

Introduction

In November of 2000, the University of Florida received approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to conduct an alternative self-study. The university's proposal, *Expanding Our International Perspective: The University of Florida's Plan for Globalizing Education*, provided the rationale and framework for the alternative review's focus on internationalization.

Internally, President Charles Young and Provost David Colburn identified the internationalization of the campus and the curriculum as one of seven specific areas where the University of Florida must foster interdisciplinary research and instructional programs in order to achieve its goal of becoming one of the best research universities in the country. Externally, the importance of internationalization is reflected in the following excerpts from two higher education associations that call for redefining a university's mission to ensure that the international dimension is an integral component of its academic program. The SACS 1998 Criteria for Accreditation (p. 21), states that "*An effective institution of higher education...prepares its students to function in an increasingly diverse, complex and global society...*" and from the strategic vision statement of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, "*...the one assumption underlying all teaching, research and service in the new paradigm of engagement is that global competence, confidence, and comfort are preconditions for both survival and success in the 21st century.*" (Expanding the International Scope of Universities, May 2000, p. 6). This re-accreditation process is an opportunity for the University of Florida to systematically investigate the degree to which the university's education, research, and service areas are internationalized. More importantly, the self-study offers the opportunity for the university to develop and implement plans to enhance the international experience of its students, faculty, and staff and to ensure that all of the university's graduates are prepared to participate fully in the global community.

A Tradition of International Activities

During 2003, the University of Florida will celebrate its 150th anniversary and it is to its founding that the university's international tradition can be traced. Even before the Florida Agricultural College and the East Florida Seminary united and officially became the University of Florida in 1905, international students were a part of the institution. The number of international students increased to over 500 in the mid-1960s and today there are over 3,850 international students representing over 100 countries at UF. The ranks of international scholars have also grown steadily over the years to over 1,300 currently on campus who are engaged in research and teaching.

An international perspective has been included in the university's curriculum, degree programs, and research programs for many years. For example, Latin American area studies and language have been a part of the curriculum since the 1890's. Early in the 20th century, the university established a reputation for expertise in Latin America, in part, due to the research that was conducted on Brazilian and Honduran agriculture. Advanced degrees with a Latin American concentration were first awarded in 1927; in 1931, a formal academic program granting an MA in Latin American Studies was approved. The establishment mid-century of a School of Inter-American Studies, in turn, led to the creation, in 1963, of the Center for Latin American Studies. A core faculty, whose interests and research was rooted in Africa, provided the impetus for the creation in 1964 of the Center for African Studies. In 1965, the Center for Tropical Agriculture was established to provide an academic and administrative base to faculty studying and conducting research in that area. Programs in Asian Studies, Soviet and East European Studies, and West European Studies were added in the 1960s and 1970s. By supporting and funding these centers, the university recognized the importance of including a global perspective in its teaching, research, and service missions. These centers and programs are indicative of the internationalization that is found on campus today.

Since the year 2000, the university has participated in the Coca-Cola World Citizenship Program. This program provides UF students with an international experience with its partner organizations. Graduate and professional students are eligible to apply for internships. Seven students received internships in the summer of the initial

year 2000; nineteen students interned overseas in 2001; and eight students in 2002. Internships take place in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Central and Latin America where students are assigned to work on projects in progress, ranging from habitat conservation to educational programming, health, nutrition, agriculture and economic stability.

Study Abroad programs--those organized by UF faculty, other institutions, and independent organizations--take about 1,200 UF students to over 80 different countries each academic year. Exchange agreements between UF and institutions abroad also contribute to the number of students studying abroad as well as to the number of international students who come to UF. While the overseas learning experience is a valuable one, only a small minority of our student population is able to participate in study abroad programs.

It is primarily through the General Education international/diversity requirement and the over 300 undergraduate courses with international/diversity content currently offered that our students gain a global perspective during their academic careers.

International Diversity

The university community is as diverse as our nation and our world. The University of Florida enrolls students representing over 100 countries, all 50 states, and all 67 counties in the State of Florida. In addition to the 3,850 international students, there are 3,900 students of Hispanic origin, 2,700 African-American students and 2,500 Asian-Americans students. By offering courses that address world cultures, world religions, global economies, and international politics and histories to name a few academic areas, we expose our students to other points of view while they are learning to formulate and articulate their own. The university aims to promote tolerance, harmony, and a better learning environment on our campus.

The Economic Importance of Internationalization

As a public institution, the University of Florida serves both the nation and the state of Florida in educating and preparing future generations for leadership positions in

virtually every field of endeavor. Currently one out of every five new jobs created in the U.S. is directly dependent on the international economy; this percentage is even higher in the State of Florida. Florida is the fourth largest state in the nation both in terms of population and gross state product (GSP), ranking second in the nation in agricultural employment and fourth in high-tech employment. Its GSP in 2000 exceeded \$472 billion, its merchandise trade totaled \$71 billion and its foreign direct investment exceeded \$36 billion. Both trade and foreign direct investment have been growing at about 8 percent annually in recent years. Tourism is a \$50 billion industry that brings more than 70 million people to the state annually. These key sectors of Florida's economy are most affected by the international environment. In addition, the number of tourists who visit, and the sales of Florida's agricultural and technology products, respond to changes in global conditions.

A case in point is Miami-Dade County, home to the leading Spanish-language media in the United States. Miami has more American-owned businesses operating in Latin America, and more Latin American-owned businesses operating within it than any other U.S. metropolitan area. Approximately 129,000 Greater Miami businesses have ties with countries located abroad. Miami has more foreign-owned banks than any other city in the U.S. except New York City. Over 130 international corporations have Latin American headquarters in Miami-Dade County. More than six percent of all jobs in Florida are supported by merchandise exports and in Metro Miami the percentage is just under twenty.

In spite of the important economic gains made in international trade, studies show Miami is losing one of its greatest economic advantages--its ability to communicate in Spanish. Similar losses are occurring at an even faster rate with other languages where their maintenance is not supported through the media or through the interaction of large groups who share languages. This shift is occurring in spite of the stream of immigrants who continue to be drawn to South Florida. It is happening in the face of growing access to other languages via the internet, television, radio, newspapers, and movies.

The growth of domestic and international businesses, particularly the Spanish-language markets, has rekindled interest in promoting proficiency in Spanish and other

languages. While wage incentives make South Florida an ideal place for the growth of an international work force, qualified personnel are lacking and economic incentives are not enough to meet work force requirements. Learning the value of diversity and acquiring language skills will benefit the potential for growth of Florida's economy.

Our graduates will be better prepared for their careers when an expanded international perspective is part of the academic experience. In an economy that will continue to become more globalized, many UF alumni will travel and work overseas. They may have clients and business associates abroad; when assuming positions of greater responsibility, they may be assigned to supervise a work force that is increasingly diverse. Imparting a genuine appreciation for individual differences and cultural diversity will be a valuable asset to our graduates who face these challenges.

Just as an international dimension to a University of Florida education will help prepare its graduates to compete in today's economy, it will also make our state and country more competitive. As one of the leading institutions of higher education in the country, the university has a tremendous wealth of human talent and experience that can and should be brought to bear on problems worldwide. The active promotion of an international orientation for the university will help make such service possible.

The Issues of Internationalization

The internationalization of the University of Florida is not without challenges. However, its single greatest advantage to accomplishing this task is the support of the university's leadership and the inclusion of internationalization as an institutional strategic plan goal. President Charles Young and Provost David Colburn have been active in international efforts throughout their own academic and administrative careers and they understand the value and necessity of internationalizing the campus and the curriculum.

Transportation--Traveling to and from the university is often expensive and time-consuming because Gainesville is a small city with limited air support. Because there are no direct flights from Gainesville to any other city in Florida, collaborative efforts, with its sister institutions and with Florida's major metropolitan areas, are difficult but not

impossible. The three international airports, all within a two-hour drive of Gainesville, provide accessibility to the campus.

Funding and Governance--The legislature has not yet given the UF Board of Trustees the authority to set tuition levels. As a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), UF has the lowest tuition of any AAU institution and would benefit greatly from a tuition increase. While internationalization and its attendant costs are not currently a legislative priority, business leaders in the state know that the future depends on international involvement and the ability to compete in an economy that becomes more globalized every day. Recent ballot initiatives on the governance structure of the state university system, on class size, and on making preschool available for all four-year-olds could affect the organization of UF or the level of its support from state sources.

Students and Faculty--The most important assets of any university are its students and faculty. The biggest challenges are how to engage the university's faculty internationally and through them how to encourage more of our students to incorporate an international experience into their university education. At the University of Florida, the majority of the faculty does not have significant international experience. Consequently, their courses and research often lack international content. In no small part because of this, less than 10% of our students have an international experience during the time they are enrolled at the university.

The Goals of the University's International Focus Self-Study

It is through the university's three-fold mission of teaching, research, and service that internationalization primarily takes place. To that end, the members of the Steering Committee and the International Focus Committee for the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self-Study designed a framework to examine the extent and degree to which the university's components are internationalized.

The goals of the International Focus Self-Study are to:

1. Assess the extent of internationalization that currently exists on campus as it relates to teaching, research, scholarship and public service.

2. Establish goals for the further internationalization of teaching, research, scholarship and public service and establish a process for assessing the implementation of those goals.
3. Identify institutional needs to provide incentives to encourage faculty and students to pursue international research, exchange and educational initiatives and opportunities.

The Sections to Follow

This report is comprised of 5 sections. The first four chapters are devoted to the reports of four sub-committees whose task was to examine the self-study reports of the university's colleges and schools in the areas of 1) research and scholarship, 2) teaching, 3) service and outreach, and 4) centers and institutes. These sub-committee reports address goals the university articulated as the framework for the international focus self-study process. Additionally, the sections on research and scholarship, teaching, and service/outreach include quantitative data from all of the colleges that reports their current level of internationalization and sets 5-year goals in the categories surveyed. The fifth section covers the internationalization of the university's non-college units.

Immediately following this introduction is a listing of the revised recommendations agreed upon by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, in consultation with the sub-committees and with university administration, revised the recommendations submitted by each of the sub-committees to eliminate redundancy, to correct recommendations based upon miscommunication of information, and in a few cases, to strike recommendations for activities already in place.

Because there is some very good information imbedded within the text of the reports in the recommendation sections, the Steering Committee agreed to include the sub-committee reports as originally submitted.