

## **FIU- I-Real Commission**

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**How will FIU respond to, and benefit from, the changes in the global educational market?**

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### **Issues Addressed:**

1. **Capacity-Building and FIU's Strategic Connections and Partnerships:  
Leveraging FIU's Strength**
2. **Curriculum Internationalization**
3. **Study Abroad, International Scholar and Student Services, and  
International Recruitment**
4. **Embracing Digital Technologies in Global Higher Education**

## **Building on FIU's Solid Foundation of International Linkages**

As of October 2013, over 180 agreements (and related amendments) and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) are currently 'housed' in Academic Planning and Accountability's International Agreements Database. A number of these agreements involve multiple degrees and educational options and, are thus, wider in scope. In addition, a number of these agreements represent renewal agreements. Fifty-three memoranda of understanding (including memoranda of understanding of Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine) are also included within the 180 count. These MOUs speak of promise of future agreements and the establishment of concrete avenues of collaboration and partnership. Forty-eight dual degree agreements top the league of agreement types, followed by 34 student and faculty exchange agreements. Over 40 countries are involved in these international linkages and ongoing dialogues. These countries vary in the level of economic development, ranging from the United Kingdom to Senegal, to Panama, Kuwait, France, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India.

Agreements also anchor the deployment of offshore programming in SACSCOC-approved sites in the following institutions and countries:

1. Tianjin University of Commerce, Tianjin, People's Republic of China: BS in Hospitality Management;
2. Universidad Francisco Marroquin, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala: MS International Real Estate (courses are initially being deployed via online delivery, per an option in the written agreement with this university);
3. University College of the Caribbean, Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies: MS Curriculum Instruction and the Professional MBA – Jamaica for Executives;
4. Quality Leadership University, Panama City, Republic of Panama: Professional MBA;
5. Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE), Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic: Professional MBA<sup>1</sup>.

These international initiatives and agreements demonstrate flexibility in the mode of educational delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> The first cohort of the MS Construction Management at UNIBE graduated from FIU in Summer 2013. Plans are underway to launch another cohort based on a new agreement in 2014.

## Building on FIU's Strengths

Florida International University (FIU) has demonstrated an exceptional ability to serve as an engaged, visionary institution that is committed to serving the educational needs of its diverse local, regional, state and global communities. Through its teaching, research, and service, FIU has positioned itself to capture current and emerging opportunities and trends tied to globalization. As one of only 311 institutions in the nation that boasts the distinct honor of attaining a Carnegie Foundation of the Advancement of Teaching Community Engagement Classification, FIU is well positioned to grow and sustain its international aspirations. Following the Carnegie model of engagement that has taken root at FIU, the collaborations with international institutions of higher education should involve the *mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources* that advance *partnerships and reciprocity*. Engagement enriches scholarship and research and creative activities; additionally, engagement enhances curriculum, teaching and learning and supports educating engaged citizens who value civic responsibility.

A robust **global research agenda** should be developed to pave the way to the discovery, diffusion, and implementation of innovative products, services and advancements that can bring prosperity and an enhanced quality of life to FIU's diverse communities. As a top-tier research institution, FIU should maximize its ability to lead an international research agenda. The Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine and the College of Engineering and Computing are just two colleges that can position FIU to lead a vibrant international research agenda. These research opportunities should also reinforce local and regional engagement efforts. The Department of Research reports that out of 1100 active research projects, only 55 have a portion of the work taking place abroad. Opportunities should be sought to bolster FIU's international research portfolio.

Moving forward, strategic partnerships should be evaluated through the following lenses:

1. breadth of impact across disciplines, college and departments and related to the institution's main missions;
2. depth of impact that involves the progressive complexity of interactions between institutions;
3. faculty support;
4. demonstrable mutual benefits;
5. sustainability.

Capturing opportunities inherent in globalization requires mounting a vibrant **continuing education platform**. Continuing education broadens access to higher education and training. FIU must be able to forecast occupational demand and workforce needs by cooperating with community leaders, industry and interdepartmental communication. Continuing education units have the ability to respond to signals from the workplace related to emerging occupations; FIU must assess global workforce needs via workforce skills' gap studies, skills-in-demand analyses, and training assessments. Continuing education can meet evolving market needs by employing a flexible delivery of contract education to companies, "stackable" academic credentials, and non-credit professional development and life-long learning opportunities. FIU's commitment to developing a competitive global workforce must be anchored in market research, trade flow analyses and the comprehensive assessment of the needs of a global marketplace and consumers. FIU must embrace innovative program delivery models and conduct feasibility studies to ensure solid, demonstrable return on investments on prospective partnerships and programming. A vital continuing education portfolio is driven by a competitive brand, a global institutional vision and mission, relationships and partnerships, a global curriculum, transnational collaborative research and an international faculty.

**Innovation** must be a driving force behind all FIU's strategic initiatives. Northeastern University's Sean Gallagher and Seema Mishra advocate in *Your Customer's Voice: An Innovation Roadmap for Professional Education*<sup>2</sup>, the setting of an innovative continuing education agenda based on the following pillars:

- online education;
- hybrid models in the delivery of educational services;
- competency-based credentialing and MOOCs;
- accelerated programs;
- experiential and work-integrated learning;
- degree completion programs;
- international perspectives, experience and curriculum.

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<sup>2</sup> Your Customer's Voice: An Innovative Roadmap for Professional Education, by Sean Gallagher and Seema Mishra, *Continuing Higher Education Review*, University Professional and Continuing Education Association, Volume 77, pages 78-83, Fall 2013.

## Curriculum Internationalization

As defined by John K. Hudzik in *Comprehensive Internationalization (CI): From Concept to Action*, published in 2011 by the Association of International Educators, CI "is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education...Comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but the institution's external frames of reference, partnerships and relations."<sup>3</sup> CI commitments include faculty development, curriculum design and delivery, research, training, resource development, financial management, and institutional competitiveness and positioning.<sup>4</sup> As proposed by Hudzik, among the bold goals of CI are the following:

- the institutional support of research collaborations abroad;
- community engagement that taps into global opportunities and knowledge;
- a sense of commonly shared responsibility among academic departments and international areas;
- leadership.

In order for FIU to maintain and increase the provision of a high quality, relevant curriculum within the context of changes in the global education market, the recommendations are:

1. Strengthen FIU's global learning approach to curriculum design and instruction;
2. Develop curricular offerings that allow every FIU academic program to pursue niche opportunities to attract students and provide them with the preparation they need for success in the global marketplace.

The benefits of the approaches recommended above are:

1. Students would graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully navigate and shape change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: *an understanding of the world's interconnectedness, the ability to analyze issues from multiple perspectives, and the willingness to solve problems with diverse constituencies.*
2. Proactive curricular goal setting and reform would yield long-term growth in the value of an FIU degree.

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<sup>3</sup> John K. Hudzik, *Comprehensive Internationalization: From Concept to Action*, 2011, Association of International Educators, page 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, page 11.

The possible actions to implementing curriculum internationalization are:

1. Increase global learning professional development for faculty teaching in online, web-assisted, and face-to-face courses.
2. Recognize global learning research and instruction in tenure, promotion and hiring.
3. Develop and carry out a SWOT analysis of current curricular offerings in all academic programs in terms of projected local, national, and global professional opportunities and students' competing educational choices.

The recommendations to evaluate success for curriculum internationalization are:

1. Perform longitudinal research into the impact of FIU's global learning curriculum and global learning professional development.
2. Continue to share global learning assessment results with internal and external stakeholders.
3. Perform longitudinal research on student internship and career placement.

## **A Focus on Study Abroad, International Scholar and Student Services, and International Recruitment**

### **Office of Study Abroad**

Reporting to the Senior International Officer, FIU's Office of Study Abroad (OSA), provides students with the best vehicles for travelling to, and studying in, a foreign country. This office is essentially the students' gateway to the world. The OSA is responsible for traditional international student exchange (ISE) programs with universities across the world as well as short-term and semester-long faculty-led study abroad programs. The portfolio of OSA includes: recruiting FIU students to participate in study abroad and exchange programs; assisting the foreign students who are studying at FIU through the formal exchange programs; managing said exchange and faculty-led study abroad agreements; developing future exchange and faculty-led programs, and assisting students with various U.S. Department of State scholarships and fellowships related to graduate study and undergraduate study abroad (e.g. Fulbright, Gilman, and Boren). In addition to all of these formal responsibilities, OSA also performs an informal recruiting function for FIU's graduate programs. Foreign students who attend FIU through exchange program become potential FIU graduate students.

In academic year 2011-2012, OSA registered a total of 830 students in its various study abroad and exchange programs (the vast majority of students [718] attended faculty-led study abroad programs as opposed to ISEs). While the total is an increase of 34 percent from the total number of students participating in ISE and study abroad programs in 2007-2008, the 2011-2012 data constitutes less than 2 percent of the FIU student body. Since ISEs largely operate on a reciprocity principle, approximately 100 foreign students attended FIU on an exchange basis. The number of applications for the various scholarships under the auspices of OSA is very small compared to the FIU student body at-large.

In order to improve FIU's study abroad and exchange initiatives, the recommendations are:

1. Review other Study Abroad programs of benchmark universities as well as state universities with solid reputations in the industry, including UCF and FAU, to identify general areas where FIU's OSA may improve its services and outreach.
2. Reduce costs and raise private funds:
  - High cost may be deterring students from attending ISE and study abroad programs. A concerted campaign to raise private funds or endow exchange/study abroad programs needs to be part of any long term strategy.
  - Assess the financial model of *faculty-led* abroad programs, and identify creative partnerships with host institutions to share costs, with the goal of minimizing expenses for the students.
3. Enhance quality control of existing programs and strategize about new programs:
  - Surveys are normally conducted in terms of students who have participated in the ISE and study abroad programs. In order to identify barriers that discourage students from pursuing exchange and study abroad opportunities, university-wide surveys and focus-groups should also be conducted.
  - Currently, there are a large number of programs in the same country (e.g., seven study abroad/exchange programs in Italy in 2013). While each program may feature its own unique experience in a given city/university, this approach undoubtedly dilutes the entire country experience and forces programs in the same country to cannibalize off each other and compete for the same students. In these cases, more centralization is required and programs that have not generated a

sufficient threshold of students (or have been deemed unsuccessful by students) should be eliminated.

- Taking into account FIU's larger vision of engaging particular countries and regions and student feedback, the OSA should identify the most optimal countries and universities that should be targeted for future ISEs and study abroad initiatives. The process of identifying strategic opportunities should be made in consultation with FIU faculty, colleges, and schools.

4. Increase visibility of the OSA and its services:

- While the OSA already advertises opportunities and promotes its services to the student body, clearly with only 2 percent of FIU students attending exchange and study-abroad programs and a similar small number of students applying to scholarships under OSA's auspices, more must be done and in a more efficient and concerted fashion. An enhanced strategy requires not only assessing the utility of past advertising campaigns but also identifying new and better ways of promoting exchanges, study abroad opportunities, and scholarships.
- Increase the number of staff needed to achieve these goals. Currently only five staff members work in OSA.

### **International Scholar and Student Services (ISSS) and International Student and Scholar Recruitment**

ISSS, reporting to the Senior International Officer, services approximately 2,500 students and 100 scholars (about 5 percent of the FIU student body) that hail from over 125 countries. ISSS facilitates the smooth transition of international students into FIU and the larger South Florida community. Services include not only general advising but also assistance with any visa or immigration matters.

Beyond these vital logistical services offered to international students and scholars upon arrival to FIU, ISSS as an important player in the university's international efforts, should therefore play a more active role in recruitment efforts of international students and scholars from select countries. In this regard, it is important to note that a recent British Council report, *The Shape of Things to Come: Higher Education Global Trends and Emerging Opportunities to 2020*, points to the importance of demographic and economic trends in determining worldwide growth rates in higher education participation. The world's largest higher education systems (outside of the United States) in 2020 are likely to be **China** (37 million students by 2020), **India** (28 million), and **Brazil** (9 million). Although Brazil does not currently make up the top five countries of international



students at FIU (for the academic year 2012-2013), China and India do make the list along with Venezuela, Colombia, and Saudi Arabia. Further disaggregating the list of international student enrollment at FIU reveals other source countries including Iran, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Dominican Republic. Preliminary reports from 2013-2014 suggest that countries like Peru and Bangladesh are also important source countries for students coming to FIU.

To further increase FIU's international student body and efficiently utilize ISSS in recruiting efforts of international students and scholars, the recommendations are:

1. Review the strategic plans of ISSS offices of benchmark universities to identify approaches employed by these universities to attract and provide services to international students and scholars, and recruit and promote programs abroad.
2. Work with the Office of Admissions and individual units to propose recruiting strategies to attract the best undergraduate and graduate students and scholars from a variety of disciplines and universities abroad.
  - Efforts should be strategic, targeting not only elite high schools abroad but top-caliber universities with the potential of building strong research and educational partnerships with FIU.
  - Increase awareness of the FIU's *Worlds Ahead* brand abroad in the most cost-effective way by promoting FIU's elite education and research programs as well as the international reputation of FIU's faculty.
3. Efforts at recruiting international students should span the globe, while remaining strategic in identifying countries with the largest potential of sending students to FIU.
  - While China and India remain large source countries for international students at FIU, efforts should also be expended to recruit from Brazil and the Persian Gulf, given the rising numbers of students from these countries enrolled at U.S. institutions of higher education. In fact, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies are greatly investing in the education of their citizenry. This commitment includes sending students to study in the United States. The Persian Gulf is thus a potentially untapped market.
  - Given FIU's proximity to Latin America and the Caribbean, this region must continue to be a strategic market for recruitment.
  - Although Vietnam and Turkey are not among the top countries sending students to FIU, according to a report by the *World Education*

*Services*, these countries also constitute potentially large markets for international recruitment.

4. Collaborate with the Office of Alumni Relations to identify alumni living and working abroad. These alumni not only can assist with recruiting students, but can also identify strategic academic partners that can serve as feeders of graduate students and visiting scholars. Alumni are FIU ambassadors abroad.
5. Leverage U.S. and federal government relationships (U.S. embassies and other U.S. departments/ministries) as well as the State of Florida's partnerships and relationships abroad (e.g., top export destinations) to open up particular student markets in select countries. In tandem with this strategy, identify promising university programs that could attract scholars interested in coming to FIU.

## **Embracing Digital Technologies in Global Higher Education**

Most research expound upon the role of technologies as follows:

- Support learning and teaching strategies for institutions;
- Enhance students' learning and their life prospects;
- Create solutions that are transferable and sustainable;
- Challenge leaders in a wide range of academic professions.

Arizona State University (ASU) is a pioneer institution in embracing new technologies; ASU has substantial capabilities in transforming the Technology Based Learning and Research into a vibrant source of high-tech initiatives, such as:

- Mobile APP Design, Development and Deployment;
- Film and Media;
- Innovation and Business Development Services; and,
- Visual Engagement Mapping.

Penn State provides its constituencies a broader access to internationalism through initiatives, such as:

- ScholarSphere: promotes research, sharing and discovery. Moreover, ScholarSphere is a service designed to collect, preserve and share digital research content across a broad spectrum of academic disciplines and media types.

- TLT Symposium (Teaching, Learning and Technologies): Penn State invites its staff and faculty in an annual event to brainstorm ideas and experiences to create a better teaching and learning environment.

According to the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education<sup>5</sup>, **innovation** will have to occur in a way that expands access to international content learning, and this goal will require creativity in what is taught and how subject matter, courses, and programs are delivered. *Changing the Learning Landscape* (CLL), an innovative program based in England, aims to support incremental change in institutions' strategic approaches to online learning and teaching. CLL increases the number of faculty adopting digital technologies in creative and effective ways to support teaching.

In order to stay competitive in a global market, FIU must encourage innovation and embrace digital technologies by adopting institutional programs to:

- Support and challenge student learning through social media and MOOCs;
- Develop student and faculty leadership;
- Champion change at departmental level; and,
- Build collaborative partnerships across functional and professional areas.

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<sup>5</sup> The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education is committed to developing and improving the management and leadership skills of existing and future leaders of higher education. The foundation works in partnership with a range of organizations within and outside of higher education for the benefit of the sector. (<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/>)

## Summary

In responding to changes in global educational markets, FIU should adopt the following strategic recommendations to become a global leader in the provision of higher education programs and services:

1. Foster a transparent culture of sharing information among units' leadership, key stakeholders and program managers.
2. Develop a financial model that demonstrates and evaluates the ROI of global partnerships and international agreements.
3. Leverage strategic partnerships by maximizing opportunities in a "cluster" approach, focusing too on research and interdepartmental collaboration.
4. Develop a competitive platform for continuing credit and non-credit education in response to current global market needs and FIU's goals of financial self-sustainability.
5. Continue to enhance-and disseminate- FIU's *Worlds Ahead* brand.

## **Appendix #1**

FIU- Office of Academic Accountability, List of International Active Agreements as of October 2013

FIU- Census 2012, data submitted to Open Doors report

FIU- Office of International Scholar and Student Services, various historical data 2011-2012

FIU- Office of Institutional Research, International Students Data - Top 5 countries for 2012-2013

FIU- Office of Institutional Research, Top 10 Fields of Study for International Students, 2012-2013

FIU- Office of the Senior International Officer, Executive Summary and List of Services

FIU- Office of Senior International Officer, Vision Statement

FIU- Office of Study Abroad, various historical data 2006-2012

## **Appendix#2**

John K. Hudzik, *Comprehensive Internationalization: From Concept to Action*, 2011, Association of International Educators

Sean Gallagher, Seema Mishra, *Your Customer's Voice: An Innovative Roadmap for Professional Education*, *Continuing Higher Education Review*, University Professional and Continuing Education Association

Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2012 Edition, Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement, a program of the American Council on Education

Open Doors 2013, Report on International Educational Exchange

Strategic Plan for a New Era of Internationalization, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, Spring 2007

The Shape of Things to Come: Higher Education Global Trends and Emerging Opportunities to 2020. British Council. (2012)

<http://tblr.asu.edu/>- Arizona State University

<https://scholarsphere.psu.edu/>- Penn State ScholarSphere

<http://symposium.tlt.psu.edu/>- Penn State Symposium for Teaching and Learning with Technology

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/cll>- The Higher Education Academy, Changing the Learning Landscape