



—a Ferris State international education newsletter

## **BEYOND Initiative (BI) - Cultivating a Global Ecosystem:**

Greetings from the Office of International Education (OIE). Last week, we had a successful Beyond Initiative inaugural event. The Minds Aflame was attended by more than 287 students from various colleges. The theme for this year's Beyond Initiative is Sustainability. In this newsletter, we invite you to learn more about the Beyond Initiative (BI) and how you can be part of it.

Our University's new vision states that we "will be an agile and transformational University" to prepare students for a dynamic global society. To achieve this, it is necessary to have a catalyst that facilitates culture change. The BI, sponsored by the Office of International Education, has been a catalyst for innovation and an inter-disciplinary approach to infusing internationalization at Ferris over the years.

The BI is a loosely structured University-wide, inter-disciplinary project to inform, engage and, inspire international collaboration. Each year, a group of interested faculty and staff come together to pick an annual theme to give shape to a series of global activities and engagements during the academic year. It is designed to enhance our General Education experience. The global activities and engagements are structured to infuse and supplement global awareness outcomes in the classroom. This is achieved by intentionally creating global engagement outside the classroom to complement the in-class experience. The OIE staff provide administrative support to the BI as it is a vehicle to build partnerships inside and outside the University for the OIE to strengthen our global ecosystem.

The organizing principle behind the BI is to bring cross-disciplinary experts together with administrators around an annual global theme to allow for cross-pollination of ideas, partnerships for collaboration, and relationship building with partners outside the University. Several significant cross-disciplinary, international collaborations within Ferris and beyond are the result of the BI. This global ecosystem is nurtured by our faculty, staff, and our committed partnerships outside the University. Beyond was nationally recognized by the Institute of International Education this year in New York City.

In this edition of this newsletter, you will learn about the plans ahead for the BI and how you can get involved professionally to help prepare our students for our dynamic global society.

Dr. Piram Prakasam  
Executive Director, Office of International Education

## BEYOND Initiative

**Theme:** Sustainability

**Duration:** Fall 2019 to Spring 2022

**Focus:** The UN Sustainable Development Goals

### BEYOND Spring Plans:

**BEYOND Exhibit:** For several of the Beyond themes, we have developed a Beyond Exhibit event. The event is a museum-like experience for visitors to immerse themselves in and engage with the theme. The centerpiece of the exhibits are 40-60 large banners that contain information and graphics related to different aspects of the theme. The banners are exhibited in an open setting and are accompanied by interactive displays and activities. For example, in our first exhibit, Beyond: The Silk Road, banners were developed about cities and cultures found along the ancient Silk Road. Visitors could walk the Silk Road to learn the history from the banners, see artifacts from the various regions, meet characters on the Silk Road, and learn about Study Abroad opportunities in countries along the Silk Road.

For the Beyond: Sustainability theme, banners will be developed around the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and will include information and info graphics developed by the World Bank. The banners will travel around campus to generate interest in the Beyond: Sustainability theme and provide context for faculty, staff, and students who would like to incorporate the Beyond: Sustainability theme into their courses, events, or activities. As we develop the theme over the next three years, the banners will be exhibited along with interactive activities on our main campus, at our off-campus locations, and potentially at partner schools and high schools to promote our programs and educational opportunities. Be on the lookout in the Spring 2020 semester as you will find the Beyond: Sustainability banners popping up across campus.

**BEYOND: Sustainability Unconference:** With our exciting approach of extending the Beyond: Sustainability theme over the next three years, we will be infusing environmental, economic, and social sustainability throughout classes, events, and activities across campus. We are inviting all faculty and staff to join the initiative. You may wonder, though, “How can I join?” You can join the initiative by infusing the theme of Sustainability into your classes, an event, an organization activity, research, your workplace – any way that is meaningful to you.

Early in the spring semester, you will see banners around campus related to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The concept is that the banners will spark ideas about how the theme can be infused across campus. Then on February 7, the OIE will host an Unconference for faculty and staff to come together to discuss ideas and find ways to collaborate on Beyond: Sustainability curricular integration, events, and activities. You may now be wondering, “What is an Unconference?” An Unconference is a loosely structured, participant-driven conference without predefined topics. There is a high level structure to the conference, which will be facilitated by the OIE, and there is a high level theme, which will be Sustainability.

However, the actual topics for the conference will be generated on the spot by the participants, and breakout groups will be dynamically organized based on areas of interest. In the spirit of collegiality and collaboration, we invite you to join the Beyond Initiative and also join us for the Beyond: Sustainability Unconference on February 7. Watch for more details to come!

Lisa vonReichbauer

Assitant Director, Office of International Education



### **In Context:**

1. **Read:** Ferris State University – 2019 Heiskell Award Honorable Mention: Scholars as Drivers of Innovation – Institute for International Education (iie)
2. **Watch or Listen** How We Can Make the World a Better Place by 2030 – Michael Green – TED Talks, 2015



### **Upcoming Events:**

1. **Diwali Festival** – Friday, November 8 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the IRC Connector
2. **International** Potluck for Faculty and Staff – Friday, November 22 from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm - IRC 104





## Moment in Time:



The Minds Aflame event on Sustainability was hosted on October 22nd in the Williams Auditorium. This was a Five Star event inspired by TedX Talks. This event was sponsored by the Office of International Education, the FSU Sustainability Committee, and the College of Arts and Sciences. Pictured are some of the speakers and students and staff who worked on hosting the event.

## Ferris Forward



# *Past OIE Newsletters*

## **Fall 2019**



Fall 2019 Issue 2



Fall 2019 Issue 1

## **Summer 2019**



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Summer 2019 Issue 4



Summer 2019 Issue 3



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**Spring 2019**



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