



—a Ferris State international education newsletter

CIP Pillar 3: Why align policies, practices, priorities?

Greetings from the Office of International Education (OIE). The Comprehensive Internationalization Plan (CIP), outlined in our Summer 2019 Issue 1 OIE newsletter, is well underway. The plan will focus on identifying plans and metrics using five key CIP Pillars for success.

In our second newsletter for the summer, we outlined how CIP Pillar 1 (benchmarking academic programs internationally) can help us achieve our core value of excellence. In our third summer newsletter, we shared how CIP Pillar 2 (infusing international and comparative perspectives in student learning) can be achieved through our core value of collaboration.

In this newsletter, we will expand on how CIP Pillar 3 - aligning policies, practices and priorities to sustain the global ecosystem - is critical to live our core value of learning in the work we do.

To create a thriving ecosystem in any organization, employee motivation is the catalyst. It requires visionary leadership and a strategic plan. But, to sustain the ecosystem, a culture of embracing continuous improvement is necessary.

With leadership support and working closely with our campus colleagues and regional and international partners, the OIE has nurtured a flourishing global ecosystem at Ferris State. How do we sustain this global ecosystem?

Leadership change is inevitable in any organization. Strategic plans that are intentional, informed, and inclusive will help sustain the global ecosystem through changes. But, aligning policies, practices, and priorities within the existing governing structure is the critical element that allows for sustainability and a culture of continuous improvement.

Michigan universities are currently facing significant financial challenges with decreasing enrollment due to demographic changes and increasing choices in higher education delivery models. With decreasing resources, how can universities motivate employees to invest in continuous improvement?

Committing to creating a culture of performance is necessary, recognizing that

the six main reasons people work are: play, purpose, potential, emotional pressure, economic pressure, and inertia. When resources are fewer, the last three intrude into organizational culture. The first three are the positive motivators that we need to nurture.

Aligning policies, practices, and priorities and, more crucially, connecting them to employee learning and growth within the organization is a key to strengthening these motivators. It helps to foster talent, encourage collaboration, and achieve excellence.

We, in the OIE, believe that as a small unit we have worked hard over the last ten years to create a flourishing global ecosystem through collaboration with many partners. But, we recognize that to sustain these efforts, CIP Pillar 3 is critical. This will drive us to achieve our University's mission to prepare our students for our global economy and society.

In the next few pages, in the spirit of learning and continuous improvement, we share a few examples of lessons learned and the need for alignment of policies, practices, and priorities at Ferris State. I invite you to connect with us to share your thoughts and also engage us in our CIP process.

Dr. Piram Prakasam
Executive Director, Office of International Education



The Benefits of Strategically Aligning Priorities, Polices, and Practices

Greetings. The Comprehensive Internationalization Planning (CIP) process is an opportunity to create a common understanding within the University of the challenge to sustain internationalization efforts at Ferris. In our experience, one critical challenge is “aligning policies, practices, and priorities” within existing governing structures, which is necessary to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement. In the spirit of learning and continuous improvement, I share a few examples of lessons learned and make a case for why there is a need for alignment of policies, practices and priorities at Ferris State University.

Enrollment: Our immediate institutional challenge is decreasing student enrollment, which impacts our budget and, in turn, hampers our existing plans. Therefore, increasing student enrollment has become a critical priority to reverse the budget challenge. For an international enrollment team, a new recruitment strategy typically takes at least 18 months from the time it is implemented to the time students enroll as a result. Additionally, once students begin enrolling,

academic programs and providers of student service support must be prepared to offer appropriate services to retain those students and help them succeed. This requires revisiting existing policies and practices to be responsive.

In 2010, when the Office of International Education was tasked with increasing international enrollment, the Administration & Finance division made it a priority to revisit their practices and policies to make student financial service, housing, dining services, campus police, and other services responsive. This resulted in a collaborative culture that motivated employees from the OIE and the division to join hands in strengthening student services. The tripling of international enrollment from 140 students in 2010 to 530 students in 2015 is a direct result of aligning policies, practices and priorities within OIE and Administration & Finance.

However, this alignment effort was not campus-wide and was not part of a longer-term plan. As priorities shifted, the momentum of increasing enrollment that was achieved at that time could not be sustained. We need a concerted effort to develop a longer-term plan with system-wide priorities to which we can all align policies and procedures. This clarity can motivate employees to collaborate to achieve successful outcomes.

Study Abroad: That University spends close to half a million dollars every year in student and faculty travel costs and faculty salaries on faculty-led study abroad programs. Most summer faculty-led programs primarily are individual faculty and individual course driven initiatives. With this model, many study abroad programs are not developed or driven as academic college or program initiatives to meet specific program needs or requirements. They are often standalone experiences offered to students who can afford the expenses. When individual faculty decide to no longer offer the program, the funds that have been spent on that program over the years do not then provide return on investment for the University.

With a limited resources and a challenging budget environment, it is critical that these investments align with institutional needs and priorities. If study abroad programs are strategically anchored to program needs and faculty professional development, the return on investment would be significant over a longer period, allowing the University to capitalize on the opportunities that come. Additionally, to develop a culture of continuous improvement, university policies and practices that govern study abroad need to be updated to consider the modern realities of online courses, health and safety, financial transactions, and regulations related to financial aid, Title IX among others.

The College of Business has made strides in this area by developing an ecosystem that has supported the development of a unique study abroad model that is accessible to students and will provide long-term dividends. Three faculty from COB and one faculty from CAS collaborated to develop a 4-week study abroad program in Shanghai. From an academic standpoint, the courses that were

offered were selected to align with business core requirements and an intercultural communication gen ed course, This made the program accessible to all business majors and also to students from other colleges who needed gen ed credits. The faculty met throughout the academic year to intentionally align the student learning outcomes of each course with high-impact experiential learning opportunities provided in China.

To keep the costs lower for students, the faculty collaborated with OIE to access the facilities at a partner institution in Shanghai to provide low cost housing, dining, and classroom space to teach the courses. Dean Nicol of the College of Business, a passionate advocate of international education, also provided support. He encourages study abroad programs that are at least 4-weeks in length so that students can have a more immersive experience, so he offered COB students a \$500 scholarship if they attended this program.

The program also collaborated with COB Distinguished Alumni, Mark Beiderwieden, who is the regional president of Amway Asia Pacific. Mr. Beiderwieden's personal assistant flew in from Japan to spend a day with the students at the Amway Headquarters in Guanhzhou. Amway Corporation provided a full day of high-impact experiences and business networking.

The College of Business is working to further develop the program into a 12-credit academic certificate on doing business in China. This certificate could be attractive to current students, high school students, transfer students, and guest students and can serve as a recruitment and retention initiative for COB. These types of study abroad initiatives will invest university and student resources wisely. As they are driven by colleges or programs, the return in investment will be more significant and sustained.

Developing facilitating, and executing high-quality study abroad programs that are college or program driven will be key to continuous improvement in experiential learning. Trying to achieve this in the absence of clear policies reduces efficiency and places undue stress on the systems and the faculty and staff that work within it. Broad campus input through the CIP process will support the development of policies that guide our work and benefit our students.

International Development: International projects on campus are often neither coordinated nor evaluated to consider the university's capacity and needs. A ten-year Comprehensive Internationalization Plan can help us identify needs that we have as an institution so that we can strategically seek collaborations and assess opportunities that arise to maximize resources and increase success.

The OIE developed the COIN (Capacity, Opportunity, Interest, Needs) Approach to provide a rigorous tool to assess international projects. We looked at 82 international projects that Ferris engaged in since 2010. Different people, offices, and divisions drove these projects on campus. Many required support from the

Office of International Education and some were undertaken without coordination with OIE. The COIN Approach assigns an institutional value to projects based on rigorous criteria to assess whether the opportunity fits our needs, whether we have the capacity to successfully execute the project, and whether the interest in the opportunity is likely to result in institutional ownership to sustain it beyond an individual faculty or staff member's interest.

Of the 82 projects that we assessed in retrospect after developing the tool, fewer than 10 scored high on institutional value. This demonstrated that the investment of significant resources such as time, financial support, expertise, and networks did not yield desired results to meet the needs of the institution. There is also opportunity cost to consider. When we engage in projects that do not align with institutional needs and capacity, we do not have resources available to invest in collaborations that yield much higher returns on investment. Identifying our needs, determining our capacity, and identifying collective priorities that benefit Ferris will allow us to strategically seek partnerships and collaborations. We can also as objectively assess opportunities that arise to decide if there is alignment with institutional priorities.

By aligning priorities and policies, the CIP can help create a common understanding of best practices in international education and help us adopt the practices that nurture our global ecosystem, foster talent, encourage collaboration, and achieve excellence. Through the CIP process, we hope that a common understanding of how the university can align its resources and expertise with opportunities to meet our needs in areas such as program development, enrollment, high-quality experiential learning opportunities, professional development, strengthening our residential campus, and building a vibrant community of students and scholars

Lisa vonReichbauer
Assistant Director, Office of International Education



In Context:

1. **Read:** How Company Culture Shapes Employee Motivation – Lindsay McGregor and Neel Doshi - HBR.org https://hbr.org/2015/11/how-company-culture-shapes-employee-motivation?utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=hbr&utm_medium=social
2. **Watch or Listen:** Leading with Lollipops – Drew Dudley TEDx Toronto 2010 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVCBrkrFrBE&feature=share>



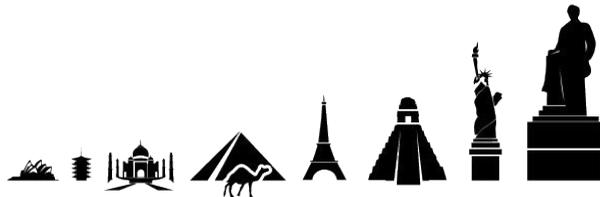
Moment in Time:



Drs. Barbara and Morton Achter joined us in the Office of International Education during a visit to Ferris. Dr. Barbara Achter was the Provost at Ferris in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Dr. Achter endowed the Barbara Chapman Study Abroad Scholarship, which has helped dozens of Ferris student participate in study abroad programs. Drs. Barbara and Morton Achter are passionate about international education. We enjoyed sharing stories with them and hosting them in the OIE during their visit to Ferris.



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