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## **Internationalization of Faculty Roles and Rewards: Challenges and Opportunities**

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Faculty engagement is the key to efforts to enhance global competence and capacity in a college or university setting. Across four faculty roles – teaching, research, service, and outreach – and across faculty careers, from the doctoral students who comprise the ranks of future faculty<sup>1</sup> to tenured full professors, there are competing forces that influence decisions about whether and how to incorporate international elements and issues into faculty life. Here we address faculty roles and rewards in relation to internationalization. This paper is organized by four faculty roles (teaching, research, service, and outreach) and includes incentives and disincentives for internationalization among doctoral students, non-tenure stream faculty and academic specialists (including part time and full time instructors, researchers, advisers), pre-tenure faculty, and tenured associate and full professors. In each role and at each point in a faculty career, there are opportunities to increase involvement in international issues; each role and each career stage also presents challenges to increasing and sustaining involvement that must be addressed if MSU is to become and remain increasingly globalized.

We recognize that there are competing demands for faculty attention and effort, yet we believe that it is possible to re-align current arguments between, for example, demands to become more technologically competent and to become more globally competent so that it is possible to see how meeting one demand does, in fact, help faculty to meet another. A more technologically competent faculty member may more easily participate in research with colleagues in other countries; a more globally competent faculty member may be a better teacher of an online course that draws an international student population. Our emphasis in this document is not on creating additional demands for faculty time and effort, but on creating incentives that will entice, recognize, and reward those faculty (and others on campus who teach, research, and perform service and outreach) who engage in internationalized activities at MSU and off campus.

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<sup>1</sup> A note on the inclusion of doctoral students in this document: We consider doctoral students to be future faculty, although we recognize that not all doctoral students will go on to academic careers. The integration of efforts to internationalize the doctoral student experience into efforts to internationalize faculty work is intended to create a predisposition among these students to pursue global interests when they leave MSU. Indeed, the doctoral students we send into the academic workforce become some of the best ambassadors for MSU as they spread across the US and the world to carry on the research and teaching interests they begin here. Our goal is that MSU become known as a place that produces globally competent future faculty; when an institution hires one of our PhDs, they can be confident that they are increasing their own global capacity. In the context of this document the general term “faculty” is meant to include doctoral students who will seek faculty appointments on graduation and academic specialists who fulfill teaching, research, outreach, and service roles at MSU.

## TEACHING

One of the goals of MSU, as outlined in the framework and guiding principles of the institution, is to become academically outstanding, nationally and globally. Complementary to this effort is President McPherson's desire to make studying abroad an integral part of the undergraduate education with an anticipated target of 40% of the undergraduate body studying in another country prior to graduation. Internationalizing the education process can occur via studying abroad or by the integration of international themes and events into the curriculum. Many faculty, however, are hesitant to engage in international instruction<sup>2</sup>. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an era of globalization requires faculty to universally embrace education that is integrated with international experiences and opportunities.

### Disincentives/Obstacles to Internationalization

One of the greatest challenges to internationalizing a teaching agenda at all teaching levels (doctoral, non-tenure, pre-tenure, and post-tenure) is having a clear understanding of how these efforts will be valued by the academy with regard to individual appointment assignments. Identifying clear and consistent (i.e., across all administrative levels) goals for internationalizing the educational process is needed to 1) develop faculty who are committed to incorporating international activities into their teaching load, 2) provide faculty with clearly articulated expectations of teaching responsibilities for annual reviews and promotion and tenure requirements and 3) ensure a variety of pedagogical techniques (e.g., study abroad, on-campus course use of international case studies) are used to provide students with highest quality international experiences possible. Another challenge facing internationalized teaching is the lack of personal international exposure and experience faculty possess. For example, appreciating and communicating about the intricacies of Kenyan wildlife conservation and management is difficult without firsthand knowledge. Describing the subtleties of the Mona Lisa cannot be articulated properly without visiting the Louvre in Paris. This lack of personal experience is also compounded by limited time and financial resource to make these events a reality.

Doctoral students face all of the above obstacles but are least impacted by not having clearly identified goals for teaching internationally as their work performance is rarely linked to their involvement in these initiatives. These students, however, face other challenges to international instruction. Many have little to no control over choice of teaching assignment (i.e., class) or course content. Rather, they participate in international teaching as opportunities arise, many of which have already been developed and outlined. Also, although these teaching experiences may be within their discipline, they may not be within the purview of their specific area of interest further alienating them from the course material. These students may also face uncertainty when teaching with an international focus if they have never participated in an international activity themselves. Finally, degree requirements, especially competing research needs may be the greatest deterrent to doctoral student involvement in international teaching. Many students simply do not have the time to participate in international teaching especially if this teaching is completed as a study abroad course. Very few graduate students can afford multiple weeks or a semester away from research projects without seriously jeopardizing the quality of their work.

Pre-tenure faculty are typically hired to fill a particular research / teaching niche. As such the courses under the direction of the new faculty member often mirror their research agenda or are general discipline-specific courses. Although willing to incorporate international experiences into campus course offerings, many faculty may be faced with a lack of their own personal international experiences on which to draw on. Instructing

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<sup>2</sup> Note about international instruction (teaching): throughout the document international instruction includes teaching abroad as well as teaching on campus but incorporating international cases and examples into a course or teaching moment

courses abroad is often met with great trepidation, as these courses require a significant time and financial investment. Faculty developing a course in another country rarely develop course material only. They are also responsible for coordinating travel and lodging, advertising, and interacting with cautious parents. All of these activities take time away from the faculty's other responsibilities, most notably research (i.e., grant writing and manuscripts). Pre-tenured faculty are acutely aware of the requirements for promotion and tenure. The University's often inconsistent interpretation and valuing of teaching abroad as it relates to faculty advancement preclude many from participating. Faculty are also hampered to participate in study abroad due to unclear University protocol as it relates to liability of lead faculty in the event of accident, injury or other such event.

Post-tenure faculty face many of the same pressures that pre-tenured faculty although the pressure from promotion and tenure expectations is not as great. However, associate and full professors may be relatively ingrained in teaching practices and may be cautious about taking on new directions for their teaching. Similarly, especially as it relates to study abroad, summer teaching abroad may be seen as detracting from research time.

#### Incentives/Opportunities for Internationalization

Many similar trends emerged when comparing disincentives and obstacles for all faculty levels participation in international instruction. To circumvent some of the disincentives / obstacles the following suggestions of incentives and opportunities are offered.

- 1) Make international criteria listed on promotion and tenure documents meaningful. The current form includes performance rating for "service" to International Studies and Programs (ISP) and narrative evaluations for such items as international instruction abroad and comparative /international courses on campus. Faculty, especially pre-tenured faculty must have a clear understanding of how international instruction is evaluated and valued. This is particularly relevant for faculty who engage in international instruction but do so as overload pay (e.g., teach study abroad for 3 weeks in the summer).
- 2) Coordinate "seminar abroad" and / or language programs for faculty. Faculty programs abroad are excellent opportunities to encourage faculty to obtain an international experience and develop an international focus. In addition to providing faculty with opportunities to develop their own international experience, these programs also allow faculty to develop contacts for further collaboration on research projects.
- 3) Similar to the "seminar abroad" recommendation listed above, an ability to extending faculty travel to overseas meetings or conferences would allow faculty to investigate potential future teaching opportunities and create international experiences of which faculty would more readily incorporate into class offerings. These stays would also allow faculty to identify collaborators for future research endeavors.
- 4) Give appropriate recognition for international teaching efforts. This recognition could come through a variety of venues including newsletter, university magazines, or via speeches of higher-level University administrators. Faculty may also be recognized through awards in excellence in international teaching. The University may also wish to work with key departments to allocate a portion of the merit salary hike budget to reward faculty involvement in international teaching.
- 5) Provide support for international curriculum development. Faculty incentives can be developed for faculty to develop new international courses or modify existing ones to include an international component. Providing this support can have an enormous impact on the University's efforts to enhance international education efforts.
- 6) Continue to provide faculty salaries and other incentives for those leading study abroad programs. The University, however, needs to re-evaluate its current overload pay rate for faculty on 11 month appointments who take on this teaching

responsibility as the overload rate has not been adjusted for over 10 years and faculty earn the same amount whether they are teaching a 2 week program or a 6 week program.

- 7) Host international scholars and visitors to campus. Although hosting these scholars on campus may be directly linked to research presentations, opportunities exist to engage these international scholars in the classroom.
- 8) Encourage increased involvement of international graduate students in course instruction. The University is in a unique position to take advantage of the presence of international graduate students on campus. These students already come to the University with international experience and can bring these as experiences directly into the classroom. Creating a listing of international graduate students who would be interested in participating in a course as a guest speaker would provide many instructors with a simple and effective manner to incorporate international experiences and examples in their courses.
- 9) Freeing up time for international teaching. The majority of study abroad courses taught by MSU faculty are currently taught during the summer, when many faculty who may be interested in leading study abroad are under contract to teach domestically and/or to conduct research locally. More an issue for annual year contracted faculty than academic year faculty, the need to free up time to teach abroad is a very real issue.

## **RESEARCH**

MSU's commitment to research at the highest level is central to its mission as a leading global land grant university. Some research is by its very nature already internationalized or global: projects involving politics, economies, and cultures outside the U.S.; languages other than English; environmental issues; health and safety; water and food resources; and so forth. This research may be conducted on campus, in other countries, or in a globalized electronic context that may combine work from campus with work outside the U.S. To make MSU a truly global land grant university, opportunities to involve undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty at all stages of their careers, in international research must be maximized.

### Disincentives/Obstacles to Internationalization

As in other areas of internationalization, key obstacles include resource allocation in terms of time, energy, and funding. Faculty whose research agendas depend on international engagement as the core of inquiry may experience only one of these obstacles – funding – but other faculty may experience the time and energy required to establish new research topics or to expand current research into the global arena as additional disincentives. It may be possible to reduce disincentives to some faculty not already inclined to pursue international research, though it is unreasonable to expect that *all* research at MSU will incorporate international elements. Across all stages of faculty careers, the major obstacles to internationalizing research appear to be lack of exposure (i.e., not aware of current international research activities at MSU or in fields), lack of interest (i.e., aware of activities but not interested enough to pursue them), lack of resources (i.e., aware of and interested, but not able to participate due to lack of necessary resources), inertia (i.e., aware, interested, and potentially able to participate, but maintaining current research out of habit), and active opposition (i.e., aware and able, but electing other research priorities).

Doctoral students may experience any of these obstacles, but lack of resources may be the most important because students are often dependent on advisers for research funding. Other pressures on doctoral students include the need to align research with that of their advisers and the lack of time to do research outside what is necessary for their degrees. Locked into existing funding, students lack the ability to pursue projects of interest without assistance in obtaining additional resources.

Assistant professors (pre-tenure) typically come to MSU with a research agenda established by their own dissertations and are hired to meet specific needs of a department (e.g., “a Shakespeare person,” “someone in rare plant genetics,” “an educational policy specialist,” etc.). New faculty face varying demands by academic discipline, but most will be balancing research with teaching new courses, adjusting to departmental culture, and competing for grants, among other activities. While there are numerous opportunities in this transition to provide incentives for new faculty to embrace a global vision for their research, there are also a number of obstacles, key among them being actual and perceived elements of a tenure and review process that does not clearly articulate the value MSU places on internationalization across research, teaching, service, and outreach activities. Without some clear message regarding the value of global engagement, new faculty are left to rely on advice (some accurate, some less so) from mentors and senior colleagues regarding the value of including international perspectives in research if such perspectives must be included at the expense of time spent on an existing, non-global research agenda.

Associate and full professors may encounter fewer obstacles or disincentives to engage in international research than do doctoral students and pre-tenure faculty. The location for institutional rewards at these levels is in the merit review process (and, for associate level, promotion to professor), and lack of a clearly articulated value on internationalization is a hindrance to motivating additional involvement of faculty not already engaged in international efforts. As well, firmly established domestic and/or local research careers – and reputations built upon that research – may deter some tenured faculty from taking up new, global projects or from adding global dimensions to existing research agendas. Time demands on tenured faculty for graduate advising, institutional service, and professional service may also hinder their involvement in new endeavors.

#### Incentives/Opportunities for Internationalization

While lack of exposure, interest, and/or resources may contribute to faculty inertia and resistance to taking up international research projects, there are incentives and opportunities for faculty development that may promote exposure to, stimulate interest in, and provide resources for overcoming these obstacles. We draw some of these recommendations from Collins and Edwards’ (n.d.) *Ten Ideas for Encouraging Faculty International Involvement*, Hudzik’s (2004 – not for distribution) *Background Documents: Internationalizing Higher Education and Michigan State University*, and from letter dated 24 April 2001 to MSU ISP Directors from ISP Faculty Incentives Task Force. Across all stages of faculty careers, key incentives and opportunities for increasing participation in international research include:

1. Recognizing research that involves international content, is conducted outside the US, and/or that otherwise promotes faculty and student engagement in global issues  
EXAMPLE: Texas A & M University annually recognizes outstanding international research and teaching (Collins & Edwards, n.d.)
2. Through a range of faculty development mechanisms, providing adequate information on existing international research opportunities on ways to locate funding for new international research projects or for inclusion of global content in ongoing research through a range of faculty development mechanisms  
EXAMPLE: New graduate student and faculty orientations could highlight international research; workshops, seminars, web tutorials could direct faculty to funding resources
3. Hosting international scholars at MSU
4. Providing adequate funding for start-up of international research projects and/or inclusion of international content in ongoing research  
EXAMPLE: IRGP funds could be set aside for internationalizing research
5. Providing “leveling funds” for Fulbright Scholars and other recipients of major international research awards (Collins & Edwards, n.d.)

EXAMPLE: On a case-by-case basis, Texas A & M supplements salaries of most Fulbright recipients to account for possible loss of income during time away for research

6. Encouraging the creation of international research partnerships and linkages
7. Promoting networking among faculty who are already doing international research
8. At all levels: hiring faculty who are already inclined toward and/or demonstrated commitment to global research agendas

In providing resources for increased global engagement in research, priorities may need to be set between supporting faculty who already do international research and enticing new faculty into this group. In an environment of cost containment and cutting, it may be more effective to provide resources to motivate greater numbers of faculty to engage in international research – and then providing support for them to find their own future funding for those projects – than to provide ongoing incentives to faculty who have already established global research agendas. Recognition of established efforts, however, is critical to sustain international engagement and to avoid a “bait and switch” or “globalism as flavor of the month” reputation for an internationalized MSU.

Doctoral students might benefit from any of the general suggestions above, and might also benefit from involvement as research assistants in global projects conducted at MSU and elsewhere. Some would benefit from direct funding to doctoral students for their own research projects (pre-dissertation or dissertation) for travel, data collection, collaboration, and so forth. Finally, students in fields not currently considered highly internationalized might be more inclined to take up international research projects if the cultures of their academic departments could be made more amenable to such endeavors (so that international projects were not seen as something to be done on student’s “own” time).

Assistant professors (pre-tenure) might be especially inclined to take up international research as they begin to establish their post-dissertation research agendas. There is a window of opportunity in early faculty careers to incorporate or strengthen existing global perspectives in research. Clear articulation of the value of internationalization within the tenure and promotion process, combined with financial incentives and resources to conduct international research, might have its most significant impact on this population of faculty. Support for applying for internal and external grants to fund international research might also be highly effective for attracting early career faculty to international research.

Associate and full professors may be influenced by the many factors that would influence their early career colleagues, but an additional opportunity exists in the form of sabbatical leaves, which may be a time for an international research experience. As well, promotion may mean, for some faculty, a chance to take their research in new directions and to explore new ideas in global contexts. Capitalizing on the occasion of promotion to promote injecting international elements into research may be possible, and late career faculty may be looking for fresh ways to be engaged in research.

## **OUTREACH and SERVICE**

Outreach and service are critical to the land grant mission of MSU, and international outreach is a valuable vehicle for extending the reach of MSU faculty into the world and fulfilling a land grant vision that is not bounded by Michigan’s borders. There are substantial opportunities in this area, as in others of faculty roles, and there are substantial obstacles as well, key among them being adjusting institutional expectations and language to reflect MSU as a global land grant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Disincentives/Obstacles to Global Outreach and Service

At all faculty career stages, obstacles to participation in global outreach include lack of exposure, lack of interest, lack of globalization as a priority, and lack of resources to undertake such activities. An additional obstacle, or challenge in any case, lies in the

apparent – though not necessarily real – conflict between providing outreach to local and state constituencies and providing outreach to global interests. In some strict interpretations of MSU as a land grant institution, outreach in the state of Michigan should be the highest, perhaps only, priority. Coming to see ourselves – and having others see us as – as globally engaged university *servicing the interests of Michigan* through that engagement will be a challenge.

#### Incentives/Opportunities for Global Outreach and Service

In addition to adapting suggestions for incentives for global teaching and research, to service and outreach activities (e.g., recognition, funding, increasing exposure, etc.), adopting strategies to reframe MSU's land grant mission as one of global engagement in the service of the state of Michigan could increase support for internationalizing outreach activities. Building rewards for such outreach into the hiring, merit, and reappointment, tenure, and promotion processes would help us attract and retain faculty who are engaged in global outreach. Creating faculty development programs that emphasize the international nature of MSU outreach (imagine "Meet Michigan Meets the World") would support these efforts as well. To be sure, not all "global outreach" must occur off campus; much of it is and can be conducted using technology and by bringing the world to Michigan through local outreach activities, just as teaching and learning can be internationalized on campus.

The major opportunity here, though, lies in taking up the challenge to be a pioneer in the vision of a global land grant that meets the needs of Michigan, the nation, and the world. As we take on this challenge of redefinition, we also have the opportunity to carry the land grant philosophy to nations that are developing or adapting systems to meet their own needs for education at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. MSU could position itself as a leader in global land grant engagement and in bringing the land grant philosophy to other parts of the world.

#### **References**

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