Maximizing Faculty Motivation in International Programming

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Maximizing Faculty Involvement in International Programming
Heather Schieman
Advisor: Molly Schaller

Motivation for Involvement
• Providing transformational opportunities for students
  • A strong desire to share their passion for international and/or cultural experiences
  • Opportunity to develop a broader reference base for teaching and research
  • Chance to cultivate different relationships with students outside of the traditional classroom setting
  (More Student Affairs Oriented)
• Family connection either through linked heritage to the site, or the opportunity to expose their children to an international experience

Limitations to Involvement
• Lacking consistent departmental support
  • Finding quality collaborations with faculty across departments and colleges
  • Intentionality of subject and location is difficult to conceptualize and develop
  • Limited amount of resources for faculty in creating programs prior to proposal approval
  • Value is not articulated in merit review or tenure
  • Financial loss by giving up summer research
  • Without department encouragement of student involvement the structure ultimately limits their participation, and in turn faculty participation

Conclusion
From the research findings, it can be concluded that faculty do not lack motivation, but instead structural support for their initiatives. When a department does not place worth on faculty involvement and international ambitions it makes continued action and growth of programs difficult.

Participant Sample
Interviews were conducted with tenured faculty members from various university colleges and departments. All faculty members who participate in Interdisciplinary Programs through the University of Dayton.

Purpose of Study
There is no question that today’s universities are committed to internationalizing the face of American Higher Education. International student enrollment has increased dramatically in past years, diversifying campuses across the country. However, it is equally important that U.S. students also gain international experience, and build cross cultural competencies, outside the comfort zone of their home campuses. Study Abroad is an incomparable experience for these transformative moments, but faculty involvement is key to the success and implementation of such programs. The purpose of the study was to pinpoint the motivational factors that bring faculty to get involved in international programming, as well as the limitations that prevent increased participation.

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“I don’t have a lot of international experience, and I feel like my teaching suffers for that. I would love to be able to draw more upon experiences I have. Drawing from more kinds of connections.”
- Linda*

“I think more departments need to think in these terms. We need to give students a push. I think its another way to get cul-de-sac kids who came from one dome to another, to leave this dome.”
- Levin*

“We need a plan, or some guidelines, or a vision for how this department wants to be. What our goals are. But we haven’t had that for at least the past eight years.”
- Samantha*