Placing Partnerships at the Center

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MAIN THEMES:

21st century internationalization differs from that of the 20th century.

Institutional partnerships play a much more central role.

PART ONE: Theorizing Partnerships

International partnership should be both a strategy and a philosophy.
Historically internationalization = bringing something into our institutions.

Internationalization (Jane Knight):
“Integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of an institution” (1994)
“the infusion of international perspectives into the purpose, function or delivery of post-secondary education” (2004)

What if we saw internationalization not just as infusing something INTO our institutions,

but also as drawing our institutions OUT into something larger than themselves?

Internationalization would no longer rest only on an institution’s own experts and internal resources.
Internationalization would also – perhaps more importantly – rest on an institution's:

- connections with the broader world
- engagement in the global construction of knowledge
- exercise of cross-cultural skill & competence
- sense of civic responsibility, both locally and globally

This approach would place partnerships at the center.

The philosophy of partnership:

- Recognizes that academic excellence is now globally distributed
- Reflects post-colonial perspectives
- Relates to the global networks in which our institutions and communities function
- Affirms that some insights and knowledge only arise through dialogue
- Opens up a world of new resources
- Gives colleges and universities a role public diplomacy and global well-being
The philosophy of partnership also means we need to rethink how we structure and sustain partnerships.

Historically, most partnerships:
- were between one faculty member and another
- sent a few students/faculty back & forth
- occasionally engaged in joint projects
- lasted as long as their original proposers were interested and often (sometimes immediately) sat idle thereafter.

Such focused partnerships only scratch the surface of what partnerships can do.

Institutions need a broad portfolio of partnership types and a clear understanding of what each type does.
Partnerships vary by scope.

- Faculty-to-faculty
- Student exchange
- One-way student flows
- Department-to-department
- Institution-to-institution
- Coalitions of several institutions

Partnerships vary by function:

- Teaching and learning
- Research collaboration
- Institution and program-building
- Applied and development work
- Enhancing community connections
- Faculty and staff development
- Or all of the above

Partnerships vary along an impact continuum:

Transactional ←→ Transformative
Transactional Partnerships

- Simple give-and-take
- Neither institution is much changed by the exchange
- Instrumental in nature

Transformative Partnerships

- Change both institutions, as they work together
- Generate common goals, projects, products
- Emphasize the relationship as much as the product
- Expand over time
- Create dialogical basis for global learning

PART TWO: International Partnerships at IUPUI
Like many institutions, IUPUI

- Has spent last five years reworking our partnership strategy
- Taking stock
- Developing policies and procedures
- Convening faculty interest groups
- Have centered our program with a few, very special partnerships known as Strategic Partnerships

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
www.iupui.edu/~cls/ia/strategicpartnerships

A bi-national community of higher education in which there is a constant flow of people, ideas, and projects back and forth, as well as the development of new projects and common goals.

Strategic Partnerships (1):

- Enable faculty who know little about the partner country or have no international background to become involved
- Build complex understandings of the partner country that deepen over time
- Impact student learning across the curriculum, even in courses not directly connected to the partnership
- Build strong platforms for study abroad, in both directions
- Spark joint research projects on new topics
- Foster creative interdisciplinarity
Strategic Partnerships (2):

- Involve administrators & staff, too
- Give each partner a long-term base of operations in the other country
- Focus campus internationalization efforts
- Create economies of scale/synergies of effort
- Establish defined concentrations of activity that attract external funding
- Model the cross-national competencies we want students to learn
- Lead to community engagement on both sides

Partnership with Moi University, Kenya

IU-Moi Partnership grew from a small faculty/student exchange in 1989 to:

- 2 hospitals, 18 clinics, 6 farms, craft workshop, orphanages, food distribution center
- Treating 80,000 HIV/AIDS patients a year
- Exchanging 20 faculty and 50 students annually
- Projects in Education, Social Work, Social Sciences, Law, Informatics, Physical Ed, Engineering, Business, Nursing
- Engagement of dozens of community organizations in Indiana and Kenya
- Over $100 million in grants
Partnership with Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo

Partnership with Sun Yat Sen University, China

Some things we have learned about sustaining such partnerships

• Establish system of regular communication/interactive websites
• Establish oversight committees
• Create on-the-ground presence
• Provide seed money
• Organize visits back and forth
Some things we have learned about sustaining such partnerships:

- Develop courses/workshops on the partner countries, taught collaboratively
- Organize lectures, films, performances that showcase partner nation
- Develop interdisciplinary study abroad platforms
- Teach language of partner, in multiple formats
- Support home community in working with the partner community

Some things we have learned about sustaining such partnerships:

- Need time to grow and develop
- Must be based on reciprocity
- Require attention to cross-cultural communication
- Often move forward around specific topics that concentrate the collaboration
- Acknowledge resource-differentials between the two institutions
- Acknowledge relationships between the two nations

One example of what such partnerships can do:

Internationalize the curriculum
- without hiring a host of new faculty
- Incorporating voices and sources of authority from around the world.
The many ways of internationalizing the curriculum with partners:

• Trading or jointly offering class sessions or whole courses – in person or electronically
• Assisting in faculty development
• Developing study abroad components
• Developing joint degrees
• Offering certificates and degrees on each other’s campuses

However we structure partnerships, we have entered the era in which internationalization should not be approached unilaterally.

This may mean that we lose some control over the process, but this may not be a bad thing.

Partnership must be a dialogue, not a lecture, and both sides should end up learning something new.