

Executive Summary

In 2017, the University of Nebraska Medical Center joined the 15th cohort of the American Council on Education (ACE) Internationalization Laboratory program. This two-year initiative is supported by ACE through the Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE). The Internationalization Laboratory is an invitational learning community that assists participating institutions to develop a capacity, capability, and strategy for comprehensive internationalization.

The initial site visit occurred in November 2017 with a visit from ACE Mentor Dr. Gil Latz to kick off the process. Dr. Latz met with stakeholders including Dr. Gold, Dr. Davies, the deans and directors and the UNMC ACE Internationalization Lab Steering Committee. Four subcommittees were formed and began the campus Internationalization Review in January 2018, collecting data about the current state of internationalization at UNMC and future needs. In spring 2019, UNMC's internationalization lab began writing the final deliverable—this report summarizing the extent of internationalization and global engagement at UNMC as well as recommendations for improvement.

Recommendations from the full report include the following:

Overarching Recommendations:

- A. A Campus Internationalization Committee should be organized by the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement, with representation from every College and key stakeholders within UNMC (e.g. Business and Finance, VCR, VCAA, UNeMed) to discuss opportunities simultaneously. Once formed, the Committee could map a campus-wide internationalization strategy through the UNMC strategic planning process. This Campus Internationalization Committee will provide a more systematic approach, independent of personal connections, in order to provide long-term stability and growth of international programs. The committee structure will include clear membership renewal guidelines at the outset to ensure that the campus goals are met. Further, this committee would determine the criteria and process for strategically establishing new partnerships and agreements by developing standard procedures to initiate partnerships through agreement standard review and approval process. A special review committee that includes legal professional could be the entity to review partnership requests and assess their sustainability. The committee would determine the priority areas for international collaboration and potential regions to develop new partnerships and a strategy for collaboration and partnership by identifying specific regions to expand these partnerships as well as prioritize areas (depths) to strengthen existing partnerships. The group would evaluate international partnerships, whether they are sustainable and beneficial for both parties and establish a set of measures and metrics to evaluate existing partnerships.
- B. Develop additional resources to support education abroad, including an advisory group composed of representatives from each College in order to advise students and faculty of education abroad opportunities. Maintain a central website for education abroad, international opportunities and resources across Colleges and other units. Clearly define education abroad in terms of duration, credit or non-credit bearing. Provide cross-cultural training for anyone who is studying abroad.

Subcommittee 1: Institutional Commitment & Administrative Structure Strategic Plan

- 1.1 Identify specific goals, strategies and initiatives for global engagement in our strategic plan for each college.
 - a. What focused area of research, education and/or clinical activity could be pursued?
 - b. Identify sources of potential funding for each collaboration, both internal and external to UNMC (e.g. travel funding)
 - c. Clarify if the institution is willing to commit internal funding to achieve some specified goals
 - d. Identify unfunded recommendations that can be easily achieved as the priority
- 1.2 Consider developing infrastructure within each individual college that interfaces with global engagement offices to facilitate educational and research programs unique to that college.
- 1.3 Develop standardized structured agreements that delineate activities, timelines and financial expectations from partnerships should be rigorously designed and vetted.
- 1.4 Identify one or two specific regional institutional partnerships that can serve as long-term sites at which to focus educational, research, and clinical activities across multiple Colleges and Institutes (e.g. Mexico or another Central American site, and an African or Asian site to be identified as UNMC “partners” on multiple levels). This requires leadership at the level of the Chancellor and Deans to make informed, dedicated decisions.
- 1.5 Metrics should be developed in concert as priorities and plans unfold.

Internationalization Committee:

- 1.6 A Campus Internationalization Committee should be organized by the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement (AVCGE).

Campus Stakeholders:

- 1.7 Two guiding groups could be created:
 - a. Campus Internationalization Committee (as described above) to conduct further work and develop an overall long-term plan for global engagement.
 - b. An advisory group composed of representatives from each College in order to advise students and faculty of education abroad opportunities.
- 1.8 Once a strategic plan, priorities, and action steps have been articulated, an extensive communication strategy is warranted to share with stakeholders mentioned above for appropriate feedback.

International Office:

- 1.9 A centralized office location on campus for students and faculty to find helpful information about participation in, partnering with or initiation of projects abroad, as well as policies about conducting projects abroad (e.g. MOU templates, requirements, signature pathways, etc.). Note: While the current office location of the AVCGE is not in a central location, plans to move to a more central location to Williams Science Hall are in place for 2020.
- 1.10 Enhance interactions by designating a point of contact within each College.
- 1.11 Consider developing faculty or support staff with expertise on regions of interests – Asia, Africa, India, Central America, etc.
- 1.12 Identify and facilitate applications for funding initiatives (e.g. NU Foundation, DOD, USAID, etc.) and scholarships. Pairing individuals or groups who have global project ideas with funding sources would be a very helpful function.

1.13 Clarification of entities (UNeMed, IHME, APRDP, Colleges, etc.) which are responsible for helping with making travel arrangements.

Subcommittee 2: Educational Programs & Students

- 2.1 Identify academic programs (existing or that could be developed) that are of interest to international students and have capacity for growth. For example, a Master in Microbiology would be a new program that would be of interest internationally. The Master of Public Health is an existing program that is of interest internationally and has capacity for growth.
- 2.2 Develop training opportunities as the Davis Global Center for Advanced Interprofessional Learning comes online.
- 2.3 Look for new markets for growing the number of international students.
- 2.4 The ILUNO English language program at UNO could be better utilized to benefit UNMC students. Work with ILUNO to expand and market training programs in medical English.
- 2.5 More cultural events throughout the year would be helpful in addition to some of the programs provided to new international students at the beginning of the academic year.
- 2.6 Continue to explore housing options with UNO.
- 2.7 Recognize faculty that provide exceptional support to international students and global engagement.
- 2.8 Expand UNMC Global Ambassador program and collaborate with Graduate Studies on intercultural events.

Subcommittee 3: Collaborations & Partnerships

- 3.1 Collect the information and build a campus-wide database for the current international partnerships. This practice would establish a strong foundation for systemic evaluation of all of our international partnerships and for strategically strengthening existing partnerships and developing new ones. Note: A database has been created as part of the ACE Internationalization Lab. The next steps will be to distribute to the campus so that it can be accessed by stakeholders.
- 3.2 Enhance the internal communication for collaboration and coordinate with other University of Nebraska campuses, especially with UNO on partnership development.
- 3.3 Leverage successful partnerships by expanding their scope into different departments, specialties or focus areas.

Subcommittee 4: Research

- 4.1 Leverage existing activity and expertise for collaboration and research in strategic areas.
 - a. The current research infrastructure and grant-funded center for population health and policy in Kano, Nigeria provides opportunity for UNMC faculty.
 - b. Leverage areas for collaboration and research through the existing and developing relationships with hospitals around the world, especially if those collaborations can also provide research opportunities.
 - c. Establish a process and framework for networking to allow faculty with international research opportunities to identify partners who can work collaboratively with them and mechanisms to facilitate such collaboration.
 - d. Leverage current activity, expertise to expand/develop research in South and Central America and the Caribbean.
 - e. Leverage the partnerships established through the Global Center for Health Security (GCHS) to expand research collaborations around the world.

- f. Resurrect or recreate a program similar to Cancer Epidemiology Education in Special Populations (CEESP) program to build on cancer and epidemiology expertise as a cross-college research collaboration.
- 4.2 Establish an Internationalization Committee to develop strategic partnerships for research.
- 4.3 Consult personnel experienced with fund raising in the University of Nebraska Foundation for global projects—how do we get funds from the home institutions? Scholarships? What are ways to provide seed funding for small research and student exchange?
- 4.4 Improve international research support through centralization of resources.
 - a. In developing the central resource piece, focus on (1) development and maintenance, (2) policies and procedures, (3) a checklist (hyperlinked) for doing international clinical research – link from Research, Academic Affairs, etc -- which someone needs to own and maintain, and (4) have a high-level advisory group that meets on a continuing basis.
 - b. Make the informed consent process culturally and linguistically appropriate and facilitate the development of methods for having confidential informed consent conversations. As one stakeholder put it, “I don’t care if it’s in India or on [U.S.] tribal land, but it’s about trust”
 - c. Hire a qualified individual who acts as a resource in adjunct to centralization of global health support. If not in the VCR office, perhaps this individual would be based in the Global Center Professionals with a background in research project/leadership and international coordination in the past may be ideal. This would require establishing a funding source for this position, potentially funded by indirects.
 - d. Conduct consistent international research training workshops. These workshops would entail research methods, study design, statistics, grant writing, etc. and could be developed into a certification curriculum.