



# **Internationalizing the Student Experience: Working Group Report**

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## Development of the Report

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### Clarifying terminology

One challenge facing Michigan State as it moves forward with campus internationalization is the use and clarity of the language used to discuss and describe the process. Research and professional reports about internationalization state that no common definitions exist, so such efforts must clarify their terminology to avoid confusion and gain support.

Within higher education institutions, the process on which MSU is embarking is most commonly referred to as “internationalization”, even though the process encompasses more than “international” content areas. Also, the resulting competencies or outcomes related to “internationalization” are described as “global learning outcomes” or “global competencies”, with “competency” referring to a combination of knowledge (cognitive abilities), attitudes (values and affective beliefs), and skills (behavior traits and abilities).

The benefit of using these terms, and why the working group adopted them, is their common usage within higher education administration, professional organizations, and research. The difficulty with these terms is that their exact meanings vary by institution and within the international, global, and multicultural education fields of study.

Considering the terms in question, the common academic definitions are:

- International education—the study of nations and nation-states. This term most appropriately refers to issues such as immigration policy, trade, history, politics, international law, language, geography, etc. These issues all deal with the interplay of governments and/or regions as the unit of analysis, and traditionally, this type of education manifests itself in political science, geography, language departments, and regional study centers.
- Global education—the study of issues and ideas related to cultures and that transcend national boundaries. In an era of the “flat world”, the research describes global education as an alternative way of conceptualizing international education. This field looks at ideas such as human rights, environmental change, food systems, peace and conflict, citizenship, etc.; it emphasizes ideas that cannot be understood by looking a specific nation or region as the unit of analysis. This approach takes a “global” or holistic perspective to study and traditionally would be manifest in a global or cultural studies program. This field of study is value-laden and often promotes the concepts of global citizenship, universal human rights, and social justice.
- Intercultural and comparative education—comparative studies of people, structures, and interactions between international cultures. Traditionally found in communications, business, political science, or education fields.
- Multicultural education—study of relationships between ethnic and racial groups, with an emphasis on increasing understanding and social justice and often focused on domestic groups classified as minorities. The purpose and extent of this field varies widely and is closely related to global education with its emphasis on social justice and culture.

Depending on the audience, the “internationalization” and “global competency” terminology brings challenges. Some people assume that the focus is only related to cultures outside the United States; however, by using a definition of internationalization that embraces global and multicultural education ideals, MSU will take steps toward bringing groups together on campus. For these reasons, the working group has used the terms “internationalization” and “global competency” to be *inclusive of all four of these concepts*.

### **Structure and process used to develop the report**

Beginning in October 2006, the Internationalizing the Student Experience team—in consultation with the Offices of Inclusion and Intercultural Activities, International Studies and Programs, and Cultural and Academic Transitions—brought together a group of faculty, staff, and students from around the university to discuss campus internationalization.

Based on the available literature, the group started its work by agreeing to the following ideas:

1. Internationalization at MSU needs to be a pervasive part of the culture, something that permeates all aspects of the institution.
2. While the process is commonly called “internationalization” within higher education, MSU must recognize the overlap between multiculturalism, intercultural learning, international learning, and global learning.
3. Recommendations made by the working group should be *inclusive*—all units at MSU should be able to see their work reflected in the effort and all students should have the opportunity to internationalize their degree program; *adaptive*—the work will be iterative and evolve with the campus; and *rigorous*—the work should be such that it pushes students, faculty, and staff toward new learning and ways of being.
4. The term competency should refer to knowledge, attitude, and skills, with each area being equally important and dependent on the other areas.

From the initial discussion about our goals, the group brainstormed the knowledge, attitude, and skills that embodied a global student and citizen in a ¾-day session facilitated by Mr. John Beck. A sub-group then organized these ideas into themes and categories that aligned with the Liberal Learning goals. *The working group felt that it was best to align the internationalization effort with other campus initiatives to gain buy-in and align institutional priorities.*

From this draft, the group then worked virtually and in two subsequent full-group meetings to refine the document. This document was then presented at the ISE Summit in February 2007. Feedback from this session went back the group for further revisions. The group then took the document around the campus through 20 different listening sessions (see the appendix for a list of working group members and listening sessions). The final report, as well as the discussion points and recommendations, resulted from conversations during the listening sessions.

### **Purpose of this document**

In writing this document, the working group sought to define—in the context of MSU’s Liberal Learning outcomes (noted in enumerated points in italics)—what a globally-competent MSU graduate would “look like”. This list is consistent with other lists produced in the ACE reports on internationalization and is meant to provide a back-bone for future action at the institution.

Our intent is not to state that all students should be an expert in each area or that each unit should provide students with experience in every point. Rather, the working group views this document as the *collection of competency areas desirable in a globally-educated person* that can serve as a guide for departments and units when thinking about the curriculum, co-curriculum, and interaction with undergraduate students..

In the end, we hope that each unit on campus would use this document to select the three to five points that best fit within its context. For example, the points that Residence Life focuses on from the document would most likely be different from those addressed by Integrative Studies, Study Abroad, or an academic department. If all campus units put forth this effort, then as a student progresses through his or her MSU career, his or her undergraduate experience would necessarily have an international aspect to it.

## **Global-Competency Outcomes for Undergraduates**

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### **Preamble**

MSU—recognizing that its students live and work in an increasingly complex and interconnected world—provides opportunities for its students to engage the world as professionals and citizens who will demonstrate leadership in their professional, personal, and civic life.

More specifically, MSU graduates will possess *global competencies as related* to the following goals:

- (1) an understanding of themselves culturally and the ability to use this knowledge to live and work effectively in diverse settings and with diverse individuals;
- (2) the knowledge and skills associated with international, global, and intercultural content areas such as language, geography, history;
- (3) a desire and ability to seek out and use diverse sources of information to inform their decision making; and
- (4) a desire and ability to engage in communities of practice as citizens and scholars.

MSU acknowledges that to be success in its internationalization efforts, these goals must extend beyond students' cognitive understandings; they must permeate students' values and be supported by a strong sense of civic and social responsibility.

### **Global-Competency Statements**

As such, in the context of the institution's land-grant tradition and Liberal Learning outcomes, MSU will provide opportunities for all its undergraduate students to become globally-competent professionals and citizens, people with the following *knowledge, attitudes, and skills*:

- (1) Graduates will demonstrate *Integrated Judgment* to:
  - Understand their place in the world relative to historical, geopolitical, and intellectual trends, including the socio-cultural, economic, and ecological influences on these trends.
  - Perceive the world as an interdependent system, recognizing the effects of this system on their lives and their personal influence on the system.
  - Frame, understand, and act upon their judgments from multi-disciplinary perspectives and worldviews.
- (2) Graduates will demonstrate the *Advanced Communication Skills* to:
  - Recognize the influence of cultural norms, customs, and traditions on communication and use this knowledge to enhance their interactions across diversity.
  - Employ a proficiency in a second language and understand how language relates to culture.
  - Use observation, conflict management, dialogue, and active listening as means of understanding and engaging with different people and perspectives.
  - Communicate their ideas and values clearly and effectively in multiple contexts, with diverse audiences, and via appropriate media and formats.

(3) Graduates will demonstrate the *Cultural Competence* to:

- Understand the influence of history, geography, religion, gender, race, ethnicity, and other factors on their identities and the identities of others.
- Recognize the commonalities and differences that exist among people and cultures and how these factors influence their relationships with others.
- Question explicit and implicit forms of power, privilege, inequality, and inequity.
- Engage with and be open to people, ideas, and activities from other cultures as a means of personal and professional development.

(4) Graduates will demonstrate *Analytical Thinking* to:

- Understand the complexity and interconnectedness of global processes—such as environment, trade, and human health—and be able to critically analyze them, as well as compare and contrast them across different cultures and contexts.
- Synthesize knowledge and meaning from multiple sources to enhance decision-making in diverse contexts.
- Use technology, human and natural capital, information resources, and diverse ways of knowing to solve problems.

(5) Graduates will demonstrate *Literacy in Science and Math* to:

- Use and apply spatial reasoning and analysis skills.
- Understand how the natural sciences and mathematics contribute to knowledge of global processes, such as those related to health, food systems, energy and other areas.
- Understand the role, potential, and limits of using science, math, and technology to address global issues and that cultures and disciplines conceptualize data, methodologies, and solutions differently.

(6) Graduates will demonstrate *Effective Citizenship* to:

- Develop a personal sense of ethics, service, and civic responsibility that informs their decision-making about social and global issues.
- Understand the connection between their personal behavior and its impact on global systems.
- Use their knowledge, attitudes, and skills to engage with issues that address challenges facing humanity locally and globally.

## **Next Steps: Recommendations for Implementing the Global-Competencies**

1. An advisory group comprised of academic and student affairs professions should be convened to guide further discussion, thinking, and action in the area of internationalization and the work of the Internationalizing the Student Experience team. The working group benefited from the diverse perspectives around the table, with each providing insight into a different part of the institution. Furthermore, during the listening sessions, numerous new ideas and perspectives were presented and new collaborations were initiated. To support the work of the ISE team, a wider-range of voices, especially faculty voices, are needed.
2. The Office of Undergraduate Education, in cooperation with key colleges and student affairs units, should begin work on an undergraduate specialization/designation (e.g., Presidential Award in Global and International Learning) that can appear on students' transcripts and/or diploma if they meet specific criteria.

Currently, process is being used at other institutions such as the Georgia Institute of Technology ([http://www.internationalplan.gatech.edu/academicunits/overall\\_plan.pdf](http://www.internationalplan.gatech.edu/academicunits/overall_plan.pdf)) and the University of Kansas (<http://www2.ku.edu/~oip/gap/components/>).

The working group discussed, but did not finalize, the following scaffolding around such an award, which connects back to the goals stated in the Global Competency preamble:

- a. Language proficiency or requirement
- b. Intercultural experience (e.g., study abroad, internships, field work, etc.)
- c. Service/civic engagement
- d. International/global/culturally themed coursework

## Additional Recommendations Related to ISE

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During the Summit and listening sessions, the working group heard a lot of feedback from the campus community about issues related to internationalization in general, but not specifically the definition of global competency. While not directly related to the charge of the working group, this feedback is presented below with some associated recommendations.

1. Many faculty and administrators expressed doubt during the summit and listening groups. They felt that “internationalization” is really just the latest in a string of initiatives at MSU and that the administration is not committed to implementing real change; these efforts are more symbolic than a real effort to implement change. Generally, faculty and administrators seemed to want a mandate from the administration with accompanying funds and incentives to make internationalization happen.

### *Recommendations:*

- The Administration should continue to promote the integration of internationalization into other campus initiatives such as the Liberal Learning outcomes. Internationalization cannot be viewed or implemented as an add-on requirement or as the latest campus fad, it must represent a fundamental shift in how we think and act as individuals and as an institution.
  - Global-competencies should be woven into the curriculum and study abroad program approval systems, as well as the budget and promotion systems.
2. Various groups feel that the document, as presented, is either too weak—it does not express a strong enough commitment to action against intolerance—or too strong—how can MSU take and promote a value-laden position (i.e., who gets to define ethical actions or human rights). The Liberal Learning Outcome on “effective citizenship” was the hardest to define, and the area of the document that received the most attention uniformly.

Also, some in the multicultural community feel that MSU should focus domestically on issues related to social justice and inequity within our own borders. Conversely, those in the international community feel that this document reflects too much on culture and not enough on specific regional and international issues.

### *Recommendations:*

- Every effort was made to include key constituencies—student and academic affairs as well as international and multicultural educators—in the discussions. The resulting document represents a good balance between these interests.
- While the working group tried to craft its language carefully so as to avoid a situation in which it seemed to be “preaching” or “dictating” what a student should do or believe, the group also felt that it was important for MSU to take a stand based on its values. While the group does not want to dictate how a student should serve his or her community or who this student should vote for, the group felt that MSU should and could expect its students to be civically engaged.

3. With the exception of the students the group talked with, everyone consulted with felt that MSU should consider options related to language education as part of the greater internationalization efforts. Faculty in ISP stated that MSU lagged behind other peer institutions in terms of our capacity to provide seat-time in a range of languages on a regular basis. Other faculty and staff agreed that language acquisition was important, but they noted capacity issues within the language departments and the credit-hour issue associated with mandating more degree requirements, especially for students in STEM fields.

*Recommendation:*

- MSU should initiate a campus discussion or task force to discuss adoption of a second language proficiency or credit requirement. This task force should explore a range of options in relationship to obtaining and assessing the concept of “language proficiency”. Some of the options for delivering language education could include:
    - Seat time in formal courses
    - Clubs and co-curricular activities
    - Mentoring and buddy programs with international students
    - On-line and computer-based instruction
    - Study abroad and field-based learning
4. Some groups on the campus community felt that the document should be much shorter. They also felt that the document was too rigorous and impossible for a student to actually accomplish.

*Recommendation:*

- Many groups seemed to understand that internationalization is a campus-wide effort, and given an emphasis on these competencies by the entire campus, that a student could be “affected” by each area during his or her career. A simpler, shorter statement could and should still be developed for marketing and promotion purposes, but the committee felt that all the bulleted areas are important aspects of global-competency at this time.
5. The linkage between internationalization and the Liberal Learning Outcomes generated a lot of feedback on the Liberal Learning Outcomes. Many people expressed concerns over the language used around liberal learning, and they had questions about how the outcomes would be used into the future. People supported the idea of interfacing internationalization—and other efforts—in the broader context of liberal learning at MSU.

*Recommendation:*

- Work on the Liberal Learning committee should be continued, and to the extent possible, connected with other initiatives on the campus related to student outcomes assessment.

## Appendix A: Working Group & Listening Groups

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### Working Group members:

1. Jim Lucas, APUE, Co-Chair
2. Kris Renn, Education, Co-Chair
3. Maggie Chen-Hernandez, Multicultural Center
4. Garth Cooper, FISPE Project/ISP
5. Carlos Fuentes, OCAT
6. Jeanne Gazel, Social Science/MRULE
7. Kathleen Geissler, Arts and Letters/Integrative Studies
8. Rob Glew, Social Science/ISP
9. Matt Helm, Career Services
10. John Lent, UUD
11. Kelly Millenbach, ANR/NCA
12. Liliana Mina, OSS
13. Eduardo Olivo, Residence Life
14. Richard Paulsen, ANR
15. Anna Pegler-Gordon, JMC/Asian Studies
16. Adan Quan, Social Science
17. Jason Ratliff, Graduate Student
18. Ann Schneller, FISPE/ISP
19. Brad Shapiro, Undergraduate Student
20. Gerry Urquhart, Lyman Briggs

### Listening sessions:

1. Faculty session in Erickson Hall
2. Faculty session in BPS Building
3. International Studies and Programs (2 sessions)
4. Residence Life (2 sessions)
5. Career Services
6. Career Services Employer Partners
7. All University Advisors Group
8. College of Natural Science Dean's Advisory Group
9. RHA
10. ASMSU
11. Vice-President for Student Affairs Deans and Directors meeting
12. Undergraduate Assistant and Associate Deans group
13. Integrative Studies Director's meeting
14. Freshman Class Council
15. International Students and Scholars
16. Office of Study Abroad
17. EAD graduate students
18. FFA students
19. LATTICE group

## **Appendix B: Liberal Learning Goals**

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### **Outcomes of Liberal Learning**

The total effect of the knowledge and skills described in the following goals for liberal learning results in the MSU graduate having the potential to be an outstanding leader – perceiving and developing opportunities, actively fostering and guiding change, and applying skills and knowledge to understand and articulate complex issues of work, community, and public life. Students who complete an undergraduate degree program at Michigan State University are expected to demonstrate:

#### ***INTEGRATED JUDGMENT***

The MSU graduate will effectively synthesize specialized discipline-based knowledge with a broad-based liberal arts education, understand the importance of life-long learning, and make decisions that reflect humane, social, ethical, and aesthetic sensibilities developed through coherent curricular and co-curricular activities.

#### ***ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS***

The MSU graduate will be a competent writer and speaker, able to write and speak effectively in a variety of situations and to a variety of audiences, able to write and speak with authority within a professional area, and able to write and speak effectively and persuasively as a citizen in the public arena.

#### ***CULTURAL COMPETENCE***

The MSU graduate will have explored global, cultural, social, and intellectual diversity and will value the experiential and intellectual diversity of the academic community.

#### ***ANALYTICAL THINKING***

The MSU graduate will be a critical user of knowledge, adept at using current technologies to access information and having the ability to analyze complex information critically, using multiple modes of inquiry (i.e., scientific, artistic, literary, and information methodologies).

#### ***LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS***

The MSU graduate will demonstrate ability to formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information, employing analytical arguments and reasoning built upon fundamental concepts and skills of science, mathematics, statistics, and computing.

#### ***EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP***

The MSU graduate will have a sense of responsibility for a dynamic, democratic society that offers broad opportunities and requires the ability to function in an interdependent world.

## Appendix C: Example implementation

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Venue: Study abroad

Liberal learning Outcome: Literacy in Science and Math

Global Competency Definitions:

- Use and apply spatial reasoning and analysis skills.
- Understand how the natural sciences and mathematics contribute to knowledge of global processes, such as those related to health, food systems, energy and other areas.
- Understand the role, potential, and limits of using science, math, and technology to address global issues and that cultures and disciplines conceptualize data, methodologies, and solutions differently.

Implementation Ideas:

- Have students calculate change in cost of living or price of items based on exchange rates.
- Have students attempt to live on a fixed monetary amount per day.
- Have students learn about the geography of the location and navigate the city with maps.
- Have students discuss current science issues such as AIDS, Avian Flu, biotechnology, climate change, etc. from a comparative perspective.

Assessment Ideas:

- Exchange rate quiz.
- Shopping activity—who can get the most nutritious food for the least amount of money.
- Debates, presentations, or comparative papers related to current events.
- Interview locals about science and health issues.
- Scavenger hunt activity around town