



—a Ferris State international education newsletter

## The Need for Deliberative Dialogues:

Greetings from the Office of International Education (OIE). Last week (Dec 7th), the University-wide Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC) invited the Office of International Education to present initiatives that we would like to have included in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan for the University.

In our presentation, we proposed a single initiative:

***To create a comprehensive internationalization plan by Fall 2020***

We requested that they include the above proposal as one of their initiatives. During the presentation, we made a case for why the SPSC should include this initiative in the final plan by revisiting the successes and challenges for International at Ferris.

We explained the background and the context in which our international student enrollment increased from a low of 162 to 530 in five years by fall 2015. This increase was due to a strategic commitment from the University to achieve this growth. We also spoke about how and why our enrollment has dropped by close to 300 International students in a short three-year period, resulting in a loss of tuition revenue of \$5 million dollars.

In preparation for the SPSC meeting, I reached out to colleagues across campus and requested endorsements of the above proposal to create a comprehensive plan. In about a week, a total of 78 faculty, staff and administrators endorsed the proposal.

The endorsements demonstrate a gathering consensus to create a sustainable strategic plan for international education. We have invested ten years in strengthening our international engagement and have had significant successes. We need to create a consensus and a strategic commitment to internationalize our university to thrive and expand opportunities for our students.

Our plan forward is to continue engaging the SPSC and seek leadership support to create a Deliberative Dialogue on comprehensive campus internationalization. In the next two pages, we outline how we can achieve it through deliberative dialogue. What is the key to achieving a successful comprehensive internationalization plan through Deliberative Dialogue?

***Achieving common understanding!***

Dr. Piram Prakasam  
Executive Director, Office of International Education



## Why Deliberative Dialogues?

The Strategic Planning process that the university has embarked on is timely as we are facing declining student enrollment. Our student head count has dropped by 10% since Fall 2015, and our Student Credit Hours have dropped by 10.6% across the system. The head count for traditional main campus students has dropped by 17.5% since Fall 2008 and is at its lowest in 10 years, challenging our ability to maintain a vibrant residential campus.

In the changing landscape of higher education, we need a common understanding of the magnitude of challenges we face as an institution today and in the future. We also need a common understanding of how campus internationalization can be a transformative engine in preparing our Ferris State University community to thrive in a dynamic global society. With that common understanding, we can achieve consensus and a strategic commitment to move forward.

With support in the University's Strategic Plan to develop a Comprehensive Internationalization plan by 2020, our approach to developing the plan would have three phases:

1. Discovery phase with a rigorous data gathering and analysis
2. University-wide Deliberative dialogs to achieve common understanding
3. Development of specific metrics for success and a request for a five-year University commitment for resources

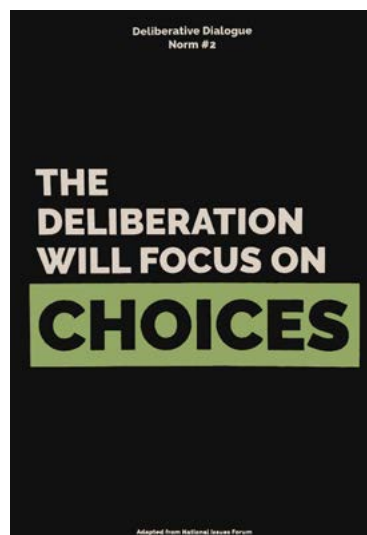
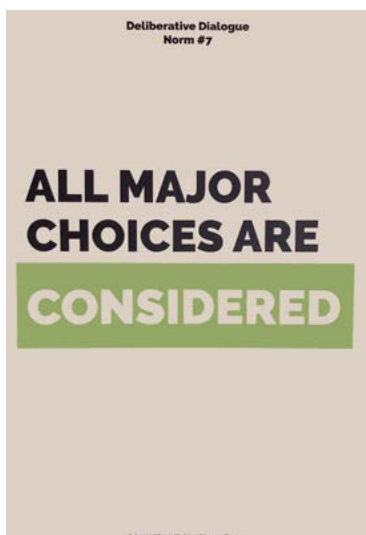
Deliberative Dialogue is a form of discussion aimed at finding the best course of action not by necessarily solving a problem but by exploring the most promising avenues. Professor Kristin Conley from RSS brought the Deliberative Dialogue model to engage the campus in dialogue on difficult topics. We are adopting this model to facilitate campus discussion.



International Education is a mature field and industry with opportunities that can be leveraged by Ferris to solve larger university challenges. To achieve a common understanding and discover opportunities and the most beneficial course of action, we will facilitate Deliberative Dialogues on core aspects of international education as they relate to the strategic areas of the university. The dialogues will intentionally include key stakeholders that are responsible for planning, funding, executing, supporting, and receiving the actions that will be discussed.

The Deliberative Dialogues will be designed around:

1. International student enrollment and retention
2. Education abroad and global experiential learning
3. Inclusion and student support services
4. Curricular collaborations and academic program development
5. International benchmarking and branding
6. Faculty and staff professional development



By hosting the Deliberative Dialogues, we hope to engage a broad constituency across campus to learn about opportunities that exist in International Education that support larger university goals. We also aim to understand what resources and commitment would be required to take action on these opportunities. If we come to a consensus about how these opportunities align with our capacity, needs, and interests, then a strategic commitment can be achieved to sustain our efforts. Strategic and sustained international efforts can help Ferris overcome challenges of today and meet challenges of tomorrow.

Thanks for reading and please connect with us if you would like to share your thoughts or have questions.

Lisa vonReichbauer  
Assistant Director, Office of International Education





## In Context

1. **Read:** [Saddle Up: 7 Trends Coming in 2018 – Inside Higher Ed](#)
2. **Read:** [8 Global Trends Impacting Higher Ed – Education Dive](#)
3. **Read:** [What is Deliberative Dialogue – American Institutes for Research](#)



## A Moment In Time:



Ferris has a long history of welcoming students from around the world. In the words of our founder, “The world is one big family.” Dr. Alkhowaiter graduated from Ferris in 1971. He wanted his sons to have the same start that he had, so he sent them to Ferris to first learn English and then obtain their bachelor degrees. Naief graduated in December 2017 with a degree in Health Care Systems Administration and Fahad will graduate in May 2019 with a degree in Hospitality Management. Naief posted a Facebook comment that we are sharing here.



## Upcoming Events:

1. December 13 – International Alumni Beginnings 11:00-12:00 pm in IRC 104 (open to all international students who are graduating or completing their semester exchange)
2. December 14- International Holiday Celebration Potluck 5:00-7:00 pm in IRC 115 open to faculty and staff
3. Fridays at 1:00 pm in IRC 104 – Weekly Study Abroad Workshops (open to all students)

Imagine more...

