Internationalising the Curriculum (IoC)

Strategies to Internationalise the Curriculum at the Course Level

IoC at the course level is one of the most effective and accessible mechanisms by which global awareness and intercultural competence can be promoted among students and staff at Griffith. IoC at the course level involves embedding global, international and multicultural dimensions into the following:

1. Course Content & Design
2. Learning & Teaching Activities
3. Instructional Materials, Tools and Resources
4. Teaching Practices
5. Assessment Practices
6. Extra-Curricula Activities

Internationalising Course Content & Design

Ideally, course content should include diverse perspectives on social, economic, political and/or environmental issues and differences in professional practices across cultures. Some tips for broadening topic areas through intercultural or intercultural approaches include:

- Include subject matter relating to global, inter-cultural and indigenous perspectives (e.g., inclusion of international and national case studies, examples, illustrations, etc.).
- Address how knowledge may be constructed differently across cultures;
- Use real-life or simulated case studies which examine cross-cultural communication, negotiation and conflict resolution;
- Refer specifically to intercultural communication in professional practice;
- Examine how professional practices vary in other cultures;
- Include content from both local and international sources;
- Include topics on ethical issues in globalization, such as social justice, equity, human rights and related social, economic and environmental issues;
- Focus on the historical development of issues relating to current international issues/practices;
- Examine content that addresses critical global environmental issues;
- Compare and contrast international and cross-cultural research findings;
- Draw on cross-cultural databases and sources of information (e.g., journals).

Internationalising Learning & Teaching Activities

Ideally, staff should use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies that are specifically designed to develop graduates who demonstrate international perspectives as professionals and as citizens. Tips for internationalising learning and teaching activities include:

- Integrate global issues and cross-cultural perspectives into learning tasks;
- Ask students to consider issues and problems from a variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical/moral, and cultural perspectives;
- Encourage students from different cultural backgrounds to contribute relevant examples from their home country or community;
- Include an international component in problem-solving exercises and/or research assignments;

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1 These strategies have been developed from resources provided on the Oxford Brookes University website, which are based on Whalley, T. (1997) Best practice guidelines for internationalizing the curriculum, Burnaby, British Columbia, Open Learning Agency. For further information go to: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsld/ioc/modules/index.html
Include activities/tasks which require students to critically reflect on international or intercultural matters (e.g. by keeping a reflective journal);

Highlight to students the ideology behind the discipline and how it has developed and discuss and analyse any cultural aspects of this;

Examine the ways in which diversity can impact on the value positions of students in multicultural Australia and how this impacts on how the subject matter is approached;

Compare and contrast how issues of multi-culturalism are dealt with in different nations, and how this impacts on citizens both in terms of their personal lives and in professional practice;

Include activities that examine how culture can impact on the application of knowledge socially, scientifically and technologically and how this can advantage or disadvantage people from different cultural backgrounds;

Use fieldwork with local organisations working on international projects or national projects with an intercultural focus;

Encourage students to compare/contrast how cultural influences can impact on the construction of knowledge around the world;

Create a safe, non-threatening learning environment in which students can express their own views/opinions while respecting those of other students and staff;

Facilitate dialogue and collaborative learning activities between students from different cultural backgrounds which will increase the potential for deep learning and cross-cultural understanding;

Create group-based opportunities to learn more about students' backgrounds through such tools as student surveys or brief “get-to-know-you” ice-breaker activities;

Use team tasks to encourage students to engage with others from different social, cultural, economic, political and/or religious backgrounds (e.g., multi-cultural teamwork, contacting international students in overseas universities via email, chat-rooms or list-serves).

Explore the impacts on culture on the development of specific approaches to the profession/discipline;

Encourage students to analyse the issues, methodologies and possible solutions related to current areas of debate within their discipline from a range of cultural perspectives.

Internationalising Instructional Materials, Tools & Resources

Ideally, staff should use a wide range of teaching tools, resources and support materials that assist students with acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a global citizen. Tips for internationalising your learning materials, tools and resources include:

- Use on-line resources, textbooks, and workshop materials from international sources which are culturally sensitive and demonstrate respect for the diversity of the student body;
- Use recently published, international journal articles, conference papers, and texts;
- Include materials and research from national, international and intergovernmental organisations to ensure students have a global perspective on their discipline.
- Use up-to-date multimedia technologies and electronic equipment to ensure that students can develop their skills in these areas;
- Include role-plays and simulations of international or intercultural interactions;
- Include presentations / guest lectures from industry professionals with international experience in specific topics in the course;
- Use electronic links and networks, such as email chat groups and list-serves, with students of the discipline in other countries;
- Encourage students to locate, discuss, analyse and evaluate information from a range of learning materials (e.g., online resources, textbooks, journal articles, conference papers, video-recordings).
Internationalising Assessment Practices

Ideally, assessment tasks should measure the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes of students that are related to global citizenship. Tips for internationalising assessment include:

• Design assessment tasks that are aligned with curriculum content, specifically relating to the development of global and intercultural perspectives;
• Make assessment criteria related to global/multicultural capability explicit to students;
• Map out the links between assessment criteria and international standards in the discipline area or profession for students, so that they are aware of why the assessment items are important.
• Use assessment tasks early in the course which provide feedback on students’ background knowledge, so that teaching can be modelled in such a way as to ‘fill in’ any gaps in requisite knowledge or skills and hence combat risk of failure;
• Include assessment items that draw on cultural contexts as well as disciplinary knowledge (e.g., comparative exercises that involve comparing/contrasting local and international standards, practices, issues, etc.);
• Include both individual and group projects, so that students’ ability to work with others, consider the perspectives of others, and compare and contrast the diverse perspectives of other individuals is assessed;
• Design assessment tasks that require students to present information to, and receive feedback from, an ‘international’ or cross-cultural audience;
• Design activities that encourage students to interact with other another (real or virtual).
• Include the use of peer evaluation and feedback.

Internationalise Extra-Curricular Activities

• Actively encourage students to join international associations that are affiliated with their disciplines;
• Encourage students to participate in international exchange opportunities, e.g. with other Universities;
• Encourage students and staff to study a second language- this will enable students to appreciate the difficulties faced when trying to communicate in languages other than their mother-tongue;
• Encourage students to complete a workshop in intercultural communication or international studies;
• Provide students with information about the institutional support which are available to assist them with managing academic and personal issues, especially during times of stress, so as to reduce the risk of attrition or failure;
• Introduce peer mentoring schemes that include domestic student mentors supporting international students in order to encourage cross-cultural interactions among students;
• Participate in professional development activities designed to enhance teachers’ intercultural awareness, including strategies for assessing and providing feedback to students from non-English speaking backgrounds.