

TO: Faculty

FROM: Doug Bennett, Len Clark and Nelson Bingham

RE: Review and Future Planning of International Education

DATE: October 7, 2005

I. Background

For several decades, international education (IE) has been a major part of the educational experience of most Earlham students. It has also been source of Earlham's strong reputation, and a significant factor in student recruiting. Accordingly, and justifiably, it also commands a substantial investment of college resources. Its very importance suggests the desirability of periodic and systemic review.

We have not done a focused review of this area, other than yearly unit planning and the recent re-accreditation self-study, for many years. Indeed, we have never done one concerning the whole area of IE, including on and off campus elements at the same time and in relation to one another. We, therefore, plan to undertake such a review during the 2005-2006 year via an *Ad Hoc* International Education Review and Planning Committee.

We need to recognize that we are doing more and better with international education than perhaps any other college or university, *and* that we do not know whether we are yet satisfied with our accomplishment. Doing more and better will require some careful thinking and some setting of priorities.

For this review, it may be useful to think of our current efforts in international education as embracing four components: (1) our international study programs, (2) our instructional programs in languages other than English, (3) our curricular and co-curricular on-campus offerings that support IE, and (4) our recruitment of and support for international students.

II. Charge

The *Ad Hoc* International Education Review and Planning Committee should:

- (a) articulate our goals or purpose(s) in making international education a central aspect of our educational program,
- (b) assess our current strengths and challenges in international education, and
- (c) sketch future directions and priorities for international education.

We hope the committee can report its findings and recommendations to the President and the Faculty by the end of the 2005-6 academic year.

V. Questions for the Ad Hoc Committee

General Questions for All Areas

Questions of Mission

What set of principles has governed our practices in each area of international education at Earlham? Are our current practices still in accord with those principles?

Have changed circumstances caused us to find problems with these principles?

Are there changes in principles we should be considering?

How much activity in each IE area is educationally optimal? (e.g. Should we strive to send all students abroad?)

Questions of Assessment of Outcomes

What practices are currently in place for assessing outcomes of our IE areas of activity?

What do we conclude about the effectiveness of our IE activities based upon those assessment practices?

Are there outcomes we believe are occurring that we are not assessing currently? How might that be done?

Questions of Relations Among our IE Activities

How do the parts of our IE programs fit together? What kinds of coordination or mutual support exist among various aspects of IE?

Should those IE activities be more integrated and mutually reinforcing? If so, how might this be facilitated?

Are there reasons to maintain relative autonomy among certain areas of IE (e.g. preserving diversity of programs)?

To what extent do activities in some areas compete with those in other areas (e.g. semester-long international programs that require a second language versus those that do not, May Terms vs. semester-long programs)?

Are there ways in which our calendar (daily/weekly, as well as semester/May term) serves and/or hinders our IE efforts?

Questions of Costs/Benefits

Can we arrive at a real cost estimate for each area?

How much activity in each area is financially optimal? (e.g. should we strive to send all students abroad? What is the best balance between May Terms and semester programs?)

Are there chronically under-funded areas within our IE activities?

How do our costs and program sizes compare to those of other colleges?

Questions Concerning Our International Programs

Is our current range and mix of programs optimal?

What principles should guide us in introducing new programs or in ending existing programs?

How are international May Terms fitting into our range of options? How is the increasing popularity of May Terms both enriching and challenging IE at Earlham?

How should we adjust to the changed landscape of GLCA relationships?

What can we observe about the national context for our efforts and what challenges and opportunities does that suggest? (e.g. international program service providers)

Are we making appropriate adjustments to the changes in international relationships and security concerns?

Is our current currency-reserve procedure adequate?

Questions Concerning the Teaching of Language

Is our program taking full advantage of the experience our students bring to us from high school and study abroad? Has our student population been changing in this respect?

Are we still positioned among the leaders in undergraduate language-learning pedagogies?

How does the array of languages taught here compare to other colleges?

What should our language program look like in 10 years? Should we be teaching more or different languages?

Questions Concerning the On-campus Curriculum

What principles should guide decisions to devote college resources for such initiatives as the India and Islamic/Abrahamic Studies programs/proposals?

Is the distribution of faculty resources among departments and ID programs appropriate?

In what ways are our programs in Latin American Studies, Japanese Studies, and International Studies achieving their purposes? What challenges face those programs?

Is the level of support for IE curricular and faculty development appropriate?

Are the goals of our general education requirements related to IE being well served?

Questions Concerning Our International Students

Is there an optimal number and distribution of international students for Earlham? How successful are we in approaching those optimal figures?

Are we using our limited resources most effectively in recruiting international students and in serving our goals in relation to these students?

What adjustments have we made and what changes should we contemplate because of the changing international and security climate?

Questions Concerning the Campus Climate and Activities related to IE

What is the experience of international students at Earlham? Is our institutional support (e.g. advising, availability of athletic and other co-curricular opportunities, orientation) appropriate for these students?

What do we know about the way all of our students experience “the world” on campus?

Is the array of campus life programs we support and encourage appropriate to our goals for IE for all students?

Are we deploying resources most effectively to provide support for IE in the co-curricular realm at Earlham?