Trends in International Education: New Imperatives in Academic Librarianship

Martha L. Brogan

The author describes new directions in international education during the past decade and links them to new imperatives in academic librarianship. Five major areas of development are considered: foreign language instruction, study abroad, internationalizing the curriculum, foreign students and scholars, and technical assistance and international development. The author recommends six ways in which ACRL might strengthen its role as an advocate of international education.

This article was written in connection with the work of ACRL's task force on international relations.

Ten years ago the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Study issued a report entitled Strength through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability that stressed the need to integrate an international dimension into the college curriculum. Among other widely publicized findings, it revealed that less than 10 percent of Americans could read and speak a foreign language effectively, that few were highly skilled and few were competent in a language other than Spanish, French, or German. The dearth of international knowledge among college students, including basic information about geography, politics, and economics, was further documented in the 1981 report, College Student's Knowledge and Beliefs: A Survey of Global Understanding. Numerous other studies during the 1980s continued to examine the role of foreign language instruction, study abroad, international curriculum, foreign students, and overseas technical assistance in higher education.

In academic institutions the argument for increasing the international competence of students is twofold, stemming from educational and economic imperatives. Developing the skills necessary to succeed in a multicultural, interdependent world is both educationally responsible and the only means of survival—economic and otherwise—in the twenty-first century. Increasingly, the United States' economic pre-eminence is being replaced by international economic competition in a global marketplace. Educators now realize that national policies alone cannot resolve the global challenges of environment, sustainable agricultural systems, improved health systems and population planning, and urban development. The United States is only one partner in a global network. During the 1980s institutions of higher education recognized their role in educating internationally competent citizens as well as developing a cadre of highly skilled future leaders who might succeed in the global arena.

We are now beginning to witness concrete outcomes, and a coalescing of opinion about the importance of internationalizing higher education. At the national level, the Coalition for Advancement of Foreign Language and International Stud-
ies (CAFLIS), founded in 1987, serves as a focal point for these discussions. CAFLIS has promoted the proposal to create a National Endowment for Foreign Language and International Studies, which would work with public and private colleges and universities, associations, and school systems to strengthen international competence.

At the state level, the National Governors' Association released its study of international education, *America in Transition: The International Frontier*, in March 1989. The report discusses the effects of globalization on state economies and work forces and outlines a "state action agenda" for elementary and secondary schools, higher education, and business. The governors' recommendations for higher education include strengthening the study of foreign languages, increasing participation in study abroad, and integrating an international dimension in all majors at the college level. Many states already have introduced programs to improve the international competence of their citizens, and this new report undoubtedly will result in even broader participation.

A special Higher Education Panel (HEP) survey of colleges and universities covering the period from 1982 to 1987, supported by the American Council on Education (ACE) was issued in September 1988. It reported increases in hiring new faculty with international expertise, international course offerings, libraries' international collections, opportunities for study abroad, and opportunities for faculty travel overseas.

To summarize, the current period in international education is characterized by consolidation and reconfiguration. Since the end of the Second World War there has been unprecedented growth on almost all campuses in teaching about other parts of the world and in international exchanges of student and faculty. Therefore, the main task ahead is not to add more courses, but to sharpen the definitions of international education, and to build into a cohesive whole the existing, usually disparate component parts. Institutions see the need to integrate and direct growth from widely dispersed, largely student demand-driven initiatives into rational institutional plans. To this end, many are appointing high-level administrators specifically assigned to review and develop a systematic, integrated approach to internationalizing the campus. Trends in five areas of international education are discussed below and their implications for academic librarianship are identified.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

Institutions are reconsidering the purpose, levels and outcomes of foreign language instruction. There is a new emphasis on requiring all students to attain a minimal-level proficiency in a second language. A second strategy concentrates on a narrower set of students who will attain a higher level of skill. This subset of students expands to nontraditional fields outside the liberal arts. The University of Rhode Island, for example, launched a pilot program in 1988 that combines a standard engineering curriculum with intensive study in German language and culture. It includes a six-month internship with an engineering company in a German-speaking country, and, upon return from abroad, an engineering course taught in German.

In order to attract students to this type of program, colleges and universities are identifying motivated, high-aptitude learners in high school and targeting groups such as returned U.S. exchange students as potential participants. The HEP survey found that in the last five years, about 100 four-year colleges have increased their language requirements for admission, and that about 200 have increased them for a baccalaureate.

Another trend in foreign language instruction is increasing enrollment in non-European languages. One-third of the institutions in the HEP survey showed increases in the number of students enrolled in non-Western languages. Figures released by the Modern Language Association corroborate these findings. From 1983 to 1986, the number of college students enrolled in Japanese increased 45%, to 23,454. During the same period,
the number of college students enrolled in Chinese increased by 28.2% and in Russian by 11.8%. In contrast, French enrollments were up by only 1.9% and German declined by 5.6%. Finally, new measures are being developed to assess students’ foreign language ability, with greater emphasis on actual performance and outcomes' assessment. Eventually, college curricula are likely to articulate more explicitly the levels of language offered, alongside the expected performance outcomes. Colleges and universities are working more closely with elementary and secondary schools to offer a continuum of foreign language training that extends from K-12 to college and beyond.

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The need for a highly trained, internationally astute cadre of academic librarians is evident. As students become more conversant in foreign languages and the curriculum develops in languages other than English, new demands will be placed on libraries' human and material resources. Higher-aptitude learners in foreign-language content courses will need foreign-language materials outside traditional, literary fields. Academic librarians can expect requests for business materials in Japanese, engineering in German, or journalism in Chinese. They must be prepared to identify and obtain these resources.

STUDY ABROAD

Traditionally, U.S. institutions of higher education have practiced a laissez-faire approach to study abroad. Although most four-year colleges and universities operate study-abroad programs (63 percent, according to the HEP survey), few have been developed as an integral part of the curriculum, and despite the number of programs available, relatively few students take advantage of them. There is a proliferation of programs, many overlapping in destination (largely European) and intent (largely general liberal arts), and often without quality control. Most institutions have not reviewed study abroad in terms of its relationship to the curriculum or the students' academic goals.

Current trends point first towards increasing the sheer number of college students who participate in study abroad. The European Economic Community (EEC) plans to send at least 10 percent of the students from each country to study in another member country as part of the EEC's 1992 integrated market concept. Similarly, an advisory panel to the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) released a report in December 1988, Educating for Global Competence, that called for an increase in the number of Americans studying abroad to 10 percent of enrollment by 1995 and 20 to 25 percent by 2008. The University of Minnesota has set a goal of reaching parity in the number of foreign students it receives and the number of U.S. students it sends abroad within the next ten years. This would mean a fourfold increase from the current 800 students, to 1,600 in 1993, and 3,200 in 1998; still less than 10 percent of the student population at the University of Minnesota.

In study abroad, there is also a movement to expand non-European opportunities and to relate study abroad to the academic curriculum, both before and after the term overseas. Most research on the impact of study abroad has concentrated on its character-building and cultural value, nearly excluding the evaluation of academic benefits and any gain in substantive knowledge. This is likely to change as institutions review systematically the purpose of study abroad and make it an integral part of the curriculum across all disciplines.

As more students seek opportunities to study abroad, academic librarians can anticipate a demand for information about
exchange programs. Moreover, students may want practical information about current social and economic conditions in the countries where they plan to study. If the library chooses not to acquire such practical guides itself, librarians should at least know which offices on their campus offer services and advice on study abroad.

INTERNATIONALIZING THE CURRICULUM

To prepare students to live in a multicultural, interdependent world, institutions must pursue a strategy of infusing the general education curriculum with international content, while at the same time maintaining and improving concentrations and majors in international studies for a smaller subset of students. According to the HEP survey, just less than half (49 percent) of four-year colleges and universities reported an increase in the integration of international materials into regular courses. This seems to confirm the earlier findings reported in ACE's *Campus Trends, 1986*, which concluded that about two-fifths of the four-year institutions are increasing or have recently increased attention to international matters in their curriculum.

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As faculty develop the international content of their courses, they will rely more on international library resources and networks. National resource collections, along with the specialists capable of developing them, will become insufficient. Knowledge of—if not access to—international sources will be required. In an international affairs course at the University of Maryland, students are linked via a computer network, created by the State Department, to European universities and strive to resolve geopolitical problems. Acting as diplomats for their respective countries, students carry out all correspondence in target languages. This type of course is likely to place new demands on academic libraries.

FOREIGN STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS

Foreign student enrollments in U.S. institutions have increased tenfold in the last thirty-five years to a current figure of about 350,000. While foreign students constitute less than 3 percent of all higher education enrollments in the United States, they now sustain academic programs on some campuses, particularly at graduate and professional levels. Since the mid-1980s, public attention has been drawn to enrollment and graduation figures in the technical fields where foreign students predominate. At the University of Minnesota, foreign students comprise about 20 percent of the total graduate student population; however, they represent over 50 percent in fields such as agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, animal science, civil engineering, economics, fluid mechanics, mathematics, mineral engineering, and veterinary medicine. On many campuses, foreign students are critical not only to the survival of graduate education in these fields, but also to the future labor force of U.S. corporations.

Academic librarians need to evaluate the relevance of their collections and services to foreign students. They should know the demographic profile of foreign students on their campuses, the countries (and languages) they represent and their fields of study. Are foreign students provided with a frame of reference for using academic libraries effectively? Foreign students are also primary resources, on the campus and in the classroom, to internationalize the curriculum. But relevant library materials are needed to validate their interpretations. Do academic libraries have resources available in the vernacular to meet this need? Should librarians attempt to acquire materials relevant to foreign students' native countries so they might apply their knowledge effectively upon their return home?
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For several decades, public research universities, in particular, have been involved in projects with developing countries that concentrate on institution-building, education and training, and technical assistance. Typically these projects have been funded by domestic and international agencies like the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the Ford Foundation, and the Asian Development Bank. Such projects send U.S. faculty as visiting scholars overseas as well as bring foreign students and scholars to the United States.

The Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA), composed of eight major public universities in the Midwest, manages large-scale international development projects that require combined scholarly resources. Since 1977, it has operated long-term programs in such countries as Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal, Burma, Korea, Bangladesh, Brazil, Peru, and the West Indies.

In January 1987, MUCIA signed a five-year, $61 million subcontract with the World Bank to the Government of Indonesia (WBXVII). Based on the premise that Indonesia’s social and economic growth are impeded by the lack of trained personnel, the project seeks to strengthen Indonesia’s capacity to train its own university instructors and researchers. Specifically, MUCIA will provide: (a) graduate degree training for Indonesian students at overseas institutions (2,300 person-years); (b) internships and other nondegree training for Indonesian faculty and staff (2,240 person-months); and (c) technical research assistance by U.S. faculty sent to Indonesia as visiting scholars (1,900 person-months). The project is targeted to the fields of economics, life sciences, food science and nutrition, engineering, social studies, computer science, and biotechnology.

Technical assistance projects vary from institution to institution, but academic librarians should be familiar with local priorities and commitments. Ideally, academic librarians would be involved during contract negotiations, since exchange of research materials is often an integral part of the proposal. Moreover, academic libraries might participate more fully in other aspects of these projects by sending their library staff overseas and agreeing to train librarians from abroad at their home institutions.

SUMMARY

Library professionals can no longer seek resolution to problems in parochial ways. The publishing industry itself has globalized: books written by authors in the United States are published by multinational corporations in the Netherlands, printed in Korea, priced differentially according to geographic markets, and distributed worldwide. To be effective, academic librarians must understand the new international marketplace. Even “local” problems such as preservation, database development, and cataloging standards must be considered in their international context.

The American Library Association (ALA) appears to have adopted an approach to international education similar to that of most institutions of higher education: random, decentralized, and ad hoc. The average ALA member needs a veritable road map through the thicket of ALA international library committees, and is hard put to understand whether and how these disparate committees cooperate to accomplish associational goals.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) should work with ALA to focus and target its international efforts in order to avoid needless redundancies in some areas and glaring gaps in others. ACRL should reexamine the way in which it contributes to international education and strengthen its commitment for advocacy. It could provide leadership in the following areas:

1. Liaison with key national and international associations and programs that fund, promote, and evaluate international exchange in higher education such as the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) and the Coalition for the Advancement of Foreign Language and International Studies (CAFLIS).
ACRL should appoint representatives to a broader network of these associations. It should take the lead in articulating the academic library dimensions of the numerous reports about international education cited in this paper and bringing them to the attention of the sponsoring agencies. With these agencies, ACRL should identify new sources of funding and lobby for resources to support the international dimensions of academic librarianship. (See appendix for list of relevant agencies.)

2. Rather than serving as a clearinghouse for individual exchange placement requests from librarians abroad, ACRL might focus its attention first on encouraging such programs as IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board) and Fulbright to promote the exchange of librarians, following the successful prototype of the Library/Book Fellows program with USIA. ACRL could become the chief consultant in identifying appropriate institutions to meet the needs of exchange scholars and encouraging colleges and universities to host exchangees under the auspices of established international sponsors.

3. Within its field of responsibility, ACRL should promote quality control over international exchanges, tours, courses and other initiatives by offering critical reviews, writing guidelines, and identifying trained consultants during project development. C&RL News might begin a regular international news column.

4. Through internationalization of its strategic plan, ACRL should ensure that its committees and sections integrate an international perspective into their work. It should support the work of its area studies sections, in particular, by ensuring their representation on appropriate ALA committees and using them as a network of consultants on various projects. All geographic areas, including Western and Eastern Europe, should be represented.

5. ACRL should recommend policies and mechanisms for academic libraries to compete for grants and gifts to support the international exchange of academic librarians and materials.

6. ACRL should develop guidelines and mechanisms for academic librarians to receive training and professional development opportunities in international areas. This effort should begin with library school training and extend throughout the career phases of academic librarianship.

REFERENCES AND NOTES


3. See bibliography for list of recent studies in international education.


APPENDIX A: INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NEWS, TRENDS, AND GUIDELINES

Recent News Articles on International Education


Trends in International Education


Barrows, Thomas and others. College Student's Knowledge and Beliefs: A Survey of Global Understanding,


"Issues in International Education," *NCA Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 2 (Fall 1988).


*Guidelines for International Education*

American Association of State Colleges and Universities. *Guidelines: Incorporating an International Di-
mension in Colleges and Universities. Washington, D.C.: AASCU.

APPENDIX B: U.S. AGENCIES AND ASSOCIATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE

Higher Education Agencies with International Dimension

Academy for Educational Development
American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business
American Association for the Advancement of Science—Consortium of Affiliates for International Programs
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Women
American Council of Learned Societies
American Council on Education
Andrew Mellon Foundation
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Carnegie Corporation
College Board, Office of International Education
College Entrance Examination Board
Committee on Institutional Cooperation
Council of Graduate Schools
Council on Learning
Dumbarton Oaks
Educational Testing Service, International Office
Ford Foundation
Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs
Luce Foundation
MacArthur Foundation
National Academy of Sciences
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Science Foundation
Olin Foundation
Pew Charitable Trust
Rockefeller Foundation
Sloan Foundation
Smithsonian Institution
Social Science Research Council
Spenser Foundation
U.S. Department of Education (Fulbright-Hays programs and Title VI centers)
William & Flora Hewlett Foundation

International Agencies

Academic Alliances in Foreign Languages and Literatures
American Field Service
Association for International Practical Training
Association for Women in Development
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of U.S. University Directors of International Agricultural Programs
Board for International Food and Agricultural Development
Coalition for Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies
Community Colleges for International Development, Inc.
Consortium for International Cooperation in Higher Education
Consortium for International Development
Consortium for International Studies Education
Council of International Exchange of Scholars
Council of International Programs
Council of International Programs for Youth Leaders and Social Workers, Inc.
Council on Foreign Relations
Council on International Educational Exchange
East-West Center
Fogarty International Center
Fulbright Alumni Association
HEA Title VI National Resource Centers for International Studies, Advanced Training and Research Branch
Institute of International Education
International Association of Educators for World Peace
International Association of Universities
International Student Exchange Program
International Studies Association
Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities
Liaison Group for International Educational Exchange
Mid-America International Agricultural Consortium (MIAC), Inc.
Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities
National Association for Foreign Student Affairs
National Council for International Visitors
National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages
National Council on Foreign Languages and International Studies
Post Secondary International Network
Rotary International
Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research
South-East Consortium for International Development
University Affiliation Programs (USIA)
Area Studies or Country-Specific Agencies

African American Institute
African Studies Association
Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung
AMIDEAST
American Association for Netherlandic Studies
American Association of Teachers of German
American-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.
American Oriental Society
American-Scandinavian Foundation Exchange Division
Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies
Association for Asian Studies
Atlantic Exchange Program
Belgian American Educational Foundation
Center for Arabic Study Abroad
Commission of European Communities
Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People’s Republic of China
Conference Group on German Politics
Council for European Studies
Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC)
  American Academy in Rome
  American Institute for Yemeni Studies
  American Institute of Indian Studies
  American Institute of Iranian Studies
  American Institute for Maghrib Studies
  American Institute of Pakistan Studies
  American Research Center in Egypt
  American Research Institute in Turkey
  American School of Classical Studies at Athens
  American School of Oriental Research
German Marshall Fund
German Studies Association
Hariri Foundation
Institute for European Studies
Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome
International Research and Exchanges Board (Soviet & East European)
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities
Latin American Studies Association
Middle East Studies Association
National Council for Soviet and East European Research
Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study
Society for French Historical Studies