AIEA OCCASIONAL PAPER

SEPTEMBER 2013

International Education Self-Studies and External Reviews

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INTRODUCTION

College and university programs of international education[1] are increasingly subject to quality assurance policies and practices[2], a very positive recognition of their contribution to higher education. This is welcome, as internationalization plays a key role in ensuring that colleges and universities are preparing "graduates to succeed in a challenging and rapidly changing world" (*American Association of College and Universities and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2008, p.2*). Organizations such as the European Association of International Education have issued publications on quality assurance in internationalization (Van Gaalen, 2010), while the International Education Association of Australia (*IEAA, n.d.*) will hold an October 2013 pre-conference workshop on the ESOS Act, intended, among others, to make sure overseas students "get what they paid for." In the U.S., NAFSA: Association of International Educators, held a May 2013 seminar for senior international education leaders on "Leveraging Accreditation and Quality Assurance to Advance Comprehensive Internationalization" (NAFSA, n.d.), while the American Council on Education (ACE) includes assessment, a component of quality assurance, as one of four markers of institutional commitment to comprehensive internationalization (*ACE, n.d.*). In May 2013, ACE issued a free tool for mapping internationalization assessment (*ACE, n.d.*). Finally, the Forum on Education Abroad has developed and published Standards for Education Abroad and a Quality Improvement Program for Education Abroad, and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad (see www.forumea.org/about.cfm). Examples from other countries, organizations, and agencies could be given.

Nonetheless, for a variety of reasons, international education has not always been subject to self-studies and external reviews at U.S. colleges and universities. Further, international education associations and organizations have not specifically addressed self-studies and external reviews, and most college and university guidelines for conducting program reviews are aimed at academic departments. Those guidelines may not be entirely appropriate for internationalization, a process involving activities, decision-making, and actors across the institution, as well as external activity engaging diverse academic systems and partnerships.

The purpose of this Issue Brief, therefore, is to provide guidance to Senior International Officers (SIOs) in preparing reviews of internationalization programs. To provide context, we begin with a brief discussion of accreditation in the U.S., even as we are mindful that this is limiting, given the fact that the internationalization of higher education is a world-wide phenomenon, and other countries have different bodies and systems for ensuring quality in higher education. Nevertheless, we hope that SIOs beyond the U.S. will be able to draw constructive lessons for their thinking and practices from this context setting and the subsequent discussions of self-studies and external reviews, as will international educators within the U.S. Our premise is that self-studies and external reviews are valuable tools for measuring and advancing the value of

1 For the purposes of this Issue Brief and to simplify terminology, we use "internationalization" or "international education." However, the guidelines, suggestions, and experiences contained in the brief can apply to self-studies of study abroad where colleges and universities have not yet adopted a comprehensive approach to internationalization. We also acknowledge the thoughtful work of Hans de Wit (2002) on what distinguishes "international education" from "internationalization", but prefer to use both here, as colleges and universities currently use one or the other to mean similar processes and programs.

2 See Dill (2007) for a discussion of quality assurance in higher education.

international education in higher education, and for making this value visible to individual institutions, to higher education more broadly, and to the public.

CONTEXT: U.S. ACCREDITATION AS QUALITY ASSURANCE

U.S. institutions of higher education are required to undergo an accreditation process, typically every ten years, to measure the effectiveness of the institution in achieving its own goals. This process involves a self-study to determine how the different areas of the institution (academic departments and programs, administrative units, institution-wide programs, facilities, services, committees, and so on) are contributing to the institution's success in meeting its goals. Self-studies for accreditation purposes must, therefore, address the institution's international education program.

Indeed, international education has been emerging as a primary area of inquiry in some accreditation reviews. A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) has been part of the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges (SACS) accreditation for a number of years, and a number of SACS institutions have made internationalization the focus of their QEPs (*Deardorff & Van Gaalen, 2012, p.176*). The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) is also moving toward a program of "continuous improvement" as indicated by several "pathways", and included in these "pathways" is room for a "Quality Initiative" (QI) (*NCA, April 2013*). Given the SACS evidence, some NCA institutions may soon also focus on internationalization in the accreditation process.

RATIONALES AND MODELS FOR PLANNING SELF-STUDIES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

Riall Nolan and Fiona Hunter, in a book chapter using case studies to provide models of internationalization for colleges and universities, draw on three concepts to frame their discussion: organizational culture (that is, institutional identity), reflective conversation (related to narrative, or the story an institution tells about itself), and essential enablers (leadership, faculty engagement, policy support, and financial support) (*Nolan & Hunter, 2012, pp. 131–132*). They conclude that while much of the discussion of internationalization has focused on ideas and results, more attention needs to be paid to turning the ideas into results. And this is exactly the purpose of a self-study of internationalization, to engage in a process that will allow the institution to gauge the importance of internationalization to an institution's mission and identity, involve members of the institution in a discussion of what the institution's internationalization is and should be, and pay attention to the kinds of supports (or enablers) that exist or are lacking. To be convincing and effective, the story needs to be illuminated by "research and data-driven analysis" to capture "what is really happening" (*NAFSA Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship Knowledge Community Task Force on Assessment and Evaluation, 2010, p. 17*) and determine if internationalization goals are being met. A well-conceived, -conducted, and -written self-study will also tell the story of the institution's internationalization to external reviewers and guide the work they will do.

Self-studies of educational activities take two primary forms: those that are comprehensive, weighing all facets of the educational program of an institution, organizational unit, or program, and those that focus on one or more selected topics. Which approach is taken depends largely on what is going to be most productive at a particular moment in the development of the program to be reviewed, and on institutional requirements for self-studies[3].

> *… both senior administrators [the Senior Vice President for (University) System Academic Administration and the Provost] were involved in the external review process, which I do think was an excellent way for the Provost to learn about the depth and breadth of my unit.*
> Meredith McQuaid • UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Comprehensive reviews make more sense if a review has not previously been conducted, the program (or larger college/university) has undergone significant change or hopes to make significant changes to its organization, function, and/or purpose. This is because comprehensive reviews will provide "institutional benchmarking [through] in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of the […] program […] its strengths, uniqueness, and areas needing improvement" (*Council for Standards in Human Service Education, 2012, p.16*).

> *I asked for a fast-tracked review because so many things had changed in my office since the previous review, from staff to procedures.*
> Carolyn O'Grady • GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

A selected topics or selected questions approach, on the other hand, can help a program that has already completed and acted on a comprehensive review focus on one or more high priority questions, and thus narrow the scope of the self-study. Selected topics/questions self-studies will need to reference and provide information about the larger context within which the questions are posed, but will focus the study, and the attention of external reviewers, primarily on the selected questions.
Another way to categorize approaches to self-studies is as legacy, disciplinary, and mission-driven. Legacy self-studies involve a "comprehensive analysis of a program's resources, processes, and outcomes" that allows for comparisons with prior and future self-studies (*IUPUI Office of Planning & Assessment, 2011, p.4*). Discipline-specific approaches conform to external requirements for accreditations; reviews of education abroad programs using the Forum on Education Abroad's QUIP fall into this category. Finally, mission-centric self-studies examine "the broader capabilities and effectiveness of a particular program" in relation to an institution's mission, and integrate program data and other information with institutional data and information (*IUPUI Office of Planning & Assessment, 2011, p.7*).

Given the varieties of possible approaches, it will be important to situate the internationalization review within institutional practice regarding program reviews more broadly. However, in consideration of the importance of international education organizations and associations to the growth and shape of international education in higher education, the author(s) of an international education self-study may also want to situate the program within wider trends in international education and in particular, trends relevant to institutional type. (*See Appendix 1 for a sample self-study template*.)

> *Our self-study and outside reviews were "self-imposed." They forced us to dig into areas we had taken for granted or had always accomplished based on tradition rather than real demand.*
> Joseph Tullbane • ST. NORBERT COLLEGE

3 We note here that some but not all of the eight U.S. higher education accrediting agencies call for both approaches to self-studies of colleges and universities.

Additionally, the relationship of the program to the institution is an important question, as programs must be analyzed in the context of their "mission, resources, tradition, student bod[ies], and community setting[s]" (*New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability, 2012, p.2*). Institutional context helps shape programs, their opportunities and constraints, and programs in turn are expected to help advance institutional mission. Their effectiveness in doing so is therefore also part of the program review.

Determining the purpose of the self-study and external review at the outset and before any data collection begins will help ensure that the program review will be productive. Reviews should not be undertaken simply because "other units are doing" them, to resolve personnel issues, or to "set the table for the next director", although these may be legitimate intermediate goals. Rather, reviews should be seen as a welcome opportunity to step back to assess program strengths and weaknesses, set priorities for the future directions, and identify next steps.

> *Engaging in a self-study and external review process allows for greater insight into the capabilities, priorities and needs of an office.*
> Allen Bertsche • AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

RESOURCES

Before embarking on an internationalization self-study, it will be important to consult with internal and external resources, not for the purpose of simply copying or adopting what others do, but to generate ideas that can help one adapt other's processes, help determine the focus of the self-study, and identify data that will need to be gathered as well as sources for that data. Internal resources for determining the approach to the self-study may include the individual to whom the international office reports, the person calling for the self-study to be conducted if different from this individual, and an institutional research office. Members of the committee(s) charged with helping to oversee and advise international education should be called on to provide input into the goals of the self-study and methods for gathering faculty, staff, and student input. Staff in the international office should also provide input as well as help gather and analyze data. Finally, many other individuals and campus units may be in a position to provide inputs valuable for the self-study. Whether they have facts and figures that can inform the report, or more subjective insights, it will be important that the self-study not only reflect the perspectives of those in the international office, but the wider community.

> *Next time, with any luck [I'll be able to] bring in some other offices to assist with data gathering and improve the level of interaction between my office and other on-campus stakeholders to produce a report which provides greater "big picture" analysis, rather than the view solely from within the office.* Allen Bertsche • AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

At larger and especially at research intensive universities, where internationalization is often as multi-college or school process, a review of internationalization at the university level (such as for accreditation) will necessarily involve input from the international units of each constituent college, even if there is a centralized international education office for the university.

Ideally, self-studies will make use of data that is regularly collected at the institutional (as well as the college/school level of universities or the unit or unit and program level of smaller colleges). These data will likely include enrollment data for students on study abroad and international students (parsed by relevant categories such as ethnicity, gender, participation in varsity athletics, etc.), academic performance information on both groups of students, the effectiveness of international student recruitment channels, performance in dual-degree programs, enrollment and academic performance information for international studies centers and courses, international research centers, international development projects, and the like, assessment data (exit interviews with exchange students, survey data – including from national surveys in which the institution might participate, such as the NSSE, but also from surveys conducted by the international office, the student affairs office, and so on –, plus data on learning outcomes), lists of institutional partnerships and assessments of their contributions to the institution's internationalization goals, international alumni activities, faculty contributions to international education, and so on.

The value of faculty contributions cannot be overemphasized. Indeed, a widely embraced definition of the internationalization of higher education (*Knight, 1994, p.3*) refers to the "process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service function of the institution," functions largely carried out by faculty members. However, while asking for self-study input from those who deliver internationalized educational experiences to students may seem obvious, it is nonetheless often overlooked. Comments from faculty teaching general education courses with an international focus (foreign language and regional and global studies), as well as internationalized courses in the disciplines will be invaluable to the self-study, as will information as to how faculty members are otherwise contributing to internationalization through research, collaborative projects with colleagues and entities on and beyond the campus, securing funding, engaging in community partnerships, etc.

External sources of data for U.S. colleges and universities will include the annual Open Doors reports published by the Institute for International Education (IIE) providing data on study abroad and international student enrollments nationally; this can be used to draw comparisons in enrollment trends. Sources of ideas for approaches to assessment in general and assessment as it applies to international education include, again for U.S. audiences, resources made available by the American Council on Education (ACE), the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), NAFSA: Association of International Educators, and of course, the AIEA and its SAGE Handbook of International Education in particular, which contains several relevant chapters. As noted previously, work in this area is also being undertaken beyond the U.S., and country/region-specific resources should also be consulted.

Having consulted stakeholders inside and outside the institution, soliciting questions for the self-study from faculty and administration can be as useful for generating support for the review project as sending the questions back out for stakeholders to respond to. Additionally, while the institution (and constituent colleges of universities) and the international office will want to generate the list of review questions that underscore the goals of the review and comprise the self-study, it may be worthwhile to seek the input of the reviewers on the list and/or individual questions, particularly at the point when the self-study has been completed and the reviewers are preparing to come to campus. If it has been many years since the last external review of internationalization, the institution and the SIO may find it advantageous to begin with a narrower scope and with fewer questions, but to anticipate the scope of future reviews and when they will be carried out. To keep the questions for the self-study from expanding infinitely, the review may want to focus on those which relate to the future direction of the program and/or those with which the institution particularly wants help.

CONDUCTING A SELF-STUDY

Setting the approach for the review. Reviews and the supporting self-studies can follow from a number of impetuses, employ a number of different approaches, and focus on issues ranging from institutional comprehensive internationalization to the staffing and workflow of the international office. While SIOs will want to guard against employing a comprehensive approach to a review when a limited one is more apropos, the "Model for Comprehensive Internationalization" developed by the American Council on Education's Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE) offers a way of approaching reviews (and self-studies) that will bring both the particular and the general into sharper focus. This model comprises "six interconnected target areas for institutional initiatives, policies, and programs":

- Articulated Institutional Commitment
- Administrative Structure and Staffing
- Curriculum, Co-curriculum, and Learning Outcomes
- Faculty Policies and Practices
- Student Mobility
- Collaboration and Partnerships

The degree to which each of these areas will be addressed in the review will depend on the focus of the review, the scope of internationalization at the institution, and the mandate of the office charged with facilitating internationalization. However, no matter which areas are addressed, pertinent questions related to the areas under review will need to be developed, and data gathered to help evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the areas of activity under examination.

Collecting Data. To meet the requirements of Quality Assurance, program reviews must be data-driven, that is, based on evidence, and should involve a "mixed methods" approach. That is, more than one method of collecting data, more than one type of data, and more than one source of the data should be employed. Using data to inform the self-study and the external review moves the process beyond opinion. While anecdotes and storytelling can be useful in illustrating arguments made in the self-study and will also emerge during the external reviewers' campus visit, they do not in and of themselves constitute data-driven assessment. Drawing on the myriad freshman English information sheets for persuasive writing, we note that among others, forms of data/evidence include:

- Statistical Evidence (such as demographic and enrollment data: student participation in "internationalized" courses; study abroad participation by major, duration and region; international student enrollment numbers, academic performance; listing of international development projects; international partners; as well as surveys of students, administrators, and instructors, etc.);
- Testimonial Evidence (such as reports on international activities, findings of international research activities, publications emerging from faculty/staff international experiences, testimonials from experts about the institution's international programs/internationalization, etc.);
- Anecdotal Evidence (such as student, faculty, and staff comments stemming from study abroad and other international experiences; findings from focus groups; interviews with students, faculty, and staff; excerpts from blogs and other personal writings, etc.); and

- Analogical Evidence (such as comparisons with programs as similar-sized institutions, comparisons with national goals, comparisons with institutions in the same consortia, etc.).

> *For each element [of the self-study] an average score was calculated. Results were then shared. … [and] we then worked with the group to prioritize areas for improvement and to develop improvement strategies.*
> Robert Franco • KAPIOLANI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Over the last decade, discussions of the assessment of internationalization in higher education have urged that SIOs distinguish between "outputs" and "outcomes" (*Green & Olsen, 2003; Deardorff & Van Gaalen, 2012*). An "output" is something that can be counted (such as the number of international students on campus), whereas "outcomes" refer to "the results of [an] activity for individuals, programs, the institution …Outcomes are directly related to the set goals and therefore often identified on a deeper level than outputs" (*Deardorff & Van Gaalen, p.169*). An internationalization review involving the assessment of student learning outcomes as well as other kinds of internationalization outcomes will lead to deeper understanding of what is working and what is not, and lead to more rapid and effective program improvements. Guidelines for assessment as well as examples of practices can be found on the websites of the Forum on Education Abroad (study abroad learning outcomes – www.forumea.org/resources.cfm), international education organizations (AAC&U, ACE, AIEA, and NAFSA among others – internationalization), and the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (www.learningoutcomeassessment.org)

Writing the self-study report. A self-study report is not a dissertation, academic article, or novel. It is a piece of administrative prose designed to convey to stakeholders and external reviewers the current state of internationalization at the institution. Self-study reports should tell the story of an institution's internationalization succinctly and well, using narrative, bullet points, and graphs, charts, and/or tables. The self-study should have many inputs, but really needs only one author. Organization and clarity are essential for the self-study. As suggested above, the ACE CIGE internationalization model offers one possible outline for the document.

Appendices can be used to present statistical and other evidence and information. The Council for Standards in Human Service Education (*2012, p.19*) notes in its accreditation and self-study guide some "common errors in writing a self-study":

- The self-study is not organized in a user-friendly manner: the reader has to search for information and/or navigation between the self-study and supporting documents is difficult.
- Sections are not clearly identified or tabbed.
- Documents are missing; i.e., curriculum matrix, syllabi, advisory committee minutes, field placement manuals, student handbooks, forms such as evaluation forms and learning contracts, college catalog, etc.
- The format for the narrative portion is not consistent throughout.
- The narrative has not been sufficiently edited for spelling and grammatical errors. Errors distract readers from the content.
- Narrative does not guide the reader in interpreting evidence provided in the appendices.
- Pages in the narrative are not numbered.

- Data are inconsistently referenced throughout the Self-Study. For example, the number of females in the program may be one number in the narrative and another number in the Appendix (e.g., in the college catalog).

THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

An accreditation review involves “preparation of evidence of accomplishment by the institution or program, scrutiny of this evidence and a site visit by faculty and administrative peers, and action by the accrediting organization to determine accreditation status” (*Eaton, 2011, p. 4*). Adapted for internationalization reviews, the same steps apply, with the third step involving action by the program and institution to make program adjustments based on findings from the self-study and external review, and subsequent deliberations by relevant members of the campus community. When well-planned and executed, the external review visit can be enormously informative and productive.

Who will conduct the external review and what will the reviewers do? In most cases, a minimum of two people will conduct the external review, although depending on the scope of the review, the team may expand to include three or four reviewers. In all cases, external reviewers read the program self-study, and usually also make the site visit to the campus to meet with stakeholders and gather additional information to inform their analysis. (Accreditation agencies often appoint a sub-set of the team to do the site visit, and in reviews of study abroad programs taking place abroad, members of the team may make separate visits to different program sites.) Increasingly, documents are accessed electronically, either through shared internet folders (using, for example, password-protected course management systems) or on CDs sent to the reviewers. However, it can be a good idea for the host institution to also have a print copy available to the reviewers when they are on site. SIOs should anticipate that reviewers may want to request additional information or suggest questions once they have read the self-study, and invite this when the self-study is made available.

Reviewers’ tasks are to read the self-study materials, interview selected stake holders while on campus, and on the basis of these two sources of information, write a report with their findings after conferring with each other about the self-study and campus visit. Reports are generally due within several months of the review, although, depending on the nature of the review and campus business, reviewers may be asked to submit their report within as short a timeframe as one month. Longer deadlines for submitting reviews are generally not helpful; while reviewers should take extensive notes during the site visit, information is likely to be fresher in their minds if they aim to finalize the report within 60 to 75 days of the visit. Because context is critical to understanding the program review, external reviewers will also be well-advised to become more familiar with the larger institution; websites are generally adequate for this purpose. Once the campus visit schedule is determined, and the individuals with whom the reviewers will meet are identified, it is also recommended that reviewers note down information about the people they will be meeting. Generally, identifying information about people to be met during the site visit, excepting students, will be available on the college or university’s website. Post-site visit, the reviewers may want to be in touch with the SIO (or, more rarely, others) to gather additional information or to clarify particular questions.

> *External reviewers are truly the only way to gauge whether or not our current procedures, plans and goals are in line with best practices and serving the needs of our students.*

Allen Bertsche • AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

External reviewers are peers with knowledge in the relevant program area. For international education, this largely means that reviewers will be SIOs, or, depending on the kind of feedback that is being sought for the review and institutional constraints, individuals in charge of a specific area of internationalization at their respective institutions (international student admissions, international student advising, study abroad advising). Among some kinds of higher education institutions, such as small colleges, there may be no SIO charged with facilitating comprehensive internationalization, and thus peer institutions with such positions and programs may look for reviewers who have responsibility and knowledge for a subset of internationalization, when these peer institutions are not similarly staffed and advanced in their internationalization efforts. What is most important in identifying possible external reviewers is to identify people who have broad knowledge of internationalization (or of components of particular relevance to the review). To be helpful, an external reviewer needs to be able to give feedback that resonates with both the particular institution where the review is being undertaken and with trends in the internationalization of higher education more broadly. Feedback from a reviewer who can only make comparisons between her institution and the SIO's may not be very helpful.

Having served as an external evaluator multiple times, I can say that external reviewers can have significant impact on the development of the programs they are reviewing. [External reviewers] can make tough recommendations about structure and personnel that internal reviewers find difficult to make.
John Heyl • CEA

Second, external reviewers should be individuals who will give honest, informed, and critical feedback. A reviewer who simply rubberstamps self-study findings will fail to give the institution the outside, critical perspective needed to help the institution move forward. This said, reviewers will be most helpful if they promise to have credibility with the stakeholders at the SIO's institution, are good listeners, and are diplomatic. Site visits often involve meetings with individuals who may rightly feel great ownership over internationalization, but may not be entirely happy with new developments at the institution, or who, alternatively, are not fully committed to internationalization. Reviewers need to be able to negotiate this landscape and make sure that the stakeholders feel they are being heard. If "status" is particularly important at the institution, and a reviewer has been selected from an institution that is perceived as having either higher or lower status, then it needs to be made clear to the stakeholders for the review why this person's expertise matters.

Third, reviewers are peers who are also largely volunteers. While expenses associated with the site visit will be covered by the institution requesting the review, most honoraria offered to reviewers are honorific in nature; the reviewers will be investing far more time in this activity than the honorarium can remotely compensate them for. However, serving as an external reviewer is also an expression of commitment to the discipline. Reviewers take on these assignments because serving as a reviewer enables them to expand their understanding of the field and also contribute to its development. They should be taken good care of (*see Appendix 4: Tips for Planning the Campus Visit*), but should also be seen as what they are: peer professionals trying to both help the SIO's institution strengthen in its internationalization program and to help strengthen the internationalization of higher education more generally. Also to be noted: reviewers may be individuals who are known personally, as the world of international education is relatively small. A personal relationship with a reviewer does not in itself constitute conflict of interest, unless the SIO or the reviewer fails to remember that the reviewer's roles is to analyze program quality and identify areas for potential improvement. That is, to be objective.

> *I researched all the reviewers on the list I sent to the Provost, and identified for him the specific strength(s) I thought each would bring to the process.*
> Carolyn O'Grady • GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

> *… having external reviewers with extensive background in the internationalization of higher education was wonderful. It motivated us to do a very thorough self-study and their opinions and feedback were very valuable to us and to the University. Additionally, the two internal reviewers we had on the team were terrific. One knew a lot about our work, and the other knew very little so he learned a lot and is now a big supporter of what we do.*
> Meredith McQuaid • UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Fourth, if particularly contentious issues are likely to emerge in the review, the reviewers may be asked to comment on these in a separate document from the report. Personnel issues must be treated in this way, so that the program and institution have feedback on these, but the feedback is provided ethically and confidentially. The key is to operate according to the principle of doing no harm.

Finally, in most cases, the SIO will be asked to recommend to a superior (chief academic officer) a list of potential reviewers. When submitting the list, the reasons for the selection and the possible contributions of the persons should be described. If the SIO is having difficulty identifying potential reviewers, colleagues at other institutions or in international education organizations can be approached for recommendations. The search for reviewers need not be limited to individuals with experience as reviewers (after all, reviews of international education are relatively new), nor do the reviewers need to be from institutions strictly in the same institutional classification, as long as it appears that the reviewers will be able to contribute productively to the review of the program. If in doubt about the quality of the contribution a potential reviewer might make, others who have worked with the reviewer can be consulted. (It would be difficult to ask to see a report a reviewer had submitted, as these are generally held confidential.)

> *I wanted folks from liberal arts institutions because while colleagues at larger institutions have really good ideas, I needed people my faculty would take seriously.*
> Marne Ausec • KENYON COLLEGE

Planning a Site Visit. Once reviewers have been identified, invited, and confirmed, the SIO will need to be in touch with the reviewers to let them know when and how the self-study report will be delivered, and to either begin making arrangements for the site visit, or let them know who their contact will be for logistical matters. (*See Appendix 4 for a list of tips.*)

Site visits often begin with a meeting with the individual(s) requesting the review. This meeting is used to set the institutional context for the review, give the reviewers their mandate – that is, identify the questions the institution is particularly concerned with, and to answer any clarifying questions the reviewers might have. The site visit often ends with an exit interview with the individual(s), a meeting to which others may be invited, such as key deans, the president, and sometimes but not always, the SIO. Reviewers will be expected at this point to discuss preliminary findings from the review of the self-study and site visit; in essence, the exit interview anticipates the report the reviewers will later submit. The timeframe for delivery of the report is also generally reconfirmed at this point.

This schedule of opening and exit interviews suggests that time be allocated for the team to confer from time to time during the visit and again immediately before the exit meeting. Even if the review is conducted by a single reviewer, time will be needed to review and make sense of notes from various meetings held, to compare these with the self-study, to identify outstanding questions or gaps in information received, and to begin to anticipate the findings to be reported. Time to confer will be particularly important if reviewers are split up for some meetings, and/or disagreements among stakeholders emerge in meetings. (We also note that reviewers may disagree with each other on certain points; if consensus is not reached, the different viewpoints should be voiced in the report.) Ideally, one or two hours should be reserved between the team's last meeting with campus stakeholders and the exit interview. Sometimes, institutions are able to set aside a room, equipped with internet access and refreshments, for this purpose. The team will also need time with the SIO as well as the international office staff; indeed, it may be desirable to have more than one scheduled meeting with them, along with opportunities for informal conversations as the external reviewers gather input and have new questions. If there is an internationalization team or committee, this group should also meet with the external reviewers.Meetings over meals are fine, but can make it difficult for reviewers to track information accurately, busy as they may be holding conversations and eating at the same time. Therefore, the purpose of the meeting should be matched with the format as close as possible.

The site visit is an opportunity for the external reviewers to understand the landscape for internationalization at the institution and gather information from stakeholders (international office staff, other administrative/student support services staff, faculty members, students, key administrators, and so on). Landscape should not be considered only a metaphorical concept; an institution's physical infrastructure will reflect, to some extent, its internationalization, and thus external reviewers should have a chance to move through at least part of the institution's physical space.

External reviewers will need to interact with representative stakeholders while on campus. Who the stakeholders are will depend on the scope and purpose of the internationalization review, and they will need to be informed about the purpose of the review, as it may be counterproductive if they do not know why they have been invited to speak with the reviewers. When the schedule of meetings has been drawn up in advance of the site visit, it will also make sense to ask for input from the reviewers; based on the self-study, they might want to meet with representatives from offices and/or academic areas not yet included in the schedule. Room should similarly be allowed during the visit for additional meetings if warranted and feasible.

> *Make sure the reviewers meet with as many people as possible on campus. Try to engage your president if possible in at least one meeting with the review team.*
> Carolyn O'Grady • GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

Finally, planning meetings for the reviewers with "representative" stakeholders is key. A conversation with a group of 20 stakeholders will likely not be satisfactory for the external reviewers (who will have difficulty recording names and titles and tracking the conversation) and the stakeholders (some of who may feel they were not heard, and others that messages conveyed to the reviewers reflect neither their views nor institutional realities). Meetings with individuals and smaller groups tend to result in more substantial information sharing and idea generation for both reviewers and stakeholders.

Site Visit Follow-Up. The external reviewer's report will generally go to the person who commissioned the review, often the institution's chief academic officer or designee. (Sometimes a preliminary draft of the report is submitted to the institution for "fact checking.") The report should then go to the SIO, who should read it, share it with office staff and relevant others (self-study or advisory committee members), and compare it with the self-study findings. No matter whether the institution requires a written response from the SIO (and the SIO's program review team) to the report, it will be crucial that the SIO respond to the report to identify priorities for next steps, that findings, as well as responses to them, are disseminated to the broader institution, and that the findings are acted upon. There need not be agreement on the external reviewers' report, but as the entire purpose of a program review is to gather information to gauge success in meeting goals and identify areas for improvement, action is necessary. Because internationalization is a shared project across the institution, dissemination is also a must.

> *Because of turmoil and leadership changes, the original review from almost a decade ago was essentially put on the shelf. But the good news is that we have a task force devoted to a comprehensive internationalization review and strategic plan and are part of ACE's Internationalization Laboratory. We've got many more people involved now, and working in greater depth.*
> Mark Schaub • GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

There are myriad ways to disseminate and consult about findings and follow-up plans: websites (for internal and external offices), committee deliberations, presentations to various campus groups. Further, it is recommended that information "be tailored to specific audiences" (*Jankowski & Makela, 2010, p.15*). For international offices, this may mean including information about student learning outcomes in sections on study abroad, or including information about the impact of faculty development activities in website sections on faculty development opportunities. Above all, the self-study should inform practice (advising, program selection, partnership design and implementation) and decision-making (policy development, resource allocations, staff development/hiring/deployment).

> *The report from the reviewers was posted on our website and a message went out to the entire Gustavus community. I also posted our response, where we think the reviewers might have been wrong, and how we will follow up on specific recommendations. I know that some members of the community read both.*
> Carolyn O'Grady • GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

> *It is hoped we will disseminate the review and the response not only to the Academic Affairs office, but also to relevant campus constituencies.*
> Allen Bertsche • AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

> *The findings of the review were disseminated to the campus through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as a series of articles in their monthly newsletter, and an outline of the review and findings were presented at a faculty meeting.*
> Joseph Tullbane • ST. NORBERT COLLEGE

Finally, the external reviewers should not be forgotten. It is rare practice to inform reviewers of progress and actions following a review; most reviewers simply receive a brief message thanking them for a productive visit and acknowledging receipt of the report. But the reviewers will do a better job next time they conduct a review if informed six months or a year out about developments post review, and SIOs and their institutions will also benefit, in keeping with the experiential learning cycle (see Kolb, 1984), if they take a moment to reflect on what was learned from the review and how it is informing further developments in campus internationalization.

CONCLUSION

The effort of planning and executing a self-study, preparing for and hosting a visit by external reviewers, receiving and disseminating the reviewers' report, discussing and implementing action steps as warranted, and hopefully providing some feedback to the reviewers is an enormously time- (and resource-) consuming effort. It is therefore imperative that a report not be simply put on a shelf and forgotten, but be disseminated, discussed, and acted upon. Having a dissemination plan for the self-study and external review findings is as important as setting the scope and approach for the self-study and review themselves. At the same time, it is important for all to note that program reviews, no matter how retrospective as well as forward-looking, are also snapshots. Thus, there may be awkward juxtapositions, misapprehensions on the parts of stakeholders and/or reviewers, and misinterpretations of data. This is why dissemination and discussion are so important, and also plans for on-going program improvement and assessment, and periodic program reviews.

> *The ideas of an audit and self-study are often scary and used as an excuse for not attempting them. This is a serious mistake. A self-study and review can be a bother to do, but their long-term benefits far outweigh that temporary pain.*
> Joseph Tullbane • ST. NORBERT COLLEGE

Some cautionary notes: Sometimes the review process will reveal fractures and fissures in an institution's internationalization. If fractures and fissures exist, they need to be revealed, discussed, and addressed in order to strengthen the institution's internationalization. There is also sometimes a truth that only an outsider can point out. Sometimes the carefully assembled review team falls apart. Unknown personality conflicts emerge; there are tussles for leadership in the review visit process; or illness or calendar conflicts may prevent the full review team from assembling or even result in postponing the campus visit. This can happen and we all know how to deal with them. But what if the external reviewers' report is so off the mark that it is not helpful? In this case, the SIO should contact the reviewers individually by phone to try to determine what led to these results. Did one stakeholder voice dominate the discussions? Was there a critical misinterpretation of data? This type of learning by the SIO/institution will be critical for the next assessment of internationalization.

And lastly, a note for reviewers (both would be and experienced). Institutions that engage in the self-study/ review process are taking a risk. If the process is truthful, the institution opens itself up to possible judgment. As a reviewer, one is invited to not only see, but inquire into the workings of functioning institution of higher education. The main objective of this invitation is to help the institution fulfill its educational mission better. Thus it is important to approach the task in a highly ethical manner; to listen carefully to all that is said; to read with concentration all documents received; and to offer critical analysis based on stakeholders' input, measured against what the institution says of itself, and what the reviewer knows of the field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank the following individuals who have been involved in conducting internationalization reviews at their respective institutions for their thoughtful and insightful comments on the review process and lessons learned: Marne T. Ausec (Director, Center for Global Engagement, Kenyon College), Allen Bertsche (Director, International and Off-Campus Program, Augustana College), Robert Franco (Direcotr, Office for Institutional Effectiveness, Kapi‘olani Community College), Meredith McQuade (Associate Vice President and Dean of International Programs, University of Minnesota system), Carolyn R. O'Grady (Director, Center for International and Cultural Education, Gustavus Adolphus College), Mark Schaub (Executive Director, Padnos International Center, Grand Valley State University), and Joseph D. Tullbane III. (Associate Dean for International Education and Outreach, St. Norbert College). We also thank John Heyl (Vice President of Global Education for Strategic Partnerships, CEA Global Education) and Barbara Hill (Senior Associate for Internationalization, ACE) for their insights.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:
Sample Template for a Self-Study of Internationalization and Suggested Documentation

Sample Template
Institutional Mission/History/Context. *What the reviewers need to know about the institution and what makes it distinctive.*

Internationalization Mission and History. *Helps tell the institution and readers how internationalization is defined, takes place, and why.*

Goals of the Self-Study. *Whether using a comprehensive or selected topics/questions approach, this section identifies the goals and guides the subsequent development of the self-study.*

Internationalization Resources: human, physical, financial. *No matter the scope of the review and the nature of the institution's internationalization, this section, while it may focus primarily on resources available to an international office or subset of programs supported by the office, it will also need to address the role of the faculty in internationalization, senior leadership, and other institutional administrative units and resources supporting internationalization. It may also include a discussion external resources, such as local/regional partnerships/networks, international partners/networks, and grants and gifts.*

Student Learning/Development goals/expectations. *How internationalization is promoting student learning and development in relationship to institutional goals/expectations for student learning/development.*

Opportunities for Learning/Development. *Discussion of the different opportunities for student learning and development facilitated by internationalization (on-campus curriculum, study abroad, internships, volunteering, service-learning, and so on)*

Evidence of Student Learning. *Discussion of assessment methods and findings.*

Strengths and weaknesses. *Discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the institution's internationalization program. Some self-studies briefly address strength and weaknesses in each section, and then provide a summary statement.*

Future directions. *Discusses plans to strengthen internationalization and requests feedback on these from external reviewers.*

Suggested Documentation
- Job descriptions of all positions in the international office.
- CVs of all personnel in the international office (or connected with internationalization)
- Description of the international office's Areas of Responsibility with indication of percent of time/effort allocated to each (if appropriate).
- International office and academic affairs division strategic plans and yearly goals;
- Assessment plans for units and programs
- Statistics (in summary form) for each primary area of responsibility
- College/University documents related to the function/responsibility of the international office (such as Strategic Plan, University Mission, etc)

- Documents relative to each area of responsibility (e.g. study abroad, study away, international students and scholars, campus internationalization, etc)
- Emergency plans (on-campus (International Students and Scholar Services) and off-campus (study abroad/study away)
- University international partnerships
- Internationalization

Appendix 2:
Examples of Self-Study Review Questions and Suggested Time Frame for the Self-Study

Selected Topics Question Examples
International Student Integration. As a college with an international identity and mission, College X has long encouraged international students to enroll in the college as degree and exchange students. At the same time, these students sometimes face unique challenges in terms of incorporation into the student body and adaptation to College X's liberal arts education. How can the Office of International Education, working with other campus units as well as off-campus partners, help ensure that international students can both thrive at the College and have the same opportunities as domestic students for educational and personal growth?

Study Abroad Teaching and Learning. Study abroad (and domestic off-campus study) offer students opportunities to both expand their opportunities for learning and test knowledge and skills acquired on campus. Working with academic departments, other offices, and individuals, and informed by the literature and national and international dialogue, how can the Office of International Education help ensure that these opportunities provide robust opportunities for learning, are connected to on-campus learning, and make sense financially for the institution as well as for students? What kinds of evidence will tell us if this is happening?

Comprehensive Approach: Suggestions for Self-Study/Review Questions
Note: Caution must be exercised in conducting a comprehensive self-study, lest the process be overwhelming for the institution as well as the reviewers.

International Education
- What is the relationship of international education to the institutional mission?
- What are the University's/College's goals for international education?
- What is the financial structure of international education? How is international education funded?
- What is the University's/College's assessment of the effectiveness of international education and how is this measured?
- How would you characterize the University/College with regard to comprehensive internationalization
- What future goals and plans does the University/College have for international education and/or comprehensive internationalization?
- If there is a specific strategic plan for international education, please share it. If internationalization/international education is part of the institution's strategic plan, please share the institution's plan. Please comment on the origin of the internationalization sections.
- In what ways and how often do the international education units (e.g. study abroad, international students and scholars) work together to promote internationalization of the campus or international opportunities?
- Are there faculty and staff training workshops or other vehicles for encouraging the better understanding of other cultures and societies (with particular emphasis on those nations from which your international students come)?

Faculty Role(s)
- What role does your faculty play in internationalization? Are they directly involved in implementation or in setting academic parameters to be met by international education operations?

- Do you have a standing faculty committee involved in internationalization? Is it advisory or directing in nature?
- How do you go about building faculty support without losing control? How do you move the faculty towards accepting greater numbers of courses from study abroad to be counted toward credit for their majors and core coursework?
- How do you get faculty to understand study abroad as an integral part of the intellectual, personal, and cultural of your students?

Roles of Other Campus Offices and Departments

- In what ways and how often does the International Office work together with other units on campus to promote internationalization of the campus or international opportunities?
- Are international activities on and off campus decentralized to other offices and departments outside of the central international office? If so, how is direction and consistency imposed? If not, have you experienced the "it's not our job" syndrome from other offices and departments on campus?
- How do you make international education a campus-wide venture?

International partnerships

- Is there a formal process for initiating international partnership agreements and is there a central repository for signed agreements? Is the information about existing partnerships readily available to faculty and staff at the University/College?
- Who maintains and nurtures your international partnerships? How many active partnerships are there and what kind of partnerships are they (e.g. student exchange, faculty exchange, dual degrees)? Do you have plans to increase the number of partnerships? Why or why not?

Note: Additional areas of inquiry for a comprehensive review could include off-campus study; international student enrollments, advising, and services; scholar services; risk management; and so on.

Appendix 3:
Suggested Time Frame for the Program Review

6 to 9 months before the anticipated review date:

- Identify reviewer candidates. Depending on institutional practice, you will either contact the reviewers directly or suggest names to a provost/dean or designee. In approaching Reviewers should be given the anticipated review date and their CVs collected (when will depend on who approaches them)
- Begin defining the scope and approach for the review
- Clarify goals to be assessed with senior administration and faculty

- Consider what data will be needed and who will provide it
- Begin discussion of which review questions to use in self-study

6-9 months before the review date

- Reviewers are confirmed.
- Set date(s) for review and on-campus visist
- Confirm scope and approach for review
- Confirm goals to be assessed.
- Confirm review questions with on-campus stakeholders and review team
- Begin to collect data.

3-6 months before the review date

- Distribute tasks and review questions for responses from stakeholders
- Collect materials (see above)
- Continue with data collection; consider how data will be presented in self-study document

- Line up people (administration, faculty, staff, students) for conversations with review team.
- Begin writing self-study

1-3 months before the review date.

- Collect all responses to review questions from stakeholders and incorporate them into the draft of the self-study.
- Confirm visit dates and travel/housing/meal arrangements with review team
- Send draft visit itinerary to review team for comments
- Confirm all on-campus conversation times and locations for review team visit.
- Send out the draft of the self-study to key campus stakeholders for comments/corrections.
- Create electronic file (using a course management system, website, or CD) of all supporting documents for review

1 month before the review date

- Send review team the final draft of the self-study
- Send review team the link/CD with all supporting documents
- Finish all on-campus logistical preparation for review team visit
- Brief senior administration as well as faculty, staff, students on what they should expect from conversations with review team.

Appendix 4:
Tips for Planning the Campus Visit

Tips adapted and expanded from Council for Standards in Human Service Education, 2012, p.22.

Prior to the visit

- Make travel arrangements for the reviewers, rather than reimbursing them, unless they are driving to the site. Make sure that getting to your campus and accommodation is as easy as possible for the reviewers. If they will be flying in for the campus visit, ask if they would like transportation arranged for them to and from the airport to the campus/accommodation.
- If the reviewers will be driving to the site, make sure they have directions for getting to their accommodation and/or campus as relevant, and that they understand reimbursement policies for mileage, tolls, etc.
- Inquire about any dietary restrictions, and anything other special needs the reviewers might have.
- Book accommodation that will have a restaurant or coffee shop on the premises or nearby.
- Try to find accommodations that will have a public, but quiet space where the reviewers can confer, and also that has free access to the internet. If the access is not free, make provisions for the fee associated with accessing internet to be covered by the institution. Inform the reviewers in advance that they will have internet access in both their accommodation and on campus.
- Try to minimize any out-of-pocket expenses the reviewers will incur.
- You will already have given the reviewers a schedule for their visit. However, make sure you also leave a folder for them at their accommodation with the schedule (updated if appropriate), a campus map, a copy of the most recent college/university magazine, and other relevant materials. You don't want to overwhelm them, but you want to welcome them with the latest information on campus developments. The materials should also make clear who will be bringing them to campus or instructions for getting to campus (including parking directions and directions to their first appointment), whichever is relevant. Make sure they also have phone numbers to call the SIO or the SIO's staff if emergencies arise. If they will be dining on their own the first evening, you may want to leave information on restaurant options.
- If you did not include a glossary of terms specific to your institution and to your internationalization program, make sure one is available when the reviewers arrive. It is common practice on campuses to use acronyms and other short-hands when discussing campus business, but this can be confusing for outsiders.

- Re-confirm appointments and meeting rooms with everyone the reviewers are scheduled to meet. Make sure these individuals also have a copy of the reviewers' schedule, so they have an overview of the visit, can attend to time, and can help the reviewers get from one appointment to another if necessary.

During the visit

- Make sure someone has been appointed to take the reviewers from one appointment to the next until they have a sufficient knowledge of the campus to navigate it themselves.
- Allow ample time between appointments for the reviewers to stretch their legs, get something to drink, and/or use restroom facilities. You want to make sure they will be refreshed before each appointment.
- Make sure the reviewers have internet access on campus as soon as they arrive on campus.
- Set aside a room, with internet connections, if possible, where they can confer between meetings. Sometimes, a conference room can be set aside for this purpose. Make sure in this case that it is also furnished with refreshments and has good access to restroom facilities. If a room cannot be set aside, make sure, particularly before the exit interview, that the reviewers will be able to confer in a private space for one or more hours to prepare for the interview and discuss the report they will write. They will need to divide up duties, and this is a good time for them to do so.
- The SIO may want to meet the reviewers at the start of the visit to welcome them and answer questions they might have about the self-study and campus visit schedule. The purpose of this meeting is not to "coach" the reviewers, but to bring them up to date on relevant developments and help them make final preparations for the campus visit. In some cases, the SIO may want to invite a relevant faculty or staff member to join the meeting. This meeting can take place over dinner the evening before the campus visit formally begins, in a meeting not involving a meal on the arrival day, or at breakfast the first day of the visit. No matter what form this meeting takes, it usually makes good sense to hold such a meeting before the official visit begins.
- Check in with the reviewers at least once during the day and again at the end to respond to questions, adjust the schedule as needed, supply additional information, and otherwise meet their needs.
- Meals are an appropriate setting for some meetings, but make the group involved is small enough that the reviewers can ask questions and take in (and record) information while also eating the meal.
- The schedule should also include a final time near the end of the campus visit for the reviewers to meet again with the SIO to clarify questions and make a preliminary report of findings.
- Before the visit ends, make sure the reviewers have completed the W-9 needed to issue an honorarium, and that they have instructions on how to submit receipts. If they have driven to the campus meeting and/or have other mileage expenses, give them your mileage reimbursement rate in writing.

After the visit

- Respond in a timely manner to any follow up inquiries from the reviewers as they prepare the report.
- Anticipate the scheduling of relevant follow-up meetings following receipt of the report (with international office staff, the international committee, the Provost/Dean)
- Once the report is received, discuss it with relevant individuals and groups as above, and prepare a response and follow-up plan. Even if the former is not required, this will help you and the institution act on the findings, no matter whether they are accepted.
- Disseminate the findings and a schedule, where relevant, of follow-up activities.
- 6 to 9 months out (or when appropriate), provide the reviewers with a brief update on developments since their visit and receipt of the report.

The **Association of International Education Administrators** (AIEA), a membership organization formed in November 1982, is composed of institutional leaders engaged in advancing the international dimensions of higher education. The purposes of the Association are to:

- Provide an effective voice on significant issues within international education at all levels,
- Improve and promote international education programming and administration within institutions of higher education,
- Establish and maintain a professional network among international education institutional leaders,
- Cooperate in appropriate ways with other national and international groups having similar interests.

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