

Reconsidering Future Priorities and Key Actions of Comprehensive and Strategic Higher Education Internationalization.

Address by Prof. J K. Hudzik of Michigan State University at the AIEA Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., February 2020

GOOD AFTERNOON. It is a pleasure returning to AIEA after a 5 year hiatus occasioned by assignments abroad. And I am very pleased to have been asked to address the topic of comprehensive internationalization's (CI) strategic priorities for the future.

As we have learned, politics and HE internationalization frequently are intertwined, particularly in a global environment such as the present.

We know that internationalization is not an end in itself, but a means to ends.

Internationalization's purposes have undergone elaboration over the last several decades—**expanding** and becoming more **complex**.

For Jane Knight about a dozen or so key terms outline this evolution over the last 50 years. (terms such as foreign students (renamed international students), education abroad, international development, area studies, globalization, regional education hubs and now adding comprehensive and strategic internationalization and internationalization at home. Knight and De Wit break the motivations for internationalization into four diverse purposes: Social/Cultural; Political; Economic and Academic.

However, while the rhetoric of priorities and goals of internationalization have expanded over the last 50 years, it is less clear how far we have come in expanding action. Indeed, ACE's 2017 mapping survey produced a mixed bag on the status of CI in the US.

- Almost 75% of respondents said internationalization is accelerating on their campuses, but the devil is in the details.
 - Respondents report making money from international students, but supporting these students less than is needed;

- Action priorities heavily focused on mobility—education abroad and recruiting international students),
 - And less on building partnerships abroad, curricular internationalization, and faculty development.
- “While institutions said the number one reason to internationalize was to prepare students for a global era,”
 - the relative inattention to curriculum and faculty development signals a gap between goals and action.
 - If 5% study abroad, what do we give the other 95%?
- Robin Helm’s 2019 rejoinder to commentary that internationalization had passed its golden age opined that we may have never reached a golden age.
 - In my somewhat more jaded view (and to mix metaphors), we may never have left the bronze age, let alone entered the golden.
- This is not to say there hasn’t been significant progress over the last 50 years—there has been—
 - but let’s also be realistic about how much of the journey remains in front of us—our futures agenda.
- Hans notes that around the world comprehensive internationalization is still not a widespread reality but often a collection of fragmented activities. Fair enough, Hans, although there are exceptions, and some evidence that we are slowly building toward it.

When I began writing about CI, over a decade ago, **it was to envision an aspirational set of goals and means**—which would take the long run to achieve.

I defined the CI aspiration as:

Commitment and action to infuse and integrate international, global and comparative content and perspective throughout the teaching, research and service missions of higher education.

- Infusing it into existing missions, not adding a fourth mission.
- Defining benefits in core learning, scholarship, and community outcomes.

This was to distinguish CI from a more limited approach which characterized it historically, and still seems the case for a majority of HE institutions with:

- Priority on student mobility—in and out
 - with far less attention to internationalizing on-campus curriculum.
- More attention to liberal arts and less to professional programs (although this is changing).
- A focus on international education and much less so on internationalizing research/scholarship and community engagement.

Addressing these limitations can be the start of an agenda for the future through a common set of aspirations for CI

1. **Mainstream to Widen Access and Participation of** faculty, students, and leadership. (Or, how do we decide who gets left out—through high cost? Which turns out to be elitist).
2. **Integrate** internationalization into ALL core institutional missions.
 - It is strategic to connect internationalization to core missions and over the long term.
 - Teaching/learning, research/scholarship and community engagement/problem solving) are important to HE overall and to its internationalization.
3. **Expand who supports and contributes:** Relying on the international office alone won't produce success. CI requires broadly activating students, faculty, staff and institutional leadership.

Building an institution-wide culture of support is critical to accomplishing any of these.

Addressing the Environment for Internationalization

The current environment of support for internationalization is mixed, as it probably always has been. Allow me to select three particularly vexing contemporary challenges that suggest action priorities:

1. **In an era of anti-globalization**, there is the danger that anti-globalization and anti-HE-internationalization may conflate.

Internationalization is now a large industry; its expense and scope of effort draw closer public and policy attention—

and raise questions about its outcomes, impacts and value added. We have not done a very good job answering such questions.

Documenting outcomes and impacts must become a priority for us.

2. **Public financial disinvestment** in higher education is a long-term challenge for all of us in HE, including those engaged in internationalization.

- Funding shortages force revenue diversification strategies (e.g., commodification—selling services and raising price have been the “easy-go-to” option—which raises consumer costs and restricts access.
- These financial realities are not going away any time soon, but we already see the public backlash.
- The great challenge for us now is to adjust to a trifecta of related challenges:
 - (1) widening goals, expectations, and clientele for internationalization, with
 - (2) radically changing strategies necessary to fund higher education, especially under conditions of massification of participation, and
 - (3) pressure to become more innovatively efficient and effective in doing the work of internationalization.
- Recent surveys by ACE, IAU, for the European barometer suggest
 - A growing divide between engaged and less engaged institutions in international activity.
 - And between students with financial resources and those without.

The future requires us to address the challenges of UNEQUAL ACCESS

3. **Massification of HE participation gives us another big challenge.**

- **It is not just numbers, but massification diversifies the “client” pool,** placing pressure on us is to think creatively in how we deliver on

- internationalization, serving a much more expansive and diverse clientele with differing expectations and needs.
- It is hard to find “traditional” students (if there ever were any) with a homogeneous set of needs, backgrounds, aspirations, preparation, and means.
 - The more communities are affected by globalization, the more their needs diversify also.

We need to meet the needs of a more diverse set of clientele, and not with cookie cutters.

What to do? I have six items.

FIRST, we should double down to complete some of our prior agendas associated with CI.

- Mainstream to widen access and participation of faculty students and leadership. Otherwise who gets left out and why.
Particular attention to internationalizing the on-campus curriculum of **ALL majors** is essential.
- **Faculty development.** An internationalized curriculum plan without an internationalized faculty will be intellectually vacuous.
- **Language learning:** We can't fix this alone, we need an effective partnership with K-12 and more cost effective pedagogies capable of efficiently **scaling-up capacity**.
- **Build strategic and mutually beneficial partnerships at home and abroad.**
 - Inevitable budget constraints prompt interest in investments that produce multiple payoffs (2fers 3fers).
 - For example, the choice of institutional partners may not simply be a matter of finding a good study abroad site, but one which can also serve research and outreach interests as well.

- **Expand who supports and contributes:** Relying on the international office alone won't produce success. CI requires broadly activating students, faculty, staff and leadership.

SECOND, work to replace commodification with innovation as the preferred means of “revenue diversification.”

Instead of raising the price or charging for everything, engage innovation, change practice, and challenge the status quo as means to manage resource needs.

Commodification is a dangerous solution to a wide range of public values, particularly access. Innovation can expand capacity without appreciably raising cost. For example:

- The intelligent use of technology as a means, not an end in itself.
- Strategic inter institutional partnerships that act as a **capacity multiplier**
- Synergies through inter-connecting mission outcomes
- Challenge existing practices. “Why don't we think about doing X? Well, because we don't do X!” This attitude kills innovation.

THIRD, connect CI to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The planet is not healthy, partly because many see local and global prosperity as zero sum when indeed local and global prosperity are co-dependent (requiring co-prosperities).

- **We can't “make us great” by ignoring or running others down (Part of our job is to help people understand why.).**
- The SDG can become a touch stone to think about the wider global set of purposes which are unalterably connected across permeable national boundaries.

Rhetorically I ask, what happens if you think of internationalization as a means of advancing **co-prosperities (local and global)?**

FOURTH, interconnect nationalism and internationalization.

- Nationalism, never went away, and it won't for a long time, if ever.
- And globalization is not going away, albeit morphing and maturing.
 - Samuelson's view is that, "globalization hasn't been repealed, but has entered a more cautious and regulated phase when considering capital flows.
 - Other aspects of globalization continue to cross borders almost effortlessly.

Nationalism and internationalization can coexist and be mutually productive.

However, nationalism coupled to a "gated community" and "zero-sum" mentality, is the real danger to peace, safety, co-prosperity.

- The need is to organize human co-existence and our internationalization efforts on a global level by cooperation among nations rather than competition.
 - H.E. is critically positioned to contribute intellectually and programmatically through cross-border international activity that produces mutual benefit.

FIFTH, commit to REAL IoC at home—of all majors and general education.

- Meaningful internationalization of the curriculum is NOT making the 10th week of a semester foreigner's week. Nor is it merely comparing us and them with the danger that someone needs to be judged "better or best."
- Rather, IoC requires a pedagogy that moves from merely exploring cultural diversity to multi-cultural critical thinking
 - Learning through the several lenses of different cultures, world views and epistemological questions;

- Instead of seeking to merely compare, or to assimilate differences and homogenize them,

Effective IoC uses differences to learn and improve results through diversity.

SIXTH, connect Internationalization to CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

Internationalization may pull institutions, consciously or unconsciously, away from local community frames of reference toward global ones in the pursuit of global rankings and reputation at the expense of civic responsibilities.”

- As Ellen Hazelkorn points out, many universities seemingly prioritize international reputation over being good neighbors.” Universities need to be key institutions at the local and regional levels.”
- As I have written on several occasions, Brexit, the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and the spread of twenty-first century right-wing populism can be traced in part to the downsides of globalization and the unevenness in who benefits, who has access, and who gets hurt.
- A civically disengaged higher education internationalization can cause globalization and internationalization to conflate—guilt by association for the latter.
 - Community support for internationalization depends on society seeing benefits *in its terms*.

HE internationalization needs to help societies negotiate the challenges of globalization through public education, public diplomacy, and community problem solving.

A big problem is that we speak mainly to the converted—our peers at international education conferences such as AIEA or to others inside the academy. We talk in an echo chamber.

- We speak less effectively, or not at all, to the larger numbers in society who are not a part of higher education, many of whom see themselves as pawns on the global chessboard.

Other Issues Coming Over the Horizon

- Expand the meaning and practice of **“internationalization at home” beyond the on-campus classroom** to include community-focused and community-located learning opportunities for globalization and internationalization.
- **Develop an institutional culture** that supports in rhetoric and action the importance of civic connectivity in local and global terms;
- **Support local development in a global context:** attracting global talent, developing local talent and accessing global pathways of opportunities
- **Employ higher education research and policy skills** to document how globalization plays out locally and co-production of workable solutions.

Other issues coming over the horizon to address

- Internationalization of **graduate education**, research, and doctoral student training for conducting international research
- Expansion of international collaborative platforms for strategic research and problem solving capacity investment and accessing the global pathways of innovation.
- Expanding **staff development** and staff expertise to support internationalization **Creativity in credentialing** for rapidly proliferating education abroad models.
- Think in more diverse **and non-western-dominated terms** about the meaning of internationalization.

Thank you and I will be pleased to answer questions.