Internationalisation of the Curriculum: perspectives and strategies

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Presentation will consider

1. Why is Internationalisation of the curriculum important?
2. What do we mean by Internationalisation of the curriculum?
3. How do mobility and internationalisation at home fit within curriculum internationalisation?
4. What factors are involved in building a sustainable approach in the formal curriculum?
5. How can staff be supported?
Our very survival has never required greater cooperation and understanding among all people from all places than at this moment in history ... when we open our hearts and our minds to those who may not think like we do or believe what we do – that's when we discover at least the possibility of common ground.

Barack Obama, Notre Dame Commencement address 2009
The demands on young people to be globally aware, international in their outlook, able to recognise and work with diversity and to have had work and life experiences that enhance their capacity to perform internationally are only going to increase.

Nita Temmerman, University World News 22/1/16
It could be argued that a university curriculum in today’s globalised world can only be of appropriate quality if international dimensions are incorporated.

Jones, E. (2016, in press)
2. What do we mean by Internationalisation of the curriculum?
Misconceptions about IoC

• Study/mobility experience abroad
• Delivering programmes in English
• Presence of international students
• Teaching by international staff
• Special courses/modules/units on IoC
• International case studies/reading lists
• One size fits all
An Internationalised Curriculum will:

- Engage **all students** with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity

- **Purposefully develop and assess** students’ international and intercultural perspectives and related learning outcomes

- Prepare **all students** for **life and work** in a globalised world

- Look different in **different disciplines**

(Based on Leask, 2009, 2015)
Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the **content** of the curriculum as well as the **learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services** of a program of study.

(Leask 2015)
1. What do we mean by Internationalisation of the curriculum?

What do we mean by ‘curriculum’?
3 dimensions of ‘curriculum’

• **Formal** - **Assessed** (Programme content, syllabus, teaching, learning and assessment approaches)

• **Informal** - **Non-assessed** (co-curriculum, events, activities arranged by Uni, student clubs and associations run by Uni)

• **Hidden** - Aspects we may fail to consider in any dimension of curriculum (eg whose knowledge is ‘privileged’ in curriculum design? exam scheduling on feast days, elements of academic ‘culture’ which we do not explain etc)
Informal Curriculum

- Student mentoring programmes
- Restaurants and accommodation
- Celebrations and events academic / cultural eg Seminars/Exhibitions
- Festivals:
  - Language
  - Culture
  - Food
  - Film
  - Music
- Student Union activities
- Clubs and Societies eg walking group, ‘culture club’ etc
- Flags

Campus culture that celebrates and values cultural diversity
Messages communicated by university leadership and services reinforce this
## Hidden Curriculum
### Academic expectations - Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Europe</th>
<th>I will introduce my topic, make key points and then draw my conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>I will explain my reasoning and then give you my conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Hidden Curriculum Academic expectations - Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Grading System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>40% to 70% range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$D = \text{Distinction}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Full range of %age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3. How do mobility and internationalisation at home fit within curriculum internationalisation?
Internationalisation of formal curriculum

Knowledge

Skills

Attitudes

Global perspectives

Inter-cultural competence

Knowledge

Skills

Attitudes
Global Perspectives

• Across the whole curriculum – not simply about mobility
• But mobility may be a tool for developing global perspectives
Global perspectives and internationalised curriculum

- Influence of cultural background on values and actions
- Understanding of professional, cultural and national contexts
- Questions of cultural dominance and implications for the subject
- Issues of sustainability and global impact
- Ethical or environmental issues and impact of or on the discipline
- Cultural considerations in professional practice
Intercultural competence

- Not knowledge of a single culture but operating effectively across cultures
- Exposure to ‘otherness’
- Making the familiar seem strange
- Challenging our own identity, values, assumptions and stereotypes and those of our students
- Learning about cultural ‘others’ and seeing the world from their perspectives
Definition of Internationalisation at Home

The purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

Beelen and Jones, 2015
‘Disorienting dilemmas’ create opportunities for change of mindset (Mezirow).

Don’t have to travel to encounter cultural ‘otherness’. Transformative learning can come not only through international engagement but through encounters with cultural “otherness” of any kind.
Refugees and asylum seekers
Local faith or migrant communities
Working with disabled people
Drug addiction or alcohol abuse
Using broad concept of ‘culture’ as a teaching resource

• Domestic/international students and staff
• Multicultural classroom context
• Engagement with ‘culture’ in local society
• Returning students
We need to work at helping **all** students get the most from overseas experience.

- Preparation
- While away, ethnographic questioning & assessment tasks
- Review on return and feed back into curriculum
- The role of the period abroad?
Example of outcomes from international volunteering (Jones 2010 and 2012):

**Intercultural competence**

- Confidence
- Willingness to take risks
- Patience
- Sensitivity
- Flexibility and open-mindedness
- Humility and respect
- Creativity
- Managing personal expectations
Example of outcomes from international volunteering (Jones 2010 and 2012):

**Employability Skills**

- Team work and team leadership
- Organisational skills and project management
- Problem solving
- Networking
- Mediation skills and conflict resolution
- Decision making (and communicating decisions which may not be popular)
- Interpersonal skills
Erasmus Impact Study (Sept 2014) found that 92% of employers are looking for ‘transversal skills’
Is international element key, or is it experiential learning?

Kolb’s Cycle of Experiential Learning

Concrete Experience  
Concrete Experience – engaging directly in authentic situation

Active Experimentation  
Active Experimentation – testing new ideas; honing skills in a new experience

Reflective Observation  
Reflective Observation – noticing what happened and relating to past experience and conceptual understandings

Abstract Conceptualization  
Abstract Conceptualization – distilling perceptions into abstract concepts

4. What factors are involved in building a sustainable approach in the formal curriculum?

- Embedded learning outcomes
- Appropriate pedagogy
- Assessment
- Academic staff support and development
Intended learning outcomes

• critical building blocks and the starting point of the curriculum
• focal point for internationalisation
• tell us what students will be able to do
• assessment tells us if they can
Internationalising learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debate the ethical responsibilities of Science in Society with reference to current issues</td>
<td>Debate the ethical responsibilities of Science in Society with reference to current issues in a multicultural Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate an awareness of the range of professional, ethical and legal issues relevant to the professional environment of their discipline.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an awareness of the range of professional, ethical and legal issues relevant to the global professional environment of their discipline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## More learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List the different components of fitness and evaluate their contribution to functional capacity.</td>
<td>List the different components of fitness and evaluate their contribution to functional capacity with appropriate reference to issues of race, gender and cultural contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the role of the organisation within the changing context of the wider sector.</td>
<td>Review the role of the organisation within the changing local and global contexts of the wider sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All examples taken from Jones and Killick 2013
Learning needs to be “scaffolded” within the degree structure so that skills and knowledge are built on progressively and the achievement of high-level international learning outcomes is supported, assessed and assured.

Leask 2015 p 72
Generic Assessment examples

- present an analysis of [xxx] appropriately for an audience of diverse cultures and first languages;

- critique the themes presented in [this area] from alternative international perspectives;

- suggest creative solutions for [this problem] which demonstrate appropriate consideration of at least one global context in which they will be applied.
Role of the academic

Create challenging intercultural learning opportunities to enhance ‘global citizenship’/intercultural competence and employability:

– Appropriate to the discipline
– Appropriate to the student body
– With relevant learning outcomes
– Assessed to ensure achievement

Thus reaching 100% of the student body
5. How can staff be supported?

- Support academic staff
- Guide reflection and discussion
- Focus on outcomes, not inputs
- Get the right people involved
- Focus on all students and programmes
- Agree why IoC is important?
1. Agreeing why IoC is important

- All students will live and work, as graduates in an increasingly interconnected globalised world as professionals and as citizens

- Solving the big problems of the world will require:
  - International and intercultural knowledge
  - Intercultural communication skills and critical thinking
  - A commitment to ethical practice, global responsibility, local action
2. Focusing on all students and whole programmes

- All graduates will need intercultural competence and an understanding of the relationship between the local and the global.
- Whole programme but not necessarily all modules in the programme.
3. Getting the right people involved

- Academic staff must be involved and engaged
- Others need to be involved, including, in many universities, the International Office
- Roles need to be clarified
4. Focusing on outcomes not inputs

- Articulate learning outcomes at programme and module levels
- Connect with assessment criteria
- Incremental development over time
- Sometimes only small changes are required
5. Guiding reflection and discussion

- Facilitation and negotiation within disciplinary groups of staff
- Cross-disciplinary dialogues to challenge assumptions and build expertise
6. Supporting academic staff

- Recognising the complexity of the process
- A continuous process
- Building networks and working towards a self sustaining process
- Leaders at different levels across the university
- University vision and policy can block and/or enable
Offer some tools for teaching, learning and assessment

- International study, work, volunteering
- International reading lists and case studies
- Virtual mobility
- Faculty-led study tours
- Guest lecturers from international partner institutions or from within the university
- International weeks / festivals / celebrations
- Language learning within or beyond the programme of study
- Diverse classroom context
- Effective group working and classroom pedagogy

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Explore local diversity as a resource

- Local faith groups
- Community centres
- Cultural groups – dance, food, music, art
- Groups supporting refugees and asylum seekers
- Local employers with diverse workforce
Virtual Mobility

- Work with international partners
- COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)
  - Centre at SUNY (State University of New York)
- Digital approaches to collaborative learning
In seeking to achieve diverse goals, the key to success lies with the individuals delivering the strategy, i.e. the academic and support staff across the institution. An internationalization strategy that does not give sufficient attention to the leadership and development of staff is unlikely to achieve its aims.

Jones 2013:165
Review

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Thank you

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