Faculty Policies and Practices
Final Report to Steering Committee

Subcommittee Members:
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I. Report on Data Analysis

Strengths:
The high interest in internationalization across campus was evident by the turnout of faculty members and staff who participated in the various meetings and surveys that were conducted this spring. The lively and engaged dialogue among members of the UM campus community that was elicited by iLAB meetings showed great enthusiasm, generally, for international activities. Overall, faculty are highly supportive of their peers’ efforts in international activities. There are some mechanisms and some infrastructure already in place on campus to help facilitate international pursuits. It was noted that communication between offices dealing with international issues has begun to improve. The Mansfield Center and the School of Forestry were praised for the administrative support that they offer the faculty of faculty-led study abroad programs (SAPs), and it was noted that these would serve as good models for organizing and administering all campus SAPs. The high number of successful sabbatical applications at UM is also a strength. Even though not all sabbaticals include an international component, this is one mechanism that can be used to facilitate international work.

Weaknesses:
While, as stated above, there is some infrastructure for the international mission of the university in place on campus, it is often inadequate, and even when it exists, there is a lack of articulation between parts of the infrastructure. A frequent comment was that communication among campus units needed improvement, particularly among units and offices dealing with international issues. Another weakness articulated by many faculty is the lack of support (specifically, administrative support) experienced by most units and faculty members involved in study abroad programs. Because of changing policies and regulations, faculty members leading SAPs have faced an increase in administrative burden, while also being responsible for teaching, preparing for, and organizing their study abroad programs.

One barrier to engagement cited by almost every group we interviewed is a decrease in funding for international faculty activity. UM has seen significant funding decreases in recent years for faculty exchanges and the Faculty Professional Enhancement Program and an elimination of all funding for short-term international activity. Another barrier seen by faculty was the paperwork required by Business Services for international travel, especially as policies seem to change a lot – or are perceived as inconsistent (which improved administrative support for faculty could help alleviate). Also, the Human Resources office is understaffed for dealing with recruitment of international employees and the
accompanying paperwork. The weak language requirement to meet UM’s General Education metrics inherently underscores an insincerity regarding UM’s internationalization efforts. In general, the faculty perception is that the university talks a lot about the importance of and its commitment to internationalization, yet there is little to back up this claim.

Opportunities:
We have a campus-wide opportunity to use the newly strengthened language requirement to generate a lot of interest in internationalism. As stated above, the requirement is still weaker than it should be, but even as it stands, it provides more opportunity. There is a great opportunity to provide centralized administrative support for Study Abroad Program directors, using the Mansfield Center and Forestry practice as a model. Departments and Programs could be encouraged to include international activities as part of their Unit Standards. In this way, UM’s Strategic Plan would be reflected in the Unit Standards for recognition and in promotion and merit decisions. UM could use the iLAB assessment as an opportunity to think creatively about incentivizing faculty international activity; for example, UM could strategically plan academic exchanges; this might include encouraging closer ties to targeted countries (for faculty as well as students). We also have the opportunity to start tracking all international activities, including sabbaticals, and centralizing this information.

Recommendations:
After reviewing all of our data and summarizing the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, we think the following recommendations would greatly enhance internationalization efforts at UM:

- Hire an expert in international travel and immigration issues in HR to ensure that UM is compliant with state and federal policies regarding visa and employment requirements for international staff and faculty. Also, better training (i.e., attending workshops and conferences) is necessary in order to make sure that HR knows the most current policies.
- Centralize administrative support for the recurring administrative requirements that accompany all or most international activities. This would lessen the burden on individual faculty and ensure that all programs follow the usual rules and best practices associated with international programs.
- Increase funding for faculty exchanges, short-term international activity, and FPEP. In addition, UM could consider strategic incentive programs, as mentioned above in “opportunities,” to enhance focused international activities to specific countries or regions. This could result in an “International Research Opportunity Fund” out of the Provost’s office.
- Make private fundraising for international activities a university priority.
- Strengthen the language requirement for general education. This will underscore UM’s prioritization of internationalization as stated in its Strategic Plan, will boost interest in multiculturalism, and will emphasize UM’s mission as a Liberal Arts university.
II. Faculty Policies and Practices Subcommittee Findings

The Faculty Policies and Practices Subcommittee collected information from ten different constituencies on campus. Our findings are listed below each question.

How does the institution promote faculty engagement in internationalization?

The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center connects UM faculty with international opportunities and promotes their strengths through grants, fellowships, programs, initiatives, travel, state-to-state meetings, etc. The Center brings international and national thought leaders to campus for conferences, programs and classroom work and all Mansfield grants have a faculty representative. The Yamaguchi fund is a small endowment within the Mansfield Center for supporting faculty research in Asia.

The Office of International Programs facilitates faculty exchange programs, called faculty long-term international activity. OIP used to offer short-term international activity funding, which was often used to develop faculty-led programs. OIP runs a speakers’ bureau and occasionally arranges for international students to visit classes and faculty to introduce foreign films. Sabbaticals often facilitate faculty work abroad through release from teaching and external research grants also fund some international work.

To what extent does the institution reward or penalize faculty for international activities and internationalization of their courses, especially in the hiring, promotion, and tenure processes?

Faculty from the focus groups reported that they feel encouraged to engage in international work but do not feel supported to do so. There are no explicit rewards or compensation for the extra time required to do international teaching and no incentive to take on faculty-led programs for students; there is only support from their colleagues. Department chairs reported that faculty members are not specifically rewarded for international activity, though it is incorporated in the faculty evaluation process if activities enhance the international reputation of the faculty member or department. They also reported that a lot of engagement is opportunistic, not strategic by the institution. Nothing in unit standards points to internationalization. Business school faculty reported that they do get rewarded for international work and entrepreneurship. In some departments, colleagues having to assume teaching for traveling colleagues is a negative. Faculty reported that for exchanges, UM used to pay replacement costs. HRS reported that ever-changing visa requirements can make hiring international faculty challenging.
What are the barriers to faculty engagement? To what extent is the institution succeeding in removing them? What is the evidence?

One barrier to engagement cited by almost every group we interviewed is a decrease in funding for international faculty activity. Short-term international activity funding, which provided an average of 10 grants per semester to faculty between spring 2009 and fall 2013, was discontinued 1.5 years ago. The number of faculty exchanges has dropped from a high of 11 in 2005-06 (supported by $149,000 in funding) to only 3 funded for 2015-16 (supported by only $27,000). Portions of a few trips have been funded through the Provost’s Faculty Professional Enhancement Program (FPEP) grants (3 of 10 funded in spring 2015 were for international activity), but FPEP funding also decreased over the past few years.
The faculty participating in focus groups reported that the lack of short-term international funding has had a big impact on units with no grant funding, effectively shutting down international trips.

Faculty reported that the paperwork for faculty-led study abroad programs has become increasingly burdensome and declared that staff support should be provided consistently across campus to help with the logistical side of study-abroad programs, so that faculty can focus on the instructional pieces. Faculty members applauded support offered by the Mansfield Center and in the College of Forestry and one faculty member suggested that the program coordinator from Forestry might be moved to OIP to serve faculty from all departments. OIP should also track all possible sources of funding for study abroad for students.

Other barriers include a lack of emphasis on the importance on international activity in the faculty evaluation process and a lack of clarity on the tax consequences for faculty of long-term exchanges. UM’s per diems and state policies are cumbersome and travel reimbursement forms are burdensome. HRS could develop user friendly templates for travel expenses that allow for trips that are longer than 10 days.

Another faculty focus group identified ignorance in dealing with international colleagues as an obstacle and suggested having more training for campus employees (citing Cornell as a good example of professional development on this topic). HRS is lacking funding to train their payroll staff on changing federal regulations regarding foreign nations; this creates a liability for the university. There is also a lack of communication between HRS and OIP. Obtaining green cards can be an obstacle to hiring international faculty.

Many groups of respondents pointed to the weak language requirement for undergraduates as a barrier to promoting international engagement more generally. OIP staff reported that the ASCRC writing requirement is a challenge for international students. And one faculty member mentioned that the budget for the international development studies minor has been nearly eliminated. The faculty focus group mentioned that another barrier is ASCRC’s resistance to giving gen. ed. credit for faculty-led study abroad programs and student exchange courses. The international committee said that reductions in faculty lines act as a barrier because it becomes harder for faculty to be off campus.

What policies or practices (related to this subcommittee) hinder internationalization efforts at this institution?

Faculty focus groups reported that ASCRC policies regarding approving credit for student exchange courses and faculty-led courses do not always support internationalization. They also said that the lack of a clear, centralized process for faculty-led study abroad lowers the quality and number of these programs. Faculty members reported differing views on GLI, mentioning both that more funding was directed to this program than to other international efforts and that a commitment to globalization does not seem to be represented in GLI, where few courses are international.

Department chairs reported that finding universities abroad that match our curricula is an obstacle for student study abroad as is language capacity of UM students. Funds for summer international research
experiences for undergraduate students or programs to help UM attract foreign graduate students would be a great addition. The proposed shortening of winter session may make international activity more difficult.

Does the institution collect information on the faculty’s language capacity, international background, interests, and experiences? If so, where is this information available and how is it used? What is the faculty composition and experience? To what extent do faculty come from other countries, have extensive international experience, speak multiple languages, co-author with international colleagues, and take international sabbaticals?

We found out that UM is starting to collect such data (a joint effort of the Mansfield Center and OIP) and that this database eventually will be available on the OIP website. A second effort is the “UM Experts List,” compiled by UM Relations. However, as both are “opt-in,” there is no guarantee of complete data.

At the moment, there is no data on international sabbaticals, but this could be tracked in the future. One suggestion was for better coordination of due dates for international sabbaticals and international exchange applications.

Does the institution gather information on the attitudes of faculty toward international learning? If so, how is this information used?

None of the entities surveyed indicated that this information had been gathered or used. Responses from the International Committee and from GLI indicated that some additional information may be forthcoming with the results of a survey of faculty (from International Committee) and from the iLab survey.

To what extent does the institution invite visiting faculty/scholars from abroad? To what extent and how does their presence contribute to institutional internationalization?

The consensus was that visiting international faculty are a great plus for campus, though they often are not well integrated into campus life, and there are not very many of them. Scholars participate in a lot of FSSS programming (e.g., workshops, field trips). They present a goldmine of opportunity, but get “lost,” thus their presence isn’t taken advantage of – sometimes due to language skills. UM needs to do more with this opportunity.

Sometimes, a visitor is invited by an individual faculty member or department, which is not coordinated by the institution. This means that certain, pertinent units might not even know about someone’s presence on campus. Or, scholars are sometimes placed into a unit without prior consultation with the unit. Visiting faculty presence is very important, but we need better coordination and communication for the benefit of all. In general, visiting scholars are underutilized.

UM should provide better support to international scholars. Short-term housing for international faculty is standard at other institutions (one-month apartments, etc.).
The organization and separation of different offices (e.g., OIP, FSSS) creates duplication and challenges in communication and creates a lot of confusion for students and faculty alike about which office does what.

**Does the institution consider international experience in hiring faculty or in the promotion and tenure process?**

It is our collective sense that the University of Montana gives some credit to international experience in hiring, promoting and tenuring faculty. However, there is no solid evidence for this or specifically written guiding principles/rules. The two Collective Bargaining Agreements (UFA & MC FA) and the Law School Faculty Handbook are silent on valuing international experience for any of these processes. In our research, there was no mention of how this topic is addressed in various department unit standards.

In a survey to department chairs and directors, we learned that within their department cultures some units consider international activities as part of the faculty evaluation process as it applies to teaching, research and service. Departments tend to value collaborations with colleagues at universities outside of the US that lead to publication in peer-reviewed journals, presentations at international conferences, teaching abroad, designing special research lab courses and organizing international conferences. These activities are viewed as enhancing the department’s international reputation, which may be reflected in the faculty evaluation assessment. Other departments expressed neutrality on rewarding international activities.

**To what extent do faculty and staff perceive international learning as an important element of the educational process at the institution? What is the evidence?**

Although responses were anecdotal and did not represent a comprehensive survey, the overall perception among faculty is that international learning is an important component of the educational process. For obvious reasons, international learning was perceived as more important in some disciplines for which international experience is not only important, but essential. Some departments have established roles for faculty to facilitate and maintain well-functioning international programs, others do not. Representatives from FSSS indicated that some faculty they work with fully embraced international learning, while others from different departments saw international learning as something that required them to perform more (administrative) work.

***iLab Taskforce co-chairs have this subcommittee’s meeting notes and survey responses on file.***