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# UA3/9/2 Report of the Task Force on Internationalizing Western

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## REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON INTERNATIONALIZING WESTERN

Submitted February 28, 1997

At the request of Dr. Barbara Burch, Vice President for Academic Affairs, a Task Force was appointed to review and make recommendations regarding the internationalization of the university. The Task Force was asked to identify general goals and more specific steps to internationalize. The goals should relate to the overall priorities of the university which will be reflected in the new strategic plan.

The reason why it is important to review this issue at this time is clear. The signs are everywhere of the increasing interdependence of the world's nations and peoples. Business, trade, investment and financial (and, increasingly, labor) markets are now globalized. Communication technologies link us instantly with all parts of the world. Transportation and travel patterns make national boundaries more permeable than ever. It all means that if we are to be successful as individuals or organizations in the future we must learn how to effectively interact with (and compete with) other individuals and organizations coming from a wide variety of cultural, linguistic and national backgrounds. Although in the past Kentucky may have been somewhat insulated from these trends, that is no longer true today and it certainly will not be true tomorrow. One need only look to the impact of such foreign investors in Kentucky as Toyota or Sumitomo, to the growing importance of exports to the state economy, or to the closing of low-tech sewing plants in the area to see that jobs in Kentucky are increasingly dependent on the global marketplace.

How should Western respond to these new realities? The central mission of the university is a "commitment to excellence in teaching and learning" (Western XXI). If Western is to continue to provide excellence (and relevance) in teaching and in learning opportunities for students, that teaching and learning must include emphasis on the international/global dimension. That dimension should be an important part of the educational experience of all students whether they are preparing to work in business, education, the professions, public service, or other fields. In addition, an international perspective is vital for citizens to be effective in a democratic society. If Western is to do its job, it must be preparing students to work, live, and prosper in an environment whose boundaries extend well beyond this state or region. Moreover, international and global aspects of the research and service missions of the university will be increasingly significant and relevant in the future.

The importance of internationalization at Western has already been identified in the planning document "Western XXI" and in the vision statement "Moving to a New Level". As the university now prepares to develop a comprehensive strategic plan, it will be vital that the continuing internationalization of the university and its programs and activities be included as an institutional priority. Internationalization goals support the highest university priorities: recruiting and retaining good students, increasing the quality of learning, enhancing the quality of faculty and staff, strengthening cultural diversity and sense of community on campus, and incorporating the effective use of technology.

The Task Force recommends that the university adopt the following general goals as part of a strategy to internationalize Western.

The university should:

- 1) Formally identify internationalization as an important institutional priority.
- 2) Adopt plans to further internationalize the curriculum.
- 3) Implement strategies for internationalizing faculty, staff and administration.
- 4) Increase international study/internship participation by students.
- 5) Increase the presence of international students and scholars at Western.
- 6) Strengthen co-curricular programs which support the interaction of international and domestic students on campus.
- 7) Develop guidelines for the expansion and diversification of exchange agreements with universities in other countries.
- 8) Identify and pursue institutional, private, foundation and governmental sources for funding internationalization.
- 9) Strengthen library and information technology resources at the university which will support internationalization.
- 10) Develop or strengthen linkages with external constituencies of the university (schools, business and industry, government agencies, community organizations) who share a common interest in internationalization/globalization.

The Task Force further recommends that the following specific steps be taken to achieve these general goals:

**1) Institutional priority**

- Adopt a policy statement on internationalization by the Board of Regents
- Incorporate internationalization into the new strategic plan for the university

**2) Internationalizing the Curriculum**

- Develop "international tracks" for existing majors
- Develop an interdisciplinary major and/or minor in international studies
- Develop a minor in international business
- Develop a strategy to add more international content to general education courses
- Include explicit internationalization criteria in periodic academic program reviews
- Create incentives for foreign language study by students and faculty
- Include more emphasis on multicultural/global understanding in courses throughout the curriculum

**3) Internationalizing the Faculty, Staff, and Administration**

- Adopt a policy where research and teaching abroad count toward tenure and are part of the annual evaluation process
- Increase flexibility of faculty schedules to allow for international experiences
- Increase the amount of the Faculty Research Grant Fund and the President's Special Grant Fund to encourage faculty research abroad and international staff development
- Publicize the availability of Junior Faculty Fellowships and Summer Research Fellowships for research abroad
- Encourage deans and department heads to foster and seek opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators in the area of international professional development
- Design a new faculty and staff development program with the explicit goal of

strengthening the foreign language and international competence of the faculty and staff

-Establish an annual award for a faculty or staff member who makes an outstanding contribution to international education at Western

#### 4)Study/Internship Abroad

-Design means to better inform students and faculty regarding study abroad opportunities

-Develop new study abroad opportunities for students, especially in areas beyond Western Europe

-Develop strategies to increase participation of underrepresented groups in study abroad experiences

-Include information about study abroad opportunities as part of the university's student recruitment efforts and as part of the Freshman Seminar and other orientation activities

-Provide forums for students, faculty, and staff who have studied abroad to share their experiences

-Incorporate study or work abroad as a key component in department programs

-Develop international work internship or co-op experiences for academic credit

-Explore opportunities for international student teaching /internship opportunities for pre-service teachers

#### 5)International Students and Scholars

-Take care of international students while they are at Western by improving support services, establishing an international floor or wing in a residence hall, and by responding to their need for year-round housing

-Expand social, educational and cultural programming for international students and cultural awareness programs for faculty, staff, and residence life personnel

-Include the recruitment of international students as a priority in the university's overall recruitment plan

-Develop innovative ways to distribute recruitment information about the university world-wide

- Create a network of Western international alumni for advice, student recruitment and fund-raising
- Develop an Intensive English as a Second Language program
- Produce a new International Student Guide

#### 6) Co-curricular International Activities

- Develop international/cultural awareness programs in residence halls
- Increase visibility of international students with and through work with Greek and other student organizations
- Create an International Living and Learning Center
- Include cross-cultural diversity training in the MASTER Plan program
- Encourage the College Heights Herald and other local media to highlight international activities and international students and scholars on campus

#### 7) International Exchange Agreements

- Selectively develop inter-university exchange agreements with universities in areas beyond Europe and East Asia
- Develop and publicize clear guidelines for establishing new, mutually-beneficial exchange agreements

#### 8) Funding Internationalization

- Establish internationalization efforts as an important funding priority in the university's budget planning, including a specific funding plan
- Encourage faculty and staff from all areas of the university to seek external funding for international activities including special training programs in grantsmanship
- Include private and corporate support for international and study abroad student scholarships as part of the university's development and fund-raising plans
- Increase institutional scholarship and loan support for student study abroad participation
- Actively seek financial support for internationalization goals from international alumni

or other alumni with international interests

#### 9) Library and Information Technology

- Increase access to current international newspapers, magazines and other mass media
- Publicize international resources available in the library such as Global NewsBank and the Grants Information Center
- Create awareness among faculty, staff and students of existing and emerging sources of technology for internationalization
- Encourage and support faculty to use resources available through global communications technologies (INTERNET, satellite television, etc.) to add international/intercultural content to the curriculum
- Identify, develop and provide training sessions for faculty and staff in use of international resources through the INTERNET
- Create an International Programs webpage

#### 10) Internationalization Outreach

- Create an International Advisory Council composed of business, education, alumni, government and community representatives
- Develop strategies to assist Kentucky schools through pre-service and in-service programs in achieving KERA goals of understanding cultural diversity and global perspectives
- Work through the College of Business Administration and the Institute for Economic Development in offering workshops and seminars to regional businesses on competing in the global economy
- Expand community programming featuring international students, visiting international scholars, and faculty, staff or alumni with recent international experiences

If these recommendations receive a positive response from the university, more detailed implementation plans will be developed by the appropriate departments and offices across the campus. Achieving these ambitious and important goals will require a major effort by many people along with the commitment of necessary university resources. It will take the active participation of colleges, departments, faculty and staff from all areas of the university for the internationalization process to really succeed at Western. We believe that it will be worth the effort.