

# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH and REVIEW

**Journal of Phi Beta Delta  
Honor Society for International Scholars**

SPECIAL ISSUE

*Internationalizing the Curriculum for All Learners*



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## Journal Description

*International Research and Review* is the official journal of the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. It is a multidisciplinary journal whose primary objectives are to: (1) recognize, disseminate and share the scholarship of our members with the global academic community; (2) provide a forum for the advancement of academic inquiry and dialogue among all members and stakeholders; and (3) cultivate support for international education among campus leadership by working with university administrators to expand the support for international education among campus leaders.

IRR is a peer-reviewed electronic journal providing a forum for scholars and educators to engage in a multi-disciplinary exchange of ideas, address topics of mutual concern, and advocate for policies that enhance the international dimension of higher education. Articles should focus on studies and systematic analyses that employ qualitative, quantitative, a mixture of both methods, and theoretical methodologies from an international scope. Both pedagogical and andragogical perspectives in teaching and learning are welcome.

The Journal reaches out to an audience involved in matters touching all areas of international education, including theoretical, empirical, and normative concerns and concepts as well as practices. It includes stakeholders, practitioners, advocates, as well as faculty, independent researchers, staff, and administrators of programs and institutions engaged in the field. The editor welcomes manuscripts that address the following concerns:

*International studies and perspectives*  
*Review of current literature pertaining to international studies*  
*Initiatives and impacts in international education exchange*  
*International program development at American colleges and universities*  
*Internationalizing of curricula: policies, programs, practices, and impacts*  
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*International Research and Review* is the official journal of the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. It is a multidisciplinary journal that (1) welcomes the submission of manuscripts reflecting research representing *all areas of study* that promote the international and global dimensions of institutions programs (including both policy, practice, and debates) and individual experience of engaging in international education; (2) welcomes articles on current issues of the day regarding international education: the practice, curriculum, institutional issues, faculty and administration management, and cultural aspects and; (3) welcomes book reviews, and reviews or critiques of current literature.

The increasing interest in international opportunities and the promotion of scholarship in this shrinking world creates new challenges. The purpose of such a publication is to contribute and engage in the conversation related to the broad frames of international education, internationalization, and international scholars. It is hoped that the Phi Beta Delta annual conference will provide an environment where students, staff, faculty, and interested groups can highlight their scholarship in these areas. The conference also serves as a forum for acquiring new ideas, conceptualizations, and best practices, as well as discussion on these and other issues of international education.

Research articles may employ qualitative, quantitative, plural (mixed methods), and theoretical methodologies from an international scope. Both pedagogical and andragogical perspectives on the international experience of teaching, learning, and cross-cultural interchange are welcome. It is recommended that manuscripts be submitted with less than 10,000 words. As of the Fall 2020 issue, submitted articles must use the bibliographic and formatting standards found in the **APA 7th edition (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition)**.

Authors whose articles are accepted for publication are required to ensure that their data are fully accessible. Authors of quantitative empirical articles must make their data available for replication purposes. A statement of how that is done must appear in the first footnote of the article. Required material would include all data, specialized computer programs, program recodes, and an explanatory file describing what is included

and how to reproduce the published results. The IRR is published four times a year online by Phi Beta Delta, Honor Society of International Scholars.

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- **Name, institute affiliation, mailing address, and email address for all authors**
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- Body of paper
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- Conclusion
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**International Research and Review:  
Journal of Phi Beta Delta  
Honor Society for International Scholars**

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**International Research and Review**  
**Journal of Phi Beta Delta, Honor Society for International Scholars**  
Volume 11 Number 2 Spring/Summer 2022

**Nneka Nora Osakwe, Ph.D.**  
**Guest Editor**

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## **Editor-in-Chief's Remarks**

The *International Research and Review* (IRR) is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year of publication, following 12 years of its predecessor, the *International Review* which was published from 1990-2002. The difference between the two publications highlights the change in the dissemination of academic research from a purely print form to one that is widely shared online. Now, as most of the world is connected through the internet, research is vastly more available due to the times and places of manipulation. This change in publication mode allows for wider dissemination of knowledge.

The Spring/Summer 2022 issue of the IRR is important as it is the second special issue focused on internationalizing the curriculum in institutions of higher education. More importantly, this issue provides a focus on a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), Albany State University of Georgia (ASU), publishing its second volume of faculty articles. These articles are important for several reasons. First, (ASU) was the first institution to offer scholars in other HBCU's a faculty-led paradigm for internationalizing their curricula. Second, the ASU faculty wrote about their course designs and their experiences in implementing this curricular change. Third, ASU shows that higher education institutions can both follow and lead faculty in these internationalization efforts. Fourth, this issue supports and reflects evolving scholarship on the changes occurring and needed in implementing internationalization.

The last reason is highlighted by the co-editor for this issue. The article by Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe et al. reveals a design for internationalizing the curriculum for ALL learners. For the past forty years, the undertone of internationalization was that it served all students, while in reality, it was understood that the gold standard for internationalization focused on those who travel abroad for study. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the technical prohibitions to virtual education dissolving it has become clear to higher education institutions that internationalizing the curriculum should, must, apply to ALL Learners.

Thus, I commend this volume to you.

**Michael B. Smithee, Ed.D.**

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## **Guest Editor’s Remarks on Special Issue**

The authors of the articles in this special issue of the journal, *International Research and Review (IRR)* use a variety of methodologies to answer the question: “How best do we include international and intercultural learning in existing courses in the education of all learners at home campuses to make global learning accessible to all?” The contributors are some of the faculty members at Albany State University (ASU), Georgia, who engaged in a three-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Education Title VI, which has several objectives. One of these is to include international and intercultural competencies (global learning) in students’ overall learning outcomes.

My sincere appreciation goes to all those who assisted in advancing the ASU curriculum internationalization, and in making this publication possible. They include, among others, ASU administrators, led by President Marion Ross Fedrick and Provost Angela Peters, The ACE Review Team, led by Dr. McKenna Brown, The Editor of the *IRR*, Dr. Michael Smithee, and the twenty-nine (29) faculty members (Appendix A) from various disciplines who participated in the Course Internationalization Project, especially those who put in extra time to write the following articles featured in this special volume:

***Introduction to Internationalization for All Learners*** by Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe. This article discusses the intentional design of campus internationalization programs, which target all students’ global learning with examples from Albany State University (ASU), Georgia. ASU has established an institutional model for curriculum and co-curriculum internationalization. Some of the illustrations include faculty professional development and engagements, in faculty-led programs abroad, and course internationalization for all students’ global learning. Others are interdisciplinary curricular and co-curricular in-class and campus-wide programs and activities. The examples shared in the article could provide some insights to other institutions, especially the HBCUs and to researchers in the area.

***Internationalization for All Students: Global Learning at Home as a Strategic Process*** by Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe, Dr. Erica Decuir, & Dr. Michael Smithee review curriculum/course internationalization with a final focus on sharing a model for course internationalization at ASU. It discusses the features which guide faculty course internationalization: a preparation phase: including academic-self and global reflection with course and syllabus review, identifying global learning outcomes and objectives, reviewing content and sourcing material, developing aligned



activities/projects/ tasks for achieving target outcomes, and assessment of the course. The article would be useful to other faculty members and to other practitioners for professional development.

***Implementation of a Global Health Perspective in a Content Heavy Biochemistry Course*** by Dr. Louise Wrensford, answers the question: How do we integrate international learning into a content-heavy chemistry course (CHEM 3250) required of all students whose majors are biology, chemistry, and forensic science at the institution? Dr. Wrensford shares an interesting research-based approach, which motivated student engagement in learning the chemistry course content and applying the knowledge they gained in unraveling global health issues in various countries. The students also gained knowledge of the countries of their research as they compared various global health issues. This article is a great resource for those in the sciences and other disciplines.

***Internationalization of a Course in Human Development*** by Dr. Patrick Whitehead, establishes the inadequacy of both the Nature and Nurture theory of Human Development and propounds the need for internationalization. His course internationalization process followed a three-step procedure, which was repeated eight times in covering eight critical cultural topics, focusing on Indigenous Alaskans. With two clearly established supplementary learning objectives, Dr. Whitehead completed the implementation and assessment of the procedure, which he describes in detail. A simplified rubric guided the assessment of students' learning outcomes and the results. His discussion of challenges and recommendations will guide other faculty members who might want to replicate the process. The article is a great model that will immensely benefit professors in various disciplines.

In ***Conceptual Basis of Professional Nursing***, Dr. Andrea Dozier conveys her experience as she internationalized the course NURS 3630, which is required for all students in the RN-BSN program. She shares a step by step, learner-centered instruction process, which took place online. The process includes identifying four student-course learning outcomes, which guided the selection of contents, culturally relevant assignments/activities, and assessment. All were intentionally designed and aligned to meet the ultimate goal of developing students' cultural self-awareness, their awareness of others' cultures (especially those who speak different languages), and for the students to acquire the expected cultural competency required in health care professions. The students' feedback/responses shed light on the students' perception of the process. Professors in the health professions will find this article highly useful

The article *Internationalizing the Language Arts Curriculum: Process, Strategies, and Challenges* by Dr. Anthony Owusu-Ansah describes a unique research-based internationalization process of middle grades reading and English Language courses. The students started the research at the home campus and continued in Ghana, the study abroad location where the research investigation took place in the context of cultural awareness and appreciation, and was completed at ASU with students' research presentations. While the preliminary research in the USA before travel was a literature review, the research focus in Ghana was interviewing Ghanaian teachers and observing their instruction to assess their teaching strategies and challenges. Dr. Owusu-Ansah's article presents a unique model of internationalization that other faculty members can replicate.

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## **Introduction to Internationalization for All Learners**

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### **Abstract**

This article acknowledges the importance of faculty in implementing institutional strategies for internationalization at Home targeting all students. In particular, it emphasizes the unique need for many institutions, especially HBCUs, to develop internationalization strategies beyond study abroad since only a few students are able to engage in overseas study. It proposes multiple pathways to internationalization for all students' global learning, an approach that has evolved at Albany State University, Georgia, and recommends that institutions of higher education should intentionally explore various internationalization initiatives in curricular and co-curricular programs to ensure that all enrolled students have the opportunity to learn about the world's people and places. It argues that faculty making changes in their domestic courses to expand the global perspectives of their students is a critical path for institutional internationalization. Students should be able to simultaneously learn about the world while they learn core contents in their various majors. This article also buttresses the need for faculty to not only internationalize their courses but to also publish their implementation efforts, experiences, and outcomes because of the dearth of faculty publications in curriculum internationalization literature. It concludes that more faculty publications will increase models of course internationalization pedagogies, which will motivate more faculty members to engage in transformative pedagogy. Further, a ripple effect will increase the number of graduating students with enhanced global learning perspectives and skills.

*Keywords:* Curriculum/course internationalization, global learning outcomes, study abroad, COVID-19 and Internationalization, faculty internationalization, professional development, HBCUs and internationalization

The literature on the meaning and rationale for internationalization of the curriculum is vast, varied, and comprehensive. From the student's perspective, internationalization of the curriculum refers to the addition of the world dimension to education to ensure that graduating students are not just competent in their majors with high GPAs but are knowledgeable about people and places of the world. In the U.S., institutions of higher education are expected to graduate students with enhanced global awareness, life skills, and right attitudes so they can collaborate with people locally and internationally in their personal and professional lives. A former Secretary of Education in the United States, Arne Duncan, affirms this expectation when he said, "In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a quality education is an international Education" (Farmer, 2017, p. 1). A growing focus in higher education discourse has been on Internationalization at Home(IaH), which stresses the need to focus on all students when planning for global learning. This need emanates from the long attention that higher education in the U.S. has placed on internationalization abroad, including study abroad, which fosters students' intercultural and international competencies (global learning) as they study, work, volunteer, or conduct service learning abroad.

Studies in various countries, like the U.S., Australia, China, Zambia, etc., have shown that students who study abroad, even for a short period of time, with effective preparation and guided experiences, develop needed intercultural and soft skills, which many companies say are key to effective working (Jones, 2014 & Olson et al, 2006). After study abroad, students are more polite, tolerant, and readily adaptable to new environments. Their communication skills and self-confidence are enhanced and they are more independent. Employers appreciate these skills which are outcomes of study abroad; they need workers with an effective interpersonal, team working, and communication skills. They prefer individuals who have the ability to "interpret local concerns within a global context and to judge the impact of global issues on one's personal and professional lives" (Jones 7). The problem, however, is that only a small percentage of U.S. enrolled students experience this transformative learning experience before graduation. In the remainder of this article, I discuss intentional internationalization initiatives that target all learners

with illustrations from Albany State University, Georgia (ASU), a Historically Black University, founded in 1903.

### **Beyond Study Abroad**

Institutions of higher education are seeking alternative engagements beyond study abroad to ensure that all their students have the needed global knowledge, skills, and perspectives before graduation. Many Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) have always had fewer students who study abroad than other similarly sized institutions. The Institute of International Education's latest annual Open Doors report shows that of the 163,333 U.S. students who studied abroad in the 2019-2020 academic year, only 5.5 percent of the students were black (Open Doors, 2021 & The Black Percentage, 2021). Albany State University (ASU) is the largest Historically Black University in Georgia, with over 80% Black students. ASU Study Abroad data shows that the percentage of students who study abroad is usually less than one percent of the student population (Osakwe & Hankerson, 2021). ASU has taken a number of steps to address the low participation rate. To motivate faculty members to create more faculty-led programs to increase study abroad participation, ASU-Academic Affairs with Senate approval reduced the class-load enrollment number to six for faculty who travel with students and teach them abroad. So, ASU has benefited from its own faculty-led programs, the University System of Georgia (USG) study abroad programs, and external agency programs (like CIEE and EF), which have taken students to study abroad in over a dozen countries. To increase funding for study abroad, ASU-Student Affairs extends travel funds to students who opt to study abroad. The Office of International Education, with Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe as director, created the Gilman's Scholarship Writing Workshops in 2012. In collaboration with ASU Writing Center led by the Coordinator, Mr. Mark Hankerson, the workshops have provided an opportunity for over 65 students who have received Gilman's funds to study abroad in eleven countries: Belize, China, Costa Rica, France, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Japan, South Africa, Spain, and Trinidad & Tobago from 2012-2021. Despite these efforts, the participation rate has remained low. However, as I will discuss later, ASU has intentionally vested in faculty course

internationalization and other co-curricular international and intercultural programs to ensure that global learning is accessible to all students.

Study abroad has been relied upon by many institutions to provide students with opportunities to acquire an expanded view of other peoples and nations, what is now termed global learning. However, only about 10 percent of U.S. students are able to study abroad. With the health pandemic, the 347,099-high number of participants for the 2018-2019 academic year dropped 47% to 163,333 in the 2019-2020 school year. The study abroad participation rate and the potential for continued concerns about the health pandemic (COVID-19) may take some time to rebound. In addition, these issues forced higher education institutions to invest in virtual means of education. Now that virtual education is readily available, such technology can enable parallel means of 'study abroad' to meet institutional goals of global learning for all students.

While study abroad is still highly promoted at ASU, there has also been an ongoing intentional effort at the Provost's office to encourage faculty members to internationalize the home campus courses. Such efforts create more opportunities for all students to acquire global learning in-class and online. Global learning is a desired goal pursued in many institutions of higher education to ensure that learners acquire international and intercultural competencies that equip them for effective relationships in their personal and professional lives. It provides opportunities for students to learn the interconnectedness and oneness of the world and the need to extend themselves to accommodate others. As Herman Melville, author of *Moby-Dick* said, "We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men, and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects" (Klemp, 2007 p. 173). Again, the global health pandemic, COVID-19, is a good example.

Olson et al. (2006) define global learning as "the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students acquire through a variety of experiences that enable them to understand the world cultures and events; analyze global systems; appreciate cultural differences; and apply this knowledge and appreciation to their lives as citizens and workers" (ACE-2007, p. 9). Through global learning, students are better equipped for their future

careers and personal lives. Generally, graduates are valued based on their employability, which is determined by having acceptable skills, knowledge, and a global mindset, all of which are the merits of global learning (Tillman, 2015 & Olson et al 2006). For several decades, study abroad has been perceived as the major avenue of acquiring global learning and accompanying competencies, but that view is changing with the emergence of creative pedagogies and innovations by faculty members, co-curriculum staff partners, and international education specialists.

Internationalizing the curriculum goes beyond study abroad. It includes all learning experiences in which students gain international and intercultural competencies. These “experiences may be curricular or co-curricular (Leask, 2015), and the learning may happen in classrooms on campus, on study abroad programs, in local communities via service-learning programs, on-campus in formal settings, or by technology with students and communities in other countries” (Woodruff & Obrien, 2015, p.63). Those global learning experiences that engage all enrolled students, whether in in-person classes, online or on-campus through curricular and co-curricular activities, like evening Cultural Exchange club activities and local internships, are all identified as components of Internationalization at Home (IaH). It is varied and innovative in approach, and the goal is to bridge the global learning gap for the non-mobile majority of students who are not able to study abroad. Beelen and Jones define it as “the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” (2015, p.76).

In response to the lockdowns and learn-from-home policies of COVID-19, Internationalization at Home has been shown to be possible online, meaning that it can also engage students who are not within the domestic learning environment. When campuses shut down, face-to-face classes and various study abroad programs were canceled, formal course instruction was moved online, and various institutions of higher learning transformed their study abroad programs into virtual study abroad and study away programs, which created opportunities for many more students to engage in global learning. Beelen and Leask (2011, p. 5) describe IaH



as a set of instruments and activities “at home” that aim to develop international and intercultural competencies in all students. It is inclusive in providing for all students’ global learning, and faculty members are instrumental in developing creative pedagogies and initiatives in their various disciplines to actualize global learning outcomes in the context of course internationalization.

The faculty is at the core of implementing IaH through the curricula and co-curricular activities in collaboration with staff members. Course internationalization is what faculty members do to ensure that their students acquire international and/or intercultural competencies in the context of learning course content. It involves more than just the professor’s knowledge of international and intercultural perspectives; it requires a thorough reflection on one’s own cultural values, worldview, and biases to help one become aware of the assumptions the individual holds about others. It also requires creativity, and the use of innovative pedagogies to engage students in well-thought-out, learner-centered activities, and projects that will bring about targeted global learning outcomes. ASU has prioritized course internationalization for all students since 2003. Its initial effort was with a Title III grant project implemented from 2003 to 2007, which engaged forty-two faculty members in ten departments in various professional development exercises to internationalize their courses (Osakwe, et al 2007). In three years, over fifty courses were either revised or newly developed with international and/or intercultural perspectives (Perkins, 2007 & Adewuyi, 2007). The pedagogical experiences of eleven faculty members who participated in the project are published in *Internationalizing the Curriculum Across Disciplines: A Model from Albany State University* (Osakwe et al., 2007). From 2007 to 2015, ASU went through financial struggles, which also affected support for curriculum internationalization. However, that changed in 2016.

With strong administrative support and funding from ASU-Title III and the U.S. Department of Education-Title VI, ASU furthered its curriculum internationalization initiative, engaging numerous faculty members in various disciplines in the process. In 2016, the Office of International Education and The Office of Academic Affairs created

ASU's Annual Symposium on Internationalizing the Curriculum, a professional development forum that serves two purposes: a place for faculty who plan to internationalize their courses to collaborate and a forum for faculty members who have already done so to share their implementation experiences and outcomes. After the symposium, some of those who shared their outcomes further developed their presentations into articles for publication. This process culminated in ASU's second publication in the Spring of 2017, in the journal *International Research and Review* Journal of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars (Osakwe, 2017a).

Since 2017, the Office of Academic Affairs at ASU has rekindled its priorities toward the internationalization of courses with the collaboration of faculty members, chairs, deans, and directors, working closely with the Office of International Education and the Center for Faculty Excellence. This effort is yielding the third publication by ASU on the subject of internationalizing courses. It will also be a second special issue of the journal, *International Research and Review*, and is entitled Internationalizing the Curriculum for All Learners. This issue will share yet another set of articles from faculty members, reporting some of the outcomes and experiences from the internationalization of their courses. Altogether, 29 faculty members in 15 departments participated in the project (See Appendix A), which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education-Title VI.<sup>1</sup> Many of the faculty members adopted the model shared at ASU's professional development workshops (Osakwe, 2017b). They implemented their course internationalization through various pedagogies and learning modes (face-to-face, online, hybrid, etc.) for at least two semesters and presented their experiences at various ASU symposia. The goal of sharing their outcomes was to motivate other faculty members to join the initiative and also to add to the conversation about putting internationalization into action by answering several questions on how best to include international and intercultural learning in existing courses throughout the curriculum.

Some of the competency skills expected of college graduates include the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively in intercultural work teams, the ability to self-regulate emotions, digital

literacies, and second language proficiency. Today's learning institutions are expected to graduate students with globally minded attitudes who are able to use empathy in "seeing others as they see themselves given their conditions, values, and so forth" (Hanvey in Olson et al, p.90). Graduates are expected to have both a tolerance for ambiguity and respect for others as they prepare to join the workforce, as well as a reflective attitude, which is the ability to think about the impact of the decisions, choices, and behavior of self and others (Fantini, 1997). These expectations extend to graduating students who are knowledgeable about world geography and global conditions, issues, and citizens, which means understanding their own political systems, players, and events as well as international systems, leaders, and events (Carpini and Keeter, 1989). To actualize these global learning competencies, institutions of higher learning must be intentional in including global learning outcomes in curriculum and co-curriculum when planning for all students' academic success.

### **ASU Leadership Support and ACE Internationalization LAB Project Outcomes**

Any success at institutionalizing curriculum internationalization comes with strong administrative support. Both the American Council on Education (ACE) and the NAFSA (Association of International Educators) have steadily identified institutional leadership as a primary factor in the comprehensive internationalization of any institution. Annually, NAFSA invites universities and colleges to apply for the Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization, which requires demonstrable evidence of genuine administrative or board-level support for internationalization as one of the assessment criteria for eligibility. The Institute of International Education (IIE) has a similar award-The Heiskell Award.

In the past two decades, ASU's Presidents and Provosts have championed ASU campus internationalization, and this administrative support has continued to date, with President Marion Ross Fedrick and Provost Angela Peters (Osakwe, 2021a). In 2018, President Fedrick accepted an invitation from the American Council on Education (ACE) for ASU to become one of the members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Cohort of the ACE

Internationalization Laboratory (LAB). The LAB is an institutional learning community that provides customized two to three-year guidance to help cohort universities and colleges achieve their set internationalization goals (ACE, 2022).

The process involves a thorough review/re-evaluation of campus internationalization status, within the ACE LAB two to three-year period, to develop a Comprehensive Internationalization Strategic Plan (CISP) or to modify an existing one to align with the institution's strategic plan, while attaining globally oriented goals and international connectivity. Engaging in the ACE-LAB initiative provided ASU the opportunity to work together with ten other institutions of higher education<sup>2</sup> to develop a shared framework and vocabulary for internationalization, as the university reviewed its campus status and plan for qualitative and excellent internationalization engagements that would align closely with ASU's new Strategic Plan. By utilizing a 22-item survey, which was circulated through the major campus communication and external social media, the ASU survey team collected data on the campus's internationalization status. The ACE Internationalization LAB surveys and several other LAB activities informed ASU's students, faculty, and staff about the need for curriculum and co-curriculum internationalization for global learning. The high survey-response rate from faculty (105 of 219 plus) and especially students (589 of 7674) to the campus internationalization survey was indicative of a strong interest in global learning engagements. There was strong acknowledgment in the survey about the need for both international student and international faculty presence on campus and their importance for all students' global learning. Some revealing results from the campus survey are as follows:

1. Overall, 83% of student-respondents (589) indicated that they thought global learning (international and intercultural learning) should be a part of the school curriculum and co-curriculum.
2. Students agreed or strongly agreed with the importance of having international students on campus (78% of 589).

3. Over half (52%, n=306) of the students surveyed indicated that they thought taking a study abroad course was important or extremely important to their academic and career success.
4. Well over half (68%, n=396) of student-respondents indicated that they had taken a course at ASU that integrated international and intercultural perspectives.
5. ASU faculty (64% of 105 respondents) indicated that they had taught at least one course on a regular basis that included an international/intercultural component in student learning goals, activities/projects, teaching methodology, and assessment.
6. ASU faculty (71% of 105 respondents) would like to participate in internationalizing their courses and other internationalization related research, professional development, service-learning projects, etc.
7. ASU has faculty with international backgrounds, spanning four other continents outside the U.S.: Asia (seven countries: Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Nepal, and Sri Lanka); Africa (five countries: Nigeria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ghana, South Africa; South America (one country: Brazil) and Europe: (one country: Sweden).
8. ASU's staff (97% of 29) respondents are aware of international students on campus and 90% (27) are aware of international opportunities on campus.  
(Osakwe, 2021b).

After reviewing and observing the progress that Albany State University has made during its ACE LAB process, the campus review team leader, Dr. McKenna Brown, declares in his report: "ASU is clearly a leader among its peers in internationalizing the curriculum, one of the most complex, protracted and challenging aspects of the ACE model" (2021, p. 1).

The initial statistics above from the LAB survey show students' readiness for global learning. They also show that many of the school's faculty members (the core drivers of global learning) are already engaged in internationalization or are willing to join the initiative. And the lead

team of administrative cabinet members—ASU’s provost, vice-presidents, deans of colleges, chairs of departments, directors, coordinators, unit-heads, and faculty—have created a formidable force for curriculum and co-curriculum internationalization through various actions and initiatives, which positively impacts global learning outcomes. Some of these cabinet members, administrators, and initiatives include:

- Dr. Angela Peters, the Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, strongly supports curriculum internationalization and has created new awards in recognition of faculty members who have excelled in globalization, innovation, research, and curriculum development.
- Dr Peters has also created an Internationalization Task Force (ITF), which Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe presently leads as Provost’s Special Assistant for Internationalization and Global Engagement. The Task Force has representation from all colleges and departments, and it is assisting in implementing the new Comprehensive Internationalization Strategic Plan (CISP) at ASU, prioritizing goals that align with ASU’s new Strategic Plan and some ACE Review recommendations. It is also overseeing the internationalization of selected general education courses, including reviewing and approving created global learning outcomes for these courses.
- Dr. Sarah Brinson, ASU’s dean of Darton College of Health Professions, is working with chairs, directors, and coordinators in her college to internationalize at least one required course in each of the college programs to ensure that all students, including those transferring in in their second year, are able to engage in global learning before graduation. This College, the largest in ASU, has graduate, undergraduate, and associate programs that attract students from various states in the U.S. and around the world.
- The Center for Faculty Excellence, in collaboration with the Office of International Education, college deans, chairs, and the Senate, approved the inclusion of course internationalization as an evaluation indicator in the faculty annual evaluation and in consideration for promotion and tenure. This provides additional motivation for more faculty members to engage in course internationalization

- In 2017 Academic Affairs with the Office of International Education and Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) initiated a Free Passport Initiative, issuing 100 free passports annually for students to travel abroad. The project is still in place, financed through international programs' students' activities funds, and has encouraged many students to acquire the passports needed to study abroad.

- The Office of International Education is advancing the ASU Virtual Study Abroad Program, which was created in 2020 due to COVID-19 when all study abroad programs were canceled. Dr. Annalease Gibson (Social Work), Dr. Erica Decuir (Education), and Dr. John Williams (Biology) led the first interdisciplinary virtual study abroad programs at ASU, re-created from an intended initial Jamaica study abroad program that was canceled due to COVID-19. The new programs engaged a comparably higher number of students than those who participated in traditional study abroad programs. The positive experience is informing the creation of similar virtual programs going forward.

- ASU Student Affairs, headed by Vice-President Dr. Terry Lindsey and the Residence Hall Director, Mr. Antonio Leroy, collaborates with the Office of International Education Director Dr. Annalease Gibson in creating co-curriculum activities that bring ASU's international students and domestic students together in innovative global learning engagements.

- For several years, international students have provided presentations about their countries in various core classes as part of their service to ASU and are presented with certificates and stipends for sharing their countries and cultures with the rest of the students. They use a presentation template developed by the Office of International Education (OIE) to share their global experience with the rest of the students. Faculty members who teach the courses that include these presentations include quiz items covering the global and cultural information shared by international students. From students' anecdotes, there is also evidence of global learning in students' participation in these presentations.

- Similarly, students who study abroad write and publish articles of their global learning experiences in *ASU Global Issues: A Journal of Study Abroad Experiences and More*. The OIE works with faculty study abroad coordinators to provide guidelines for students'

articles which are also part of their study abroad assessments for global learning. The Journal is used by some faculty members in classes to enhance students' global learning. It also serves for study abroad publicity and recruitment.

- Another global learning program is the International Education Week (IEW) activities, which include a parade of international countries' flags, instruction in various cultural dances, and an international dorm competition, featuring an international food festival with meals from various continents. This program has been implemented at ASU for over two decades. Both domestic and international students collaborate and practice together as they prepare for the festivities for several weeks, and these are rich interactive global learning engagements. Although a number of international education specialists explain the difficulty of establishing data-based evidence of the acquisition of global learning in co-curriculum activities, there is no doubt that students' international and intercultural learning is positively impacted through these activities and programs. Apart from global learning engagements, these activities help with the retention of a large number of international students who feel accepted through their active participation in school programs. Numerous domestic students, who are mostly from Southwest Georgia, for the first time see, speak to and work together with students from different countries. The impact the international students make on their domestic peers and vice versa has lasting culminating positive effects on the students' future careers and personal lives.

- Annually, ASU students also participate in the Southeast Model African Union (SEMAU) Conference, which is a curriculum internationalization model in which students simulate the African Union, the regional organization of African States, by serving as delegate members of different African countries (Osakwe, 2021). The delegate members serve on various committees: Democracy, Governance, and Human Rights, Economic Matters, Social Matters, Pan-Africanism and Continental Unity, Peace and Security, and Assembly of Heads of State and Governments. They develop position papers on the issues and actions confronting the African Union (A.U.), and they also model crisis situations similar to the typical cases that confront the A.U.



- ASU has dedicated SEMAU advisers, such as Dr. Kwame Dankwa, who have taught students about their selected countries of study in more detail as well as teaching SEMAU semantics and protocols. Students who participate in this annual event go through a semester-long lesson on the African country assigned to ASU. When students return from this annual conference, they also share their experiences with other students through presentations in classes and at the International Education Week (IEW).

Undoubtedly, Albany State University (ASU) has made significant strides in its Internationalization at Home (IaH) initiative through multiple strategic pathways that increasingly target all enrolled students through the formal curriculum and co-curricular programs. As you read articles in this volume, you will find examples of how faculty engage global learning in their discipline. For example, utilizing a STEM subject like Chemistry to provide an avenue for learning about global health issues in different countries of the world. You will also read examples of research-based course internationalization in Psychology and the inclusion of intercultural competence in a Nursing course. Another example is a hybrid course that starts at the home campus, then continues abroad with students engaged in research, and concludes on the home campus with students' presentations to a campus audience and a national conference audience. An article on Internationalizing the Language Arts illustrates this approach. The ultimate aim of this volume of articles, including this article, is to show how study abroad can be carried on with other internationalization at Home programs and activities, especially course internationalization, to reach more students. With Faculty Engagement in course internationalization, ASU has engaged more students in global learning than before its strategic efforts. (See Appendix A).

As I conclude this introduction, it is critical to stress the importance of faculty publication in course internationalization and other Internationalization at Home initiatives. It creates models of practice and encourages more faculty members globally to engage in internationalization initiatives. In doing so, a ripple effect is created leading to more students expanding their global perspectives before

graduation. I also conclude that increased faculty publication of their course internationalization experiences will bridge the existing dearth of faculty publications in curriculum internationalization literature, a point reiterated by Michael Smithee in his recent book chapter on faculty curriculum internationalization at HBCUs (2022). This piece is a response to the call to put into practice “internationalization at the teaching-learning interface, (where) many academics say they are exasperated by what they see as a hollow shell behind the rhetoric” (Green & Whitsed, 2015, p.4). Green and Whitsed also observe, “Little attention has been given to what these concepts (internationalization and the like) mean in practice, how they can be conceived, implemented and assessed within specific disciplines, and across degree programmes” (p. 4). The frustration expressed in this quotation could be addressed by more faculty members publishing their internationalization processes, no matter how incomplete they are. The need for these efforts cannot be emphasized too strongly as many learning institutions aim for all students to acquire the global knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes needed for living their personal and professional lives in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century world that is now intricately connected.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>The ASU Course Internationalization Project was funded by the U.S. Department of Education-Title VI grant under the Undergraduate International Studies Foreign Language (UISFL) Project from 2018 to 2021. One of the project goals is to internationalize a number of select courses annually at ASU.

<sup>2</sup>ASU’s Cohort 16 ACE team members included Auburn University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Franklin and Marshall College, George Mason University, Holy Family University, Monmouth College, The College of Brockport (SUNY), University of California Santa Cruz, University of Maryland Baltimore, and University of Maryland Baltimore County. To date, over 150 universities have participated in the Laboratory’s 18 cohorts.

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## Appendix A

### Curriculum Internationalization Faculty Fellows For Transformative Global Learning 2021-2022

Name of Faculty	Department	Internationalized Course(s)
Dr. Elizabeth Kuipers	Arts and Humanities	<b>ENGL 1101</b> -English Composition I
Dr. John Williams, Jr.	Natural Sciences	<b>BIOL 3901</b> -Pathophysiology: Nutrition and The African Diaspora ( <b>Virtual Study Abroad</b> )
Dr. Erica DeCuir	School of Education	<b>EDUC 3402</b> -Educator Preparation Practicum II ( <b>Virtual Study Abroad</b> ) <b>EDUC 3378</b> - Creative/Effective Teaching Performance-Based ( <b>Virtual Study Abroad</b> )
Dr. Annalease Gibson	Social Work	<b>SOWK 3385</b> - Social Work with Children ( <b>Virtual Study Abroad</b> ) <b>SOWK</b> - Special Topics in Social Work ( <b>Virtual Study Abroad</b> )
Dr. Anthony Owusu-Ansah	School of Education	<b>EDUC 2110</b> -Investigating Critical and Contemporary Issues in Education
Dr. Matthew Stanley	History	<b>HIST 1112</b> -Survey of World History II
Prof. Ishante Hunter	Political Science	<b>POLS 1105</b> -Current World Problems (2)
Dr. Ronald Leonhardt	Political Science	<b>HIST 1112</b> -Survey of World History <b>HIST 2112</b> -Survey of American History
Dr. Patrick Whitehead	Psychology	<b>PSYC 2103</b> -Human Growth and Development

### **Curriculum Internationalization Faculty Fellows for Transformative Learning 2020-2021**

Dr. Erica DeCuir	Teacher Education	<b>MGED 3315</b>
Prof. Aaron Johnson	Business Administration	<b>ECON 2105</b>
Dr. Chinenye Ofodile	Mathematics and Computer Science	<b>MATH 2212</b>
Dr. Devona Mallory	English, Modern Languages, and Mass Communication	<b>ENGL 3824</b>
Prof. Shani Clark	English, Modern Languages, and Mass Communication	<b>COMM 4140</b>
Dr. Andrea Dozier	Nursing	<b>NURS 3630</b>
Prof. Lisa Jenkins	Nursing	<b>NURS 1311: Adult Health II Nursing</b>
Dr. Uzoma Okafor	Chemistry and Forensic Science	<b>FOSC 2100</b>
Dr. Uzoma Okafor	Chemistry and Forensic Science	<b>FOSC 2100</b>
Prof. Anta'Sha Jones	Biological Sciences	<b>BIO 2412</b> <b>BIO 2412</b>

### **Curriculum Internationalization Faculty Fellows For Transformative Global Learning (2019-2020)**

Dr. Annalease Gibson	Social Work	SOWK 2310
Dr. Chinenye Ofodile	Mathematics and Computer Science	MATH 2212
Prof. Shani T. Clark	English, Modern Languages, and Mass Communication	COMM1110 COMM 1000
Dr. Patrick Whitehead	Sociology and Psychology	PSYC 2103
Dr. Anthony Owusu-Ansah	Teacher Education	MGED 4439 MGED 4423 (Study Abroad) MGED 5520
Dr. Ashok Jain	Biological Sciences	BIOL 4701
Dr. Shavecca Snead	Visual and Performing Arts	ART 1100



Dr. Mimi Noda	Visual and Performing Arts	MUSC 1100
Dr. Kathaleena Edward Monds	Accounting, Management Information Systems, and Marketing	MIST 4220
Prof. Joy S. Handelman	English, Modern Languages, and Mass Communication	ENGL 1102: Composition II
Dr. Zachariah Oommen	Chemistry and Forensic Science	FOSC 4050 CHEM 50643
Dr. Louise Wrensford	Chemistry and Forensic Science	CHEM 3250
Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe	English, Modern Languages, and Mass Communication	ENGL 3204: Rhetoric & Advanced Writing and ENGL 1101: Composition I

### **Grand Total Impacted**

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Departments</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Students</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1,488</b>

### **About the Author**

**Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe** is a professor of English and the Provost's Special Assistant for Internationalization and Global Engagement at Albany State University (ASU), Georgia. She was the Director of International Education at ASU for over ten years. As the director, she managed the operation of 57 fulltime faculty members who led study abroad programs to over a dozen countries and internationalized courses at home. She initiated, managed, and expanded international activities across campus, and led the first ASU study abroad programs to Peru, China, and Ghana. Under her leadership, ASU Title III has been awarded \$602,713.73 to increase study abroad participation, international partnerships, international students' retention, and to institutionalize internationalization of the campus. Dr. Osakwe was the Principal Investigator (PI) for the U.S. Department of Education Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) Title VI Grant and led a multi-year strategic planning process for Comprehensive Internationalization of ASU with the American Council on Education (ACE). Further, she is a Core trainer for the National Association of International Educators (NAFSA) and served as a member of the Internationalization Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum (ITLC), a subcommittee of the Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship Knowledge Committee (TLS KC) at NAFSA. Dr. Osakwe has published several articles, and

book chapters, and is an editor/co-editor of books and journals. She serves as a consultant in international education, curriculum internationalization, communication skills, and faculty/teacher education professional development, an area of her consultancy with UNICEF in Serra Leone and Nigeria. She is named a University System of Georgia(USG) Leadership Fellow and is a Fellow of Fulbright, American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the British Council. She is also the recipient of the International Impact Award by Georgia and Haitian Chamber of Commerce Initiative (GAHCCI) with B.E.L. Initiative, Atlanta-Georgia.



## **Internationalization for All Learners: Global Learning at Home as a Strategic Process**

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### **Abstract**

Internationalizing the curriculum is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century educational phenomenon, and it can be defined from various perspectives: international, national, institutional, departmental, and individual, from the points of view of faculty members. Whichever perspective one takes, it is a response to globalization, which is the combined impact of all kinds of political, economic, educational, health, environmental, and social interactions of the world's citizens. Today's institutions of higher education are at the forefront of internationalization, finding it their responsibility to equip all graduates with global knowledge, skills, right attitudes for living their personal and professional lives. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions are evaluating their approach to internationalization. With the expansion in virtual modes of learning and others, institutions are reflecting on their responsibility to engage all students in global learning. An idea that is gaining presence is that students should graduate with global knowledge, skills, and the expected attitudes to effectively live their personal and professional lives.

International education specialists point to faculty as being at the center of all students' global learning and argue that more attention should be focused on how faculty members can incorporate international and intercultural learning into their existing curricula. Faculty frequently turn to published works by other faculty to guide them when developing and adapting curricula, but research reveals a dearth of faculty publications on actual course-internationalization processes and implementation which this piece hopes to begin to address. Bridging an existing gap, this article describes a tried process that guides faculty members at Georgia's Albany State University in achieving global learning outcomes for all students in various disciplines. This strategic process has guided faculty

internationalization of courses in face-to-face, hybrid, and online learning environments and can be replicated in other learning institutions.

*Keywords:* internationalization, global learning, faculty roles, curriculum change, learning environment, strategic process, assessment

### **Literature Review**

Current influential scholars (de Wit, H., & Jones, E., 2022; Beelen J. & Jones, E., 2015; Bista, K. & Pinder, A., 2022; Landorf, H., Doscher, S. & Hardrick, J., 2018) and others argue, at the front end of the instructional process, for a broader conceptualization of internationalization and related definitions. The international education literature shows changes in higher education from an emphasis on the general encouragement of students to travel abroad for some segment of their learning to bringing the world to their courses in the form of internationalizing the curriculum/courses at home.

The literature shows that internationalization as an instructional ideal has evolved over the past forty-five years. One can chart this evolution through the changes in the definition of internationalization, from being a series of courses on foreign topics (Harari, 1972; Klasik, 1992) to a process (Knight, 2003); to defining internationalization as an intentional process (de Wit, et al, 2015); to Internationalizing the Curriculum (IoC) as a method to expand internationalization's impact within higher education institutions and among learners (Leask, 2009); to using virtual education to cope with a pandemic beginning in 2019, and thus, pave the way for the teaching of an internationalized curriculum for all learners; a process known as internationalization at home (IaH) (Beelen and Jones, 2015), and at this point, beginning to emphasize ways to plan and expand intercultural learning, whether it be face-to-face or virtual (Ogden and Hulse, 2021; de Wit and Jones, 2022) for the purpose of achieving global learning outcomes. This last step in the evolution of internationalization, still in process, provides a sense of where internationalization is headed.

Beelen (2019) provides an analysis of obstacles and enablers for faculty to engage in internationalizing the curriculum. Beelen's publication provides insight and guidance into planning the second, more

pragmatic component in the instructional process, the implementation stage of instruction. The implementation stage of internationalization is a process that focuses on the application of assorted designs, methods, and programs for internationalizing the institution and the curriculum (Creatly, 2020). Although one pragmatic design is the Internationalization Laboratory (ACE, 2022), created by the American Council on Education (ACE), an organization whose mission statement includes a promise to “provide assistance to leadership teams as they engage in a comprehensive review of internationalization efforts on campus” (ACE, 2022). Other institutions have published their engagement in implementation. For example, Institutional programs at the University of Minnesota (2020), and Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI, 2020), exemplify institutional in-person workshops and activities in addition to web-based content for self-instruction, resources for academic disciplines, and conceptual underpinnings, as exemplified by Sanderson (2008) and Leask (2009), which included the intercultural aspect of curriculum internationalization. These examples highlight three choices exemplified by Bond (2003).

The three choices are (1) *add-on*, a way of tweaking course assignments, readings, and guest lectures that do not add a burden to the faculty or student workload nor change the course content or pedagogy; (2) *curricular infusion*, a more significant change, in that it requires changing elements of the course design, such as specifying new course goals, learner behaviors and attitudes, and new materials to achieve a diversity of recitation and discussion; and (3) *transformation*, in which the focus goes beyond the content of the course to the utilization of that content, to provide the learner with a new perspective on the self and other cultures, world views, and environments (social, political, educational).

The third component of the instructional process is the backend. This part of the process encompasses evaluating, assessing, and disseminating the results of implementation. Recent literature shows that relatively little attention is given to this component (Smithee, 2022; Osakwe, 2017a). The ideal form of dissemination of assessment and evaluation will share results, setbacks, and successes in the hopes of convincing other institutions, faculty, and administrators of the value of introducing methods and content that enhance academic disciplines, and

by extension, provide the institution with learners who have gained international and global competencies (Smithee, 2022).

Faculty of all universities, HBCUs and non-HBCUs alike, remain a key component of convincing other faculty to engage in this process, Faculty publication of their experiences with IoC and with IaH is informative and critical to the advancement of curricular change in the institution and the academic disciplines. The literature cited below exemplifies faculty descriptions of their (1) approach to IoC, (2) reflections on the process, and (3) student learner perspectives. These publications take the form of websites (the University of Minnesota and IUPUI have the most detailed sites), books, such as Williams and Lee (2015), and Green and Whitsed (2015), and journal publications, exemplified by Niehaus and Williams (2016), Osakwe (2017a), and Hartzell (2019). More recently, a research series of books and journal articles largely focusing on frontend and implementation stage issues has been published by the Star Research Network from 2020 through 2022. For HBCUs, Osakwe's (2017b) piece published in the journal *International Research and Review* is believed to be the first HBCU faculty-driven resource citing faculty articles specifically laying out the instructional process for their IoC, in addition to their reflections on that process. An understanding of faculty engagement in IoC is found in the publication of the Star Scholars Network's recent volume: *Reimagining Internationalization and International Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (Bista, K., & Pinder, A., 2022).

An emerging theme within the internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) has become identifying and clarifying the intercultural aspects of the discipline or course (Ogden and Hulse, 2021; de Wit and Jones, 2022), and ensuring that all learners (those traveling abroad or not) have access to learning environments termed internationalization at home (IaH), in which international and intercultural issues are an integral part of the course and curriculum (Beelen, 2019; Beelen and Jones, 2015; Leask, 2009).

Another element in the backend of the internationalization process is the assessment and evaluation of the global learning outcomes. The research of Jones and Killick (2013), and Ogden (2010) point to the importance of such assessments. Their guidance led to recent surveys of

employers (Buffett, 2022; Gray, 2021) to reveal that while graduates may have the technical skills needed in given job positions, they often lack soft skills for effectively working with others. Some of these skills include teamwork, collaboration, negotiation and mediation, interpersonal skills, flexibility, and good communication (Beelen, 2019). Twenty-first century graduates should also be able to judge the impact of global issues on their personal and professional lives, as well as interact in a multicultural environment (Childress, 2006). These attributes are the benefits of global learning.

Research and activities highlighted thus far have paved the way for institutional action. This article shows the strategic process resulting in faculty publication as evidence of the achievement of an HBCU in internationalizing its campus.

### **Strategic Process for Course Internationalization at the Home Campus, Including an Online Learning Environment**

Internationalization of a course refers to all that faculty members do to simultaneously develop students' global (international and intercultural) skills, knowledge, and attitudes of the mind while they are learning the major or minor course contents. This process involves faculty members' personal development and reviewing of courses to creatively include international and/or intercultural perspectives into courses. In some cases, there might not be any need for an additional component; it might just be a faculty re-examining existing course descriptions and intentionally refocusing to give more attention to some neglected global aspects. Essentially, what is required is open-mindedness, flexibility, and creativity in adopting an appropriate methodology.

### **Internationalization of the Academic self**

The first intentional step in the process is for faculty to internationalize their personal and professional selves, and this has been described as the "Internationalization of the academic self" (Sanderson, 2008). This process requires reflecting on and assessing one's cultural and global perspectives, taking stock of one's beliefs, seeking out opportunities that exist in the course for learning about people and places of the world, and engaging in both professional and personal development



to bridge any existing gap one might have in knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective engagement of students in global learning. Internationalization of the academic self also involves re-assessing the way one thinks and understanding one's own values, customs, and behavior, in order to be ready to guide students through the transformative activities that will lead to global learning (Agnew & Kahn, 2014). This self-reflection stage is critical because faculty members must see the value of global learning for both themselves and their students before any formal plan can succeed at internationalizing their courses.

### **Activities and Engagements for Internationalizing the Academic-Self *Faculty Engagement***

What activities can faculty members create and implement? Faculty members can engage in a number of activities and programs to expand their international and intercultural (global) competencies, which is the goal of the internationalization of the academic self. The following are suggestions:

- 1) Show interest in people from different towns, states, and countries on one's campus. For example, find time to interact with people one has not met before, especially international faculty members or students, to learn who they are, their culture, and different aspects of where they come from: their towns, states, and countries.
- 2) Explore local stores owned by international people, dining out in unique and international restaurants in the local environment. These are great places to meet and engage with people from other cultures who might end up as great resource persons in the classroom.
- 3) Engage in virtual and live tours of countries, museums, and historic sites. Rick Steve's free recorded videos of travels and tours of various countries in Europe are a good example. Richard John Steves, Jr., Rick Steve for short, is an acclaimed American travel writer who is an authority on European Travel and Tours for decades and has video documentaries of tours and travels to many countries in Europe. His website <https://www.ricksteves.com/> also has an App called Rick Steve's audio, which could be listened to in one's leisure time.

- 4) Go on international cruises: <https://www.travelandleisure.com/cruises>
- 5) Engage in the U.S. Department of Education Fulbright Scholar Programs, which are fully funded and now have both long and short-term programs of all variations: research, teaching, cultural tours, etc. <https://fulbrightscholars.org/>
- 6) Engage in a Road Scholar tour to any country, [www.roadscholar.org](http://www.roadscholar.org)
- 7) Design and/or engage in virtual programs and then invite students to participate in similar programs.
- 8) Watch and listen to global documentaries and TED Talks.
- 9) Research and read beyond a specific field of specialization, and learn about target continents, countries, and cultures to expand perspectives. Irrespective of subject specialization, faculty members should be aware of the existence and functions of global organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and its affiliate agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, etc.), which were formed after the World Wars. It is important to be aware of global issues that impact the world, such as Global Health, Climate Change, and Human Rights, as well as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which provide a blueprint for global progress ([sdgs.un.org](http://sdgs.un.org)). Knowledge of the world and its issues impacts the quality of course internationalization the faculty can offer. The faculty can then use creative and innovative approaches to utilize information and data from these sources to expand their own knowledge and skills and those of their students as well.
- 10) Attend international local conferences in one's discipline and across disciplines
- 11) Intentionally seek and relate with international colleagues in one's disciplines and collaborate with them in projects and research
- 12) Engage in interdisciplinary projects and research
- 13) Intentionally seek professional development opportunities in diversified pedagogy, research, or teaching abroad.
- 14) Explore such opportunities for faculty professional development as
  - a) College Consortium of International Studies (CCIS), which sponsors professional seminars for faculty and administrators, although institutional membership is required.

- b) Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), which provides one-two intensive seminars overseas offering faculty members the opportunity to update their world view on various global and cultural issues.

Academic-self internationalization is a continuous process. While the faculty members look for ways to internationalize themselves, the administration has a huge role to play in the process too. Given the central role of faculty members in curriculum internationalization and students' global learning, a key campus internationalization strategy is that "institutions should commit to engaging faculty in expanding their international work and building their interest and capacity" (Green and Olson, 2008 p. 69). Faculty members should always remember this and proactively seek out internationalization opportunities, but they should also be able to rely on their administration for funding, material, and moral support.

### ***Effective Planning***

Effective planning of course internationalization involves revising the existing syllabus or developing a new one to ensure that international and/or intercultural (global) dimensions are specified in five major areas: a) learning outcomes and objectives, b) contents, c) learning activities/projects and methodology, d) resources/material/textbooks, and e) assessment and evaluation. The specified global learning outcomes should inform the focus of lesson objectives, content, activities, choice of resources for teaching and learning, assessment, and final evaluation. It is crucial that all aspects align with the global learning outcomes identified at the outset, and the faculty's success to a large extent is measured by students' experiential global learning engagements and achievement.

### ***Global Learning Outcomes.***

Global learning outcomes are broad goals for student learning that indicate what students will know and be able to do by the end of an internationalized course. In Suskie's words, "learning outcomes means the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of the mind that students take with them from a learning experience" (2004 p.75). Learning outcomes should not begin with content in mind; rather, faculty should consider the larger

purposes for internationalization and long-term goals for student achievement. Global learning outcomes are broad yet actionable. For example, a learning outcome that requires students to demonstrate critical thinking is broad but not actionable. Why? Because it is not relative to a particular purpose. Similarly, a learning outcome that requires students to label international regions is actionable but not broad. Is the entire goal of the course to label international regions? Certainly not. Defining terms is only one focus for student learning in the course. To identify global learning outcomes, faculty should consider established core competencies for global learning and the goals for internationalization relative to their specific academic discipline.

The American Association of Colleges & Universities designed a VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubric on global learning that identifies six global learning outcomes: 1) global self-awareness, 2) perspective taking, 3) cultural diversity, 4) personal and social responsibility, 5) understanding global systems, and 6) applying knowledge to contemporary global contexts (AAC&U, 2014). Each of these learning outcomes is aligned to a specific list of performance expectations for student learning. Faculty should consider these nationally recognized learning outcomes as guidance in their internationalized course development. Additionally, they should consult their own state higher education frameworks on global learning. For example, Georgia identified six core competencies for global learning: 1) knowledge (cultural self-awareness), 2) knowledge (knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks), 3) skills (empathy), 4) skills (verbal and nonverbal communication), 5) attitudes (curiosity), and 6) attitudes (openness) (USG, n.d). These six competencies reflect learning goals for internationalization that state higher education leaders support. Both national and state guidelines on global learning give faculty a vision for framing their own global learning outcomes and course objectives.

National and state guidance on global learning are the starting points for developing global learning outcomes for internationalized courses. Faculty should align these guiding principles to key concepts and skills valued in their specific academic discipline. For example, in the field of teacher education, education majors should display cultural awareness that informs their curriculum and lesson planning for diverse

student populations. Therefore, a global learning outcome could be: that *students will be able to demonstrate cultural knowledge of dominant immigrant groups in the United States and model teaching strategies that meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners*. Applied to the field of mathematics, a global learning outcome could be *students will be able to evaluate algorithms used by popular global companies to develop their knowledge and skills for designing international computation systems*.

Typically, faculty should identify one or two global learning outcomes for internationalization within one course. Broad, yet actionable global learning outcomes inform measurable course objectives, which are small steps that progressively build towards the learning outcome. Course objectives identify the performance level (e.g., explain, identify, describe) at which students must master core content and skills. Course objectives typically do not include all content and skills taught in a course. Instead, they indicate essential content and skills that should be mastered to fulfill the learning outcome in sequential order. For example, using the education learning outcome stated above, course objectives could include: 1) identifying dominant immigrant groups in the United States, 2) describing the main cultural characteristics of these groups, 3) delivering a presentation on the culture of dominant immigrant groups to demonstrate cultural knowledge, 4) describing a learner who is culturally and linguistically diverse, 5) identifying effective teaching strategies for teaching such learners, 6) developing model teaching strategies for a peer audience, 7) using model teaching strategies in a mock classroom consisting of culturally and linguistically diverse students. These course objectives effectively unpack the global learning outcome into specific concepts and skills to guide further course design.

### ***Review of International and intercultural dimensions of existing course content***

Faculty members who wish to internationalize their courses would need to quickly review their course contents to assess for existing international and intercultural dimensions of the course, once the global learning outcomes are identified. This process will reveal if there are existing international and intercultural (global) dimensions in course

content to explore. Some courses already have these existing global dimensions and all a faculty member needs to do is to intensify attention on those areas, identify objectives, activities/projects, and search for new resources to provide opportunities for expanding students' global perspectives. For example, discussing the history and origin of a course and the rationale for learning the material provides an opportunity for students to learn wider cultural and global aspects of a course. A good example is in mathematics, where the discussion of the discipline's history introduces students to Greeks and their progress in mathematics dating from 300 BC to 200 AD. Also, for any course in nursing, reflecting on the history of nursing by a quick review of Florence Nightingale and the rationale for the development of nursing as a distinct healthcare role might be a first approach. This could bring in international and intercultural perspectives depending on the faculty's framing and creativity. The faculty might start with history to creatively include international and international learning component(s) and objectives to a new course if none are present.

***Identifying/ developing global learning activities/projects for attaining set outcome(s)***

The faculty is responsible for intentionally creating global learning activities/projects and assignments to help students achieve identified global learning objectives for attaining global learning outcomes. For example, if a change in perspective is expected, students must engage in an activity or project that compels them to place themselves in others' positions (learning empathy). Also, students' awareness could be developed when they are assigned an activity, task, or project that helps move their understanding from where it was to a new desired understanding. The faculty's role is to create learning activities that teach students how to identify and connect relationships among disparate and conflicting ideas, events, and disciplines (Landorf, Doscher, & Hardrick, 2018). They might not make this connection by simply listening to a lecture, talking, or reading a passage/article and answering some comprehension questions on them. Tasks that facilitate critical thinking and working with peers are needed. Similarly, to develop global

perspectives, they would need to engage in assignments that help them put themselves in another person's position.

### **Samples of Learning Activities/Tasks with International and Intercultural Dimensions**

- Enhancing a course with intentionally selected resources that would increase global learning outcomes and the global competency of students. Video and article selections from global media, documentaries, and TED Talk videos are great resources for developing global learning activities. Follow-up activities after listening or viewing might include peer interaction on observed intercultural/cultural issues, critical response writing affirming or disputing a case made in a video/documentary, etc.

- Creating assignments that engage students in local communities beyond the classroom by assigning them to research and interview local individuals who have an international background. Such assignments could create opportunities for students to execute projects with international peers and teams and thus help them build needed interaction skills for life and careers.

- Using locally based, international community resources to contribute international content, assignments, or projects. One example is inviting an international local entrepreneur to serve as a guest speaker to share cultural beliefs and mores with follow-up assignments asking for a comparison with students' own beliefs and mores. The speaker is specifically instructed on the international/ and intercultural content to present and students are informed of the topic and follow-up activity before the presentation. Providing specifications and guidelines for the speaker and students creates a sense of formality and provides an opportunity for formal assessment of students' learning after the presentation to check if there was students' global learning and to collect data on the extent of students' global learning after the presentation. This provision also excludes the presentation from the typical non-evaluated co-curricular presentations that are not aligned with the formal school curriculum.

- Incorporating a research project that would encourage students to explore international aspects of existing content or work with peers abroad via technology. For example, using Collaborative Online International

Learning(COIL) to engage students (SUNY, 2022) or engaging students in the Sustainable Global Conversations Solutions with U.S. Department of State-funded initiatives by IREX (2022). As a specific illustration, students in a U.S. institution can engage in Global Conversations Solutions with Students in Iraq. The focus could be on discussing global poverty issues and jointly coming up with solutions (UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2022). STEM students can examine data, scientific issues, and health issues related to their topics of study. See Table 1: *Sample Assessment Plan for Global Learning* for advice on focusing on assignments to attain needed global learning objectives and global outcomes.

- A list of activities and models from different institutions can be accessed at the ACE website: <https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Internationalization/Internationalization-Toolkit.aspx>
- Also, the AAC&U website has great resources on global learning and developing effective citizens” <https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/high-impact>
- There are also examples from the University of Minnesota website (2022) which provide resources and examples from nearly twenty years of faculty development workshops and seminars.

### **Developing Global Learning Assessment and Evaluation (planning and implementation)**

Course assessments measure student learning at key intervals throughout the course. They compare student performance to the expectations outlined in each course objective. By contrast, course evaluations measure the holistic learning experience. They consider overall administration and course delivery, such as the professionalism and quality of faculty instruction. Both course assessments and course evaluations align with student learning outcomes and should be designed early in course development.

Similarly, global learning assessments measure student performance of those expectations outlined in course objectives that are aligned to global learning outcomes. Faculty can use the Backwards Design strategy for developing global learning assessments that align with global learning outcomes and targeted course objectives (Wiggins &



McTighe, 2005). Backwards Design encourages faculty to develop course assessments with their desired results (or learning outcomes) in mind. When applied to internationalizing courses, the first stage of Backwards Design is to identify global learning outcomes that indicate what students will know and be able to do by the end of an internationalized course. Faculty should unpack these learning outcomes into measurable course objectives that specify concepts and skills targeted for student learning. The second stage of Backwards Design is to develop course assessments that align to one or more course objectives, to evaluate students' performance in meeting global learning outcomes. For example, if a course objective requires students to *explain* cultural diversity, then the assessment should include a paper or presentation that requires students to *explain* the nature of cultural diversity. Similarly, if a course objective requires students to *demonstrate an appreciation* for cultural diversity, then the assessment should require students to respond to real-life scenarios where they can demonstrate an appreciation for cultural diversity. Effective course assessments align to performance expectations specified in course objectives, which are aligned to overall global learning outcomes. By using this process, faculty are assured that they are measuring exactly what they want students to know and be able to do as a result of their participation in the internationalized course.

Faculty can create a basic assessment plan to align their global learning outcomes, course objectives, course assessments, assessment formats, and assessment weights in students' overall grades. An assessment plan is a visual display of alignment between global learning outcomes and assessments. Table 1, below, shows an example from an education course.

As shown in the assessment plan, two global learning outcomes reflect broad goals for internationalization attained by the end of the course. The first global learning outcome is an indicator of student competency in cultural diversity. It is aligned to three course objectives that specify content and skills to demonstrate students' cultural knowledge.

**Table 1**  
*Sample Assessment Plan for Global Learning*

**Assessment Plan**

<b>Global Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Course Objectives - By the end of this internationalized course, students are expected to:</b>	<b>Global Learning Assessment</b>	<b>% Weight in Final Grade Calculation</b>
Students will develop cultural self-awareness by recognizing their own cultural layers (race, ethnicity, nationality, etc.) and appreciating cultural diversity in the United States.	Describe their own cultural identity by identifying their main cultural layers (ethnicity, race, gender, profession, organization).	#1 – In an oral presentation (3 minutes), students will describe their own cultural identity by identifying their main cultural layers. They should incorporate images, memes, and other media to illustrate their cultural identity.	10
	Identify cultural characteristics of key cultural groups in the United States.	#2 – In a short essay (3-5 paragraphs), students will identify and describe cultural characteristics of key cultural groups in today’s schools, specifically naming language, religion, food, traditions, and general physical characteristics.	10
	Demonstrate an appreciation for cultural diversity in the United States	#3 – Using digital media (10 minutes), students will describe at least three contributions to U.S. society from major cultural groups in today’s schools.	15

**Table 1**  
*continued*

<b>Global Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Course Objectives - By the end of this internationalized course, students are expected to:</b>	<b>Global Learning Assessment</b>	<b>% Weight in Final Grade Calculation</b>
Students will apply their knowledge of cultural diversity to demonstrate effective teaching practices that reflect the differentiated needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.	Demonstrate strategies for embracing cultural diversity in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	#4 – In a classroom setting, students will demonstrate strategies for embracing cultural diversity in a teaching demonstration.	15
	Apply their knowledge of cultural diversity through completion of a teaching portfolio consisting of differentiated instructional activities for culturally and linguistically diverse K-12 students.	#5 – Students will develop a teaching portfolio consisting of instructional activities, materials, and assessments that embrace cultural diversity in a K-12 classroom. Students will show instructional differentiation that embraces individual cultural groups in the United States.	50
			100

The first global learning outcome is an indicator of student competency in cultural diversity. It is aligned to three course objectives that specify content and skills to demonstrate students' cultural knowledge. These three course objectives directly align with course assessments that provide measurable evidence of students' competency in cultural diversity. The

second global learning outcome is an indicator of applied knowledge. It is aligned to two course objectives that demonstrate an applied knowledge of curricula, strategies, and resources to address the differentiated needs of diverse students in K-12 schooling. These two course objectives directly align with course assessments that provide measurable evidence of students' applied knowledge. Assessments are then weighted in percentage values, to sum up the final grade calculation. Faculty should assign percentage weights based on the breadth and depth of each global learning assessment identified in the course.

Course evaluation differs from course assessments. Where course assessments align to specific concepts and skills found in course objectives, course evaluation measures the holistic learning experience. An evaluation of internationalized courses provides feedback on the teaching and learning experience, whether from the viewpoint of the student, administrator, or faculty member. It provides insight into non-academic features of global learning, including the safety of site visits and the instructor's professionalism. It can also include aspects of the planning, content, and organization of the course or embedded field experiences, such as the quality of guest speakers or accessibility of instructional materials. To create an evaluation of an internationalized course or field experience, faculty and administrators should consider student feedback on logistical planning and implementation that would improve efficiency, organization, and student satisfaction. They can create a simple survey using a Likert scale, adopt a standardized evaluation rubric offered by AAC&U or their campus center for international education, or assign student reflections upon completing field experiences and/or internationalized components within a course. Developing effective global learning assessments and evaluation tools are key planning steps to designing internationalized courses.

### **Conclusion**

Nothing is cast in stone for course internationalization designed to target all learners. Faculty members' development of their global perspective is a lifelong prospect, as the world is too big to be fully known and is always changing. Enhanced global knowledge, skills, and attitudes on the faculty members' side prepare them to do what it takes to enhance

students' international and intercultural (global) competencies to live their personal and professional lives in an interdependent and interconnected world of diverse people. In planning and implementing course internationalization, faculty members should develop intermittent reflection points and processes for modification of all components as they implement their course plan. Effective course internationalization, with robust institutional support, will help faculty and institutions develop more effective citizens.

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## **Implementation of a Global Health Perspective in a Content Heavy Biochemistry Course**

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### **Abstract**

This project focused on integrating an international component into the one-semester biochemistry course, a required course for biology, chemistry, and forensic science majors at the institution. A driving question was how to integrate the international component into the course while showing direct relevance to the course and students' lives. Therefore, it was decided to use global health as a focus. Students were required to analyze current or historic events or issues of global significance with direct or indirect impacts on health. In addition, a specific component required students to make connections to the course content and its relevance to biochemistry and their career interests. Student learning outcomes for the project are that students will be able to a) demonstrate knowledge of course concepts and how they apply to global health, b) evaluate and compare the forces shaping global issues, both now and in the past, and c) compare and contrast global events/issues and impacts internationally and domestically. The process of course revision and implementation, and outcomes are described.

*Keywords:* course internationalization; science curriculum; undergraduate curriculum; biochemistry; global health

There has been considerable focus on the inadequacy of traditional approaches for preparing students to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce, which is becoming increasingly diverse. In response, higher education institutions are integrating international/intercultural dimensions into the undergraduate curriculum to provide students with the global attributes that prepare them to live and work in a global and culturally diverse environment (Green & Whitsed, 2015; Williams & Lee, 2015).

As subject matter experts, the primary concern of many higher education faculty is the course content, and even though they understand

the value of course internationalization, many are hesitant to revise their courses. As a result, deep engagement with the Internationalization of the Curriculum in the disciplines remains an activity of internationalization scholars that often occurs on the periphery of other academic requirements (Leask, 2013). Several reasons are suggested for this. One is that the concept of internationalization in higher education is not well understood (Green and Olson, 2003; Clifford, 2009). Another reason put forth is that faculty lack the pedagogical knowledge and skills to develop quality curriculum internationalization (American Council on Education, 1996; Saroyan & Amundson, 2004).

Except in a few cases (Atweh et al., 2007; Douglas, et al., 2010; Okonkwo, 2017), there is no significant evidence of widespread internationalization in science disciplines. These cases often involve applied science courses or approaches. Even so, academicians in these fields understand and agree with internationalization's educational and professional benefits (Clifford, 2009, Williams & Lee, 2015). There is also the belief among some that scientific content is culturally neutral and that internationalization of the curriculum is, therefore, irrelevant or low priority (Clifford, 2009). A survey of faculty indicated that it would be difficult given other demands of the course and that they would have to consider if they could do it without compromising the time for the current course content (Bond, Qian & Huang, 2003). However, the increasingly globally diverse nature of the STEM workforce demands that students entering STEM careers develop the competencies needed to work in this environment (Etherington, 2013). Given the benefits to students of course internationalization and the focus of the institutions' Office of International Affairs on curriculum internationalization, efforts were made to integrate an international component into the Biochemistry course. This article describes the process of internationalizing this course, an upper-level course required for our STEM majors.

## **Methodology**

### **Educational Context**

The biochemistry course, CHEM 3250, is an upper-level course typically taken by juniors and seniors. Like most science courses targeted at science majors, the course is content-driven and content-heavy. Students who

major in Biology, Chemistry, and Forensic Science must complete this course to satisfy their degree requirements. In addition, students require the course to satisfy the prerequisite requirements for entry into professional programs of study, including preparing for the required admissions tests. Many students taking the course aspire to advanced studies in graduate school and professional programs in medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. The course is a 4-credit course that includes a lecture and lab component. Current research on student learning and retention in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) includes student-centered evidence-based teaching strategies. These strategies, including active learning (e.g., cooperative learning, flipped lecture sessions, case studies, think-pair-share), are sometimes included as part of the course. Though overall, the course retains a primarily traditional lecture format to ensure the time is available for the content needed in preparation for advanced study to be covered.

In Spring 2019, after attending a presentation on curriculum internationalization offered by our Office of International Education, I seriously began thinking about how I could integrate international elements into the course beyond previous efforts, which were limited to a few questions. With the significant amount of content covered in the course, a major concern was what could be left out or sacrificed to bring the internationalization component into the class. In addition, given the hierarchical nature of the course content, students need to understand foundational concepts. Therefore my approach was to think about a project that would allow students to reinforce some of the content that they learn in class while gaining new knowledge as a result of the international focus. For this reason and that many students aspire to careers in health, the overarching theme of global health was an appropriate choice. In addition, with the emergence of new and reemerging infectious diseases on a regular basis, there is applicability to all students.

The implementation was conducted in the Spring 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters. The 2019 cohort consisted of 46 students, and in Spring 2020, 33 students. Students taking the course were primarily African American. In total, 57 % of students were biology majors, 11 % chemistry majors, and 32 % Forensic Science Majors.

## Project Goal and Expected Learning Outcomes

The project goal was for students to analyze a current event or issue of global significance using course concepts. Students were provided a list of potential topics, as indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1**

### *Internationalization Project Instructions*

<b>Project Guidance</b>
<p>a) Identify an international country to complete this assignment on global health impacts.</p> <p>b) Select a health-related topic from among the following to research for the country chosen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>air quality/air pollution</i></li> <li>• <i>water quality</i></li> <li>• <i>maternal and child health</i></li> <li>• <i>health care availability</i></li> <li>• <i>hunger and nutrition</i></li> <li>• <i>Infectious diseases- identify specific (e.g., HIV/AIDs, measles, influenza, COVID-19, etc.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Identify another other problem/event of your choosing (see me for approval)</i></li> </ul> <p>c) Provide a summary describing the country, its population, demographics, and a map indicating its location relative to the US.</p> <p>d) Provide data about the country (location, population information (data, statistics, etc.) about the event/issue</p> <p>e) Describe the cause of the disease and how it impacts health</p> <p>f) What are other impacts (social, economic and environmental, political)* that may be impacted, and how?</p> <p>g) Compare and contrast this issue in the international country with the US or your community including prevalence, and how the issue is addressed.</p> <p>h) Discuss how the event that is occurring internationally impacts the US and/or your community.</p> <p>i) Using <b>course concepts</b>, explain how biochemical-related knowledge/research is involved in the disease and/or used to help resolve issues that may arise from the event.</p> <p>j) Imagine that you have graduated and are working in your chosen profession. Identify your chosen profession and discuss how you in your chosen career would be engaged or involved in solving or addressing this global health crisis and/or matters that may arise from it. Be specific in your response.</p>

Expected student learning outcomes are that students 1) demonstrate knowledge of global issues, 2) demonstrate knowledge of an

international country, and 3) demonstrate knowledge of course concepts and how they apply to global events. Additionally, students were asked to discuss how they could contribute to solving or addressing the issue in their chosen careers.

### **Student Group Selection**

The project was completed in groups of three to four students. In Spring 2019, student groups and topics were self-selected. Students were provided a variety of topics to choose from but were also able to suggest their own topics. Groups that selected the same topic were required to select a different country. In Spring 2020, the instructor randomly assigned student groupings and topics. This change was instituted to facilitate the project implementation as the course was switched from face-to-face to online format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a challenging adjustment for both instructor and students. Group cohesiveness proved to be a problem in the spring 2019 implementation. Therefore in 2020, each group was required to determine specific roles for each member to ensure the project was carried out in a timely manner and that everyone contributed fairly to the project. Roles included 1) responsibility for initiating and sustaining communication with the rest of the group, 2) coordinating schedules and organizing meetings, 3) recording ideas generated and decisions made at meetings, and 4) keeping the group on task and on time to meet required deadlines. Groups were required to submit their roles to the instructor along with their final topic.

### **Description of Activity**

For the activity, students were asked to 'Reflect on current issues in the world that impact global health, relevance to biochemical concepts, and career interests. Students could choose from among these topics or suggest a topic of their own for approval. Table 1 (above) shows the assignment instructions and guidance provided and the list of potential topics.

### **Assessment**

An oral PowerPoint presentation, a written report, peer assessment, and a student evaluation survey were required to assess the project. Rubrics were used to assess student learning gains for the oral presentation



(Appendix B) and the paper (Appendix C). The oral presentation rubric assessed seven areas: Content, organization, mechanics, subject knowledge, quality of the activity, oral presentation style, data graphics, and evidence of cooperation and teamwork. The written report rubric assessed proficiency in five categories: content, clarity and purpose, structure/development, language and mechanics, and documentation of sources. In both of these assessments, content and subject knowledge were weighted 2-5 times more than each of the other categories. This weighting was used to convey the importance of these components in the overall project. All rubrics were provided to students at the beginning of the project, and at the same time as the project instructions.

### ***Oral Presentation***

One of the institutional student learning outcomes is that students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills. The oral presentation requirement for the project addressed this learning outcome. Each group was required to give a PowerPoint presentation of 5 -7 min on their topic. Specific guidance was provided to the students for the organization and content of the oral presentation, including a requirement that each member of the group participates in the oral presentation.

### ***Paper***

A group paper of no more than ten double-spaced pages, including tables and figures, was required. Each group member was responsible for different aspects of the paper; however, group members were encouraged to coordinate subject matter with each other, share findings, and work together on editing and finalizing the paper to produce a cohesive and well-organized paper.

### ***Peer Review***

Group members evaluated each other on the extent to which each group member 1) attended meetings regularly and on time, 2) was cooperative /agreed on tasks, 3) contributed meaningfully to ideas/planning, 4) was available for communication, 5) prepared work in a quality manner, 6) provided work in a timely manner, 7) demonstrated a cooperative and supportive attitude and 8) contributed to the overall

project success. Each was evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Comments and or justification were required for any score of 1 or 5.

### ***Student reflections***

Finally, in Spring 2020, students were asked to complete a survey on their perceptions and reflections about the project. This element allowed the instructor to assess the course beyond students' performance on the presentation and paper to gain feedback on their perceptions of the project's usefulness. Specifically, they were asked to rate the extent to which the project, 1) increased their knowledge about the assigned topic, 2) provided an opportunity to explore a topic or concept from the biochemistry course more deeply, 3) improved their understanding of one or more biochemical concepts more thoroughly and 4) improved their knowledge about the country they selected/were assigned. Additionally, they were asked if they would recommend that an international component be included in other courses in their curriculum.

The contribution of each component to the overall grade for the project was oral presentation 100 points, written paper 75 points, and peer evaluation 25 points. The project accounted for 25% of the lecture grade.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The rationale for the project was to enhance global awareness by focusing on a health-related topic in a specific country and its impacts globally and relating the subject to course concepts and future careers. A list of the topics selected by students in each cohort is provided in Appendix A. Through the oral and written reports, students demonstrated learning gains in two specific areas of the project: knowledge of the disease and connections with core concepts of the course. For example, one group that focused on HIV/AIDs in Zimbabwe discussed treatment for HIV/AIDS that utilized reverse transcriptase inhibitors and related it to the enzymes and inhibition content covered in the course, including details on types of inhibition in the basic mechanism of interaction. Another group that studied COVID-19 in Italy discussed the Spike protein and made connections with cell membrane structure and properties also covered in the course. In the evaluation survey responses, several students

commented on this aspect of the project as a benefit. One student indicated that the project allowed her to make connections and improved her analysis skills. Another indicated that they would like to have similar projects in other courses because it helped them understand how the course can tie into everyday life. Yet another student said, "This was a great idea, and I hope to see other courses use this type of project for their students! I like the freedom you gave the students to look into something they are interested in and is related to the course because we can put what we learn into real-world scenarios. It also allows for critical thinking when we have to find a possible solution." Some groups were more effective at making the connections to the course content than others, which was expected, but the results show that this approach is promising. With refinement and additional guidance and direction, perhaps more students will be able to connect the course material for increased depth of understanding of course concepts.

Students also demonstrated knowledge of the international country, the impact of the disease on that country, and how the situation compares with the US. When asked what they liked about the project, one student responded, "I learned a lot about another country that I never knew previously." Another student whose project was about the disease Ebola said that "I liked the fact that we got to explore Ebola in a more in-depth view as opposed to just viewing on the news; the data was interesting to understand."

Working in groups was one aspect of the project that students indicated they liked. The assignment of roles provided specific responsibilities to each group member which was evident in the collaborative group presentations that, for most projects, showed contributions from each group member in an organized fashion and with fluid transitions between subtopics. In addition, the peer evaluations were helpful to the instructor in assessing each student's contribution to the project.

When asked if they would like to have a similar type of international project such as this as part of other courses, the majority of students responding to the survey indicated that they would. Students' reasons included the opportunity to learn about current events, learn about a new country, and to be able to learn how the course can tie into everyday

life. One student responded, "It would not hurt the course. It is an opportunity to learn about situations that affect other countries around the world. It would help us to have a better world view." Some students also liked the different options as they provided another assessment that helped improve their grades in the course. A smaller group of students indicated that they would not want to have this type of project, one reason being that they thought the project was too time-consuming. Another student did not like having to do the project in an online format that was necessary due to the COVID-19 shutdown in Spring 2020. In future semesters, at the beginning of the project, some time will specifically be devoted to explaining the international aspect of the course and its value to students' education and preparedness for success in the STEM workforce.

After the midterm, the project was introduced in the last half of the course, which provided students at least six weeks to complete it. Unfortunately, time did not permit the collection of students' perceptions and attitudes about the internationalization component in Spring 2019. Therefore, the information provided here is for the Spring 2020 implementation, and no comparison between these two cohorts of students was possible. Also, students were required to work on the project primarily in their groups. The instructor provided no additional guidance unless students sought further clarifications or assistance, which limited the overall experience of the internalization between students and the professor. Also, it became apparent that a few groups procrastinated on their project and did not adequately address the required components. In addressing these issues in the future, the plan is to utilize the course online discussion board for student groups to post regularly to specific prompts that will require them to demonstrate ongoing work on the project leading up to the final presentation date. This will also allow students to reflect on their research findings as they read and respond to others' posts. The instructor will also be able to provide strategic guidance to assist students in critically analyzing the information they have obtained through their research and making connections to the course content.

### **Conclusion**

Like most of the hard sciences, the biochemistry course is a content-driven and content-heavy course that is prerequisite knowledge for further studies

upon graduation. To add another component to the course by internationalizing the course, I needed to determine how to implement this project in a way that ties into the course material so that students' knowledge and application of course concepts could be expanded and/or enforced. The global nature of health and its relevance to biochemistry, the community, and students' career interests provided the impetus to move forward with the implementation, which included an intentional directive to relate the topic to course concepts. Summative assessments in the form of oral and written reports demonstrated that students gained knowledge on their selected topic, the international country, and the global impact. Also, students were able to make connections between classroom content and real-world situations. This approach lowered the barrier and hesitancy of the instructor to utilize class time for an international project. The students gained a global perspective that will help them move forward in their careers. The multidimensional nature of the project, working in groups, and oral and written presentations provided opportunities for students to build on interpersonal communications skills, teamwork, and oral communication skills, which will also be useful. Given the documented benefits to students for course internationalization, it is worth the time for faculty to integrate an international dimension into their courses. For science courses, particularly those that are not applied-science courses, finding ways to link internationalization to course content where possible can provide a viable means to do so.

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**Appendix A**  
**A list of the topics selected by students in each cohort**

<b>Spring 2019 Topics</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Country Selected</b>
Air Pollution	China, Qatar
Climate Change	Japan
Famine	Sudan
Herpes	France
HIV/AIDS	South Africa, Zimbabwe
Hunger and Nutrition	Haiti, Nigeria
Herpes	France
Maternal Mortality	Nigeria, Sierra Leone
Maternal and Child Health	Nigeria
Oil Spills/Pollution	Nigeria
Water Quality and Pollution	India
<b>Spring 2020 Topics- Infectious Diseases</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Country Selected</b>
Cholera	India
COVID-19	China, South Korea, Italy
Ebola	Africa (Multiple Countries)
H1N1	South Africa
HIV/AIDS	Kenya
Zika	Mexico



## Appendix B

### Project Assessment

#### Individual and Group Presentation Rubric

Category/Weight	4	3	2	1
<b>Content/ Effectiveness (2x)</b>	Content well researched and presented succinctly, presentation well prepared. All required criteria for the project were met. Includes enough material to gain an understanding. All references are provided in correct format (APA).	Content is well prepared for the most part; research and preparation are evident. Includes most material needed to gain an understanding of the topic presented. Most references are provided in correct format (APA).	Content shows problems with research and succinct preparation. More preparation is necessary. Missing more than 2 key elements needed to gain an understanding of the topic presented. Some references provided, most in incorrect format.	Presentation of content is disjointed and incoherent; little evidence of preparation missing several key elements needed to gain an understanding of the topic. No references provided.
<b>Organization</b>	Audience can follow the presentation because information is presented in logical sequence.	Audience can follow most of the presentation because information is presented in logical sequence.	Audience has difficulty following presentation because group jumps around.	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.
<b>Mechanics</b>	No more than 1 spelling error and/or grammatical errors	No more than 2 spelling errors and/or grammatical errors	3 spelling errors and/or grammatical errors	4 or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors

## Appendix B

continued

Category/Weight	4	3	2	1
<b>Subject Knowledge (2x)</b>	All facts are correct. Student demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and answers all questions correctly with explanations and elaboration. Notes are not used, and/or slides were not read.	Most facts are correct, and the student is at ease with the information and answer most questions correctly with explanations and elaboration. Notes are used infrequently. Slides were not read.	Many facts are incorrect, OR student has a limited understanding of the subject and has difficulty answering questions. Notes and/or slides are read.	Most facts are incorrect, and the student does not appear to understand the subject and cannot answer questions. Notes and/or slides are read.
<b>Quality of Activity</b>	The activity is engaging for the entire class and aligns with the concepts presented.	The activity is engaging for most of the class and aligns with the concepts presented.	The activity is engaging for only a few students and aligns with the concepts presented.	The activity is not engaging and/or is not in line with the concepts presented.
<b>Oral Presentation Style</b>	Presenter is confident, speaks very well and clearly, and maintains excellent engagement with the audience. Presenter stands or sits up straight and establishes eye contact with the audience.	Presenter is confident, speaks well, and is somewhat engaged with the audience. Presenter stands or sits up straight but lacks eye contact with the audience.	Presenter lacks confidence, voice is low and unclear, and has difficulty engaging the audience. Presenter appears too casual and establishes little eye contact with the audience.	Presenter lacks confidence, does not speak clearly, and is not engaged with the audience. Presenter appears too casual and establishes no eye contact.

<b>Data Graphics</b> (tables, charts, graphs, etc.)	Graphics were included, clearly related to the presented material, and <b>explained</b> .	Graphics were somewhat related to the material and were explained, OR graphics are clearly related but <b>were not explained</b> .	Graphics were somewhat related to the material but <b>were not explained</b> .	Graphics were not related to the material and <b>were not explained</b> , or graphics were not included.
<b>Cooperation/ Teamwork</b>	Presenters worked as part of a team, providing effective transitions to next/previous speakers or making references to previous/next speakers.	Evidence of teamwork; transitions made to previous/next speaker or topics.	Some evidence of teamwork; some transitions made to next/previous speaker or topics.	No evidence of teamwork; no transition made to next/previous speakers or topics.

### Appendix C Written Report Rubric

Category/ Weight	5 Highly Proficient	4 Proficient	3 Acceptable	2 Needs Improvement	1 Unacceptable
<b>Content (5X)</b>	Writing meets <b>all</b> assignment content requirements ( <i>Topic and the international country</i> ).	Writing meets <b>most</b> assignment content requirements ( <i>Topic and the international country</i> ).	Writing meets <b>minimum</b> assignment content requirements. ( <i>Topic and the international country</i> ).	Writing meets <b>some/few</b> assignment content requirements. ( <i>Topic and the international country</i> ).	Writing <b>does not</b> meet assignment content requirements. ( <i>Topic and the international country</i> ).

<p><b>Clarity/Purpose (5X)</b></p>	<p>Writing is clear and appropriate for the purpose of the assignment. <b>All</b> evidence and examples are effective, specific, and relevant.</p>	<p>Writing is <b>generally</b> clear and appropriate for the purpose of the assignment — with some exceptions. Evidence and examples are <b>generally</b> effective, specific, and relevant— with some exceptions.</p>	<p>Writing is <b>adequate</b> in terms of clarity and appropriateness for the purpose of the assignment. Evidence and examples meet <b>basic</b> requirements for being effective, specific, and relevant.</p>	<p>Writing may be unclear and/or inappropriate for the purpose of the assignment. Evidence and examples may require further development to be adequately effective, specific, and relevant.</p>	<p>Writing is unclear and inappropriate for the purpose of the assignment. Evidence and examples are <b>not</b> effective, specific, and/or relevant.</p>
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**Appendix C (Continued)**

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Category/Weight</b>	<b>Highly Proficient</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>Structure/Development (4X)</b>	<p>Ideas are coherently and logically organized with well-developed paragraphs and effective transitions.</p>	<p>Organization of ideas is <b>generally</b> coherent and logical. In addition, <b>most</b> paragraphs are well-developed and use effective transitions.</p>	<p>Organization of ideas meets the <b>minimum</b> requirement for being coherent and logical. <b>Some</b> paragraphs may be well-developed and use effective transitions, while others do not.</p>	<p>Organization of ideas does not meet the <b>minimum</b> requirement for coherence and logic. Paragraphs lack development and/or fail to employ transitions effectively.</p>	<p>Ideas are <b>incoherent</b> and <b>illogically</b> organized. Paragraphs are <b>undeveloped</b> and need transitions.</p>

<p><b>Language and Mechanics (4X)</b></p>	<p><b>All</b> sentences are well-written with varied sentence structure and virtually free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p>	<p><b>Most</b> sentences are well written with varied sentence structure and virtually free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p>	<p>Language is accessible to readers; however, many sentences may lack variation in structure. <b>Minimally</b> acceptable number of errors in grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling.</p>	<p><b>Some/few</b> sentences are well-written with <b>little</b> variance in structure and/or <b>numerous errors</b> in grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling.</p>	<p>Language may be inaccessible to readers. Sentences are incomplete and/or contain grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling errors.</p>
<p><b>Documentation of Sources (2X)</b></p>	<p>All sources are <b>credible</b> and formatted following standard format (APA).</p>	<p><b>Most</b> sources are <b>credible</b> and documented following a standard format. (APA)</p>	<p>Sources meet the minimum requirements for <b>credibility</b> and documentation following a standard format (APA).</p>	<p>Sources do not meet the minimum requirements for <b>credibility</b> and documentation following a standard format (APA).</p>	<p><b>Insufficient</b> sources and/or <b>insufficient</b> quality and documentation. Standard formats <b>not</b> followed.</p>

## **A Design Process for the Internationalization of Conceptual Basis of Professional Nursing**

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### **Abstract**

Nurses are expected to provide culturally competent care. Many health care organizations support the need for more emphasis on cultural competency in nursing academia. Institutions of higher education have begun encouraging more course internationalization and globalization to help accomplish this goal. The purpose of the current article is to describe the steps involved in the internationalization of NURS 3630: Conceptual Basis of Professional Nursing course at Albany State University. This course is a part of the required courses within the Darton College of Health Professions Post-Licensure Registered Nursing program and was purposefully selected for internationalization. Conversations between nursing faculty, the Office for International Education, and nursing leaders occurred in the decision-making process. Course objectives and assignments were recreated or altered to have a more cultural and global focus. Four student learning outcomes were addressed in the internationalized course. Positive student feedback regarding course information learned and usefulness was received at the end of the semester. Future suggestions for the course include integrating culture grading rubrics, pretest and posttest administration, faculty professional development, course design team collaboration, and student input.

*Keywords:* internationalization; nursing; education; curriculum; globalization; culture

The Albany State University's Department of Nursing offers a post-licensure registered nursing program. The post-licensure program is offered for individuals who have already obtained an Associate of Science Degree in Nursing and are seeking a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The program is entirely online. This paper describes the steps involved in the internationalization of NURS 3630 Conceptual Basis of Professional Nursing.

## **Background**

NURS 3630, an eight-week course, is described as follows:

*This course examines the dynamic transformation in nursing through the exploration and investigation of major nursing issues. These issues are examined within the context of nursing history, nursing theories, nursing philosophy, legal issues, political activism, health care delivery systems, and the delivery of culturally competent patient care. (Albany State University, 2020).* The university offers at least one cohort every A and B term. Upon successful completion of the course, students earn three semester credit hours towards their bachelor's degree. Thirty to forty students typically are enrolled in the class (about 15-20 students each 8-week term). However, due to an increase in program enrollment, three cohorts were offered Fall 2020 semester; two- A-term sections and one B-term section. A total of 69 students were enrolled during the first semester of NURS 3630 being offered as an internationalized course.

## **Placement Within the Curriculum**

Students enroll in this course during the first semester of the RN-BSN curriculum. NURS 3630 was purposefully selected for course internationalization for several reasons. First, the course is required of all RN-BSN students for degree completion. Second, the faculty anticipated that students could use this course's cultural and global information in future classes by completing an internationalized first-semester foundational course. Third, given that the RN-BSN program is entirely online, purposeful selection within this program helped include online university students in the university's internationalization efforts.

## **Significance**

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)(2017), information learned about diverse cultures and perspectives is especially beneficial because it can be used in health care. Given that nurses work in various environments, nursing curricula should include aspects of globalization and internationalization. According to Jibeen and Khan (2015), course internationalization expands students' educational value.

Nurses are expected to provide culturally competent care. Culturally skilled nurses can provide more culturally appropriate and sensitive care to patients. Conversely, cultural unawareness between patients and their nurses can often cause patient compliance problems, thus negatively influencing patient care (Black, 2020).

## **Literature Review**

### **Theoretical Framework**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Prevention Information Network (2020), "Cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes." A portion of the ASU's Department of Nursing's statement of philosophy includes the following. *"..increase the number of nursing graduates who are adequately prepared to enter the healthcare workforce and provide holistic, culturally-competent care..."* The need for culturally competent nurses relies heavily on nursing faculty equipping student nurses with knowledge about culturally competent care.

Dr. Madeleine Leininger's Cultural Care Diversity and Universality Theory (also known as the Culture Care Theory) focuses on equipping nurses to provide culturally appropriate and unbiased care to diverse patients. Dr. Leininger began formulating this theory in the late 1970s with her dissertation work. Dr. Leininger deemed a new care approach necessary due to the lack of studies from diverse cultural perspectives (McFarland & Wehbe-Alamah, 2019).

Dr. Leininger's theory encourages nurses to investigate and gather patient data about the patient's particular cultures and then formulate nursing care based on the information discovered. The cultural investigation of the patient provides the nurse with a holistic, inclusive summary of the patient's history (Petiprin, 2020). There are three aspects of culturally appropriate patient care: cultural preservation/ maintenance, cultural care accommodation/ negotiation, and cultural care repatterning/restructuring.



Cultural care preservation/maintenance refers to actions that support patients in retaining cultural practices and values to help them maintain well-being, recuperate from sickness, face disability, or death (Butts & Rich, 2018). Cultural care accommodating/negotiation refers to enabling or assisting professional activities and decisions geared to help patients and their families of a specific culture negotiate with skilled caregivers to meet desired health care outcomes (Butts & Rich). Cultural care repatterning/restructuring denotes how health care providers can work with patients, families, and the community to promote lifestyle modifications to achieve different health patterns (McFarland & Wehbe-Alamah, 2019).

### **Internationalization in Higher Education**

According to DeWit, Hunter, Howard, and Egron-Polak (2015), internationalization of higher education is defined as "the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society." The internationalization process in higher education offers opportunities for student and faculty growth regardless of a specific discipline. For example, nursing educators can incorporate global student learning objectives into nursing courses to strengthen nursing students' cultural competency and global awareness (Mulready-Schick, 2019).

There is limited literature identifying methods that schools of nursing use to help produce culturally competent nurses (Creech et al., 2017). Creech et al. (2017) conducted a study that requested nursing faculty implement at least one cultural competency objective into their Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) curriculum. The longitudinal study lasted for two years. Pretest and post-test results were compared. Results indicated that the number of courses with at least one cultural competence increased, and the DNP students' transcultural self-efficacy tool scores increased. The results of this study help support the need for more efforts to improve nursing students' cultural competency by implementing more culturally based education into nursing education curricula.

A study conducted by Lonneman (2015) investigated the effectiveness of six instructional strategies on nursing students' cultural awareness levels. The strategies were varied and included activities such as journal critiques and a personal history reflection paper. The outcome of this study revealed an increase in students' perceived cultural awareness self-efficacy, indicating effective teaching strategies implemented in this particular study. As a result of this study, the researchers contend that nursing faculty should increase student cultural awareness efforts.

Many nursing organizations support internationalization (Mulready-Shick, 2019). The National League for Nursing (NLN) places particular emphasis on promoting global awareness. The NLN recommends incorporating global competencies in nursing programs and increasing faculty global resources (2017). Incorporating internationalized courses in nursing curricula is one way to increase future nurses' awareness of diverse cultural aspects.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is another organization that supports culturally competent nursing. A part of this organization's *The Changing Landscape: Nursing Student Diversity in the Rise Policy Brief* (2017a) includes how exposure to different perceptions and viewpoints helps provide better workplace relationships. A survey that the AACN conducted (2017b) reported that approximately 30 percent of all bachelor's and graduate nursing students come from assorted backgrounds. The results of this study support the need for more cultural relevancy in nursing courses, such as with the internationalization of NURS 3630.

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)(2020) is a primary accrediting agency for nursing education. One of the organization's standards is that *"the curriculum includes cultural, ethnic, and socially diverse concepts and may include experiences from regional, national or global perspectives."* Nursing programs are evaluated on this and many other standards and criteria during ACEN site visits. According to ACEN (2020), diversity concepts include *"Knowledge about persons, communities, regions, countries, cultures, and ethnicities other than one's own."* Nursing programs that cannot demonstrate this cultural aspect within the curriculum may receive a non-compliant status in meeting this criterion. The ASU Department of Nursing receives

accreditation from this agency, furthering the rationale for internationalizing courses.

### **Practical Application/Methods**

#### **University Support**

According to Musil (2006), individual courses' internationalized alignment goals should align with departmental and university goals. The Office of International Education (OIE) at ASU fosters a very encouraging environment for student and faculty study abroad programs and course internationalization. The OIE at ASU has an outlined Comprehensive Internationalization Strategic Plan (CISP) Framework. According to the American Council on Education (ACE) (2021), Comprehensive internationalization is defined as "a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate policies, programs, and initiatives to position colleges and universities as more globally oriented and internationally connected." Since increasing the number of internationalized courses is one focus area of this CISP framework, the OIE offers numerous resources, professional development, grant funding, and course internationalization guidance. For example, a dedicated course shell within ASU's learning management system is specifically designed with various faculty resources when internationalizing courses.

#### **Departmental Support**

The Albany State Department of Nursing already had a few internationalized undergraduate nursing courses before the internationalization of NURS 3630. Some of these classes included Adult Health II, Geriatric Nursing, Community/Public Health Nursing, and Nursing Research. In addition to these internationalized courses, selected faculty and students participated in various study abroad trips.

### **Planning Process**

After the decision to internationalize the selected course, discussions between faculty, program director, department chair, and the Office for International Education began. Following these discussions, the process of internationalizing oneself began. According to Sanderson

(2008), faculty must know and accept cultures other than their own. Numerous university professional development sessions and opportunities were attended, including a Spring 2020 Jamaica Study Abroad trip. Many culturally relevant and historical tourist sites were visited as part of the study abroad travel, allowing for novel faculty cultural experiences.

The goal of the internationalization of NURS 3630 was to address four course learning outcomes; professionalism, nursing process, therapeutic communication and intervention, advocacy, and evidence-based practice. Table 1 below illustrates the learning outcomes alignment with culturally relevant assignments used for course internationalization.

**Table 1**  
*NURS 3620 Course Learning Outcomes Alignment Used for Internationalization*

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<p><b>Professionalism</b> Synthesize knowledge from the humanities, natural and behavioral sciences, and nursing in meeting human responses to maintain wellness and/or prevent illness.</p>	Globalization Assignment
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<p><b>Therapeutic Communication and Intervention</b> Apply the theories of communication, teaching-learning, leadership and problem-solving to clinical decision-making and provisions of care.</p>	<p>Considering Culture: When You Don't Speak the Patient's Language. Sociocultural self- assessment.</p>
<p><b>Evidence-Based Practice</b> Relate nursing theories to the care of selected clients in clinical situations.</p>	<p>Considering Culture: When You Don't Speak the Patient's Language. Discussion Questions.</p>

## **Teaching Activities**

Part of the Albany State Department of Nursing's mission statement includes the following "*...learning activities support the holistic development of students as learners, leaders, and contributing members of society who embody the ideals of professional nursing in a global society.*" Musil (2006) suggests several questions for consideration when planning goals for course internationalization. One of these questions for reflection is, "What teaching strategies should be employed to enhance students' global learning in this course?" Before internationalization, the NURS 3630 course emphasized preparing the registered nurse for entry into Bachelors of Science in Nursing role responsibilities, transitions, and practices with little to no emphasis on culture and globalization. A few pre-internationalization course activities included a code of ethics, a professional nursing roles paper, a workplace incivility group project, an American Nurse Association assignment, and a nursing profession timeline.

During the planning phase of internationalization, culturally relevant course textbook unit objectives emphasizing culture and globalization were selected for course integration. Course textbook teacher resources and the Internet were used to create and integrate more culturally relevant assignments for the internationalization process. Musil (2006) recommends that faculty deliberately plan to develop activities to assess student learning outcomes. Therefore, specific activity alignment addressed the course outcomes and unit objectives. Innovative internationalization activities and assignments included a Globalization paper, a When You Don't Speak the Patient's Language assignment, a Sociocultural Self-Assessment, Cultural Stereotypes, and discussion questions. A brief explanation of the assignments is mentioned below.

## **Globalization Writing Assignment**

Globalization in the health care field "is the process in which the events, activities, and decisions of a region in the world can have important effects on people, societies, or connections of another region of the world" (Dorri, Abedi, & Mohammadi, 2020). Dorri, Abedi, and Mohammadi conducted a study that revealed nine effects of globalization

on nursing. Researchers of this study concluded that globalization in nursing is unavoidable; therefore, globalization can be viewed as an opportunity for growth or, subsequently, a peril. Given the importance of globalization in health care, students were asked to research nursing as a global profession. Students were asked to compose a 400-500-word count paper citing if they agreed that nursing has a role in global health care initiatives. The globalization project addressed course module objectives such as; *comparing early definitions of nursing with contemporary ones and identifying the characteristics of a profession.*

### **Considering Culture: When You Don't Speak the Patient's Language Assignment**

The United States is becoming a more diverse society. Nurses must be able to provide competent care to non-English-speaking patients. Studies have indicated more adverse care in patients who do not speak English as their primary language (Divi, Koss, Schmaltz, & Loeb, 2007). Students were assigned to complete a case study chapter assignment wherein the case study patient did not speak the same language as the nurses. Students answered questions about ethical considerations, situational management, and problem-solving. This assignment was chosen because it addresses the module objective: *Identify strategies in providing care to patients who do not speak English.*

### **Stereotypes Paper Assignment**

Students were asked to choose a media portrayal of a cultural stereotype and write about the stereotype depicted in the media clip. Students were asked to elaborate on whether the media clip influenced or did not influence their cultural perceptions. This assignment addressed the module objective of *recognizing how environmental factors such as family, culture, social support, the Internet, and community influence health.*

### **Sociocultural self-assessment Assignment**

Students were assigned the Challenges of Understanding Your Own Cultural Beliefs-Sociocultural Self-Assessment from the course textbook. This particular assignment required students to assess their

cultural practices and beliefs. The student addressed the module objectives to *explain behavioral responses to illness and what influences these behaviors* by completing this assignment.

### **Discussion questions**

In addition to the assignments above, students were assigned discussion questions throughout the course. Some examples of culturally relevant discussion questions include:

1. Effective nursing care requires nurses to strive for cultural competency. Is it possible to learn about another culture without learning to stereotype? Explain your response.
2. Do stereotypes always hinder cultural competency? Can stereotypes be a beginning step to cultural competency? Can one truly be culturally competent without awareness of one's own stereotypes?
3. Try to identify your own cultural group's response to illness. What are your family's characteristic responses to the illness of a family member?

As a part of the planning process, a syllabus course goal was added to the university syllabus template that included the following:

*The Conceptual Basis of Professional Nursing is an internationalized course. Through careful selection of unit objectives, the five-course learning outcomes will be encompassed in the internationalization process. Learner-centered instruction and assignments will be provided to help meet course objectives and enhance students' global knowledge and cultural competency. The student will examine the dynamic transformation in nursing through exploration and investigation of major nursing issues. These issues are examined within the context of nursing history, nursing theories, nursing philosophy, legal issues, political activism, health care delivery systems, and the delivery of culturally competent patient care. Instructions for selected assignments will require students to incorporate various aspects of nursing education, healthcare, culture, ethics, and religion from world regions outside the United States.*

## Results

The initial implementation of the internationalized course design occurred in the Fall 2020 semester. There were three 8-week class cohorts. After each 8-week term, students enrolled in all three cohorts were asked to complete a course evaluation of the internationalized course and assignments. A total of 33 students responded to the survey. The survey consisted of 3 questions detailed in the following paragraphs.

### Question 1

*The Concepts of Professional Nursing course you have just completed was an internationalized course. Through careful selection of unit objectives, four-course learning outcomes were encompassed in the internationalization process. Learner-centered instruction and assignments were provided to help meet course objectives and enhance students' global knowledge and cultural competency. Do you feel this course increased your cultural competency?* The purpose of question one was to evaluate students' perceptions of the internationalized course's relevancy and gather their opinions on whether their cultural competency level increased. Thirty-three survey participants responded to question one.

All survey participants noted that they felt the course increased their cultural competency.

### Question 2

The purpose of question two was to gather information about which assignments the students most enjoyed. Participants responded to the following multiple-choice question:

*Which culturally based assignment did you most enjoy?*

- Globalization (Do you agree nursing has a role in global health care?)
- Sociocultural Self-Assessment (Understanding your own cultural beliefs)
- Considering culture (When You Don't Speak the Patient's Language)
- Cultural Stereotypes (Media influence)

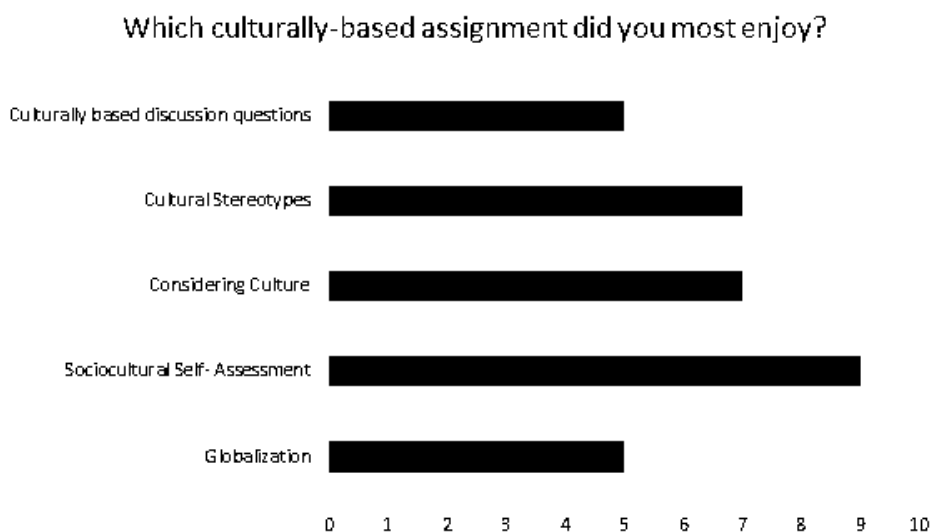


- Culturally based discussion questions

See figure 1 below

### Figure 1

Question 2: Which culturally based assignment did you most enjoy? N=33



### Question 3

What are your overall thoughts on taking an internationalized course?

The purpose of this open-ended question was to provide students with the opportunity to express their opinion on the internationalized course.

Students voiced sentiments such as;

*"This course helped me to understand the importance of being a culturally competent nurse as well as how to care for those of different cultural backgrounds and beliefs. This will ultimately prepare me to become an efficient nurse."*

*"Being culturally competent as a nurse or in healthcare as a whole is very important to understanding different groups and ethnicities. It is critical for positive patient outcomes and provider relationships to be learned about individuals before making generalizations or being stereotypical. The course was very enlightening; it shed light on my own cultural beliefs about other groups."*

*"I thought it was extremely interesting and made me think a lot about myself and how to be a better nurse for people. Thank you!"*

### **Discussion**

The NURS 3630 internationalization included culturally relevant learner-centered assignments and activities during four weeks of this eight-week course. Assignments were graded utilizing the program assignment rubric, and discussions were assessed using the program discussion rubric. Four culturally relevant assignments and discussion questions were integrated into the course for internationalization. The 8-week NURS 3630 course was internationalized in Fall 2020. The results of the student end-of-course survey revealed positive responses from students. All the students indicated they felt this course increased their cultural competency. Student feedback regarding their most enjoyable assignment varied with the Sociocultural Self-Assessment (Understanding Your Own Cultural Beliefs), with the highest score from all the other assignments and discussions. Perhaps this assignment was most enjoyed due to the self-reflection required to complete the paper. Self-reflection allows individuals to investigate and reflect on beliefs, values, and perspectives most desirably from an objective viewpoint. According to Black (2020), cultural assessments help individuals assess themselves and more easily recognize any preconceptions regarding cultures that differ from their own. Comments revealed students' viewpoints on the course's overall internationalization as a positive experience. Students indicated the course's information was very engaging and applicable to their working in a nursing environment.

### **Limitations**

There were three identified limitations in this initial internationalized course design process. One main limitation of this design process was the absence of culturally relevant rubrics. The small number of students who participated in the course evaluation survey at the end provided a very subjective view of the course design. Additionally, assessments were formative in nature rather than both formative and summative.

### **Future Suggestions**

There are several recommendations for this course's internationalization course design improvement. These suggestions apply to faculty, instructional designers, and students. They are outlined in the subsequent paragraphs.

### **Grading Rubrics**

Using the experiences learned from the first internationalized course offering, the course can be offered with the same assignments and papers preceding 8-week terms. However, culturally relevant grading rubrics should be used in future classes to efficiently capture the internationalized course's impact on students' cultural competency levels, knowledge level about different countries, and student understanding of the nursing profession from an international viewpoint. Numerous culturally emphasized grading rubrics are available online and from various organizations for faculty use when conducting student assessments.

### **Pre/Post-test**

Another faculty suggestion is to have students complete pre and post-tests to evaluate their learning level after completing the internationalized course. Pretest and post-test results can be compared to provide a more specific indication of student learning. Results could reveal the effectiveness of implemented instructional strategies, any changes in intercultural competence, and other pre and post-learning facets, such as country-specific knowledge, general cultural knowledge, and differences in approaches to nursing outside of the United States.

### **Professional Development**

Faculty professional development would help ensure the course execution and organization are evidence-based and meet student learning needs. According to Leask (2014), faculty who are inexperienced with the internationalization process should be mentored by faculty experienced with this process. Additionally, academic leaders can incorporate internationalization workshops throughout the academic year to help

promote faculty development in the course and curriculum internationalization.

### **Course Design**

Faculty seeking to internationalize courses should ensure quality in the course design. According to Lenert and Janes (2017), appropriate course design is one way to promote quality in course delivery. Financial resources and institutional support help support quality in online instruction (Lenert & Janes). Moreover, formative and summative assessments are a necessary course design component to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of course concepts.

### **Student Input**

Conducive learning environments include activities that encourage student input from different backgrounds and positively affect educational outcomes (IDEA, 2021). Providing students with the opportunity to share information about their respective cultures can increase student engagement and learning opportunities. Additionally, peers enrolled in the course will benefit from learning about their peers and culture.

Information from students that took the internationalized course regarding how they applied their learning to nursing practice after graduating would be helpful. This could be accomplished by administering an assessment of new nurse graduate perceptions of the impact of the internationalized course on their nursing practice. Faculty could then make course design improvements influenced by graduates' feedback.

### **Conclusion**

The process of internationalizing NURS 3630 was a noteworthy and meaningful event for students. The information presented from the internationalization of this course is quite applicable to the nursing discipline. The course allowed students to view nursing from a global perspective while taking time to assess their various client cultures, gather pertinent information, and provide culturally appropriate nursing care. Enrollees applying cultural information learned from this course will help advance nursing knowledge and practice, regardless of their working environment.

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## **Internationalization of a Course in Human Development**

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### **Abstract**

The author, a psychology instructor at an American university, describes the internationalization of his course in Human Growth and Development. The author argues that human development cannot be easily summarized by nature (i.e., biological and evolutionary predisposition) or nurture (i.e., learning through environment and experience). Development must be seen as a combination of both, and this makes the internationalization of courses in human development necessary. The internationalization of the course in question is set up with respect to cultural differences in individualism and collectivism. In each internationalization activity, students are asked to compare and contrast mainstream scientific rituals and practices in development, which is consonant with traditional human development textbooks, with indigenous rituals and practices, which are often left out of textbooks. The author provides detailed examples of how this process was carried out, what the objectives were and how they were assessed, as well as describes some of the problems he faced in doing so.

*Keywords:* internationalization, individualism, collectivism, developmental psychology, teaching psychology

In this article, the author describes the method for and reasoning behind internationalizing a Human Growth and Development course. At the author's university, Human Growth and Development is a prerequisite for the popular nursing major, which makes it a well-attended course.

### **The Nature vs. Nurture Debate**

A common debate in psychology aims to establish which factor is the most important for human development. This is colloquially known as the Nature/Nurture debate, terms were perhaps chosen more for their similarity in sound than for the purposes of description. Consequently, the



two are often confused. The same factors could be named more specifically, such as Biology vs. Experience, or Genotype vs. Phenotype.

If human development is a product of genetics and heredity (i.e., development is determined by Nature), then we would not attach any importance to the role played by culture. Consequently, cultures would vary only as far as the people representing them varied genetically. Such international differences could be examined in a laboratory or by a microscope. But the impact of culture goes much deeper than this.

### **Nature**

Many psychologists understand human development to be a natural process—no different from the growth of a tree in the forest or fish in the ocean. These psychologists describe human behavior, intelligence, personality, and so forth as products of genetics, heredity, and reflex—factors as easy to control as the ocean tide. Famous examples of evolutionary scientists who have influenced psychology include Charles Darwin and Francis Galton. Using genetics to explain developmental processes makes of psychology an experimental science.

At conception, the cells of an organism (zygote) begin to multiply, but they do so by following the pattern given them by their genetic code. This genetic code indicates whether the organism will have hair and what color it will be, but it also applies to other physical attributes and abilities. It is common knowledge, for example, that dogs are bred for hunting, protection, racing, and/or beauty. Prize horses are valuable precisely for the genes they can potentially pass on to future generations, and for which large fees are often paid.

Heredity explains why tall children are often born of tall parents. It also explains hair color, eye color, and body shape, as well as the likelihood and susceptibility of many neurological diseases (such as Alzheimer's Disease and Huntington's Chorea). If, by development, we mean "growing taller," then we cannot ignore the role played by heredity.

Francis Galton (1865) took this formulation even further when he argued that heredity could explain more than physical appearance and that it applied to mental capacities as well. He explained that intelligence, for example, was the product of heredity and breeding practices, though he

could not prove it. This was because there are always too many factors to control and, possibly, too few willing test subjects.

### **Nurture**

The opposing view concerning human development emphasizes the importance of the environment—that is, how an individual has been nurtured by others and their experiences. These scientists believe that humans and animals are born as blank slates (*tabula rasa*), and human development is a product of experience, learning, and environmental shaping. The American behaviorist John Watson is perhaps the most extreme example of this.

Watson saw human behavior as highly plastic: if the environment could be controlled, then humans could be shaped into anything the way a child shapes snow into a snowman. “Give me a dozen healthy infants,” Watson said,

well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take anyone at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggarman and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors. (1913, p. 10)

Watson admits in the next sentence that he had no evidence to support his claim. History tells us that he would not produce any evidence of this throughout the rest of his career. But his proposal neatly demonstrates the assumption of nurture psychologists: anybody can be shaped into anything.

### **Nature and Nurture**

The Nature/Nurture debate has no clear winner, so it is still a useful debate for undergraduate courses. Genetics alone cannot explain why some traits find expression and others do not, and learning alone cannot explain all human behaviors.

In genetics, the term “genotype” refers to the presence of a specific gene, and “phenotype” refers to that gene’s *expression*. This is because not all genes are expressed. For example, ducklings have a gene for developing a species-specific call (i.e., to recognize their mother’s voice),

but this only develops if the duckling is exposed to its mother's call during the embryonic stage (Gottlieb, 1981). There is a genetic–environment interaction that must occur before a genotype is expressed (Whitehead, 2018).

But environment alone is not sufficient, either. The laboratory of Watson, as well as his most famous follower B.F. Skinner, fell into disrepute because behavioral conditioning failed to explain the impact of heredity. In a series of famous and comical examples, researchers were unable to get animals to behave in a way that was contrary to their evolution: raccoons would not give coins away even when trained to do so, because raccoons take things; chickens that were trained to play baseball couldn't help chasing after the ball instead of running to the base, because chickens follow movement (which is how they find their food). Researchers Breland and Breland (1961) have provided four examples, each more outrageous than the last, of how evolution makes *tabula rasa* impossible.

### **Examining How Culture Shapes Development**

Evolution and biology are important for understanding some of why humans grow up the way that they do, but these alone do not give the full picture. Environments affect human growth, but, perhaps more importantly, culture affects what growth *means*.

Looking at the shape and size of the body as well as the facility with which the body is used might tell us something about when a child will become independent. Indeed, the growth of the nervous system and brain predict when a child will master language or literacy. But the majority of human development has to do with cultural expectations. This can be seen by looking at development only in the United States.

### **History of Childhood in the United States**

Until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, childhood terminated at the sexual and physical maturation of the human body, which occurs somewhere between the ages of 12 and 14. At this age, humans are capable of reproduction and work. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it was not uncommon for these young men and women to begin starting and supporting their families. It is no coincidence that few people attended school beyond junior high (i.e., eighth grade).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, American psychologist G. Stanley Hall proposed a new stage of development between childhood and adulthood called “adolescence” (1904). While the term has roots in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, its usage did not become common until Hall’s book. The popularity of the new stage of childhood cannot be viewed separately from the disappearance of factory and farming jobs, which now went to machines in the increasingly efficient manufacturing industry.

It is no surprise that the establishment of the National Child Labor Committee, which kept children out of the labor market, occurred the same year that Hall published his book. These also coincided with compulsory schooling through the age of 17, also known as high school. Even though 13-year-olds routinely worked full-time jobs and took care of families in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> it was scarcely believable that a 17 year-old had the responsibility necessary to do so.

Today we are in the midst of another extension of childhood, which has been named by yet another American developmental psychologist. It is “emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2014). Now young adults are expected to remain in school until their early to mid-twenties before they are thought fit to begin a job and take care of themselves.

### **Cultural Significance of Development**

A few important developments are tied to biology. At birth, an infant (literally “without speech”) is helpless and requires constant protection and attention. By six months, infants give an indication that they recognize their native tongue (Kuhl, et al., 2005). Over the next 12 months, the infant’s facility with movement and language develops rapidly until they are mobile and have a rudimentary grasp of the phonemes of their native tongue. By five, or early childhood, children exhibit mastery of language and begin developing massive vocabularies. They are also developing rudimentary literacy (which is generally mastered a few years later).

While these may sound like natural processes, they are highly shaped by culture. Children only develop recognition for phonemes if spoken to or interacted with, and this can only occur in a society where these expectations are made apparent by interactions with the children (Whitehead, 2020). It would not occur if, for example, infants were left in

incubators where they were fed by tube. The importance of literacy, and thereby the significance of learning to read and write, only makes sense in a society that esteems the printed word (such as ours). The printing press was not invented until the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and reading did not become a common expectation for another several decades. Also in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, children were thought to be little adults—that is, different only in size and the ability to procreate.

The same may be said of the many other so-called stages of human development. Students often ask the following questions, which are more cultural than biological:

- When will I know if I'm ready to handle responsibilities?
- When will I know if I'm ready to start a family?
- Start a relationship?
- Done growing up?
- Mature?
- And so on.

### **Internationalizing a University Course in Human Development**

Culture shapes development. Therefore culture is essential to understanding the process of development. It is like spending an afternoon outside in the sunshine: after a while, a person no longer realizes how much the sun has washed out the color of what they see. It is not until they go inside that they realize the color distortion. In order to recognize how culture shapes development, students must be exposed to other cultures.

The best and, for this, unreplicable method for exposing students to other cultures is to ask that they do so directly—that is, by having them visit a culture different from their own. Reading about a cultural practice such as Quinceañera, the Spanish coming of age ritual for women, confronts students only with book reading, and possibly a video documentary. Such an experience is passive and is a practice of consumption. Superior to consuming information would be experiencing a Quinceañera directly, such as attending the celebration and talking to the people involved. Unfortunately, costs and time constraints prohibited an experiential internationalization program. Instead, existing models and examples of course internationalization were followed as guides (DeCuir, 2017; Medlin, 2017; Okonkwo, 2017).

### **Summary of Procedure**

The present internationalization program followed three steps. Students were asked to:

1. Reflect on a significant developmental achievement in our society (such as “coming of age”)
2. Confront, by way of documentary or lecture, the same developmental achievement as it unfolds in a different culture (such as Indigenous Alaskans)
3. Compare and contrast the two cultural perspectives as they pertained to the developmental achievement in question.

The program was repeated eight times and covered the following topics: prenatal care, childbirth, child education, parenting styles, adolescence, coming of age, marriage, grief, and mourning the loss of a loved one (that is, death and dying rituals).

### **Internationalization Program Learning Objectives**

The principal objective of the internationalization program was as follows: “Students will understand the cultural and global differences in human development.” Two supplementary objectives were as follows:

1. Students will recognize multiple viewpoints in interpreting developmental psychological theory, specifically individualist and collectivist.
2. Students will understand the role played by cultural and religious beliefs in theories of human development. (*See Appendix A for the assessment rubric*).

### **Individualism and Collectivism**

Cultures can be divided broadly into two categories: individualist and collectivist. These cultural categories determine how personality is defined, decisions are made, success is determined, and so on.

Individualist cultures emphasize the solitary individual. Examples include the USA, Canada, Continental Europe, and Great Britain. In individualistic cultures, success is determined by individual accomplishment. Independence and self-reliance are held in high esteem. In individualist cultures, competition is important and extends to all

contexts—intelligence, emotion, kindness, sociality, size, strength, happiness, and on and on.

Collectivist cultures emphasize the family or group. Examples include Central and South America, and South and East Asia. In collectivist cultures, success is determined by how well the family or group is doing. Working together and supporting a family are held in high esteem. There is a great family and nationalistic pride, and competition is generally only between groups (such as Japan vs. China in a World Cup match).

With the exception of the biologically dependent dimensions of development such as puberty, every aspect of human development in the United States is influenced by the country's individualism. Children are rank-ordered in terms of their reading and speech abilities, intelligence levels (cognitive and emotional), and how well they get along with others. Marriage difficulties and irresponsibility are traced to the individual person and not, for example, their families. Falling in love is a highly personal practice in the US, and arranged marriages, which are common in collectivist countries, are scarcely conceivable in the US. Weddings in the US are about the couple being married, but in collectivist cultures, they are about the families involved.

For each area of internationalization implementation, the course textbook (Kuther, 2017) was used as an example of development in an individualistic culture. Like nearly all human development textbooks published in the United Kingdom and the United States, Kuther's (2017) text presents a strong bias in the direction of neutral scientific reasoning. Such textbooks take for granted that human development is something that can be studied using empirical methods of experimentation and that there are no other reasonable alternatives to this approach.

While life expectancy and birth mortality rates are evidence of the benefits of a neutral and scientific approach to human development, human civilization has survived for 3300 years without it. In the internationalization component of each section, students were introduced to a model that is not based on the sovereignty of science but based on among others, religious beliefs, spirituality, ancient Indigenous practices, and myth.

### **Implementation Process**

The internationalization of the Human Development course complemented the existing curriculum as it had been designed by the instructor. The course had been previously taught by dividing the subject into the following stages: prenatal development, infant development, early childhood development, late childhood development, adolescent development, early and middle adult development, late adult development, and Death/Dying. For each of these, an internationalized perspective was added.

### **Prenatal Development**

As it is taught in conventional textbooks, the subject of prenatal development concerns nutrition practices for pregnant women (such as vitamins, diet, drug use, etc.) as well as evidence-based delivery practices. After learning about prenatal nutritional advice from obstetrics experts, students watched a documentary (Northern Health, BC, 2016) where Tsimshian, Tahltan, Haisla, Gitksan, and Nisga'a women described their Indigenous Canadian birth practices. For example, it is absolutely essential that the family be present for the birth and not, as generally happens with modern medical procedures, restricting the number of people allowed in the delivery room to two—a partner and a support person (such as at Bryn Mawr Women's Health Associates; Main Line Health, 2019). In the documentary, the indigenous women discuss where conventional medical practices interfere with cultural practices (to the detriment of everyone). After birth, it is not uncommon for indigenous Canadian families to bring home the placenta and bury it along with a tree, so signifying the complementarity of the new life and Nature.

### **Infant Development**

The two main conventional themes for infant development are physical growth (both body and nervous system) and its attendant changes (such as motor control and sense-organization). Social development and relationships begin shortly thereafter and signify early childhood. During infancy, the newborn is entirely dependent on its caretakers. The need for supervision, protection and nutrition are natural—that is, these needs must be met regardless of culture. But how they are met varies. For example,



the need for affection has been noted by American psychologists (Harlow, 1958), but the person who plays this role can vary from culture to culture. Even in individualistic cultures, it is not unusual for a family member to play the childcare role. After exploring these topics from a conventional and individualistic perspective, students watched a documentary about childrearing practices in indigenous Africa (Parenting in Africa, 2014). The documentary made clear the adage that it takes a village to raise a child. The community was essential in its support of newborns. The shift from infant to child occurred seamlessly as villagers doubled as childcare providers, teachers, trainers, and so on.

### **Early Child Development**

At six months, children begin to recognize other people as others as well as develop self-awareness. While bodily growth is still rapid and thus nutrition continues to be important, social development begins. A common feature of this development is attachment theory (1969). In individualist cultures, attachment is primarily between the child and the primary caretaker (often the mother). This puts an enormous amount of pressure on the single relationship, and children either learn to trust this singularly important person or develop independence and self-sufficiency. In Part II of the childrearing in indigenous Africa documentary, students see how the child can learn to trust entire communities or families.

### **Additional Topics**

For late childhood development, students watched a documentary on indigenous American rituals associated with growing up; for adolescent development, students watched a documentary about the caste system in India; for early adulthood, a documentary about a Quinceañera celebration; for late adulthood, students read a book chapter on indigenous approaches to old age; and for death and dying, a documentary about Día de los Muertos.

### **Assessment of Projects**

Each internationalization topic began with a discussion of human development practices and rituals with which the students were most familiar. This generally followed a textbook-based lecture from the

instructor and took an entire day. The second day of the week began with a documentary or guided reading from a nontraditional perspective (as described above). This was followed by a student-led compare and contrast activity where students identified areas of overlap as well as areas of disagreement between the cultural approaches.

Student responses, as shown in Table 1, were gathered and organized into three categories based on awareness of cultural differences as they pertain to human development: exceeds expectations (e.g., Student not only accepts contradictory developmental claims, but discusses how they play out differently across cultures), meets expectations (e.g., Student is able to accept contradictory developmental claims as equally true), and fails to meet expectations (e.g., Student is unable to accept contradictory developmental claims as equally true, but must instead choose that which is most true).

**Table 1**  
*Rubric for Learning Outcomes*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds standards</b>	<b>Meets Standards</b>	<b>Fails to Meet Standards</b>
<b>Students will recognize multiple viewpoints.</b>	Student not only accepts contradictory developmental claims but traces these differences to cultural and religious norms.	Student is able to accept contradictory developmental claims as equally true.	Student is unable to accept contradictory developmental claims as equally true, but must instead choose that which is most true.
<b>Students will understand the role played by cultural and religious belief in theories of development</b>	Student gives scientific, religious, and/or cultural explanations for developmental achievements, and compares/contrasts their explanatory usefulness for different social groups.	In addition to giving scientific explanations for developmental achievements, the student is able to discuss their religious or cultural significance.	Student cannot see beyond the norms of their own cultural/social/religious group (including science) as it pertains to describing or explaining developmental achievements.

For example, students were asked the following open-response question on a midterm: *Kerry has just completed her Quinceañera training and celebration. Is she ready for a serious romantic relationship?*

### **Exceeds Expectations**

One student wrote:

“Ready for a serious romantic relationship” is a social, cultural, and religious judgment and will vary from culture to culture and community to community. In Kerry’s community, which celebrates Quinceañera, the training and celebration alone signify her readiness to become a woman and begin a serious romantic relationship.

This student realizes the cultural factors at play in determining when a person is ready for a serious relationship. By noting how the training and celebration alone signify Kerry’s readiness, the student recognizes the comparable unimportance of “getting a college degree” or “living on her own” as indicators of readiness. This student could likely predict what it would mean to be a good mother or father in a given community, or what might constitute a satisfying life.

### **Meets Expectations**

One student wrote: “Yes, based on the Quinceañera training, everything she needs to know should have been covered and she is now ready.”

This student, who was born and raised in Georgia, is making a judgment that is at odds with their culture. But the reader can nearly detect some resignation with which this student has suspended their own culturally biased understanding of what qualifies a person for a serious relationship.

### **Fails to Meet Expectations**

One student wrote: “I do not think Kerry is ready because she is still young. 15 is too young and she won’t understand commitment.”

This student has in mind a single answer to this question that is correct regardless of culture. That is to say, only this student’s culture is doing it the correct way, and all other cultures are mistaken.

## Results

To assess learning objective One, students were asked to compare individualism and collectivism in the custom of marriage ceremonies. Half of the students met expectations by demonstrating an understanding of how this cultural difference could impact the selection of a partner, the decision to get married, or the organization of the ceremony. Two exceeded expectations by describing possible conflicts between different cultures, particularly if both are present during the same ceremony. Fifteen students failed to meet expectations by speaking vaguely of the differences between individualism and collectivism, or by defining them in similar terms (e.g., “in the end, people will do whatever they please”), which fails to capture the influence of culture.

To assess learning objective Two, students were asked to reflect on US customs surrounding childbirth and to explain whether these customs were influenced by science, religion, or culture. One student exceeded expectations by comparing and contrasting home birth with laboratory birth. The majority of students, however, described US childbirth practices as a monolithic practice (“childbirth in the US is always social because of baby showers”) or spoke vaguely of customs (e.g. “sometimes science is used but it’s up to the parents/doctor”).

The disparity in total participants assessed, Table 2, can be explained by a scheduling irregularity that took place during the semester, which was due to the early emergence of COVID-19.

**Table 2**  
*Assessment of Learning Outcomes*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Fails to meet</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	2	17	15	34
2	1	3	20	24

## Challenges

The internationalization of this course occurred the week before the semester began and, consequently, the instructor took on too great a

change to the course. As seen above, every area of human development included an internationalization component. In retrospect, it would have been better to spend a week introducing the internationalization process, then choose only three or four topics to engage. This would have provided more opportunity for discussion and feedback rather than covering as much content as possible.

Students quickly fell into the habit of saying “everything is relative,” and struggled to understand why, for example, one community values medical advice while another does not.

Finally, students had trouble letting go of the biases of their own culture—namely, the eminence of modern science. Consequently, any argument that was not endorsed by a scientist was criticized for no other reason than its being nonscientific. This was evident in the assessment of Learning Objective 2, “Students will understand the role played by cultural and religious belief in theories of development.” As mentioned earlier, the human development course is a prerequisite for nursing majors at the school. The perspective of Western medical science, however, was not easily challenged. With good reason, these students were having difficulty suspending the medical approach they were learning in their other courses. Extra time is necessary to work with students on their assumptions about health and wellness, which are heavily biased in the direction of experimental science. The importance of an integrated approach—where experimental medical science merges with nontraditional and/or humanistic medicine—has been documented in detail elsewhere (Aho, 2018; Heidegger, 2001; Kleinman, 1986; Whitehead, 2019). But suffice it to say that medical experts have estimated that one in three adults in the United States has used or relied on unconventional medical practices (Eisenberg et al., 1993).

### **Conclusion**

It is the author’s understanding that an intercultural or internationalized approach is essential for teaching human development. The human development canon popular in the United States is not without cultural influence. What it means to be a child, adolescent, and adult has changed considerably even in the last 120 years (Postman, 1994).

In order to best internationalize a course, human development or otherwise, the author recommends a slow-going approach that emphasizes depth over breadth. The shift in awareness requires a lot of practice and benefits from feedback. This would mean spending extra time going over the answers after they were submitted, rather than rushing on to the next topic. For example, if a student recognizes a cultural difference, then they could be encouraged to examine the consequences of such differences instead of stopping the inquiry there. This would be most beneficial for the students who conclude that “everyone is different,” but who look no further. The differences are not arbitrary or irrelevant, however much they might seem to be. Rather than linger with students in the uncertainty of cultural differences, the author sped along to the next topic.

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## **Internationalizing the Language Arts Curriculum: Process, Strategies, and Challenges**

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### **Abstract**

The role of the English language, used around the world for international diplomacy, aviation, health, economics, technology, education, and research, cannot be overstated. In places where English is not the first nor an official language, the task for second language teachers in elementary schools through college to perfect students' language arts skills is daunting. This Course Internationalization project for Middle Grades Reading and English Language Arts pre-service teacher candidates sought to study the process, challenges, and strategies of teaching English in Ghana. The project further highlights the teacher candidates' observations of how teachers in Ghana taught their students to read fluently and express themselves clearly in various content area courses. Candidates who traveled abroad to the teaching sites in Ghana as part of the internationalization process researched current literature for specific English language teaching strategies that worked for different populations in non-English speaking countries and how these were likely to influence their thinking on teaching English Language Arts in the United States. They also had the opportunity to interview Ghanaian teachers, and gather data on their teaching strategies and the challenges they faced as English language teachers. The initial course outcomes were intended to support further creative instructional programs for teachers and students to boost the teaching of reading and English.

*Keywords:* teaching ESL, course internationalization, reading strategies for ELL

The use of English as a medium for international communication across the globe has been the norm for over a century. According to Muciaccia (2012), the study of world history shows that the spread of English around the globe has been prolific, first influenced by colonization

and lately by globalization. Many countries, especially those in Africa and Southeast Asia, have had challenges in their educational systems. English remains the key in many aspects of education, research, and communication to operate fully on the world stage. Many students in Africa and other parts of the world are usually taught in their native language. Still, they have to learn to think and communicate, written and orally in English, to understand the content they read in science, social studies, mathematics, recent digital formats, and the arts. This process creates a task for English language teachers, many of whom may not have been properly trained or would likely have problems with local accents and other teaching practices and strategies.

It is well known that colonizers did not only introduce English but also foreign religion, and even alien cultures. Many of these colonized countries, especially in anglophone Africa, were literally forced to re-organize their national lives to suit the thought patterns of these alien cultures. As such, local languages are used widely and taught in Ghanaian schools, but every student has to learn the English language. According to Kim (2011), English learners (ELs) are students unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, often come from non-English speaking homes and backgrounds, and typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses. By that definition, nearly all students in Ghana are ELLs (Taylor, 2016). Ghanaian English learners needed to learn the language to read books and even sing hymns in churches introduced to over-shadow their local traditions, religions, and rites and, as a result, fit the category of English Learners. While these expectations do not override the need to understand and use the native language in schools, there is tension between the roles the local language and English play in the home culture that creates challenges for those struggling to learn and those trying to find creative ways to teach English to young students in primary, middle and secondary schools in the country.

In Ghana, there is also a more significant problem of how diverse local accents and spoken languages affect learning and English language use. These problems add to the usual challenges of teaching English as a second language. Many of these language learners will have to translate from their first language before making any sense in the second language.

Many students in Ghanaian schools also need to understand and apply basic reading instruction skills – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension – different from how the local languages are taught and learned.

These concerns formed the basis for teacher education candidates in a US higher education institution to study how teachers in non-English speaking countries like Ghana taught their students to learn, read, and communicate in English for present and future use. The teacher candidates in this project were to research the strategies, the impact English Language had on the different populations in a select number of non-English speaking countries, and how these were similar to or different from their culminating experiences in Ghanaian classrooms.

### **Literature Review**

Researchers have delved deeply into tasks facing teachers of English in countries outside the English-speaking world. The English Language, having evolved from so many other tongues, both ancient and modern, has posed countless problems with its phonology, syntax, and morphology throughout its developmental changes to modern times. So vast is its lexical range that even as far back as Shakespeare's time, it contained some 400,000 words (Vito, n.d.). These words and the new ones added periodically, pose many problems and confusion for many non-English Speakers because they may not have resources like books and teachers to effectively teach the language to their students. Crystal (2012) paints a clear picture of the frustration many non-English learners when he writes:

And if English is not your mother tongue, you may still have mixed feelings about it. You may be strongly motivated to learn it because you know it will put you in touch with more people than any other language, but at the same time, you know it will take a great deal of effort to master it, and you may begrudge that effort. Having made progress, you will feel pride in your achievement and savor the communicative power you have at your disposal. Still, you may nonetheless feel that mother-tongue speakers of English have an unfair advantage over you. And if you live in a country where the survival of your own language is threatened by the success of English you may feel envious, resentful, or angry.

Many Ghanaian English learners would easily reference the sentiments above. Still, it should be noted that globalization has also played its part in ensuring the spread and use of English in many countries. Institutions in non-English speaking countries across the globe may use their national languages in teaching their students. Still, they have to teach their students the English language to ensure that what they share with the rest of the world in research, media, medicine, engineering, politics, and international relations is clearly understood. At one extreme, English exists in a hegemonic relationship with the local language such that both the local language and people are marginalized, while in other areas, English functions as a means of empowerment for its new-found speakers (Clyne & Sharifian, 2008, Sharifian, 2009). This relationship has had a profound impact on how people in these colonized countries view the power of English in their midst.

The English language in Ghana is seen as a way toward success through the educational process. The country's history of colonization and being considered "a developing country" means citizens face marginalization from the developed world. Unfortunately, English is a second language in Ghana and is not taught the same way in primary, middle, and secondary schools. Schools in urban centers have a clear advantage over those in rural areas. Schools in these underserved and under-resourced districts in the country are at a disadvantage because they do not have the right personnel to teach, the right books to use, or in many instances, the school buildings to house their students. Unfortunately, the same revised national curriculum (NaCCA, 2019) is recommended for every school. The same basic tests are administered nationwide every year for placements into secondary schools and programs in the universities. The result is a wide difference in test scores which creates frustration for parents and a huge problem for government to fix the disparities. The truth of the Ghanaian situation is that many people see English language acquisition as the path for upward mobility. This further means that those who have the money to place their children into private schools where the teaching of the English Language is a priority see it as a good investment for the future while the poor ones are left with very few options. Taylor (2016) states that Ghana's educational system is highly centralized, and

the Ministry of Education and its agencies are responsible for everything within the system. Dokua-Sasu (2020) reports that compulsory education in Ghana spans eleven years. As of the 2019/2020 academic year, formal education up to the secondary level was free in Ghana, with 404,856 students enrolled as of March 2020.

English is the medium of instruction from primary four to tertiary institutions in Ghana. Every student from Junior high to Senior High School should obtain a passing grade to progress to the next level of education (Gyimah et al., 2014). Unfortunately, available data from the Ghana 2013 National Education Assessment Summary of Findings indicate that students from the Northern regions of the country have lower grades in the English format terminal grade examination when compared to those from the other regions of the country, especially the south. The national data showed that 42% of students were below competency and proficiency in English for Primary P3 students, 30% had minimum competency and, 28% were proficient. For P6 students, 31% were below competency, 30% minimum competency, and 39% proficient. There are slight differences in the 2016 report where 29% of students in P4 were below competency, 33% were in the minimum range, and 37% were proficient. The P6 data remained in the 30%, 34%, and 36% range for all the competency areas. These results indicate a need for extra work in creative teaching methods that target schools in many deprived regions in the country's north. There should be poverty alleviation policies to help the population in the north because if the students are hungry, come to schools and sit on the bare floors, and in many cases do not have teachers, it will be difficult for them to compete with students in other parts of the nation.

The English language is also socially diagnostic because it appears to suggest that speakers of the language belong to a desirable class, or are engaged in sought-after activities in society and thus 'creating a language-based system of social stratification that favors a small, educated African elite' (McLaughlin, 2009). Not only is English the official language in Ghana, as in many sub-Saharan countries, some middle-class parents even go beyond their means to ensure their children can speak English at home even though it is not their first language. Dako and Quarcoo (2017) claimed that Ghanaians are proud of their competence in English even to

the point that in a highly competitive Ghanaian educational environment, parents – irrespective of their educational background – believe children will perform better academically if they are exposed to only English in school and at home. Quarcoo (2006) has also found that the majority of parents believed that early and exclusive exposure to English promoted higher academic performance in the child.

### **Study Context: The Process of Course Internationalization**

As part of the overall Internationalization and Intercultural learning outcomes for Reading and Teaching Language Arts courses, all candidates in MGED 4423 (Teaching Language Arts) and MGED 4439 (Reading in the Middle Grades) were expected to:

1. Choose a country in either Scandinavia, Southeast Asia, South America, or Africa, then investigate how children in these countries learn English and how they can excel in other content areas when they come to the United States.
2. Interview university faculty from these regions and around the United States on how they succeeded in learning how to read in English, and what instructional strategies were used in teaching English and reading in these parts of the world.
3. Complete a month-long study abroad experience in Ghana, observe and teach in schools as part of a Practicum course requiring 60 hours of classroom observation, collect data from interviews with local teachers, administrators and parents, and share their experiences with faculty and students on our campus and at conferences.

### **Student Learning Objectives**

The global learning objectives applied to the internationalization of the courses included:

1. Exploring the role that teachers play in helping students to think and learn with texts in the English Language.
2. Understanding the complexities of teaching English, reading English texts, and connecting these texts with reading in the content areas. (Emphasis on Non-English-Speaking country like Ghana),

3. Recognizing the need for global understanding of the essential role the English language plays in the lives of an increasingly diverse population in schools in the United States, and
4. Relating what has been learned in the class to international contexts by investigating how English is taught in Ghana, and how those strategies can impact diverse students in the United States.

### **Intercultural Knowledge**

As active members of the world community, the main objective in this internationalization project was to help candidates fully understand how different students in diverse settings struggle daily to learn the English Language, and by learning directly from the cultures these students grew up in. Bennett (2008) defines intercultural knowledge and competence as a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts. One of the objectives of the study abroad trip to Ghana was to ensure that Black students from an HBCU have an opportunity, not only to learn about the Ghanaian culture and interact with its people but also to go into its schools, learn from teachers, students and parents in order to study and understand the educational system. The candidates on the trip also observed different teaching strategies and classroom behaviors. They documented them to see if these could be applied to students in their classrooms back in the United States after they completed their program of study. There was also an expectation that the numerous cultural lessons the candidates experienced would add to their understanding of the different backgrounds and cultures they will have to work with later in their classrooms.

At the beginning of the process, candidates were asked to explore strategies for teaching English in countries where English is a second language. The internationalized courses involved an average of five candidates in the classes per semester. They were designed to take 30% of the total grade for the class to ensure that candidates took this intercultural learning and knowledge seriously as part of their preparation for their final clinical semester. At the end of the semester, these classroom projects centered on research papers that specifically examined how English was taught in Norway, Brazil, the Philippines, Spain, Cameroon, and Ghana.



Candidates in these classes shared their findings to assist those who could join the month-long study abroad trip. The class research papers were not evaluated differently among the two groups. All candidates in the class had the same end-of-semester class evaluation rubric for their papers. Still, the three candidates who took part in the four-week culminating activity in Ghana used an observation rubric (see Appendix A: Observation Rubric). While intercultural learning goals were important to the internationalization process, only candidates who traveled abroad had the chance to live those experiences. These candidates observed, taught different classes, and interviewed teachers in four private schools in three country regions. They also looked at the challenges and strategies associated with teaching English in Ghana. They added the information they got from the observation rubric in their final reports at the end of the trip.

Another important aspect of the process was the application of Global Competency Goals which were intended to assist candidates in becoming global citizens later in their professional lives. Among these goals were:

- A mindset that appreciates and respects other cultural perspectives and norms (open-minded; nonjudgmental; accepts differences),
- Experiences in multicultural environments either abroad or their own country
- Adaptability and flexibility in unfamiliar situations
- International awareness, knowledge and understanding, and
- Practice communicating effectively across cultural and linguistic boundaries (Shandler, 2015). Candidates who took the study abroad trip had the opportunity to actualize these goals in their interactions with cooperating teachers, school administrators, students in the schools they visited for observation, people in shopping malls, and the realities they encountered as they traveled around the country.

Candidates spent the first week in the capital city of Accra observing teachers and classrooms in two schools. At the end of each day, the team met and discussed their experiences, documented their interview

notes, and what they learned in the classrooms. The candidates were further tasked with writing weekly reports based on all the daily notes and experiences for each of the other cities we visited. We spent the second week in Cape Coast, where candidates were assigned different classes to observe and teach five hours a day. After our classroom activities, candidates took an extra class with an English professor at the University of Cape Coast on the history of slavery and the role of women in Ghana before we took a trip to the Slave Castle after the third day. There was also an extra opportunity for the candidates to observe a parent-teacher conference before traveling to the Ashanti region.

In Kumasi, candidates continued their observation and taught for the same number of hours a day in another private school. In addition to this, the candidates had an opportunity to engage the teachers and administrators of the school in a professional development meeting. We continued our cultural tours around the city in the afternoons and wrote our specific reports at the end of the week. The group spent the fourth and final week back in Accra with more teacher interviews, classroom observations, teaching, and cultural tours.

### **Explanation of Assessment and Assessment Methods Used**

This course internationalization project went through two phases: the in-class research paper and the practicum final report after the study abroad experiences. The research component on the final grade in the course was 30% or 180 points out of students' overall score total of 600 class points. The remaining points went to Chapter Quizzes, Midterm Exams, Technology WebQuests Assignment, and ESL Lesson Plans. The assessment criteria for the research paper ranged from students' understanding of the purpose of the research, literature review, analysis of data, grammar, and mechanics. At the end of the practicum experiences in Ghana, candidates' final reports were assessed on the strength of analyzing the data they collected from teachers and their observation experiences in the classrooms they visited.

### **Discussion**

This course internationalization project in Ghana sought to confirm what Willard (2009) described as a way to demonstrate the benefits of

being a globally competent teacher, which included extensive exposure to a wide variety of learning styles and cultural backgrounds, firsthand experience in effective, hands-on teaching approaches, in-depth exposure to foreign cultures, and a fresh, valued perspective on education. Back on campus, the candidates analyzed their data and put their findings together as part of their practicum grades. Apart from the teaching they witnessed, the level of understanding and empathy with the diversity they found enhanced the candidates' global awareness. Their personal narratives were evidence and further demonstrated their ability to re-assess their own cultural values and open their minds to inspire personal skills building. The candidates commented on a variety of English teaching strategies such as brain breaks, hands-on learning, the extensive use of visual aids, and classroom discussion. Some of them felt that choral reading, the use of poetry, and encouraging students to speak English while in school were helpful. Candidates learned from their cooperating teachers that many of their students easily picked the English Language from their friends and teachers at school. There were extensive comments on the lack of resources like books, access to technology tools, and instructional materials hindering effective teaching and learning of English. Candidates also learned that the government had not provided enough textbooks to meet the requirements of the new curriculum written for schools in the country. Private schools like those we visited could not provide all the textbooks, library, and technology resources needed to improve teaching and learning. Despite all the problems these schools had, teachers improvised as much as possible to ensure that the language was taught well.

It should also be noted that the specific aim from the NaCCA, Ghana's Ministry of Education (2019) National Curriculum document for basic schools, is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a good command of the spoken and written word to enable them to:

- acquire the basic skills that will help them decode any text;
- read age-level texts easily, fluently, and with comprehension;
- cultivate the habit of reading widely for pleasure and information;

- acquire a wide stock of vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structures as well as linguistic conventions for easy reading, good writing, and speaking;
- write clearly, accurately, and coherently, adapting their first language style in a range of contexts for varied purposes and audiences;
- read with pleasure literary materials and appreciate an outstanding stock of literary repertoire;
- acquire the skill of self-expression and be able to communicate their ideas to different audiences to achieve the intended purpose; and,
- develop and cultivate the skill and ability to read the lines, in-between the lines and beyond the lines, and find hidden meaning and ideas.

The task of accomplishing these goals is enormous, not just for privately-run schools, but also for public schools that have difficulty meeting these competencies. In many instances, the truth is that despite the difficulties many teachers in the country faced, those we interacted with knew how to pull the best out of their students and further encourage them to learn the language. Teachers taught large classes with few resources, but they were well supervised to ensure effective teaching and learning took place in their classrooms. They also had to ensure that their students were competitive in the Basic Education Certificate Examinations, which were administered in English.

### **Challenges and Recommendations for Future Projects**

While our candidates enjoyed the overall outcomes of the project, there were areas needing improvements for the next in-class project and the trip abroad. Faculty and student objectives can be retained with some modifications depending on the focus of the trip for the year. It would be helpful if candidates were allowed to present their own educational topics and objectives not only as a sign of promoting diversity of ideas but as a way to encourage authentic projects that candidates can continue working on later in their professional lives. Appropriate program changes must be made to ensure that candidates have their practicum experiences and complete the research component if this need occurs. Lack of

communication and planning with international and external partners can also present challenges. It should be noted that while extensive planning is always a key in projects like these, realities on the ground can change and pose a lot of problems for the team. There will be classrooms to observe, teachers to interview, and other logistics to put in place before the trip starts. It is always essential for the observation and interview protocols to be completed jointly by both parties (local and international) to ensure everything moves smoothly when the visiting team arrives at the observation sites.

Over the years, many candidates have not made the trips because of financial problems or fear of traveling abroad. Offices of International Education should continue to support candidates to apply for external funding from programs like the Gilman Scholarship and other grant-awarding institutions. Study abroad program coordinators will also have to start promoting and recruitment efforts early to give potential candidates a chance to raise the program and other associated fees to complete the internationalization project and pay for the study abroad experience. Program coordinators need to explain the importance and benefits of the project as more than something candidates have to complete for a letter grade at the end of the semester. Candidates should also know the benefits of learning about cultures and how such knowledge can be translated later into their own classrooms and teaching lives. They need to understand how children in other parts of the world learn and use the English Language so that if they encounter any of these diverse children in their classrooms, their presence will not come as a shock. The pandemic has also exacerbated the challenges associated with such projects because candidates will give a lot of consideration to health issues as well as those related to international travel.

### **Successes and Solutions for Teaching English in Ghana**

At the end of the candidates' trips and assignments, the consensus was that there were similarities in how English is taught in American schools, but some differences were evident. The extensive use of choral reading and drills in many of the schools was to ensure comprehension as well as the first steps to self-expression and communication. As one of the visiting candidates aptly stated: "reliance on oral communication is one of

the best tips for teaching English to non-native speakers. The more students talk to each other in English, the better their overall understanding of the language grows.” Teachers of English in Ghana have a difficult task, but their commitment to the profession remains the bedrock to preparing young children who have to use a second language for many of their daily tasks in school. It is expected that the government’s commitment to free education and incentives for the training of qualified teachers will eventually help students learn to effectively learn all the domains (listening comprehension, grammar, and reading) of the English Language.

The current pandemic has affected even the best-resourced school districts in the United States of America. This means that schools in rural communities in Ghana, which are already struggling to teach English to their students, could be further restricted in their efforts to deliver effective instruction. Computers and internet access, availability of electricity to power these machines, and other learning tools are in short supply. In many villages across the country, classes are often held in rooms without tables and chairs. The current government is working to ensure that more classrooms are built to accommodate public school students in rural districts and other remote parts of the country.

Additionally, recent incentives given to trained teachers (many of them prefer to stay in the cities and urban areas) will encourage these individuals to accept postings to the rural regions so that children in those places are not left behind in learning and using the English Language. The best strategy left in these circumstances will be individual creativity and improvised methods from teachers with the hope of making some minimal successes with these children. What is concerning and should also be noted is that the revised Ghanaian curriculum for the English language (P1 through P6) sets bold goals for all school children who eventually take the same basic education examination irrespective of location. These make the training of quality English teachers an indispensable imperative for the country and its educational future.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, this attempt at internationalizing the reading and language arts courses for the Middle Grades Education student-teachers had its

challenges, but it was successful. The candidates' experiences as they interacted with various groups in Ghana remain priceless because they allowed them an opportunity to learn about a different culture with different instructional strategies, behavioral management tactics, and a fresh perspective on the day-to-day routines in African schools. Field experiences like the one these candidates went through offered extra insights into teaching than what many of their peers can get from sitting in a college classroom or going through the same routines every semester. Additionally, when redesigning the project for future candidates, it is important to consider the role the English language plays for other teachers, especially in public schools in rural areas. This initial trip was designed mainly around private schools. The next project will consider public schools in under-resourced and poor districts to investigate any differences in teaching and learning the English language in the country.

At the end of the one-month stay in Ghana, the teacher candidates had a chance to share their experiences at a conference and in various class discussions. They also learned that Ghanaian students perform differently based on regional and economic differences. Unfortunately, the schools classified as "good schools" in the country do not exist everywhere in Ghana. Candidates also learned through their experiences with the new friends they made while studying abroad in Ghana. There was a clear wish that other candidates in the class would have had an opportunity to travel on this interesting experience. Still, personal and financial challenges stood in their way.

In the end, it was found that every study abroad project or site will present unique circumstances and problems that must be closely studied and carefully handled to maximize candidates' transformational experiences. This task will require extra faculty training, creative thinking, innovative approaches, and patience to help students learn the new intercultural knowledge desired to improve their personal and professional experiences before entering the teaching profession.

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### Appendix A Observation Rubric\*

Category/ Criteria	Highly Proficient	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Integration of Knowledge	The report demonstrate s that the candidate fully understands and has applied the new information gathered during the field observation. The information is integrated into the writer’s insights. The writer provides concluding remarks that show analysis and synthesis of ideas.	The report demonstrates that the candidate, for the most part, understands and has applied the new information gathered during the field observation. Some of the conclusions, however, are not supported in the body of the paper.	The report demonstrate s that the candidate, to a certain extent, understands and has applied the information gathered during the field observation.	The report does not demonstrate that the candidate has fully understood and applied the information gathered during the field observation.
Report focus	The report is focused on all the essentials of the observation experience. A thesis statement provides a clear direction for the report.	The report is focused but lacks direction on the essentials required to answer all the questions in the observation instrument.	The report has a broad focus that misses the essential focus for the scope of this assignment.	The report’s focus is not clearly defined. The overall report misses the essential details in the observation instrument.

Category/ Criteria	Highly Proficient	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Depth of discussion	There is an in-depth discussion and elaboration in all sections of the paper.	There is an in-depth discussion and elaboration in most sections of the paper.	The candidate has omitted pertinent content from the report. Excessive quotations from others outweigh the writer's own ideas.	The candidate presents a cursory discussion in all the sections of the report or a brief discussion in only a few sections.
Cohesiveness	The report ties together information from all sources. Paper flows from one issue to the next without the need for headings. Author's writing demonstrates an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	For the most part, the report ties together information from all sources. Paper flows with only some disjointedness. Author's writing demonstrates an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	Sometimes the report ties together information from all sources. Paper is disjointed and does not flow as expected. Author's writing does not demonstrate an understanding of the relationship among material obtained from all sources.	Report does not tie together information. Paper does not flow and appears to be created from disparate issues. Writing does not demonstrate understanding any relationships needed to create the proper focus.
Spelling and grammar	No spelling and/or grammar mistakes.	Minimal spelling and/or grammar mistakes.	Noticeable spelling and grammar mistakes.	Unacceptable number of spelling and/or grammar mistakes.

Category/ Criteria	Highly Proficient	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Sources	More than 5 current sources, of which at least 3 are peer-review journal articles or scholarly books. Sources include both general background sources and specialized sources. All websites utilized are authoritative .	5 current sources, of which at least 2 are peer-review journal articles or scholarly books. All websites utilized are authoritative.	Fewer than 5 current sources, or fewer than 2 of 5 are peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly books. All web sites utilized are credible.	Fewer than 5 current sources, or fewer than 2 of 5 are peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly books. Not all websites utilized are credible, and/or sources are not current.
Citations	Cites all data obtained from other sources. APA citation style is used in both text and bibliography .	Cites most data obtained from other sources. APA citation style is used in both text and bibliography.	Cites some data obtained from other sources. Citation style is either inconsistent or incorrect.	Does not cite sources.

\*Adapted from: Whalen, S. "[Rubric from Contemporary Health Issues Research Paper](#)."

### **Field Experience Observation Instrument for Study Abroad**

*As part of your observational experiences for the Study Abroad Practicum, you are expected to give particular attention to the contexts within which students are learning. Please engage each section completely and provide specific examples. Your responses should be in complete sentences that are grammatically and mechanically correct. Use appropriate academic language and APA style citations where necessary.*

A. School Name and Date of Observation:

**B. Region/City/Town:**

- 1) Describe the demographics of the classroom.
- 2) Describe the educational resources in the classroom and how they impact teaching and learning.
- 3) Describe the relationship(s) between the teacher(s) and their students in the classrooms you observed.
- 4) Describe the teachers' methods to build rapport with their students to encourage English Language learning.
- 5) Describe the level of teachers' content knowledge and their effectiveness in teaching English Language in the classes you observed.
- 6) Describe the problems associated with teaching English in the class.
- 7) Describe the use(s) of technology in the lesson. If you did not see any evidence of technology use, describe the lesson in detail and the teacher's type of improvisations used to impact student learning.
- 8) What other teaching/learning materials do teachers have access to in their classrooms, and how were they used? Describe any other classroom interactions you observed between the teachers, administrators, and students that are different from or similar to what you see in the US.
- 9) Briefly describe your overall impressions of the lesson you observed.

**About the Author**

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Phi (philomatheia)-love of knowledge

Beta (biotremmonia)-valuing of human life

Delta (diapheren)-achieving excellence

