

How to address Internationalization of Campus Culture or Student Life?

In efforts to internationalize MSU should campus culture or student life be a focus of the initiative? Why and how? Also, how should this issue be addressed by the NCA accreditation self-study in an **open** and **inclusive** manner to avoid unnecessary controversy.

The Office for Internationalizing Student Life has already crafted a plan for enhancing international education efforts at MSU:

The American Council on Education in *Educating for Global Competence-America's Passport to the Future*, proposed that America's future depends on the ability to develop a citizenry that is globally competent. Such an effort would be defined by being internationally *competent, comfortable and confident*. Building on this theme of competence, comfort and confidence, the Office of Internationalizing Student Life developed a plan in consultation with faculty and staff from a variety of academic departments and units in spring 2003. The following overview presents the mission, goals and objectives of the office as well an examination of current and new programs that contribute to the overall internationalization of the campus.

Mission and Vision

To provide every domestic undergraduate student at MSU varied opportunities to raise their knowledge and awareness in the global context: countries, cultures, issues, religions, practices, etc. This will be accomplished through an All-University collaboration (International Education Advisory Committee) that identifies and promotes an array of international learning opportunities designed to actively engage students at all levels of competence. Through the programs of ISL and the broader MSU offerings, competencies will be identified and established to promote knowledge and skill development for successful transition into a global society.

Core competencies for the globally proficient student

Knowledge of countries and culture at a broad and general level

Skills and ability to communicate effectively across a wide spectrum of styles and cultures

Ability to apply critical thinking and reasoning from a variety of perspectives

Ability to work confidently and competently in a global environment

Ability to integrate academic discipline (theory) with practice before transition to the workforce

Major objectives

To provide opportunities to study, interact and participate in intercultural learning activities designed for students who may not choose a study abroad experience

To identify the variety of academic courses with international content and work with the lead faculty in bringing the expertise of international students and internationally experienced domestic students into the classroom

To contribute to preparation and orientation of students going on international service learning (Alternative spring break) and study abroad programs

Goals

1. To provide all students with opportunities and appropriate co-curricular challenges to increase their knowledge, experience and competence in international areas as in-class or out-of class experiences.
2. To provide specific alternatives for developing cross-cultural competence, especially for domestic students who do not engage in study or research abroad
3. To create more opportunities for international and domestic students to interact and appreciate the learning that occurs across cultures through student organizations, joint sponsored events, etc
4. To identify specific courses with international focus/content in areas such as ISS, IAH, College of Business, Area Studies Centers etc. and work with faculty in providing trained international speakers/internationally experienced US for their classes
5. To work with targeted colleges and department faculty/staff in the assessment of their students' global and cultural competence through use of Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and other related of assessment programs (qualitative and quantitative methods)

6. To develop critical cross-cultural skills necessary to function as global citizens and leaders as they transition to the workforce in the form of senior class global workforce preparation seminars/programs and leader global leadership programs

This plan and other strategies for internationalizing student life or campus culture at MSU should be revisited by the NCA Self-Study if the initiative is deemed important by the MSU community. A strategy of cooperation and outreach concerning this issue should be formulated to decide whether to pursue this sort of internationalization at MSU. A possible strategy for addressing this issue could include:

Open forums with students—as students are the population targeted by such an initiative it is imperative to seek their ideas and opinions about internationalizing student life or campus culture. Possibly leading to the creation of an internationalizing student life or campus culture student coalition.

- International student organizations (international mission or composition)
- ASMSU and college senates
- Major governing groups (COGS, RHA, Greeks)
- Living units (Hall Governments, Caucus Groups)
- Student advisory committees
- Off-campus students

Open forums with other constituents—as other populations, faculty and staff, are included in student life or campus culture it is imperative to seek input from such groups. Possibly leading to the creation of an internationalizing student life or campus culture student and faculty/staff coalition.

- ISP and Student Services Advisory Committee on internationalizing student life at MSU (Chair: Marti Ruel)
- Liberal arts restructuring committee

Newsletter, listserv, website outreach—a consistent and effective way of informing students and other constituents across colleges and units about the development of this issue at MSU is necessary to keep open dialogue effective. Possibly leading to an internationalization news source for sharing ideas between internationalization initiatives and creating synergy.

- NCA Accreditation website survey of student experience at MSU