

Internationalizing Teacher Education Programs at U.S. Colleges and Universities

The following questions and answers were taken from the November 9, 2010 webinar, Internationalizing Teacher Education Programs at U.S. Colleges and Universities.

Audio recordings of this webinar are available for purchase at <http://www.nafsa.org/eventsandtraining/event.aspx?id=22372>.

The webinar was presented by **Cindi Fries**, *Northeastern State University, Oklahoma*, **James Greenberg, PhD**, *University of Maryland-College Park*, and **Helen Marx, PhD**, *Eastern Connecticut State University*.

Do most of your programs have existing relationships with international colleges or universities?

The two institutions that I have worked with have had existing relationships with international universities. These are very powerful vehicles to build upon in our work, though I do not think that teacher educators have fully explored the potential of this. Like all cross-institutional work, it is vital to create personal connections across the institutions. I think much more needs to be done to leverage these existing relationships within the teacher education programs. *Helen Marx*

What were the mechanics and some specifics about setting up these internships? Who did you work through?

The specifics of setting up international internships are complex and require careful attention. In general, there are two options: to develop your own internships or to use a “third-party” organization/consortium that has existing relationships. I have been involved in a number of cases where a U.S. teacher education program created direct relationships with international schools as part of a study abroad experience. It is vital not to underestimate the complexity and time required to develop and maintain such relationships. The book listed below discusses organizations that help facilitate these internships in more detail. *Helen Marx*

- Cushner, K. and Brennan, S. (Eds.) *Intercultural student teaching: A bridge to global competence*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2007.

Does anyone have a program where students can get licensure overseas and within their state?

I believe that this question is related to the fact that in many states teacher educators who wish to develop international teaching internships are frustrated by the fact that the Department of Education requires internships to be done within a state or with a state-certified teacher. This is the case in many states, making a full-term student teaching internship difficult. Different states

have different requirements, making a general answer here difficult. We recommend that you consult with your state's Department of Education and with other teacher education programs in your state. There are creative ways around these issues; short-term programs, such as the one Cindi Fries has created at Northeastern State University, Oklahoma, may prove to be a very powerful option for some programs where a full semester student teaching experience is not possible. *Helen Marx*

Do you use the hours that they work in schools overseas... can they use these toward their state required hours?

In many cases these can be, though you must consult with your state's Department of Education. *Helen Marx*

With so many course requirements for education students, how do they find the room to internationalize their programs?

This is one of the largest hurdles we must address in our efforts to internationalize teacher education programs. As we tried to emphasize in our webinar, internationalization should not be seen as an "add-on" to the existing program. As teacher educators, we must see the development of a global perspective and intercultural competence as the foundation to all we do and infuse this within the framework of the design of our programs and the courses we teach. In the webinar we spoke directly to ways that faculty are trying to infuse an international/global mindset into education coursework. In addition, we strongly believe that internationalization is an institution-wide effort—we cannot do this alone. We must work with other departments within our colleges and universities on these efforts so that students come to our programs with disciplinary coursework/major that has been internationalized. *Helen Marx*

Are there common goals for internationalizing a curriculum?

This question warrants a webinar all on its own! Vital to the process of internationalizing a program is to initiate dialogue and development about potential goals of internationalizing a curriculum. The journey toward an answer to this question will be transformative for everyone in your department and/or institution. *Helen Marx*

Which courses did the presenters change first? And what specific changes did they make in the syllabus?

In my experiences coming from two universities, I have found social studies and science method courses are often natural places for faculty to begin to infuse an international/global perspective into the coursework. *Helen Marx*

How do you facilitate cultural reflection beyond the surface similarities and differences?

I believe this is one of the most important and difficult challenges to facilitating intercultural development within study abroad and domestic cross-cultural experiences. I speak directly to this question in an article I co-wrote with David Moss (listed below). I would also recommend King, P. M. (2000). Learning to make reflective judgments. In M. Baxter Magolda (Ed.), *Teaching to promote intellectual and personal maturing: Incorporating students' worldviews and identities into the learning process: New directions for teaching and learning* (pp. 15-26). New York: Jossey-Bass. *Helen Marx*

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- Marx, H. & Moss, D. (in press). "Please mind the culture gap: Intercultural development during a teacher education study abroad program." *Journal of Teacher Education*. 1-13.
 - NAFSA's 3rd Annual Conference Colloquium on Internationalizing Teacher Education will focus on this question.

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I would like to know if we can get a copy of a student's work and/or the cultural reflection assignment mentioned

I am currently working on a paper related to these that I will share in the NAFSA network once completed. *Helen Marx*

Do any of you have a professional development for practicing teachers opportunity or courses to encourage internationalization of the curriculum they teach in schools

There are many professional development opportunities within the social studies and science education communities that directly address the need to internationalize the K-12 curriculum. My university does not offer any professional development for practicing teachers (unless they are directly enrolled in our graduate program), however faculty are engaged in professional development directly with K-12 schools addressing global education and internationalization.

Helen Marx

What support do you provide for these teachers once they have graduated? Are there follow-on professional development activities that reinforce globalization in their classrooms as well as resources as they work with their school administration to bring international perspectives into their schools?

I think this question highlights a pressing need to support our students upon graduation as they begin their careers. In one of the programs I work with, we are developing an alumni group of the students who went on a teacher education study abroad program. One of the goals of this group will be to continue to support our graduates' intercultural growth within their first placements, leveraging their experiences internationally to support their work within domestically diverse schools and their commitments to global education curriculum development. *Helen Marx*

Is there an ethnographic research focus on teacher candidates to study impact of internationalization in schools?

I think that the question is asking if there is research that has looked at the influence of internationalizing a pre-service teacher's education program on their subsequent work within schools, to see if they are indeed infusing a global perspective into their work within K-12 schools. I think there is a pressing need to understand in more depth the ways we can leverage our work within teacher education and their subsequent work within schools, both in relation to

their effectiveness in teaching culturally diverse student populations and in the internationalization of the K-12 curriculum. I am not, however, aware of any particular ethnographic studies that have sought to investigate this question. My own research, and the research literature I am most familiar with, has focused on teacher candidates' intercultural development during their tenure within teacher education programs, particularly as a result of international teaching experiences. *Helen Marx*

That's a great idea, and we are in tune with the concept but not yet at implementation. We convened a group of doctoral students this semester in order to describe all of what we are doing and to see where there was interest in some study (ethnographic or otherwise) and there has been some response. But, the focus has been on international teachers in our midst at this point and not yet on teacher candidates and schools. We are early for that step, if I understand the question. *James Greenberg*

How have you documented student outcomes in ways that are compelling to the Department of Public Instruction?

Honestly, we are not at that stage yet. Since we are going for overall systemic change, the assessment step—in the way you describe it—(i.e., for student outcomes) is coming up. We have piloted an assessment instrument this past summer and will do a full college administration by the end of this year. I am attaching a poster that shows pilot outline of our thinking on this topic. Also attached is a report of one GATE Fellow showing some assessment of impact in the course. That's the most reasonable way to do it at this point—course-by-course according to instructor goals for internationalization outcomes. On the question of “compelling to Department of Public Instruction” we don't really have to do that. Our Maryland State Department is a partner in all of this and they are just as convinced of the importance of internationalization as we are. *James Greenberg*

How important is it for institutions to formally address the entry and reentry emotional variables for students?

Understanding where our students are in terms of their intercultural development is vital as we design programs to meet our students' specific intercultural needs. Your question speaks to the need to think about our work with pre-service teachers from a developmental standpoint, which we often fail to do. I have used the Intercultural Development Inventory as a method of more formally assessing students' intercultural development, both pre- and post-international experiences. There are a number of instruments that might be used for these purposes. I'd like to highlight the use of such assessments in formative ways that can then inform our work with teacher candidates, not just as a means to measure outcomes of programs. *Helen Marx*

NAFSA Resources:

- [Providing Post-Study Abroad Support - It's Easier Than You Think! Webinar](#)
 - [“Orientation/Re-entry Programming” topic in Resource Library for Education Abroad Knowledge Community Network](#)
 - [Back in the USA \(1995\)](#)
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Have you encountered any resistance from students toward internationalization? If so, how have you addressed that resistance?

I have not encountered any direct resistance to the concept of internationalization from pre-service teachers; they tend to feel that they are part of a new generation that is living in a “global” world and are eager to embrace this mindset. However, as might be expected, I have experienced resistance within courses I teach. As we struggle with many of the difficult questions that are ingrained within the development of intercultural sensitivity and a global perspective, we need to confront and deal with the ethnocentric worldviews and privilege that we Westerners bring to our understanding of the world; this is not easy work and students often resist these explorations. I have found techniques developed with multicultural teacher education and within the field of intercultural communications very helpful as I work on my skills as a facilitator of intercultural growth. I would encourage teacher educators, who might already be familiar with the work of theorists such as G. Gay, T. Howard, J. Irvine, and S. Nieto to read the leading researchers within the field of intercultural communications, particularly the work of Milton Bennett and Janet Bennett. In addition, work within Transformative Learning theory, specifically Mezirow, provides keen insight into how to facilitate transformative growth among adults. *Helen Marx*

I’m happy to say there is no resistance. In fact, the opposite has occurred. All GATE Fellows who have made internationalization an “up front” component of their courses have received positive response from these efforts. *James Greenberg*

For those institutions that have students experience some or all of their student teaching in another country ... how do you reconcile the disconnect between the methodologies and strategies common in the United States and perhaps less practiced in other parts of the world? Also, how do you work to ensure the quality of the experience:

This is a huge question and I fear I cannot answer it in full here. I would like to acknowledge that this question hits at the heart of much of what we all are struggling with as we consider how to best design international experiences for pre-service teachers. The question of the quality of the experience is one that I am often asked. I think what you mean to address is the degree to which the student teacher is witnessing or practicing “quality” teaching within their overseas assignment, as defined from the perspective of our U.S. perspective. However, we might ask a different question, or more specifically, focus on the defining quality in a different way. Personally, for me, it is the quality of the guidance (pre, during, and post) that we provide our students’ that is fundamental to their growth, both in terms of their understanding of pedagogy and their intercultural development. I would argue that it is the very “disconnect between methodologies and strategies” that is at the heart of the power of these experiences and becomes the focus of the critical cultural reflection we hope to facilitate. International experiences provide an avenue to help pre-service teachers begin to uncover the ways culture influences teaching and learning within a society, including their own. Thus, the focus of reflections and learning within these experiences is to begin to unpack what is behind these disconnects, both for the host culture and, more importantly, in the ways our students interpret what they are seeing through their own cultural perspective. By learning to look at the host culture through an ethnographic lens, pre-service teachers turn that lens onto themselves and schooling within the United States. I speak more about this in an article I co-wrote with David Moss that is cited in the resources, and there are other articles that directly speak to this issue in the handout. *Helen Marx*

Can technology be used to begin the process of gaining faculty buy-in and consensus?

I think that it is vital for us to explore in more detail the ways that technology can facilitate many aspects of our work to internationalize, including faculty development. As I mention in my answer to another question, technology is increasingly providing us with ways to connect globally in this area. There are exciting elements to this both in terms of research and in terms of facilitating curriculum development. *Helen Marx*

To what extent have you integrated the internationalization process into the faculty tenure and promotion process?

That's a good and expected question. Certainly, the international reach of scholarship and the priority of global connections fit well. Tangible attempt by our college is to have a dedicated fund to support travel to international conferences to present papers/research and to support invited collaborative research. This feeds directly into stronger resume for APT. *James Greenberg*

Do you have more examples for providing incentives to faculty for internationalization other than travel abroad?

GATE Fellows project is our best example—\$2500 stipend, support for curriculum development, professional community of support, and support of our Office of International Initiatives. Travel fund is tangible, too. *James Greenberg*

What specific strategies have you found to be successful in bringing upper-level administrators into your vision for global education?

Luckily, as I tried to express in the webinar, they are there and in fact have helped support specific efforts from the beginning. However, there is so much literature and momentum out there for internationalization that more and more top-level administrators are supportive. In our case, the strategic plan and attitudes of our particular leaders have been major assets. *James Greenberg*

What are some opportunities for faculty development that don't cost a lot of money?

While I am a big believer in having “authentic” “on the ground” cross-cultural contact, there are certainly so many opportunities to learn and grow within an international community of scholars from right on our campuses. I also think this technology can play a large role in faculty development, and can be done for low cost. For instance, just last week there was an international conference held on global education (www.globaleducationconference.com) that I attended virtually. The speakers were leaders in the field of global education from across the country and around the world, and we all attended from the comfort of our own offices. *Helen Marx*

What financial resources have been developed to finance international internships?

Typical of financing study abroad in general, most teacher education study abroad programs (either short- or long-term) are financed by the students through the payment of fees/tuition. I know of several institutions that have sought grants to help offset the cost and one institution that is seeking to establish an alumni fund that would directly fund preservice teachers seeking to go overseas. I also believe that universities have yet to fully explore how preservice teachers and teacher education programs might better make use of existing exchange relationships with international universities, which can significantly reduce costs to students. Cindi Fries speaks directly of the need to be cognizant in our design of programs of the restriction students face in using any financial aid to help pay for programs. Thus, her international internship is a part of a required course and takes place during one of the semesters rather than during the summer.

Helen Marx

Could you kindly give us the specific reference/legislation for the U.S. Department of Education and Department of State fellowships opportunities or funding for global education?

Department of State, through the ECA branch, handles lots of Fulbright programs and teacher exchange programs. Their programs are usually brokered through NGOs. Ours was through AED, and IREX also handles some. So, they are not grants for global education per se, but competitions to host groups of visiting Fulbright teachers/leaders—a GREAT way to add major international dimensions to your college (as we are now doing in hosting the Distinguished Awards in Teaching Fellows—17 teachers from six countries for the entire semester).

USDE -- Title VI of the postsecondary education division. *James Greenberg*
