this an important lost opportunity to frame an Iowa education in appropriate 21st century terms. For the state to maintain its economic and civic vitality, the international focus of the education provided needs to be intensified.*

*The peer review team noted that all colleges do not have the same vision about internationalization and a few may perceive it as a lesser university priority. However, the Deans whom we met wanted to discuss internationalization in the context of a university direction. They wanted to identify 2-3 interdisciplinary global issues where Iowa has expertise, and to focus institutional commitment in only several regions for greater impact. Such a niche stamp could occur by focusing, for example, on global rural health, the International Writing Program, human rights, environmental issues, and the needs of gifted and talented international students. *IP should be encouraged to link more effectively with the professional schools to identify those persistent global issues; this**

would attract more research and program funding to the university, but many of these issues will require interdisciplinary teams from multiple colleges.

More challenging is cooperation and collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; see page 52 of the report. *This was the most problematic situation that the team identified, because faculty expertise in this College is critical to many international and interdisciplinary programs. The senior leadership needs to give this issue high priority and bring resolution to the major issues. We are not optimistic that this will happen in the absence of appropriate intervention by senior administrators. This is a critical component of the internationalization of programs within this College and across the campus.*

The peer review team cautions Iowa not to adopt the “Year of...” model of promoting internationalization, because its spottiness promotes cynicism and does not reflect the sustained commitment needed to embed internationalization in the institution’s culture.

Communicating the institution’s commitment to internationalization is also crucial. The recent IP Web page restructuring is an important first step in maintaining a global presence, both for those in Iowa and elsewhere. We strongly recommend that “International” be on the front page with links to all things international under this heading. By including a wide array of information in one place, such as International Studies, Study Abroad, the Office for International Students and Scholars, Grants and Funding, Outreach and Community Engagement, Programs and Centers, and IP Services in one place, Iowa has developed an important feature for serving all current and potential constituencies. The peer review team recommends, however, that the home page for the university should make international activity at Iowa visible; now, one has to know where to look to find the broad array of information available.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Structure of the Undergraduate Curriculum

The peer review team noted that the current curriculum seems composed of pieces that could be further integrated with international emphasis. For example, students have general education, majors, minors, language study, study abroad, and international service learning opportunities. If Iowa considered some thematic organization that would cut across all these pieces, such as a focus on social justice both domestically and internationally, more integration of multicultural and international efforts could occur.

In this regard, the peer review team sees that internationalization and interdisciplinarity are inextricably intertwined. The team urges the senior leadership to develop a campus climate that nurtures both and is welcoming to cross-cutting issues.

To strengthen the curriculum, the *faculty who gain support for international research and travel should be expected to translate this global experience into the classroom.*

Language Instruction

The peer review *team encourages Iowa to continue to look at the way it addresses the language needs of its students. This means that the language needs of students in different schools should be addressed in the context of the different programs.* Attention should be paid to second language acquisition and its application at home. Perhaps the role of a Language Resource Center should be studied as an adjunct to classroom experience. The professional expertise of graduate faculty in the Second Language Acquisition PhD program should be mined for program improvement.

Learning Outcomes

The peer review *team commends the faculty of International Studies on articulating learning outcomes for the major.* But given the importance of internationalization for all Iowa graduates, the peer review *team suggests that the senior administration encourage this broader discussion.* Assessment of student learning is clearly an important topic in higher education nationally, and to be true to its standing as a national institution, *the University of Iowa needs to take the lead on assessment, rather than having it thrust upon it.*

ALUMNI

Support for internationalization initiatives can come from many sources, but a renewable source is alumni support. *Iowa could do a better job of tracking the students who do study abroad and the international students who graduate from Iowa programs, both undergraduate and graduate.* Loyal alumni who have international connections are eager to give financial support, provide useful contacts for Iowa students wishing to study or find internships abroad, and recruit international students. *Addition of a development officer for the international area should be evaluated.*

VI. Conclusion

The University of Iowa is clearly fortunate to have support for internationalization from many faculty and administrators. But of course, the conversations about internationalization need to continue, to widen the base of support so that Iowa can effectively reframe its vision and mission in terms of internationalization.

The University of Iowa is well positioned to continue its work in internationalization because it has all the key ingredients: leadership, energy, and systems for establishing learning goals and assessing their outcomes. International Programs has demonstrated that it can engage faculty members and feed into and influence faculty processes; IP should continue to do so. *Internationalization is a long-*

term project that requires commitment from the top administrators who regularly provide reasons why the University of Iowa campus and programs (like all of higher education) must become more fully internationalized. *This requires resources and regular evaluation and assessment.* By developing and continuing an intentional process, Iowa will make its internationalization goals part of its everyday operations.

Submitted December 21, 2007