

Europe Calling: A New Definition for Internationalization at Home

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A SHIFTING FOCUS

These unresolved questions highlight a shifting focus in approaches to internationalization—away from ad hoc, marginal, and fragmented activities toward broader, more diverse, and more integrated and transformative processes. Although there is still a strong focus on the abroad side of internationalization, there is an ever stronger call for attention to the internationalization of the curriculum at home. There is increasing recognition of the need for institutions to pay more attention to involve more, and even all, students in internationalization. The focus is, however, shifting slowly and more is imagined than achieved.

Internationalization is not a goal in itself but it is a means to enhance the quality of the education, research, and service functions of higher education. The context influences the why, what, and the how of internationalization; therefore, the way in which internationalization of the curriculum is interpreted and enacted, is both similar and different across disciplines and fields of study. There is no one model of internationalization fit for all higher education systems, institutions, and disciplines. ■

Europe Calling: A New Definition for Internationalization at Home

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In recent discussions on the internationalization of higher education, the constant introduction of new terms and definitions has rightly been criticized. Although the authors are fully aware of this, they consider that the importance of clarifying the concept of internationalization at home overrides the urge to limit the number of definitions. They have recently proposed a new definition of internationalization at home. Although defining it does not guarantee its implementation, since there are fundamental challenges to be overcome, it is hoped that this redefinition might bring implementation a step closer.

CONTINUED AND GROWING ATTENTION TO INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

The concept of internationalization at home plays a useful role in certain contexts, particularly where the emphasis of internationalization efforts has traditionally been on mobility. It is increasingly clear that mobility can bring substantial benefits to participants, and countries around the world are seeking to increase the number of students taking part. However, it is also recognized that mobile students will continue to make up a relatively small proportion of the student body, and internationalization at home is a convenient term to designate internationalization activity aimed at the whole student body. Now that internationalization at home has, since 2013, been included in the European Commission's education policy—*European higher education in the world*—it might even be said that it has gained momentum and has moved to the center of the debate on the internationalization of higher education.

“Internationalization at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students, within domestic learning environments.”

Internationalization at home is now also on its way to becoming an item in the educational policies of European Union member states; e.g., the two Nuffic studies published in 2014 in the Netherlands were intended to form the basis for a Dutch national policy for internationalization at home.

It seems that, for once, policy is following practice. In the Netherlands, 76 percent of universities have already included internationalization of home curricula in their policies. For Europe, the percentage is somewhat lower at 56 percent, as we learn from the recently published *EAIE Barometer*. It is not simply about policy-making, however. Most European universities claim to be undertaking activities to implement internationalization at home. According to *Trends 2015*, the recently published survey of the European University Association, 64 percent of European higher education institutions are doing so.

CONCEPTUAL FOG

With the attention on internationalization at home increasing, it is all the more important that the concept is understood clearly, and shared understanding is not simply as-

sumed. The original definition of internationalization at home, dating from 2001, was not very helpful: “Any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility.” The confusion centers around the overlap between internationalization at home and internationalization of the curriculum as it has developed as a concept, particularly in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Internationalization of the curriculum, on the other hand, refers to dimensions of the curriculum regardless of where it is delivered. In this sense it may include mobility for the students that choose that option, or it can refer to curriculum for transnational or other forms of cross-border education. The confusion over the two terms is also reflected in surveys. The *EAIE Barometer*, for instance, includes both concepts as items in the same question on content of internationalization policies.

OTHER IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Even when the conceptual fog lifts, a big challenge remains: supporting academics so that they can capture intended internationalization in learning outcomes, plan assessment, and design learning environments that enable students to achieve intended learning outcomes. This is the system that underlies the European quality label CeQuInt, established in 2015. The articulation of these outcomes is a crucial task. When we see in the *4th Global Survey* of the International Association of Universities that the internationalization of learning outcomes is booming, in fact this is mostly at the institutional level. At that level, it is easy to pay lip service to introducing outcomes for international and intercultural learning, since that is not where they are assessed. The real challenge is to contextualize internationalized learning outcomes in individual programs of study and support academics in crafting outcomes and assessment. For this, they need support from both educational and internationalization experts. The new definition hopefully contributes to reaching a common understanding of internationalization at home, which may assist this challenging task.

The new definition—coined by the authors and proposed in a 2015 publication, *The European Higher Education Area: Between critical reflections and future policies states*: “Internationalization at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students, within domestic learning environments.”

The definition stresses inclusion of international and intercultural aspects into curricula in a purposeful way. This implies that adding or infusing random internationalized elements or electives would be insufficient to internationalize a program. It also emphasizes the role of internationalization for all students in all programs and does not simply rely on mobility to offer international and

intercultural perspectives. In talking of “domestic learning environments,” the definition makes it clear that these may extend beyond the home campus and the formal learning context to include other intercultural and/or international learning opportunities within the local community. These may include working with local cultural, ethnic, or religious groups; using a tandem learning system or other means to engage domestic with international students; or exploiting diversity within the classroom. It also includes technology-enabled or virtual mobility, such as through Collaborative Online International Learning.

It must be highlighted once more that these contexts may be seen as learning environments, but it is the articulation and assessment of internationalized learning outcomes within the specific context of a discipline which will allow such environments to be used as a means of achieving meaningful international and intercultural learning. ■

Internationalization of the Curriculum and the “New Normal”: An Australian Perspective

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The adjective “normal” is often used to describe the present state of conditions, in colloquial terms, as being acceptable or okay. However, “the trouble with normal is it always gets worse”—or so wrote the Canadian folk singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn in 1993, reflecting on the social and political conditions of the period, which coincides with the beginnings of the modern era of internationalization of higher education.

THE NEED TO PROBLEMATIZE THE NORMAL

In the context of higher education and the internationalization of the curriculum, perhaps it is less a case of the normal getting worse, and more a case of needing to problematize the normal in new and potentially challenging ways.