

Faith-Based Universities and Internationalization: Balancing Mission and Market Realities

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Across the United States and around the world, faith-based colleges and universities adhere to distinctive missions. These institutions are typically guided in their actions by a particular set of values and priorities that exert a direct influence on their approaches to all aspects of their work. Faith-based institutions see their place in the world through a unique lens, which in turn affects a wide range of decisions and actions they may take with respect to teaching, learning, research, student formation, and community service.

Based on our understanding of these fundamental dynamics, one would assume that the faith-based identity and orientation of a particular college or university would also affect its approach to internationalization, a key phenomenon in higher education around the world today. But, what do we really know about the ways that faith-based institutions approach matters of internationalization and global engagement?



To address this key question, this AIEA Thematic Forum offered an informative, interactive experience designed to provide participants with new information and insights into what we know about faith-based universities and their approaches to internationalization, as well as opportunities to share and compare their experiences with colleagues from a diverse group of faith-based institutions from the United States and elsewhere.

Leveraging the knowledge and experience of the Boston College Center for International Higher Education—itsself housed at a faith-based (Jesuit, Catholic) institution, and directed by Prof. Hans de Wit—this Thematic Forum brought together higher education experts, internationalization scholars, international education practitioners, and representatives from a range of faith-based institutions in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and beyond. The Forum provided an opportunity for significant learning and robust discussion of this important and timely topic.