

NAFSA 2006: Global Perspectives in the Curriculum: Two institutional models David Killick & Vicky Lewis

This session outlines the approaches adopted by two British universities keen to ensure that our graduates are prepared for a multi-cultural, globalising world. Our institutions share the view, not yet very common in the UK, that this is a fundamental role of a university of the 21st century and that global citizenship should become a basic graduate attribute. Our contention is that, in too many cases, either through our own choices or through the power and politics of our institutions, this role is hampered because international education - and the values that underpin it - fail to be mainstreamed. In order to rise to the challenge of integrating international educational values into institutional thinking, Bournemouth University (BU) has chosen the 'conceptual hook' of Global Perspectives (GP), whilst Leeds Metropolitan University (Leeds Met) has used the term Cross-Cultural Capability (CCC).

BU's Global Perspectives Group has been operating since 1998, with a view to ensuring that the Bournemouth graduate will be someone who:

- respects and values diversity
- understands how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally
- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of her/his own role within it
- challenges social injustice
- participates in and contributes to the community, at a range of levels from the local to the global
- is willing to act to make the world more equitable and sustainable
- takes responsibility for his/her own actions (*adapted from Oxfam 1997*).

International events since 2001 have reinforced the importance of this approach, with concern about terrorism and global warming leading to an increase in national and international policies that are relevant to GP and to the related concepts of internationalisation and sustainable development. BU's position as a modern university with a consistently high graduate employment rate means there is also a strong link to the employability strategy.

At Leeds Met, cross-cultural capability originally developed through a series of international conferences on the intercultural and ethnographic skills of successful language graduates, but these quickly became recognised as key attributes for graduates in any discipline area – and for all those working within an international university. There are also strong affinities with the work being done on widening participation and the challenges posed for students and faculty when working in an increasingly multicultural university.

The concept of CCC is articulated as a graduate attribute comprising:

- **Intercultural skills** to communicate, live and work in and with unfamiliar cultural contexts (national, socio-economic, ethnic, etc.);
- A particular awareness of how **one's discipline** relates to a multicultural and globalising world;
- **Global Perspectives** – an awareness of the connections between local activity and global impacts, of sustainability, of responsibility and of the notion of ethical global citizenship;
- **The ability to apply** all the above to perform more effectively as a student (or as a member of staff), and subsequently as a graduate – both in a professional and a private capacity.

Strategies used by BU for institutional integration include the development of a range of rationales which work with a range of interlocutors, a participative approach to change and some 'quick win' deliverables (made possible thanks to a national fellowship award); Leeds Met has adopted a Guidelines document for faculty, against which all programmes must be reviewed by 2008. Both institutions found that implementation requires a whole institution approach, which means not only top level buy-in from senior management, but also doing and giving profile to those activities which show we "walk the talk".

It has been about bringing values into our work, and taking those values beyond the often peripheral realm of international education such that they begin to transform the institutions themselves. We believe we are having some impact because our approach is strategic and relates to core activity and other significant agendas. We hope that, by bringing these values and associated skills to our institutional understanding of what it means to be a graduate in the 21st century, we are embedding this work for the future.

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Powerpoint presentation and links to other resources available at:

http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/global_perspectives/

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Related Books

- Brislin & Yoshida 1994 Improving Intercultural Interactions: Modules for Cross-Cultural Training Programmes, Sage
- Cushner K. & Brislin R.W. 1996 Intercultural Interactions – A Practical Guide 2nd Edition, London: Sage
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- Lago C. & Barty A. 2003 Working with International Students: A cross-cultural training manual UKCOSA
- McNamara & Harris (Eds) 1997 Overseas Students in Higher Education: Issues in teaching and learning, Routledge
- Ryan J. 2000 A Guide to Teaching International Students Oxford: OCSLD

Articles & Links

- Group Work & Diversity: Paper on assessing group practice (Gareth White, Goldsmiths College) <http://assessing-groupwork.ulst.ac.uk/paper2.doc>
- Cross Cultural Learning: Paper which reviews and questions perceptions re culturally based differences in learning behaviours (Prem Rambruth, RMIT) <http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Articles/may01/ramburuth1.pdf>
- Tweed R.G. & Lehman D.R. 2002 *Learning Considered Within a Cultural Context: Confucian and Socratic Approaches* American Psychologist Vol 57, No 2, 89-99
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- Development Education Association <http://www.dea.org.uk/>
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