

Opening Session Summary: Advancing the Ideal of Internationalization

Scott Thomas, Lorna Jean Edmonds, Matt Hartley

Most Critical Challenges to Achieve Goals for Internationalization

- *Broad Engagement from Leadership:* Commitment from the president on down
- *Faculty Role:* Connecting with and engaging faculty intentionally, including through the promotion and tenure process. How to engage faculty beyond those who already have tenure.
- *Adhocracy and decentralization:* Things are happening but they are not necessarily intentionally tied together as a cohesive plan. How do you move beyond a superficial repackaging of “international” things and pull work together in a strategic direction?
- *Money Matters:* Internationalization when done right is a fairly horizontal activity but operates a fiscally vertical environment.

Prevailing Norms, Values, and Assumptions Hindering the Work

- *Different lenses:* There are competing goals at so many different institutional levels (senior leadership, deans, faculty, etc.) and with each player holding different priorities, it can be difficult to find mutual agreement.
- *Governmental Roles:* Norms set by both state and federal governments in the US and locations of collaboration can help or hinder this work.
- *Internationalization as a moving target:* Combination of lack of definition of internationalization and a desire to lift and boost the work of others on campus can also distract from the driving internationalization plan (trying to avoid “repackaging” while honoring work already happening).
- *The Domestic/International Divide:* Diversity and Inclusion in competition/discord with Internationalization – this work often exists in different silos, though much of this work is and should be closely aligned.

Promising Areas for Growth/Change

- *Shifting Perspectives:* Even with the best of intentions, we often focus too heavily on the challenges/obstacles and challenges. Important to also focus on the positives and the big and bold ideas. Allow enthusiasm, vision, and clarity to drive work.
- *Don't forget the low-hanging fruit:* While avoiding tinkering towards a bigger vision, must also not lose sight of small opportunities for success that can sometimes be obscured when looking at the daunting challenge of changing institutional culture through integration of broad plans.
- *Linguistic Pivots:* There are opportunities to shift some of the language in ways that become more inclusive to the bigger goals and reach of internationalization. Rather than focus on international, how might we consider a global campus.
- *A future without a focus on International:* Deep and meaningful embeddedness of international vision throughout institutional culture could someday perhaps remove the need for international specialists and instead help international become part of the norm.
- *Space and Place:* Dedicating funds to true “place” on campus can quickly shift the visibility and centrality of “international” work.