



NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION



Internationalizing

THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE

INTERNATIONALIZING THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE

This brochure provides Communication scholars, educators, and administrators with information about the rationale for “internationalization,” current efforts in this regard, and possible future directions. We hope to help teachers who seek to internationalize their courses, to support scholars who study internationalization within the Communication discipline, to enable students to enrich their experiences through international learning, and to encourage administrators to advocate for greater internationalization on their campuses and beyond.

Why Internationalization?

Globalization is a major force driving both hope and turmoil across the world. While the concept is immensely complicated, most observers agree that globalization entails an almost unstoppable movement toward the greater interdependence and integration of previously discrete communities, with flows of capital, trade, ideas, and people crossing borders and creating interconnectedness across the globe. While globalization is an immense historical force, “Internationalization” is one of the key strategies adopted by universities in response to globalization. Through internationalization, teachers and scholars seek to help students and the communities we serve make sense of the forces of globalization by including more international examples in our classes, by driving our research with more international collaborations, and by enhancing our service commitments via more international projects.

TOP FOUR REASONS FOR INTERNATIONALIZING 2016 Percent of Institutions, by Type						
	Doctoral	Masters	Bachelors	Associates	Special Focus	All Types
Improve student preparedness for a global era	81	80	81	63	64	71
Diversify students, faculty, and staff	50	64	65	57	40	56
Become more attractive to prospective students at home and oversea	35	52	52	32	28	38
Generate new revenue for the institution	34	45	32	30	23	32

Source: Robin Matross Helms and Lucia Brajkovic 2017. Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses: 2017 Edition. American Council on Education. <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Mapping-Internationalization-Tables-2017.pdf>

(Front cover) Students in Dr. Soumia Bardhan’s Intercultural Communication travel seminar visit the Le Jardin Majorelle in Marrakech, Morocco.

FOR FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ADMINISTRATORS

Five Reasons Why Internationalization Is Important

FOR FACULTY, INTERNATIONALIZATION IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

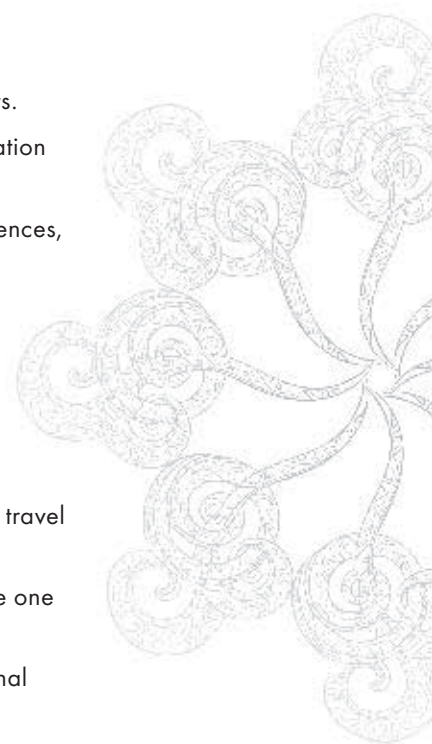
- Mastery of the Communication discipline requires an understanding of its international opportunities and dilemmas.
- Exceptional research requires “scalar thinking,” zooming in and out to see the interconnections between the local and the global.
- Communication is context-specific, yet also comparative, meaning good analysis requires scholars to be intellectually sensitive across different cultures and contexts.
- Enhancing scholars’ international awareness leads to more perceptive communication analysis and production.
- Pursuing internationalization leads to remarkable opportunities for foreign conferences, international research collaborations, and new grant-seeking options.

FOR STUDENTS, INTERNATIONALIZATION IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- Learning about diverse conditions and cultural perspectives enables one to live harmoniously in a wide range of settings.
- It leads to competency in the worldly skillsets employers desire.
- Engaging in international learning makes for more exciting classes, especially via travel study and foreign-based service-learning opportunities.
- Learning to consider and solve problems from international perspectives will make one more culturally flexible.
- Understanding what it means to be a global citizen is now a benchmark of personal growth and career readiness.

FOR CAMPUS ADMINISTRATORS, INTERNATIONALIZATION IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- It jells with the mission and purpose of most higher education institutions.
- It supports a wide range of diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff on our home campuses.
- It opens doors to exciting new institutional collaborations abroad.
- It generates increased tuition revenue (which should be used, in part, to support the excellence of the internationalization process).
- Supporting faculty’s pursuit of internationalization will lead to their producing cutting-edge scholarship and teaching, thus enhancing the institution’s reputation.



INTERNATIONALIZING THE COMMUNICATION CURRICULUM

FOR COMMUNICATION TEACHERS, internationalization means taking the classroom to the world and bringing the world into the classroom. This internationalization process should focus on *enriching student learning experiences* by enabling students to learn about diverse cultures and their communication norms.

INTERNATIONALIZING COMMUNICATION COURSES can also include an interdisciplinary component, by situating the analysis of communication within the nuances of geopolitics, history, culture, international affairs, and current events.

STUDENTS RESPOND ESPECIALLY WELL to international communication artifacts pulled from music, videos, film, TV, advertising, and websites, meaning internationalizing the curriculum should involve the appreciation and analysis of international media artifacts.



Drs. Patrick Shaou-Whea Dodge (far left) and Supriya Karudapuram (second from left), with students on a fieldtrip to Hebei (the inner Mongolian grasslands of China), where the team was planting saplings to celebrate Earth Day. The trip was an example of internationalization intersecting with community engagement and service learning.



LEVELS OF CURRICULAR INTERNATIONALIZATION

LEVEL 1: THE COURSE CONTAINS SOME INTERNATIONAL ELEMENT, SUCH AS:

- Using photos, videos, or news from various places around the world to illustrate a point.
- Analyzing an international website for information.
- Referring to Communication articles or artifacts produced outside the United States.

LEVEL 2: THE COURSE DEDICATES A COMPLETE UNIT TO INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS, BY:

- Moving from the sampling method of Level 1 to a more systematic focus on international questions, information, and artifacts, thus enabling students to engage in comparative, intercultural thinking.

LEVEL 3: THE ENTIRE COURSE HAS AN INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION, SUCH AS:

- Topic-specific courses about international communication questions.
- Topic-specific courses comparing communication practices in the United States and abroad.

LEVEL 4: THE COURSE INVOLVES IMMERSION IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS, SUCH AS:

- Travel study classes that take students abroad.
- Service-learning classes that enable students to focus on community-based issues in international settings.
- Tech-savvy classes that enable U.S. and international students to collaborate on projects.

LEVEL 5: MOVING FROM COURSE DESIGN TO THE DEPARTMENT'S CURRICULAR SCAFFOLDING, A UNIT COULD:

- Offer certificates for international competencies earned through clusters of classes.
- Include international courses among the list of required classes.
- Encourage travel study as an ideal senior capstone experience.

HOW TO INTEGRATE TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONALIZATION

USE COMPUTER-MEDIATED TECHNOLOGY (online collaborative tools) to bring together students from disparate cultures to learn with and about one another.

INVITE GUEST SPEAKERS FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD to speak to students through video conferencing and lecture-capturing tools. Guest speakers can be based in or outside the United States and can speak about communication practices in their respective countries.

INCORPORATE SOCIAL MEDIA SITES from other cultures into learning plans.

VIRTUALLY TEAM UP with an instructor and a classroom overseas to engage U.S.-based students in intercultural conversations and group assignments with students from different cultures.

USE TECHNOLOGY TO PARTNER with international civic groups engaged in community-based projects.

(Below) Students in Dr. Soumia Bardhan's Intercultural Communication travel seminar visit the Birla Temple in Kolkata, India.



THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES OF STUDY ABROAD

TYPES OF TRAVEL PROGRAMS

- Long-term programs usually last a semester to a year. There is a “more is better” mentality associated with these programs due to their longer duration of immersion in a foreign country.
- Short-term programs may last from two weeks (usually travel study) to three months (semester abroad) and, if well-planned, also offer intensive and rigorous experiences.
- Travel programs offered by Communication departments often focus on cross-/intercultural dynamics, intercultural dialogue, and developing intercultural competence in many areas of communication.
- Programs are also offered by organizations such as the Council on International Educational Exchange (www.ciee.org).

TIPS TO ENHANCE THE RIGOR OF SHORT-TERM TRAVEL PROGRAMS

- The role of the academic director is crucial. Be clear about students’ learning expectations while also committing to their health and safety while abroad; foreground the pursuit of cultural competence in your host country, in part by partnering with local contacts and putting site visits at the center of your experience.
- Include a strong academic component: Make sure your syllabus includes clear course goals and learning objectives, a detailed itinerary of events and site visits, and a wide range of relevant readings and assignments.
- Within the classroom, instill the ethic that local or native concepts, categories, and worldviews are important; create ample space for observation, reflection, and discussion of the intersections of course content and personal experiences abroad; and encourage interactions with the host community.
- Upon return to your home campus, design opportunities for debriefing, reflecting on international experiences, and reintegrating students back into campus life.

Resources

National Communication Association

www.natcom.org/academic-professional-resources/internationalization

American Council on Education

www.acenet.edu/higher-education/Pages/Internationalization.aspx;

American Council on Education: Center for International and Global Education


<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Center-for-Internationalization-and-Global-Engagement.aspx>

Institute of International Education

www.iie.org

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

www.nafsa.org



IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION, internationalization was first identified as a new mandate to maintain currency and viability for the discipline by then NCA President Steven Beebe. To see some of the resources Beebe developed for NCA members, please visit www.natcom.org/academic-professional-resources/internationalization.

CURRENT NCA PRESIDENT STEPHEN HARTNETT has developed this agenda further by establishing a Task Force on Fostering International Collaboration in the Age of Globalization. This brochure is a product of that Task Force's work. For Communication scholars seeking to expand their expertise in international matters, please consider attending the biennial conference on **Communication, Media, and Governance in the Age of Globalization**, which is jointly hosted by NCA and the Communication University of China; the next version of this conference will convene in Beijing in June 2018.

TASK FORCE ON FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

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