



–a Ferris State international education newsletter

Collaboration + Excellence → Learning + Opportunity

Greetings from the Office of International Education (OIE). Thank you for your continued interest in reading our biweekly newsletter. In this issue, we are sharing a successful Ferris State University symposium series we started six years ago. By sharing the details here we are hoping academic programs across campus would adopt it as a cost-effective model for professional development for their faculty.

We, in the OIE, believe the foundation for successful academic endeavors must be rooted in faculty professional development.

With our current budget challenges, many departments and units are finding it difficult to fund and support faculty and staff travel to conferences and national expos. These missed opportunities for bench marking and professional development will cloud our University’s vision to prepare our students “for our rapidly changing global economy and society” and hamper our daily efforts to achieve our mission.

How can we ensure that faculty and staff continue to gain high-quality, high-impact professional development opportunities? How can we achieve this goal with minimal investment? How can it help us to grow out of current challenges?

In the OIE, we anticipated these resource challenges as changes in higher education and regional demographics, some specific to Michigan, became visible on the horizon. Understanding that this may impact our ability to support faculty and staff professional development, in the OIE, we saw these challenges as an opportunity to innovate and collaborate. The Lighthouse Symposium model outlined in the next pages can be adopted across campus for cost effective professional and program development. How did we achieve it?

Effective environmental scanning!

Dr. Piram Prakasam
Executive Director, Office of International Education



High Impact Professional Development Model: Lighthouse Symposium

Seven years ago we created an innovative, impactful, international TESOL symposium model for our Intensive English Program, housed in the OIE. It was designed as an in-house professional development opportunity for our faculty at minimal investment with the aim to benchmark and build international partnerships.

Lighthouse Symposium Rationale: In our design of this two-day symposium, we were intentional in our efforts to develop a model that can be embraced across campus by other programs, a franchise if you will, that highlights our strength as a hands-on, practical institution.

The ultimate goal of the design of the symposium model is to enhance academic quality of programs and strengthen the recruitment of both faculty and students. It was structured to have flexibility to support the branding and bench-marking needs of academic programs with the hope that it will be embraced across campus as an inexpensive professional development training model.



Lighthouse Model: The model was designed to be flexible enough for other programs to adapt it to their needs as our aim all along was to use the Lighthouse model as a vehicle for campus internationalization efforts.

The Lighthouse model is adaptable, but we designed it to have three consistent core pillars:

1. The symposiums have a workshop focus for the programming to showcase our strength as a hands-on, practical institution.
2. The symposiums are designed to have a small and intimate setting, which allows participants to build a close and meaningful network and keep the cost down.
3. The symposiums have an international focus that can provide opportunities for program development, bench-marking, branding, and recruiting depending on the needs of particular programs.

The IEP Lighthouse: The Intensive English Program at Ferris was restarted in 2010 after a 5-year hiatus as a core arm of our international student recruitment strategy. After bringing aboard a small cohort of faculty to develop a new curriculum, the Intensive English Program was renamed the West Michigan English Language Institute.

Context for IEP Lighthouse: With a new and growing program, we had a need to bench mark against best practices as we were seeking accreditation by two key organizations and recognition among our regional peer institutions. We also had a need to develop our cohort of faculty and attract new faculty to our growing program. And fundamentally, since the WMELI was a cornerstone of our international recruitment strategy, we had a need to brand ourselves internationally.

IEP Lighthouse Symposium success: We have successfully hosted the Lighthouse Symposium for six years in Big Rapids. Participants from 16 to 18 institutions across the Midwest region and international partner institutions join us each year. We have been able to run each symposium close to the cost of sending one faculty to a national



conference. We are now a well recognized program in the Mid-west.

International Lighthouse symposium for Business Programs: As we have molded the Lighthouse Symposium model over the years, we encouraged other programs to adopt the model. The Dean of the College of Business encouraged his faculty to start a new Lighthouse Symposium for business educators in 2017 in collaboration with our German and Dutch partner institutions to focus on international curricular and experiential learning collaborations. Their model invited international business schools to join for a two-day symposium to attend workshops on potential collaborations and also to tour industry partners. The first Business Lighthouse Symposium was hosted at Ferris. In 2018, it was hosted at our partner Rhein-Waal University in Germany. In 2019, it will be hosted at our partner Saxion University in the Netherlands, after which it will return to Ferris.

If your program is interested in exploring how a Lighthouse Symposium could meet your needs, join us for a conversation!

Lisa vonReichbauer

Assistant Director, Office of International Education



In Context

1. **Read:** Want to Keep Your Talented Professors? Sponsor Their Professional Development - The Chronicle of Higher Education
<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Want-to-Keep-Your-Talented/244925>
2. **Watch or Listen:** Lighthouse Summer Symposium 2015
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmB9CoxmTfA>
3. **Read:** Lighthouse Symposium - Ferris State University
<https://ferris.edu/international/lighthouse/index.htm>



A Moment In Time:



Staff in the University play a very important role in making our International students feel welcome. We value diversity. Our alumni appreciate and remember the acts of inclusion. Pictured: COB alumni from the MISI graduate program with Ms. Shannon Yost during the Diwali celebration held on Friday, November 9 in the IRC Connector.



Upcoming Events:

1. November 16 – International Faculty and Staff Potluck from 12:00-1:30 pm in IRC 104
2. November 21- Home Away from Home Thanksgiving Dinner from 2:00-4:00 in IRC 115 (open to all international students and any Ferris students who cannot go home for Thanksgiving)
3. Fridays at 1:00 pm in IRC 104 – Weekly Study Abroad Workshops (open to all students)
4. Fridays at 2:00 pm in IRC 107- Cultural Conversations (open to all students)

Imagine more...

