



Association of International Education Administrators
Leaders in International Higher Education

Dear AIEA Colleagues,

I am pleased to write to you almost halfway into my year as president of AIEA. Being in conversation with our many thoughtful members is a tremendous professional privilege. We sit in a unique place within our institutions and in the history of higher education worldwide, with a prime window on the “blooming, buzzing confusion” that is our rapidly changing landscape. Our effort to make sense of the swirl of economic and demographic shifts, and to provide the best direction to our institutions, requires great networking and absorption of a burgeoning array of interacting trends. AIEA has put its own leadership through the paces recently in a strategic planning process, and the results will enable us to continue to serve a dynamic field as it evolves.

AIEA’s Secretariat recently sent out our draft strategic plan. I hope you’ve had a moment to take a look and let us know what you think. (See <http://www.aieaworld.org/publications/strategic-action-plan>.) The plan describes, among other things, our hope to seize this important moment by partnering with key organizations that share our passion for the international work of higher education. We are in discussions with organizations the world over who want to forge links among leaders in higher education in the U.S. and around the world, and whose efforts help us understand how best to guide institutions to new models of connection, inclusion, and performance. These partnerships will benefit our membership both directly and indirectly. For instance, EAIE (the European Association of International Educators) and AIEA will hold a series of events at both organizations’ conferences, linking models of leadership in Europe, the U.S. and other areas of the world. We will continue to work with Australia’s higher education community and with the consortium of North American and Latin American organizations, among others. These multilateral modes of collaboration reflect the way our world itself functions, with flows of people and organizations moving well beyond the bilateral approaches that have served us in the past. In another example of organizational cooperation for our members’ benefit, we have been in discussion with the American Council on Education, and are in the process of forming a partnership that will serve two immediate needs: to help SIOs communicate their priorities to university presidents, and to tap the leadership development expertise of ACE on behalf of our member SIOs.

AIEA delivers the resources and relationships SIOs need to guide their institutions as contributors to the senior management team. Global issues, multilateral engagement, operational skill, top-level confidence, and long-term commitment: these are the topics that are discussed every day on my campus and on many I’m aware of. The requirement that we be on top of our game, that we understand the shifts and movements of other world regions, that we appreciate what is now possible in educating students, promoting research, and providing the best professional opportunities to faculty and staff—these matters are more relevant as each year goes by. And as each year goes by, topics that once were of the utmost importance in our work (recall our immersion in developing responses to swine flu and SARS, visa delays, escalating risk management needs, efforts to catalog every international flicker of the institutional eyelash) have either disappeared or morphed in approach and expectation. We continue to master each challenge and to learn as we go. Thanks to your participation as members, we have successfully strengthened our community and our resources as an organization, taking advantage of AIEA’s special view across the globe to help each of us develop the needed qualities, knowledge, networks, and skills.

To turn just for a moment to our organizational housekeeping, I want to thank Rodolfo Hernandez Guerrero, Director of the Center for U.S. - Mexico Studies and the Office of International Education at The University of Texas at Dallas, for accepting our call for a new secretary to serve the Executive Council. Please join me in welcoming Rodolfo to this important position.

I also want to thank Riall Nolan for his adroit leadership of our strategic planning conversations. The result is a remarkably elegant, deceptively simple document that will undoubtedly be referred to constantly in the years ahead, to our benefit. The partnerships I referred to just now are in synch with the identity of AIEA as we've strategically defined ourselves. We have also settled on a focused strategy for membership management, one that will ensure AIEA's continued place as a specialized organization for strategic leaders in academic settings in the U.S. and around the world. Riall and all those who brought the plan into being deserve our lasting thanks.

I remind you to begin honing your best ideas for the 2013 AIEA conference in New Orleans. Incoming president Sabine Klahr recently sent out the call for session proposals, and we hope many of you will respond (August 15 deadline – details are at <http://www.aieaworld.org>).

I look forward to seeing you in New Orleans in 2013 and, in the meanwhile, wherever our paths meet.

Sincerely,

Donna Scarboro
2012 AIEA President