

Internationalization and the Professional School **Findings from Research on the Undergraduate Training of K-12 Teachers**

I am here today to give you a brief report on findings and recommendations from my current research on the problems and prospects for internationalizing the undergraduate training of K-12 teachers here in the U.S. The topic is particularly important for NRC, and LRC, Directors working on improved professional school linkages – and to all university faculty members engaged in educating a globally aware citizenry. The findings have implications not only for your plans for extending your reach within your institutions but also for the evaluation of several aspects of your programs – advising, language instruction, curriculum and faculty development, and governance.

What got me involved in this project? After many years as a program officer at the U.S. Department of Education, urging Title VI-funded grantees to forge effective curricular linkages with professional schools, and particularly Education, I became part of a research team evaluating the long-term impact of one of those programs.¹ Although that research project included one or two questions about teacher education, the responses seemed focused on faculty development or on outreach to the current teacher rather than preparation of future teachers, so with the press giving increasing attention to the deficiencies of K-12 education, research seemed needed to learn about the obstacles to an internationalized curriculum for teachers – and ways to overcome them. My first grant, completed in 2003,² focused on the undergraduate, pre-service training of the secondary school teacher. The current grant builds on the first, with emphasis now on undergraduate preparation for elementary level teaching. I am putting the resulting papers on my website for those of you who want more details about the findings on the various relevant threads, and I will certainly let you know when the final report is available. All three grants have been funded – competitively – under the Title VI International Research and Studies Program.

Methodology

The methodology has been similar for both teacher education projects. Data has been collected in nearly 400 structured but open-ended interviews (conducted by myself) with deans, faculty, and advisors in both Arts and Sciences and Education, with Education students, and with senior administrators. Although many of the questions were similar for all groups, somewhat different protocols were used for Arts and Sciences, Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education (SCDEs), and senior administrators. Most interview questions were the same in both phases, but, drawing on the data from the first phase, a number of second phase questions included menus of possible responses – which seems to have elicited more systematic data on several topics.

¹ Ann Imlah Schneider, and Barbara B. Burn, *Federal Funding for International Studies: Does it Help? Does it Matter? Long-Term Impacts of Federal Funding on International Studies and Foreign Language Programs: A Research Report*, University of Massachusetts (Amherst), 1999.

² Ann Imlah Schneider, *Internationalizing Teacher Education: What Can Be Done?*, April 2003 (available from the author and at www.internationaledadvice.org) and summarized in *International Studies Perspectives*, April 2004, vol. 5, #3.

In addition, views were collected by interview (by volunteers) or by questionnaire, using still another set of questions, from 119 current teachers, the majority of whom are working at the elementary level. Findings from that part of the project were presented at the WIOC outreach conference in Madison last April.³

The university interviews were conducted on 41 campuses (actually 42, with one dropped in the second phase) at both research (20) and comprehensive (17) universities and at liberal arts colleges (4), located in 19 states plus DC, on the west and east coasts, in the midwest, and in the southeast and southwest. For the 23 institutions included in both phases, additional second-phase interviews were conducted either by telephone or in second site visits. Fourteen of the sites had Title VI NRC grants. The average number of interviews per campus was more than six. The result is a daunting amount of data which I hope to summarize enough to provoke discussion in several contexts, including the NRCs. However, because the numbers of respondents in several sub-categories (such as Education advisors) are relatively small, the study must be considered an exploratory one, pointing to topics that need to be studied further, and more systematically.

A small group of advisors drawn from the ranks of Education faculty, the K-12 teaching community, area studies center directors and outreach coordinators, and senior university administrators has helped enormously in refining the interview protocols and procedures and in reviewing findings, recommendations, and dissemination strategies.

Defining Internationalization

Findings from a few earlier studies indicated that internationalization efforts in teacher training programs concentrated on only two types of activity – sending a few students abroad for a semester, or less, and sending faculty abroad, although with no special assignment or mandate. Because other research has shown that fewer than 5% of all undergraduates are able to study abroad,⁴ and because no research has demonstrated that faculty travel automatically affects course content,⁵ our definition of internationalization was broadened to include a wide range of on-campus activity as well as various opportunities abroad. The first interview question asked about a series of activities that might be taking place at the institution. Most were direct questions, but respondents were invited to report other activities as well.

The final report will include discussion of these responses – information from the interviewees, not necessarily definitive about the institution’s resources – but I will mention here that, while including study, internships, and faculty experience abroad, some twenty other activities, mostly on the home campus, did get on the list, which is shown here in Table 1. Perhaps the good news in this table is that the comprehensive universities – where most K-12 teachers do their undergraduate work – might seem to be doing a wide variety of internationalizing activity – indeed, a bit wider than the research universities that you represent. However, the other side of that coin is possibly that research universities – yours – may not be exercising as much “internationalizing” leadership as they think, and would like, or that their internationalizing efforts are not widely known within the institution – at least from the information I found in the various interviews.

³ Ann Imlah Schneider, “Preparing Internationally-Oriented Teachers: Some Research Findings” presented at Wisconsin International Outreach Conference, April 2006, and available at www.internationaledadvice.org.

⁴ Madeleine F. Green, “Joining the World” in *Change*, May/June 2002

⁵ Findings in this study indicate that faculty members seldom travel for course development reasons.

Table 1
Interview Responses: Defining Internationalization

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Total</u> N=386	<u>Comments</u> Derived from interviewees' reports...
Study abroad	353 (92%)	Less than 90% at research universities and in SCDEs
Faculty going abroad	344 (89%)	Over 95% at comprehensive universities, less than 90% in both A&S and SCDEs
Internships/practice teaching abroad	293 (76%)	Higher percentages reported by senior administrators and at liberal arts colleges
* Foreign visitors	267 (69%)	Senior administrators most likely to cite
** Exchange programs	94 (24%)	(Could overlap with other categories)
** Overseas centers	6 (2%)	Only for research universities
** Summer research abroad for students	10 (3%)	
Language requirement		Nature of requirement not specified
- institution-wide	140 (36%)	Only 25% at research universities, 74% at liberal arts colleges
- only for some departments/colleges	123 (32%)	SCDEs rarely have requirement
Possibility of a major in discipline such as history, including non-US content	329 (85%)	80% or more in all categories
International students as cultural resources in courses	321 (83%)	Least at research universities and by SCDEs
International module(s) in general education courses	310 (80%)	Least for SCDEs, and at research universities
Possibility of a minor in discipline such as history, including non-US content	297 (77%)	Reported by less than 65% in SCDEs
General education requirement of one non-US or comparative course	214 (55%)	Less than 50% in SCDEs, and by only 26% in liberal arts colleges
* Heritage communities as cultural resources in courses	144 (37%)	More than 40% at comprehensive universities
* Language-across-the-Curriculum	70 (18%)	More than 25% only at research universities
** Internet, international video hook-ups	10 (3%)	
** Curriculum permeated with non-US content	4 (1%)	Only reported at liberal arts colleges
** Student theses	1	
International, foreign language clubs	279 (72%)	Less in SCDEs and research universities
* International film, food festivals	229 (59%)	Highest % at liberal arts colleges
International house or dormitory floor	147 (38%)	Under 50% in all categories
* Model UN	102 (26%)	Much less reported in SCDEs
Mentoring by in-service teachers with international outlook	83 (51%)	Only in SCDEs, all kinds of institutions
* Promotion and tenure policies	62 (16%)	Not reported at all in liberal arts colleges
** Outreach with international emphasis	27 (7%)	Not reported at all in liberal arts colleges

* Volunteered by interviewees in Phase 1, direct questions in Phase 2

** Volunteered by interviewees in both phases

I might point out two other interesting bits of information here: First, that the number of people citing outreach is surprisingly low (again, many of your institutions were included in this project). A second interesting finding is that only one interviewee out of nearly 400 mentioned attention to the advising process, a matter that I'll return to.

Well, do all of these activities really concern participants at this conference? Senior administrators were asked whether all of the activities we had discussed were available to undergraduates throughout the university; the answer was uniformly “yes,” indicating that all could have an impact on students in Education and other professional programs. Just as important, any student in a teacher certification or licensure program must take the majority of her or his courses in Arts and Sciences fields, some to meet general education requirements and some to meet the highly prescribed curricular requirements for an Education major and for certification. Students in other professional programs also have general education requirements. Most NRC faculty are in Arts and Sciences, are surely involved with curriculum discussions, and are likely to have prospective teachers in introductory level classes. As area and international studies specialists, in whatever department, you might well be able to increase your impact on the training of the teachers of your future students.

Findings

At this point, let me anticipate questions. Is increased “internationalization” for prospective teachers needed? What activities are deemed desirable *and* can be sufficiently cost-effective in the current funding climate? What kinds of activity can I urge you to undertake that could make a difference?

To answer the first question, the current teachers' responses are clear.⁶ Generally, only about half of the teachers participating in the survey felt that they had had enough pre-service training in the subjects they are now teaching – and most reported getting their “content” training in Arts and Sciences. A majority of them had not had an undergraduate foreign language requirement, yet 90% wish they had. About half reported a general education requirement of one or more non-U.S. courses, while 97% felt there should be such a requirement. While 17% had met a requirement of a minor that included non-North American-oriented courses, more than 75% said there should be such a requirement.

Two thirds of the responding teachers reported that the recently modified standards which they are required to meet (and also the standards for the tests that their students must pass) do not reflect increasing globalization. At the same time, many of the Education deans, faculty, and advisors participating in the project – notwithstanding the lack of “international” in the standards they're dealing with – clearly recognize the basic need for this country to do more to develop a globally competent workforce, and are searching for ways to increase their students' international (and “multicultural”) exposure, but felt seriously constrained by the many curricular requirements for their students, combined with state-level demands for reductions in time-to-degree to alleviate teacher shortages. Several commented that the interview had given them some ideas, and they in turn passed on many ideas to the interviewer, which I want to share with you. These carry messages relevant to both NRC planning and evaluation.

Advising

At the top of the list of suggested strategies for “internationalizing” is strengthening of academic and career advising systems. Indeed, it was a topic that just about all interviewees wanted to talk about. And it is a topic that you covered in your NRC applications. Or did you? Some 85% of the interviewees felt that the

⁶ These were discussed in more detail in a presentation prepared for the Wisconsin Outreach Conference, available at www.internationaledadvice.org.

process needs improvement — and in the more recent phase, the percentage was even higher at research universities (yours!). Only 10% of the current teachers reported special advising about international options and nearly 90% said their undergraduate experience should have included it.

At nearly all the institutions where interviews were conducted, the students preparing for teaching careers enter their postsecondary training through Arts and Sciences, where they take required general education courses and other prerequisites for the Education programs in their first two years. Do students in professional programs make the best use of their pre-major options for international exposure? The students I interviewed indicated that they probably had not, even at institutions with a wide range of international activities. Internationally-aware advising, even before matriculation, could make a difference, particularly for students wanting a study abroad experience and surely for those interested in foreign language study.

Who does undergraduate academic advising? As often as not, I learned, it is not done the same way throughout the institution. The patterns vary not only from institution to institution but also from college to college, and even department to department, within institutions. Most academic advising is done by faculty, although increasingly it is done by professional advising staff, with faculty serving a “mentoring” role. The advisors – faculty or professional staff – are most likely based in Arts and Sciences (at the college level for “undeclareds” and in departments for majors). The practices are generally similar to those reported by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA).⁷ However, for Education students the advising pattern becomes increasingly confusing and is all the more important, particularly for the many who transfer from other institutions (70% was the proportion cited in at least one interview), usually community colleges, and/or who may be first generation college students.

Many institutions (and particularly the liberal arts colleges) do not offer a teacher education major, so their students preparing for teaching do Arts and Science majors – this is most likely for the secondary level, but can be the case for prospective elementary school teachers as well. Indeed, in California, where K-12 teachers are required to have done a major in the liberal arts, universities in the CSU system usually offer special content liberal arts majors for students preparing for teaching careers. Students who have set career goals early in their undergraduate years are normally enrolled in the teacher education program along with their Arts and Sciences major. Advising by Education staff and faculty is usually available only after these students have been accepted for a teacher education program or, in some instances, when they are considering applying for it, and it focuses pretty exclusively on what students need to know and do to meet certification requirements. The advising for “content” is most often in Arts and Sciences.

How do students receive information about international options and activities? The question was asked in both the Education and Arts and Sciences interviews. Respondents most frequently thought that posters were the medium (although one remarked that fliers about international activities are rarely even posted in the College of Education building!). Also mentioned as information sources were classes, faculty, and other advisors, then the student paper, clubs, and various meetings. Why were faculty and other advisors not mentioned most frequently? Yes, most said, they are in a position to advise students about the full range of curricular and extracurricular activities that increase international exposure. Perhaps they could use encouragement to do more.

⁷ Wesley R. Habley, and Ricardo H. Morales, *Current Practices in Academic Advising: Final Report on ACT's Fifth National Survey of Academic Advising* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1998), 13. NACADA, 1998)

So it was not surprising that nearly 350 respondents, including current teachers, would like improvements in the academic and career advising systems. Even on campuses where faculty reported that advising was working well, students said that improvements were needed. But what might be done?

Education participants in this project were asked whether advisors are sufficiently trained with respect to the international options for students, and more than 70% of the respondents, at all types of institutions and including advisors, replied that they are not. A question was also asked about how advisors receive the information needed for advising. A few shrugged their shoulders and reported that they consulted the catalogue or handbook. Most mentioned e-mail, memoranda, and/or meetings, but relatively few reported attending workshops, until we got to questions about how the advising system might be strengthened, and then many suggested more workshops. Training sessions for advisors about the benefits and realities of international exposure for students could certainly help get better information to the prospective teacher – and the training should include not only faculty and professional advising staff, but also admissions officers.

Other ways to increase all advisors' (and students') international awareness were also suggested, including

- sending advisors on overseas missions, such as evaluation of study abroad programs;
- inclusion of international options on the standard advising checklist menu;
- special briefings (for advisors) by International Programs staff;
- special attention to international needs and possibilities in the advising for first year students;
- increasing the international content of freshman orientation;
- improved website information; and
- more open houses for international programs, including foreign language “days.”

One respondent to the improving-advising-question suggested that internationalization should have much more attention in curriculum committee discussions, so let us now look at findings about the curriculum, starting with the foreign language instruction which is so basic to Title VI programs.

Foreign Language Requirements

Many of the participants in this project felt that attaining some proficiency in a foreign language is an important piece of the undergraduate experience for prospective teachers. Yet, although about two thirds of the respondents reported a language requirement at their institutions, most of those requirements apply only to Arts and Sciences majors. As Table 1 shows, if there is a university requirement, the Education student is very likely to be exempted, except at liberal arts colleges. Later in the interviews, about 70% of the second phase Education respondents reported no foreign language courses among the elementary education program requirements, and more than 90% reported no state certification requirements for foreign language competence. But the current teachers, by a ratio of 9 to 1, do think that foreign language study should have been a part of their training. Of the Education respondents in universities about 70% would like to add or increase a foreign language requirement; the percentage was much higher among the senior administrators and in Arts and Sciences.

Interestingly, however, the only categories of respondents who would give priority to foreign language instruction if extra funds were available were Education advisors and students, and current teachers. The obstacles to doing so are many, the principal one being the limitations on time in the

undergraduate teacher education curriculum. Others included the orientation of the foreign language faculty (more interested in literature than in language instruction), lack of interest in foreign language departments themselves, and inability to teach to a high enough – i.e., usable – proficiency within the limited time that might be available. Both NRCs and LRCs should be working on diminishing these obstacles.

Another language question that may be of interest to NRCs, since your applications responded to a question on “Languages-across-the-Curriculum.” Many interviewees knew nothing about it, even at research universities. Languages-across-the-Curriculum may be an unrealistic goal in the teacher education curriculum itself, but I mention it in part because several interviewees mentioned, as an obstacle to having a language requirement for prospective teachers, that the language training offered at their institution is unrelated to students’ interests in fields other than literature. Perhaps the existence of such options (and faculty capabilities) would provide a somewhat different perspective in courses the student in a professional training program might take.

Many suggested a foreign language proficiency requirement for admission. I did ask a few questions about the undergraduate training of foreign language teachers who would be preparing their students for admission. The results that should interest both LRCs and NRCs, particularly now that interest in K-12 instruction in the less commonly taught languages is now on the national radar screen.

- Are foreign language majors encouraged to become teachers? Responses to a series of questions about advising for Arts and Sciences students indicate that they may not be. Few interviewees reported that students get career guidance from their faculty advisors, although many did suggest that students could get information about teaching as a career goal from their advisors if they asked. Are faculty advisors prepared to help students in foreign language fields discover their vocations for teaching? Most who responded did not know, or said quite frankly that they were not prepared.
- Education respondents were asked whether teachers are being trained for foreign language instruction at the elementary level. Some did not know, but the majority said no; most certification for foreign language teaching is for K-12 which, I was told, could cover language teaching in elementary schools. Again the responses may be ambiguous. Many noted that schools in their states do not teach foreign languages at the elementary school levels, so the emphases in the K-12 programs for prospective foreign language teachers is really on the secondary level. LRCs particularly may want to work on this – effective pedagogy is likely to be very different for K-5.

Issues related to foreign language requirements and instruction were discussed at a conference on language teaching⁸ last year and will be covered in my final report. They should be considered central to NRC curriculum planning and evaluation, yet I heard on a campus known for its international orientation that few faculty members see foreign language instruction as a key to internationalization, and that it’s even been the language faculty who resist having a requirement. Furthermore, my data show rather surprising lack of campus understanding about the existence and/or nature of language requirements, at all types of institutions

⁸ Ann Imlah Schneider, “Language Instruction and Prospective Teachers: Preliminary Findings and Recommendations.” Presented at the Interagency Language Roundtable Showcase, July 29, 2005 and available at www.internationaledadvice.org.

(research universities, comprehensive universities, and liberal arts colleges) and irrespective of size – on only 41% of the campuses I visited were there consistent responses. This has interesting implications for both advising and overall curriculum planning (and evaluation).

Curriculum Development

As noted above, the course requirements for prospective teachers are very prescriptive, since the courses needed for certification or licensure are added to at least twice as many “content” and general education courses, leaving little room for electives. From more than half of the institutions visited I obtained advising checklists for analytical purposes, but found that making comparisons between them is not simple because of their reliance on institution-specific codes (not explained on the sheet itself), likely overlapping course titles (from one institution to another), and imprecision about the general education requirements that could fill some of the apparent gaps, among other reasons. Less than a third of the checklists show the possibility of any electives (which could be foreign language or other internationally-oriented courses), and for that third the average number of such courses is less than three.

The good news is that at least 75% of the checklists show a requirement of one or more “world” courses, and at least one institution seems to require many as four. Furthermore, even if 25% of this sample did not seem to have a requirement for world history, geography, politics, or literature, it may be that the students could get some such exposure through their general education courses. Indeed, as each interview began, in both phases, more than 300 respondents said that one or more general education courses have international or comparative components. In the second phase of interviews, more than 50% of the participants reported a general education requirement of at least one international or comparative course. Should the general education requirements be changed, to add more international exposure? More than half would like to see that happen, but most acknowledged that it would require a great deal of negotiation to do so, that adding to the general education requirements would be impossible, and that making substitutions could raise many hackles. Yet it was noted by several that this might be the best approach for internationalizing the teacher training experience. Put a little differently, the institutional context and the liberal arts curriculum need to provide most of the international exposure that teachers-in-training may receive, and this may well be the case for students in other professional programs as well.

Indeed, a large number of the current teachers suggested that having more international courses would be an effective approach, if funds were available. But many university respondents reported that space in the curriculum for additional courses in teacher education programs is very limited, or non-existent, because state legislatures are pressing for prompt completion, capping the number of required courses for the teacher-in-training. What about lengthening the undergraduate teacher education program to be longer than eight semesters? Fewer than a third of the current elementary teachers liked that idea, but the majority of secondary school teachers (many of whom had done graduate work) favored it. A more generally acceptable approach would be the addition of international or comparative components to existing courses in both Arts and Sciences and Education. Indeed, high on the list of preferred strategies for internationalizing teacher education is facilitation of course revisions, or the addition of more international courses (suggested particularly by current teachers). This must be an activity to which NRCs can contribute.

Another curricular approach is based on the assumption that the student training for an elementary education career does a major in that field, but can minor in another. When Education interviewees were asked whether Education students might be allowed to minor in internationally-oriented subjects, nearly 75% said yes, and only about 5% were negative. A surprising number of current teachers also liked this approach.

How many of your NRC colleagues have students whose minor is your field or a discipline that can include area studies, while majoring in Education?

A second question about minors probed options for the Arts and Science major: Might an education minor for Arts and Sciences majors be an effective approach for recruiting prospective teachers? Few SCDEs offer a teacher education minor, or any education minor – teacher certification programs are normally much more demanding than “minors” – and many of the Education interviewees initially responded negatively to the notion, emphasizing that a minor would not be enough for certification. Furthermore, many Education courses are not open to non-Education students. Might a minor serve as an introduction to the profession for the Arts and Sciences – area studies – major, and ultimately serve to shorten a post-baccalaureate certification program for the student who eventually decides on a teaching career? Well, come to think of it, that might be a good idea... The Arts and Sciences faculty I talked with were close to unanimously in favor of an Education minor option for their students. Have you worked with your Education colleagues to develop such an option in Education for your students?

Following the questions about strategies for more internationalization, interviewees were asked whether departments have enough flexibility to make changes that could improve the international exposure of teachers-in-training. Some 95% of the senior administrators and 92% of the Arts and Sciences respondents opined that departments do have enough flexibility, while close to 50% of the Education interviewees felt that they do not, probably because of the constraints related to certification requirements and increasing emphasis on standards and testing. Yet some in Education did comment that perhaps their basic courses on Educational Foundations might be revised to include more comparative information. So let us now move to more information about faculty.

Faculty Development

Early the interviews faculty were cited most as the sources of initiative for internationalization efforts. And for the final question asked of all the university interviewees, about how they would want to use a hypothetical outside grant of funds for internationalizing teacher education, a substantial number would target both course revision and faculty development. What kinds of activities were discussed to encourage faculty in the internationalization effort? I asked direct questions about several specific activities.

- As noted, facilitation of **course revision** was favored by many – over 90% in phase two. In the interviews with senior administrators, it seemed clear that all of the institutions visited have funds that could help with this, subject to faculty interest and university priorities. As I recall, this has also been a frequent use for Title VI funds – an approach certainly validated by this research, but perhaps one in need of better reporting and measurement.
- Helping faculty to **work abroad on course development** was favored by many (78% in phase two), in Education as well as in Arts and Sciences – although few (barely 7%) reported foreign travel for this purpose hitherto. Asked whether faculty experience abroad affects teaching, a large majority replied that it does, particularly citing course revisions, at the very least by addition of more varied examples. At one or two institutions I heard about faculty grants for overseas travel for a variety of primary purposes, but always with a condition that an impact on a course syllabus also be demonstrable. It was also noted, by many, that faculty who travel overseas are much more likely to encourage students to do the same. So it seems that facilitating overseas experience for faculty is very likely to advance campus internationalization in several ways. Are you measuring this for planning and evaluation purposes?

- **Joint Arts and Sciences and Education faculty workshops** to solve specific curriculum issues (related to internationalization) were approaches liked by a surprising 75% (in phase two), notwithstanding the qualifications voiced by some respondents in Arts and Sciences that the Education folks would probably not like it – and vice versa. In fact, I heard increasingly about successful efforts of this sort already under way, often facilitated by an institutional Center for Teaching and Learning. (Are NRCs using this institutional resource?) This might be an exercise that the Arts and Sciences faculty member with substantial numbers of Education students could find helpful, with Education methodology experts contributing to choices of content and presentation that could be most useful to the prospective secondary or elementary school teacher.
- **Team teaching**, with Education and Arts and Sciences faculty, was also looked on favorably, by well over 85% of the respondents in the second phase of the project. As you know, administrative problems abound for such efforts (who gets credit for the enrollments? and who pays for the teaching time?), but when deans have found special funding, the concept has seemed to work. Might you, as area and international studies specialists, for example, consider a team-teaching assignment with an expert on social studies methods, which are required for most elementary school teacher training programs? Might there be similar productive combinations for other professional schools?

I also asked senior administrators whether faculty throughout their institutions go abroad in equal proportions, and some 80% replied that they do not. Although the comments about which faculty travelled the most were surprising, it was rare that Education faculty were cited as well-travelled. NRCs might want to keep this in mind as they consider grants to faculty for overseas experience.

The foregoing has mentioned a few funding sources, and NRCs are encouraged to use their budgets for program development such as these activities. In addition, I can report that every interviewee (who was asked) reported the existence of institutional funds for faculty development, be they department travel stipends or grant funds from deans and other offices. Given the limitations of your NRC budgets, do your faculty make maximum use of these funds as well?

International Experience

As noted earlier, many have defined international education as study abroad. Although the focus of my research has been on the home campus undergraduate experience, I did ask questions about study abroad and have written up those findings too.⁹ Since you are most concerned with the development of on campus programs, I will move on quickly to other subjects in this presentation. But that is not to discount the impact of study abroad on participants, from whatever field – it was favored as a strategy by more than 90% of my respondents, even though an appreciable number knew of no Education students actually participating in a study abroad program.

I did learn about several related issues that should interest NRCs and that need to be addressed to make any kind of overseas experience more effective for students. They concern the relationship of study abroad to requirements in the general education part of the curriculum, how the experience may be integrated with the major (or minor), whether internships abroad are feasible (or can be made so) for teachers-in-training, what pre-program preparation is most effective (and needed), and what follow-up practices can increase its effectiveness for returnees, and their fellow students. A number of interviewees, and current teachers, felt that follow-up courses or seminars, and encouragement of presentations and papers drawing on

⁹ Ann Imlah Schneider, “Study Abroad and the Undergraduate Preparation of K-12 Teachers,” available at www.internationaledadvice.org.

the overseas experience, could serve to amplify the impact of the students' overseas experiences. Here too is a realm in which NRCs could make a difference, and not just for professional school students.

Under this heading might also be mentioned the on-campus roles of international faculty and students. Although more than 80% of the campus interviewees reported having international students serve as resources in courses, more than 70% in the second phase agreed that it would be a good idea to involve more of them in curricular or extracurricular activities. About international faculty, in the second phase all of the senior administrators reported having them, but their potential impact may not be institution-wide – at one institution it was noted that nearly all the international faculty are in scientific fields. So do international faculty actually contribute to internationalization? Yes, they do, almost unanimously – through their different perspectives and methodologies, special presentations, faculty seminars, and help in developing exchange and study abroad programs. But how many are teaching the courses taken by students in the professional schools? A surprising number of Education respondents could think of only one or two.

Another question about international influence on the home campus was whether the resources of heritage communities are drawn on in course syllabi. Here the response was less unanimous, although two thirds of the second phase respondents did report use of this kind of teaching resource. For some NRCs this could be a valuable addition to the teaching program – related to, but not the same as, outreach. Is anyone monitoring this?

Governance and Policy Issues

On most campuses, a key player in the internationalization process is the Office of International Programs (OIPs). Your campus probably has one, and it probably provides you – the NRCs, and LRCs – with important services, such as recruitment of international students and faculty, administration of study abroad programs, administering exchange programs, and organizing events such as lectures and film festivals and other outreach activities. Additional functions include providing assistance for outside grant applications, backstopping a special club for study abroad returnees, running an international student house, and special seminars for faculty.

Directors of such offices were almost always among the interviewees for this project on each campus; the discrepancies between their reports of what they do and the other information garnered on the same campus was the subject of two other papers,¹⁰ and will of course be included in my final report. One discrepancy relevant to NRC efforts was emphasized when I compared my data with information from a recent survey done by AIEA.¹¹ While my interviews showed relatively few respondents (other than OIP directors) mentioning faculty or curriculum development as an OIP activity, the AIEA data indicates that as many as 75% of its (OIP) respondents do faculty and/or curriculum development as a primary or secondary activity. Can NRCs' efforts be supplemented by this source?

Another interesting – and puzzling – discrepancy in these two sets of data is related to community outreach, which was reported as an international activity by very few OIPs or others (respectively, 7% and less than 2%), while the AIEA survey showed 59% of its respondents reporting it as a primary activity. Where do the NRCs fit in this mix? To this outsider, it would seem that close working relationships between

¹⁰ Ann Imlah Schneider, "Connecting 'International' and Prospective Teachers: Added Challenges?" presented October 30, 2004, at Beloit College (<http://www.beloit.edu/%7Eoie/conference/>) and "Research on Internationalizing Teacher Education: The Role of OIPs, and Underrepresented Groups" presented at AIEA meeting February 2006 and available at www.internationaledadvice.org.

¹¹ www.aieaworld.org (under Campus and Administrative Programs)

OIPs and Title VI grant recipients (whose activity and development are, after all, described as a university responsibility) could only be helpful, both before and after competition seasons.

Answers to my question about how internationalization efforts may be initiated offer more advice for NRCs and LRCs. After faculty, the next most frequently cited were senior university administrators – presidents and provosts (although in a number of conversations they were described as “very supportive” rather than initiators), then college administrators (i.e., Arts and Sciences and Education deans). Students were sometimes ascribed a role, and other occasional sources were alumni and the local business community. Some respondents ventured that their institutions had some encouragement, but no help from the state for internationalization efforts. A few noted encouragement from consortia such as the UNCF. And were Education respondents encouraged to internationalize by the priorities of their professional associations? Half of the faculty said they were (by at least one association), but some 30% did not feel that to be the case. On the other hand, about 80% of the Arts and Sciences respondents – and 73% of the Education faculty – did report impetus for internationalization coming from foreign visitors. These are all sources of support that NRCs and LRCs should strive to keep “in the loop” as programs develop.

While you are currently exquisitely aware that outside grant funding plays an important part in the initiation of internationalizing efforts, you may be interested to know that the responses to questions about what the sources of incentive funding might be were very mixed. Nearly 40% of the non-student Education interviewees just did not know or would even venture a guess about what funding sources might exist. Some U. S. Government agencies were mentioned – most likely FIPSE, Department of State, USAID, and the Department of Education (Titles II, III, and/or VI), and also NIH, and NSF. Surprisingly relatively few (for example, a scant 24% of the research university interviewees in the second phase) mentioned Title VI. What’s going on here? Why isn’t Title VI better known in the academic community? What can you do to make the results of your evaluation efforts known?

Conclusions

Given the key players’ pessimism about funding sources, it is not surprising that many of the strategies suggested, and liked, by a considerable number of respondents, are not very expensive. Improved advising might simply make better use of already-existing resources, for example. I learned on many campuses about programs to help faculty improve and update their teaching, so adding (or strengthening) an international strand to that activity might similarly be quite cost-effective.

So I hope it is clear why I want to share these research results with NRC Directors. The importance of strengthening the preparation of K-12 teachers everywhere is well recognized and as international and area studies specialists you can surely – you must – recognize the importance of having teachers well grounded in the basics of our global context. The prospective teacher is trained primarily in the Arts and Sciences – the institutional home of most NRCs – and Arts and Sciences faculty need to give serious attention to their impact on that training by working with faculty in Education, and other professional schools, through discussions of course requirements, through faculty and curriculum development to increase international content of as many courses as possible, and through an advising system that is sensitive to the real options – and needs – for as much international exposure as possible.

Do you still need to be persuaded to take a more active role in the undergraduate training of teachers? Please remember the current teachers’ responses, wishing they had had more foreign language training, more non-U.S. courses, more study and internships abroad, and better advice about international options.

We have developed a fairly extensive set of recommendations – for state and local governments, for accrediting agencies, for professional associations, for outside funders, for Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education, and for institutions of higher education generally. All will be included in the final report, which I hope to have ready and posted on my website within the next few months, and I am making serious efforts to get them to the relevant organizations. For purposes of this presentation, I include the recommendations that will probably be applicable to participants in this conference. I hope you will also take note of the many questions and suggestions in the foregoing. And of course I welcome your questions, comments, and suggestions.

Recommendations

For institutions of higher education generally:

- implement a wide range of strategies for increasing international exposure for pre-service teachers, among them –
 - add formal international components to student advisory services, beginning in the pre-application phase, to assure the feasibility of maximum international exposure within normal time-to-degree constraints;
 - provide training, and website support, on international options for students, faculty, and professional advisors;
 - foster development of internationally oriented curriculum, through, for example,
 - individual faculty grants (particularly for general education courses),
 - joint workshops for both Arts and Sciences and Education faculty, and
 - hiring faculty with international training and experience;
 - strengthen requirements for foreign language training for all undergraduates, with a goal of attaining at least conversational proficiency in a second language; and
 - review policy and practice for the integration of study and internships abroad in the curriculum, with respect to both general education and major field requirements;
- strengthen the role of campus-wide offices for international services and programs, and effectively provide information about them;
- expose all students with international interests to the challenges and satisfactions of teaching careers; and
- track characteristics described in this report for evaluation, research, and planning purposes, for all undergraduate programs, including those in professional schools and advising services.

For Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education:

- review all courses for possible addition of international content (see above);
- integrate study and internships abroad into the professional training of teachers;
- emphasize and increase the options for observation and practice teaching in bilingual and international magnet schools;
- require that prospective foreign language teachers have at least one semester of overseas experience in an area where the target language is spoken;

- strengthen the international components of academic and career advising services, in cooperation with other university and community college advising services; and
- offer an effective introductory course, and even observational internships and a minor in education, open to all undergraduates, to reinforce career advising.

For professional associations:

- give increased attention to needs and strategies for improving international components in testing standards and in the preparation of teachers, in publications and at meetings; and
- increase attention to solutions for the demand and supply problems of foreign language teachers, at all levels of instruction (K-12 and postsecondary).

For outside funders:

- disseminate more widely, and particularly to the teacher education community, information about funding available to strengthen and initiate international studies and foreign language programs that are available to strengthen the training of prospective teachers;
- provide funding for a wide variety of activities, as indicated above – including such activities as academic and career advising – that can strengthen the international options available for, and known to, all undergraduates and particularly those who might consider teaching careers; and
- develop more effective networks for disseminating information about options and resources for prospective and current teachers.