

**INTERNATIONAL STUDIES COMMITTEE  
REPORT TO THE DEAN  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO**

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Elizabeth J. Sandell, Ph. D., Writer and Editor

Committee Members:

Joanne Brandt

Ronald Browne

Cynthia Broderick

A. Douglas Ganss

Sandra Jessen

Elizabeth Sandell

Jerry Robicheau

## OUTLINE

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## ABSTRACT

### Committee recommendations:

1. Establish COE goals related to international partnerships, including
  - a. COE students and faculty will grow in cross-cultural competencies.
  - b. COE students and faculty will each have an international experience, either in another country or with persons from other cultures who live in the USA.
2. Prioritize implementation of intentional, official partnerships with higher education institutions in other countries according to the criteria, standards and timelines set forth in other sections of this report.
3. Assign the COE International Studies Committee to review and recommend requests for endorsement, financial support, and faculty time related to international studies.
4. Promote and support with finances, release time and attention COE-related international study and travel based on College priorities.
5. Create and foster partnerships with school districts in the Midwest for domestic international experiences for faculty and students.
6. Schedule an annual International Festival for COE faculty and students to promote international exchanges, study, and travel.
7. Schedule an annual International Hospitality Tea for COE faculty and students to welcome and get acquainted with international students and faculty studying in COE.
8. Participate in program evaluation to show change in COE student and faculty global-mindedness and cultural sensitivity.
9. Explore relationships and arrangements with partner institutions for student teaching and clinical experiences.
10. Explore contracting with an organization that knows how to arrange logistics for individuals and groups in the priority institutions and countries.
11. Explore creating an orientation course for COE students and faculty to learn about travel and study abroad.
12. Explore instruments to measure individual and COE change related to global-mindedness and cultural sensitivity among COE faculty and students.
13. The committee recommends that COE faculty encourage their students and even their entire classes to be involved as Cultural Ambassadors to the international students studying at MSU. This is facilitated by the course, KSP 106: Education and Culture in the US. In this course, students who are new to studying in American colleges are matched with students from American cultures.
14. School districts with immigrant communities for domestic international experiences.
15. Create a COE learning community organized around international partnerships that support public school administrators and teachers in our partner districts (Faribault, LeSueur, Mankato, Owatonna, Saint Paul, Sibley East and Waseca).
16. Create a COE-sponsored summer institute (2 to 4 weeks) for teaching international faculty about active learning and about teaching in the USA.

## **I. Introduction and Background**

Once again, the world is flat, at least according to Thomas Friedman (2005). [insert a little more introduction]

### **A. Creation of the Committee**

#### Charge from the Dean

Dean Michael Miller invited the members of the committee to recommend to the College processes and priorities for a strategic approach to prioritizing and establishing international relationships and programs for faculty and students in the College

#### Members of the Committee

Joanne Brandt, CSP  
Ronald Browne, Elementary and Early Childhood  
Cynthia Broderick, Business Education  
A. Douglas Ganss, K-12 and  
Sandra Jessen, The Children's House  
Elizabeth Sandell, Elementary and Early Childhood  
Jerry Robicheau, Educational Leadership  
Gail Zahn, ESSP

### **B. Committee Work During AY2005**

During Academic Year 2004 – 2005, the committee met several times to describe its tasks and responsibilities. The list that the committee developed included:

1. Provide opportunities for students and faculty to travel and learn abroad.
2. Audit currently available international travel opportunities specific to the College of Education as well as general opportunities available to the university.
3. Determine when, how, and why international travel would fit into the curriculum. Determine what purpose it would serve our candidates and the results of our programs or schools.
4. Interview College of Education international students to determine why they are attending and to learn more about their experiences here.
5. Learn more about MSU support systems including financial support in determining how the institution is prepared to support international students. In addition, determine available financial support services for students planning on traveling and studying abroad.
6. Conduct conversations within the college regarding specific domestic and international locations and opportunities and their fit with programmatic needs.
7. Refine the College of Education decision-making processes regarding prioritization of international opportunities including such factors as programmatic fit, faculty

connections, financial commitments necessary and opportunities for reciprocity in the partnership.

8. Assure that there is a liaison with the diversity committee in the College of Education.

In addition, Joanne Brandt reviewed data about level of involvement in international studies by all Colleges of Education in the United States. Her information indicated that only four percent of the Colleges of Education in the United States have international activities and relationships with universities in other countries. The committee concluded that this implies that (1) there is a lot of work to do in connecting American teacher preparation programs with colleagues around the world and that (2) there are few templates or examples of how to do this successfully.

The committee recommended several tasks and activities for the academic year 2005 – 2006:

1. Survey faculty and students on interests related to learning abroad, including teaching in the IEP program.
2. Determine where studying abroad fits within the College of Education curricula.
3. Use MSU's major advancements with technology to provide the appropriate assessments for learning (e.g., student teaching, counseling practicums, and leadership internships).
4. Determine levels of interest in learn abroad determined by type of immersion experience as moderated by distance, culture, activities, and willingness to embrace new cultural experiences.
5. Generate a list of already established contacts with countries (e.g., Thailand, Ireland, Kenya, etc.) and formulate standards and rubrics for learning.
6. Explore professional relationships with other academic institutions (e.g., University of Minnesota, St. Cloud State University, etc.) and review their templates for student and faculty study abroad.
7. Develop a professional working relationship with the MSU International Programs Office.
8. Take a leadership role in working with the MSU International Programs Office to build a strong international program within the College of Education.

### **C. Committee Work During AY2006**

In October, the committee received its charge from Dean Michael Miller and elected a chairperson, Elizabeth Sandell.

In November, the committee learned from Caryn Lindsay about MSU's International Programs Office and the support systems and processes that MSU has in place. The International Programs Office is available to facilitate student and faculty international learning opportunities. The IPO can also connect faculty with other organizations that provide planning consultation and logistical support for travel abroad. The IPO does not specifically support these opportunities with financial resources. However, the IPO staff members can connect students and faculty with possibilities for grants and fellowships for traveling and studying abroad. The committee also learned from the MSU – Thai Educator Exchange program about what cooperative programs might look like for the College.

In December, the committee discussed next steps for the MSU – Thai Educator Exchange and endorsed a plan to submit to Dean Miller. The plan was submitted to Dean Miller in late December. The Dean next asked the committee to consider department initiatives and needs and to lead the College faculty in a conversation about international studies connections.

In January, committee members participated in the International Fair to learn more about currently available international travel and study opportunities as well as general opportunities available to the university. There are a myriad of organizations available for MSU faculty and students to join with in international study.

In January, committee members used the chart attached to guide and record the discussion about how international travel fits into the curricula and what purposes international studies serve COE program candidates and stakeholders.

In February, the committee sponsored a “Brown Bag Conversation” during the noon hour for conversation among interested faculty in the College about how existing and future international study and exchanges can further the already-established initiatives and agendas for the department.

A tea was held in March for faculty to meet international students enrolled in the College. The conversational agenda was to discuss what led them to select MSU for their education. Representatives from the International Student Office were present also to share about how that office supports students in their work at MSU.

In March and April, the committee sponsored two a “Brown Bag Conversations” to discuss goals and priorities for international relationships that will further the work of the College. The March “Conversation” invited faculty to consider opportunities in China and Hong Kong and how they fit within programmatic initiatives and needs. The April “Conversation” invited faculty to consider opportunities with a university in the Far East region of the Russian Federation.

The committee wanted to reviewed the report of the MSU President's Task Force on International Studies, which was due early Spring semester.

The committee discussed the results of the College-wide Conversations and created recommendations, a timeline, and a priority list of international connections to recommend to the Dean. This report constitutes the summary and presentation of these meetings, research, and conversations

## **II. Goals for COE International Partnerships**

The committee’s work was guided by the missions and goals of Minnesota State University, Mankato and the College of Education. One of the attachments includes related mission statements and goals for MSU and for the COE.

The committee recommends these goals in general related to intentional, official COE international partnerships:

- (1) COE students and faculty will grow in cross-cultural competencies
- (2) COE students and faculty will each have an international experience, either in another country or with persons from other cultures here in the US.

The committee recommends that progress toward these goals be measured in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Number of COE students and faculty that participate in international partnerships.
- (2) Number of COE students and faculty that show change on an instrument that measures global-mindedness and cultural sensitivity.<sup>1</sup>
- (3) Case studies about COE faculty, COE students, and school district faculty and administrators
- (4) Number of COE faculty that are involved in leading cross-cultural experiences

### **III. Benefits of COE International Partnerships**

Increased adaptability  
Reduced stereotyping  
Increased understanding of other cultures  
Increased preparedness for multicultural public schools  
Enhanced global-mindedness

### **IV. Standards for COE International Partnerships**

The committee recommends that intentional, official COE partnerships be organized and coordinated so as to create deeper, not necessarily broader, international partnerships. In other words, more is not necessarily better. Instead, the committee recommends that intentional, official COE partnerships be required to meet at least these four standards:

#### **A. Intentionality**

COE international partnerships will be prioritized for intentional relationships with institutions that help expand and diversify the COE curriculum. COE students and faculty will grow in cross-cultural competencies. COE students and faculty will each have an international experience, either in another country or with persons from other cultures who live in the USA.

Intentional partnerships will:

- (1) Set expected outcomes
- (2) Address diversity
- (3) Help to establish an inclusive learning environment
- (4) Be student focused
- (5) Enhance faculty awareness

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<sup>1</sup> Such as Diversity Awareness Instrument (Dowlin and Bunkers); Intercultural Development Inventory (Bennett and Hammer); Global-mindedness Scale (Hett); Classroom Communication Competence Scale.

- (6) Create an awareness of globalization
- (7) Provide for flow of learning experiences

## **B. Applicability**

COE international partnerships will help connect COE programs with immigrants to the Midwest area of the USA. For example, southern Minnesota has immigrants from countries in Southeast Asia (Hmong, Laos, Cambodia); Africa (Somalia, Sudan); Central America (Mexico); China; Russia; Middle East; Eastern Europe. So COE's international partnerships will provide learning and cultural understanding of the immigrant communities in our own region.

## **C. Reciprocity**

COE international partnerships will facilitate two-way teaching and learning between the institutions. Relationships may be expanded from already-existing interactions. For example, COE includes faculty interactions with colleagues in other countries, such as Southeast Asia (Thailand); Europe (Scotland); Eastern Europe (Slovakia); Far East (Hong Kong); Australia; and Russia.

Already, COE includes an international student body from throughout the world: Southeast Asia (Japan, Korea); Africa (Kenya); Central and South America (Mexico and Ecuador); Far East (China); Middle East; and Eastern Europe (Ukraine). Future partnerships will:

- (1) Include cooperative research among faculty at both institutions
- (2) Include faculty exchanges at both institutions

## **D. Efficacy/Effectiveness**

COE international partnerships will enhance the effectiveness of COE programs. Faculty will learn from colleagues in other institutions about technology in education; teaching and learning in settings with different resources; models from other cultures about educational leadership, support for student orientation to higher education, science and mathematics education, working with special populations, etc. Partnerships will:

- (1) Enhance teaching and learning in COE
- (2) Provide value by its foundations and relationships
- (3) Create and maintain a relationships of respect and trust

## **V. Proposals – International Partnerships outside of the USA**

### **A. Early Partnerships**

These relationships are proposed as early partnerships to be established during 2006 – 2007 because they meet the four standards and COE faculty members are planning involvements or are already involved in professional, intentional relationships with their colleagues in another country. (See attachment for details about each institution.) The committee proposes that COE establish three-year partnerships with colleges in:



... University of Economics, Bratislava, Slovakia. Joanne Brandt.  
... Northern International University, Magadan, Russia. Elizabeth Sandell.  
... New South Wales, Australia. Patricia Hoffman. Literacy.

## **B. Next Partnerships**

These relationships are proposed as partnerships for 2007 – 2008 because they meet the four standards and COE faculty members are planning involvements in professional, intentional relationships with their colleagues in another country. (See attachment for details about each institution.) The committee proposes that COE establish three-year partnerships with colleges in:

... University of Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom. Scott Wurdinger.  
... (institution to be determined) Thailand. Jerry Robicheau and Jean Haar.  
... (institution to be determined) China. Ron Browne and Linda Good, Sandi Jessen, Ann Blackhurst.

## **C. Future Partnerships**

These relationships are proposed as future partnerships because their location fits into the “applicability” criteria, however, there are no current connections for COE with higher education institutions in these countries. COE international partnerships can help connect COE programs with immigrants to the Midwest area of the USA. For example, southern Minnesota has immigrants from countries in Africa (Somalia, Sudan) and in Central America (Mexico). So COE’s international partnerships will provide learning and cultural understanding of the immigrant communities in our own region. The committee proposes that COE explore partnerships with colleges in:

... Mexico.  
... Kenya/Tanzania. Cheryl Kalakian.

## **D. Logistical Elements**

The committee recommends that partnerships with other institutions:

- (1) Explore relationships and arrangements with partner institutions for student teaching and clinical experiences.
- (2) Explore contracting with an organization that knows how to arrange logistics for individuals and groups in the priority institutions and countries.
- (3) Explore creating an orientation course for COE students and faculty to learn about travel and study abroad.
- (4) Explore instruments to measure individual and COE change related to global-mindedness and cultural sensitivity among COE faculty and students.

## **VI. Proposals – International Experiences in the USA**

### **A. Early Partnerships**

The committee recommends that COE faculty encourage their students and even their entire classes to be involved as Cultural Ambassadors to the international students studying at MSU. This is facilitated by the course, KSP 106: Education and Culture in the US. In this course, students who are new to studying in American colleges are matched with students from American cultures.

### **B. Future Partnerships**

School districts with immigrant communities may be organized to provide MSU faculty and students with domestic international experiences. The committee recommends:

- (1) Create a COE learning community organized around international partnerships that support public school administrators and teachers in our partner districts (Faribault, LeSueur, Mankato, Owatonna, Saint Paul, Sibley East and Waseca).
- (2) Create a COE-sponsored summer institute (2 to 4 weeks) for teaching international faculty about active learning and about teaching languages in the USA.

## **VII. Financial Support for COE International Partnerships**

The committee recommends exploring a variety of financial resources to support international partnerships, including but not limited to:

Grants from Government and Foundations

College of Education Endowment: funds raised to generate interest revenue

Faculty Development Funds

## VIII. Resources

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