

Strengthening Global Diversity Executive Summary

The attached report proposes that FGCU embark on an effort to internationalize its campus through the curriculum, extracurricular activities, community engagement and international study, research, and service. Following is a summary of recommendations.

To enhance emphases on global perspectives in the **Curriculum** it is recommended that:

- *faculty members create learning outcomes required for students to develop a global perspective within the general education curriculum appropriate to the FGCU mission.*
- *focus on the curriculum as the primary strategy to ensure that students gain global skills and knowledge in the process of developing a global perspective.*
- *we increase the opportunities for and student participation in the study of foreign languages.*

In the areas of **Experiential Activities** it is recommended that:

- *we strengthen existing support for global initiatives and add new ones as a way of providing momentum for increased efforts to internationalize the campus.*
- *we 1) increase the number and type of global exchanges; and 2) join a study-abroad consortium.*
- *we increase the number and frequency of faculty-led study abroad programs to add greater variety to international offerings.*
- *we increase opportunities for service abroad programs through faculty-led efforts, exchange agreements, and consortia arrangements.*
- *we consciously increase the number of international students who attend FGCU.*

To support **Faculty Development** it is recommended that:

- *we develop increased opportunities for faculty exchange programs with foreign universities.*
- *we increase the number of faculty participating in Fulbright and other grant programs to teach and do research abroad.*
- *we equip faculty with the intellectual and pedagogical skills needed to creatively design and teach the complex interdisciplinary courses that global learning requires.*

To create **Community Engagement** it is recommended that:

- *we join the National Council for International Visitors and create a Gulf Coast Council for International Visitors made up of community and university members.*
- *we create a coalition of the various ethnic heritage groups in the region to help bring to campus festivals, exhibits, music, art, speakers, films, etc.*

To ensure **Resource Development and Fund Raising** it is recommended that:

- *we develop within University Advancement focused case statements and strategies for resource development for international education and research activities.*
- *we actively pursue the development of English as a Second Language program.*

Strengthening Global Diversity

A draft proposal

Vision: *Florida Gulf Coast University students will develop a global perspective, and international opportunities will be provided for students, faculty and staff.*

Introduction

Following is a report that includes the primary elements needed to strengthen global diversity and develop global perspectives at Florida Gulf Coast University. The report begins with a rationale for the program, followed by recommendations, a proposed organizational structure, and a list of needed policies and procedures.

Developing Global Perspectives

Florida Gulf Coast University was established as the 20th century was coming to a close and had as its primary focus the education of students in Southwest Florida. The university began with “service to the community” and “environmental sustainability” as two of its primary distinguishing features. This report proposes that a third distinguishing feature be added — “global perspective.” The reasons that it is important to add this important dimension to our educational community include the following. First, as Thomas Friedman has written, *the world is flat*¹ and our students must learn to compete on a global playing field. Second, we operate in a world that is shaped by global interdependence where we must interact with more and more people from other cultures. Third, as citizens our politics will be dominated by global considerations and we must learn to participate as concerned citizens. Fourth, our economy is increasingly intertwined with the rest of the world and dependent on dynamics far from the local marketplace. We can see these tensions in the Islamic world, in global warming, the revolution in outsourcing, new technologies, and hundreds of examples in virtually all of the disciplines we teach in our university.

In light of these changes, it is not surprising that the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) has begun to promote global education among its membership through a Commission on International Education. The Commission proposes “to incorporate a global dimension into the learning, discovery, and engagement activities of NASULGC members. It also supports initiatives in Congress, federal agencies, and multilateral development banks to enlarge the international component of academic exchanges, research, and development programs.”² Also citing dramatic global changes, Harvard College has recently changed its core

¹ Friedman, Thomas L. (2005) *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Friedman lists ten forces that flattened the world: 1) 11/9/89 – Fall of the Berlin Wall; 2) 8/9/95 – Netscape went public; 3) Emergence of workflow software; 4) Open-sourcing – self-organizing collaborative communities began to develop; 5) Outsourcing; 6) Off-shoring; 7) Supply chaining; 8) In-sourcing – for instance, UPS now synchronizes global supply chains in addition to delivering packages; 9) Informing – Google, Yahoo, etc.; 10) Steroids – Digital, Mobile, Personal and Virtual.

² National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. Website accessed 1/19/2006. http://www.nasulgc.org/comm_intprogs.htm

curriculum to enhance opportunities for its students in international studies and in the sciences.³

Development of global perspectives among our students can be accomplished by addressing global issues in five domains: the curriculum, experiential activities, faculty development, community engagement and resource development.

Curriculum Development

In this rapidly changing world, it is important that education enable students to develop multiple perspectives on themselves and the world, giving them the knowledge, training, and skills for economic survival, global citizenship, and to provide a foundation for their lives. Following the events of September 11, 2001, and the changes outlined above, FGCU has an obligation to assess its educational response to these changed circumstances. This report strongly recommends that we enhance the opportunities for our students in international education. The report recognizes it is the faculty's responsibility to define what it means for students to "develop a global perspective."⁴ *It is recommended that faculty members create learning outcomes required for students to develop a global perspective within the general education curriculum appropriate to the FGCU mission.*

The most significant questions shaping higher education today arise out of an interdependent world community in the midst of profound social, political, economic and cultural realignments. Many of the urgent problems we face as a society are defined as global in nature: environment and development, health and disease, conflict and insecurity, poverty and hopelessness. As a university, we want to see our graduates succeed in the global economy and demonstrate social responsibility and civic engagement.

Chief among the Harvard College recommendations is that "Every Harvard College student should be expected to complete an international experience, defined as study, research, or work abroad."⁵ The following recommendation recognizes that any state supported school cannot hope to send all students abroad. Given the low level of student participation in internationally oriented extracurricular activities and academic programs

³ Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. (April 2004) *A Report on the Harvard College Curricular Review*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

⁴ The American Council on Education (ACE) published *Beyond September 11: A Comprehensive National Policy on International Education* in 2002. In that publication, ACE defines global competence as "in-depth knowledge required for interpreting information affecting national security, the skills and understanding that foster improved relations with all regions of the world; ...foreign language proficiency and an ability to function effectively in other cultural environments and value systems, whether conducting business, implementing international development projects, or carrying out diplomatic missions."

⁵ Op cit Harvard University.

abroad, we must accomplish much of our global education through our curriculum. *It is recommended that FGCU focus on the curriculum as the primary strategy to ensure that students gain global skills and knowledge in the process of developing a global perspective.*

As we look at our curriculum, we should ask ourselves: Do we routinely place the United States within the context of global diversity? Do students routinely explore science within a global context (disease, environment, natural resources), apply quantitative literacy skills to global questions (demographics, economic development, immigration policy), or consider the ethical dimensions of global issues (sustainable development, religious conflict, civic responsibility)? Are we satisfied that our graduates leave FGCU with a sufficient level of global competency, understanding and moral grounding? Do FGCU graduates have an adequate global perspective? It is equally important for the graduate programs to examine their curricula to ensure an appropriate emphasis on global issues.

An area of weakness in the FGCU curriculum is the limited number of foreign languages available to our students. When we have tried to expand the selection, enrollment has often been so low it has been hard to justify the expense. It was heartening to see the number of students who enrolled in the Chinese language class offered in the fall 2005 semester. Our student population is shifting and this is an opportune time to increase foreign language instruction. There is particularly strong Federal support for foreign language education, especially the study of less commonly taught languages and cultures. *It is recommended that we increase the opportunities for and student participation in the study of foreign languages.*

For consideration: Through the State Department's initiative to develop languages in areas of national need, we can develop language programs in Arabic, Farsi, etc. The Fulbright Foreign Teaching Assistant (FTA) Program provides graduate students from abroad to teach introductory language courses and will often support broader international programs. (Efforts are underway to attract a teaching assistant from China and a proposal is being generated to support an Arabic teaching assistant.)

Experiential Activities

Study abroad and exchange programs offer the greatest opportunity for students to immerse themselves in another culture. Much will need to be done to expand the menu of opportunities available to FGCU students to study abroad. There is a number of exchange programs available under agreements negotiated by the College of Business, although students from other colleges often do not know that these programs are available to them. Research agreements with foreign universities often open opportunities for alliances in other parts of a university, as we are finding with the University of Brest in France. Also, there are many exchange programs available in the Florida State University System open to FGCU students as transient students. *It is recommended that we strengthen existing support for global initiatives and add new ones as a way of providing momentum for increased efforts to internationalize the campus.*

For consideration: The Institute for Chinese Studies is actively soliciting involvement among the colleges. Other institutes and centers on campus may want to look for international partners within the framework of existing exchange programs or develop new ones to support their regional and national work and expand their reach globally.

Research exchange agreements provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in international programs. We are benefiting from recent agreements that are bringing international scientists to FGCU. International research collaboration with colleagues in partnership universities is an important way to expand our global reach, and our excellent technological infrastructure makes such international collaboration possible.

Exchange program development is just one way of providing opportunities for our students to study abroad. With the increasing staff in the International Services Office and the development of a website to highlight opportunities, there is increasing support for students seeking a global experience. We can build upon the strengths of the support provided by the International Services Office. *It is recommended that we 1) increase the number and type of global exchanges; and 2) join a study-abroad consortium.*

For Consideration: India is being touted as “the new China” – it is democratic, the Indian economy is booming, there is a highly educated segment of the population, and they speak English. India has recently been more receptive to partnerships with American universities and a number of American universities are taking advantage of this opportunity. Universities in emerging democratic countries are another target group to look at for creating exchange programs.

There are a number of consortia which facilitate the process of validating the quality of courses offered through international programs, making it easier for U.S. schools to accept academic credits earned abroad. One such consortium is the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES)⁶, a global, non-profit organization based in Chicago with nearly 30 programs in 15 countries. In this case, the school of record is the University of Minnesota. Other consortia provide exchange agreements so that students have a range of foreign institutions from which to choose, and for each student we send through the exchange, we agree to accept a student from one of the international programs. In this type of consortium the student continues to pay tuition to the home institution. Consortia arrangements make it easier to develop a list of “approved” study abroad programs from which students can choose, and many institutions join more than one type of consortium.

A growing trend in international education is for fewer long-term, immersion programs and for more short-term, faculty-led study-abroad programs. That trend can be seen at FGCU with opportunities to travel to China in the summer, Brazil or Bolivia over spring break, and other destinations as programs are developed. *It is recommended that we increase the number and frequency of faculty-led study abroad programs to add greater variety to international offerings for undergraduates and graduate student.*

⁶ <http://www.iesabroad.org/homepage.do>

Examples: Currently, there are plans for a faculty-led trip to Guatemala by a group of nursing students as a part of their program. Another faculty-led trip is being planned to Costa Rica as a part of a University Colloquium class. Other plans are being developed for a summer study abroad, cultural immersion experience in Spain. The College of Business has provided opportunities for its graduate students to participate in international educational visits.

For consideration: Standard policies and procedures and a central support mechanism will facilitate the expansion of faculty-led study abroad programs.

Service abroad is a growing trend that fits well within FGCU's commitment to civic engagement. The Spanish Club and their faculty sponsor have pioneered such service abroad activities with their trips to the Dominican Republic. There are also consortia that provide service abroad opportunities for students. As FGCU moves from an hours based approach to service learning to a course based approach to civic engagement, it seems to be a good point to look at more service abroad opportunities. *It is recommended that we increase opportunities for service abroad programs through faculty-led efforts, exchange agreements, and consortia arrangements.*

For consideration: As we move from an hours based approach to a course based approach to service learning, faculty may want to begin to think about how service portions of courses may be carried out in international service projects. Again, standard policies and procedures and a central support mechanism will facilitate this process.

One way of internationalizing the campus environment is to attract more foreign students. Faculty members who have had international students in class often remark that the nature of the student exchange in class discussion is altered in a positive manner. Students who have grown up with universal health care in their home country have much to add to a discussion about the pros and cons of such a system. *It is recommended that we consciously increase the number of international students who attend FGCU.*

For consideration: Current exchange agreements are bringing a number of international students to campus, especially in the College of Business. Plans are being developed to increase the number of students from China through recent agreements. Joining one or more study abroad consortia may have the effect of bringing even more students to FGCU from a greater diversity of foreign universities as a part of the exchange nature of many of the consortia. We need to determine the optimum percentage of international students desirable for our campus environment and establish benchmarks for achieving that number.

International athletes also provide opportunities for internationalizing the campus. We should support efforts by the athletics programs to attract and retain these students as our athletics programs continue to grow.

Faculty Development

Best practices in international education, according to the National Association of State University and Land Grant Colleges, indicate that faculty commitment and involvement is the single most important factor in having a successful program. Faculty who themselves

have had opportunities for work and study abroad become the strongest advocates for such programs.

Faculty exchange programs with foreign universities can be very useful professional development activities and can help to internationalize the campus. Faculty exchanges can also support approved institutional agreements and on-going relationships with foreign institutions. *It is recommended that we develop increased opportunities for faculty exchange programs with foreign universities.*

For consideration: The Institute for Chinese Studies is working to provide opportunities for faculty to teach in China. With the number of agreements in place, faculty could be encouraged to explore opportunities for faculty exchanges with these institutions.

Fulbright is the single most successful and important federally supported program for faculty to work and conduct research abroad. Fulbright grants are made to U.S. faculty for a variety of educational activities, primarily university lecturing and advanced research. Over 800 people are granted Fulbright scholarships each year. Through the development of a committed faculty team that functions as a clearing house for Fulbright information, workshops on application procedures, and support by campus Fulbright alums, we can increase participation in the program. *It is recommended that we increase the number of faculty participating in Fulbright and other grant programs to teach and do research abroad.*

There is a renewed emphasis among the faculty to increase interdisciplinary approaches. Working with the existing faculty interdisciplinary team, it is important to identify faculty development needs that will support increased emphasis upon developing global perspectives. *It is recommended that we equip faculty with the intellectual and pedagogical skills needed to creatively design and teach the complex interdisciplinary courses that global learning requires.*

For consideration: We can arrange for faculty who have studied and taught abroad to conduct a series of faculty-led seminars on the incorporation of interdisciplinary-international themes into their curriculum.

Community Engagement

FGCU has been actively engaged with the southwest Florida community since its inception, thus it is natural to think of developing a community program to involve residents in assisting with international program activities. Volunteers will be trained by program staff to provide support for international students and visitors. Such activities not only provide a valuable resource but also excellent outreach to the community. This is one of the strategies used successfully by other universities according to NASULGC. One way of beginning such an endeavor is to join the National Council for International Visitors,⁷ a national network of independent program agencies and community-based organizations that design and implement professional programs, and provide cultural

⁷ See www.nciv.org a program of the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

activities and home hospitality opportunities for foreign leaders, specialists, and scholars. We could join the organization by forming a local chapter (there are six chapters in Florida), to get national program support and potentially grants for community partnerships. *It is recommended that we join the National Council for International Visitors and create a Gulf Coast Council for International Visitors made up of community and university members.*

For consideration: We can engage the Chambers of Commerce in this effort to bring international guests to the region and support international tourism. This effort could model or be combined with the efforts of the College of Business in its Second Circle model which aims to connect with the community beyond the university as exchange agreements are developed. By hosting international visitors we could launch an International Speakers Program and draw on the resources of the Department of State.

As a university, we have attempted to provide public educational opportunities in a broad array of disciplines. To build global perspectives in the community we need to develop innovative public educational forums and venues in partnership with regional organizations to explore global issues and showcase world cultures. To help build the Council for International Visitors, we need to work with the broader ethnic communities in the region for program support and to highlight the cultural richness of our own community. *It is recommended that we create a coalition of the various ethnic heritage groups in the region to help bring to campus festivals, exhibits, music, art, speakers, films, etc.*

For consideration: International Services and other entities on campus have reached out to these various groups in the past. Each year when International Services holds its welcoming ceremony for international students, invitations go out to supporters throughout the community. We can build upon these relationships and expand the interactions.

To be truly successful, we must take advantage of the commitment of our business, government and community leaders with a global focus. We must identify and seek support from people in the community who have a stake in global issues. *It is recommended that we create an external support group, the International Advocates.*

For consideration: This support group could be modeled on the advisory committee model, but would have a larger group of supporters. There might be a small steering committee with an expanded group of members who could be called upon to host events, speakers, or students.

Resource Development and Fund Raising

This proposal urges FGCU to commit to increasing the international experiences of our students and faculty through study, research, volunteer or paid work abroad. As many of us know from our own experiences, the experience of living, studying, traveling, and working in another country can provide extraordinary academic and personal rewards. We need to provide diverse options that can combine cultural immersion, intellectual challenge, and individual growth for both students and faculty to develop the global competency skills needed. We want to encourage experiences that will ensure the

discovery of new perspectives about the world and its people, which often bring about profound changes in personal views of the world and individual outlooks.

We also recognize that we must find a way to pay for some of these activities through earned income, annual fund raising, foundation and federal grants, and corporate support. *It is recommended that we develop within University Advancement focused case statements and strategies for resource development for international education and research activities.*

One of the ways that some international programs have found to support international activities is through an English as a Second Language (ESL) program. An ESL program would not only provide needed support for non-native English speaking international students, but it can also be a community service program within the area. An ESL program can be an income producer and also a potential source for full-time international students. Such a program could be developed in cooperation with the College of Education as the lead academic unit, as they are already training ESL teachers. *It is recommended that we actively pursue the development of an English as a Second Language program.*

Organizational Structure for International Education

The International Services Office has developed programs and services as need arose to serve international students and more recently expanded to provide advising for study-abroad activities. The International Services staff also provides legal and immigration advice and support throughout the university. Initiatives within the colleges have been entrepreneurial in nature and procedures have been developed to handle a given initiative with little coordination across the colleges. The creation of the Office of Global Initiatives is designed to help move international education to a new prominence at FGCU. The Office of Global Initiatives will work with International Services in a collaborative fashion to provide additional support for colleges, faculty, and students. The Director of Global Initiatives will work with the faculty and the colleges to develop policies and procedures to ensure academic integrity of programs, a high level of risk avoidance, and increased global opportunities for the entire academic community and the region of southwest Florida. *It is recommended that an International Education Coordinating Council be created made up of faculty and administrative representatives from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to review policy recommendations prior to submission to the Deans Council and the Faculty Senate for approval.*