Chapter 12

Beyond Curriculum Internationalization: Globalization for Intercultural Competence

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum internationalization (CI) has shifted from U.S. student and faculty mobility, foreign language offerings, and interdisciplinary programming to the delivery of content and the role of international students in the method of delivery. Although CI is still about developing students’ international and intercultural perspectives, it is not only about teaching or students. Broadly speaking, it is about learning and involves every member of the campus community through purposeful curriculum planning and campus programming. Curriculum internationalization is also about exposing American students, scholars, faculty, staff, and administrators to their overseas counterparts as well as to international settings and perspectives through co-curricular programs. This chapter discusses Georgia Gwinnett College’s path towards campus internationalization through a quality enhancement program, education abroad programming, international students and partnerships, and campus programming—a purposeful blend of an internationalized curriculum and a co-curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum internationalization (CI) in the early decades of systematic campus internationalization in the United States—particularly in the 1970s-1990s—referred primarily to U.S. student and faculty mobility (through study, service, and research abroad), foreign language offerings, and interdisciplinary programs—mainly area studies or comparative studies. Starting in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the focus broadened markedly to encompass the delivery of content and the role of international students in the method of delivery (McLoughlin, 2001; De Vita & Case, 2003; Bond, 2006; Leask, 2011; & Leask, 2015)—a broadening which Bond characterizes as “changing fundamentally what we teach and how we teach it” (2006, p. 3). Curriculum internationalization is still about developing students’ international
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and intercultural perspectives, but it is not only about teaching or students. Broadly speaking, CI is about learning, and it involves every member of the campus community through purposeful curriculum planning and campus programming. It is also about exposing American students, faculty, staff, and administrators to their overseas counterparts as well as international settings and perspectives. This chapter discusses Georgia Gwinnett College’s path towards campus internationalization through a quality enhancement program, education abroad, international students and partnerships, and general campus programming.

Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC) was founded in 2005 as the thirty-fifth member of the University System of Georgia. The establishment of the college arose from a realization that Gwinnett County was the most populous county east of the Mississippi River lacking a four-year college. In March 2005, the Georgia legislature authorized the establishment of GGC as an access institution to “serve the broadest range of students, including those whose level of academic preparation limited their options for higher education” (initial mission and vision statement). Georgia Gwinnett College is a liberal-arts institution which provides select bachelor’s and associate’s degree programs in a student-centered, technology-enriched learning environment which meet the needs of the Northeast Atlanta metropolitan region. Gwinnett County has a population of over 907,000 residents and is home to various businesses, including those involved in health care, education, and information technology. GGC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and has over 12,000 students enrolled in programs in six schools: Business, Education, Health Sciences, Liberal Arts, Science and Technology, and Transitional Studies. GGC opened its doors to students in 2006 and began creating many aspects of student life, such as the Student Government Association, student clubs, honor societies, and other organizations, including intercollegiate (NAIA) sports. In fall 2013, GGC received its first international students.

GGC’s choice of a topic for a Quality Enhancement Plan ensued from three years of assessment and planning involving research and input from across the campus community. At a June 2011 planning retreat, one of the five recommendations adopted was that the QEP include international content and focus in co-curricular programming; however, because GGC had just been selected to participate in the American Council on Education Laboratory to develop internationalized co-curricular programming, the college determined that including co-curricular programs to the QEP charge would be redundant. In the final design of the QEP, the QEP Committee decided the program would “focus only on internationalization of the academic curriculum and […] [i]nternationalized courses [would] be infused throughout the curriculum by revising or developing courses in the core curriculum, majors, and upper level electives” (Quality Enhancement Plan, n.d., p. 23). As a result, the QEP Committee maintained a primarily curricular charge focusing on creating internationalized courses, a Global Studies Certification Program, and faculty development, whereas the Internationalization Committee maintained a primarily co-curricular charge focusing on study abroad, international student recruitment, and campus programming (Quality Enhancement Plan, n.d. p. 23). GGC had already established the Office of Internationalization in 2010 to shepherd the co-curricular component of its internationalization mission. Internationalization of the curriculum aligns well with GGC’s mission to produce globally competent graduates—those who are “inspired to contribute to the local, state, national, and international communities and are prepared to anticipate and respond effectively to an uncertain and changing world” (current mission statement).

Georgia Gwinnett College’s approach to internationalization was informed by, and is modeled after, the American Council on Education’s Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE) model for comprehensive internationalization. The model defines comprehensive internationalization as “a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate policies, programs, and initiatives to
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