




Tradition and Evolution: Academic Collaboration in Latin America



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First a little about *why this matters*

First, for the University of Arizona:

- Founded in 1885 – at the time perhaps the *least* hospitable location for a U.S. university
- 27 years before Arizona became a state
- In the part of Arizona purchased from Mexico *only 31 years before*
- *Created in this geographic and historical flux, the University of Arizona is inextricably tied to Mexico and Latin America*



And,
for me, it's
personal!!



A unique relationship ...

- Common histories and pre-histories
- Young nations responding to unforeseen local and global trends
- Relationships driven by *family*, *culture* and *shared challenges...*



Our shared interests transcend borders...



Trends

- Many nations modifying higher education strategies (and others emerging)
- Increased government and industry focus on internationalization
- Depending on funding, priorities and discipline, all of this should lead to new mobility, ideamix and opportunity
- *Unless we keep doing the same old thing!*



Challenges to traditional mobility

- The global economic crisis led to wider tuition differentials
- More students focused on time-to-degree
- September 11 and subsequent
- Perceptions about safety (and warnings)
- New and emerging mobility models (particularly from Europe)



So what do we do?

- We are built to do what we do
- How do you build to do what you *don't* do?



Recommended Gap Analysis

- Environmental scan
- Internal trends
- What you do
- What peers and aspirational peers do
- What other countries are doing
- Emerging opportunities



What's Missing?

- Facilitating grants?
- Working with governments, agencies and “non-peer” institutions?
- New curriculum development?
- Building multi-entity consortia?
- Alumni development?
- Fundraising?
- Data mining and strategic planning?



But think before you jump!

- Beyond best practice models, examine your own mission
- Define and assess for desired outcomes
- Focus on long-term impact and sustainability rather than short-term attention
- Accommodate local and cultural context (don't apply another's model without adaptation)
- Local realities for success and sustainability



(And perhaps we can learn from our most successful faculty!)

- The deepest academic collaboration, like knowledge creation itself, is *also* an inherently organic process
- Built upon the relationships between faculty
- Sharing common or complementary interests
- Across political and institutional boundaries.

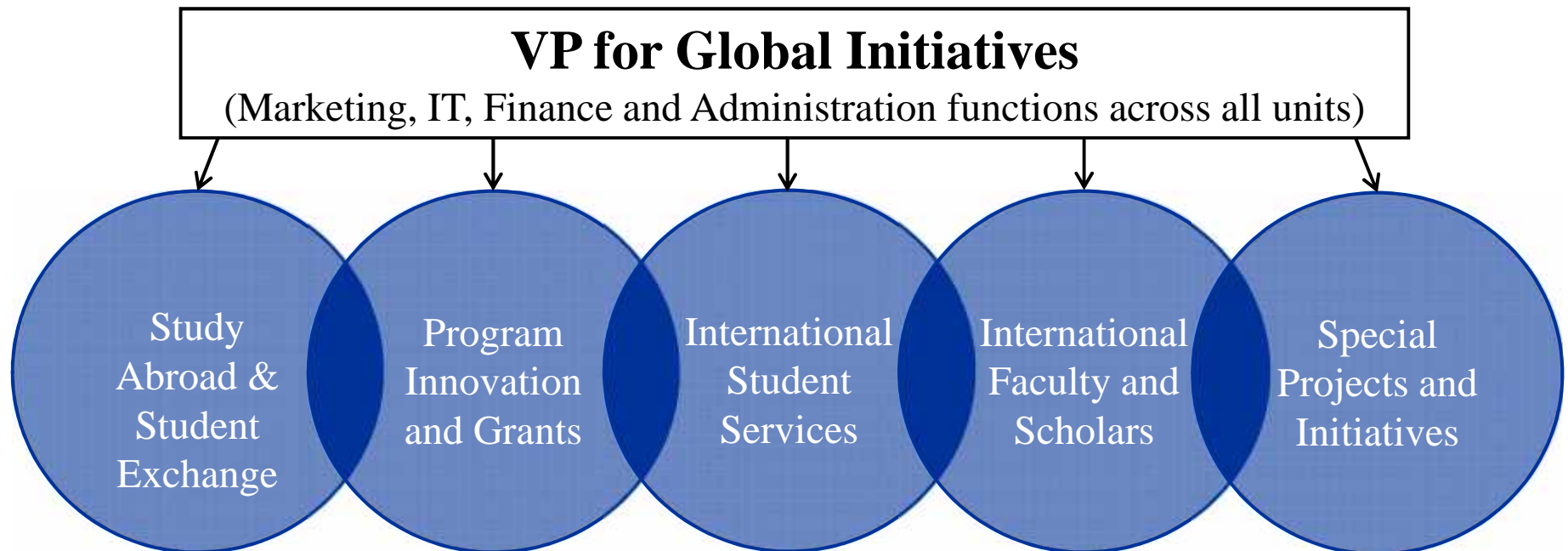


Basic and emerging models

- ❑ Study abroad (and service learning)
- ❑ Exchange (virtually enhanced)
- ❑ Joint research (emergent parity)
- ❑ Deeply integrated programs such as dual degrees, sandwich and pathways
- ❑ Consortia and institutes, virtual or real, for research or capacity development



Current Organizational Chart



Examples

- The SEP Project
- Verano de Investigación
- Engineering Internships
- Dual degrees
- REINU and I3For



Process

- Define *your* vision and strategic plan
- Manage for change
- Build project teams
- Focus on timelines and closure – *project management*



Key challenges:

- Over-reliance on traditional models
- Failure to focus on solutions
- Failure to be realistic about complementary role
- Failure to “tune” the idea
- Administrative inflexibility



The role of failure

- Must allow and plan for failure
- Good failure results in:
 - ▣ Innovation
 - ▣ Resilience
 - ▣ Clean conscience



IDEAS³

- Innovate
- Develop
- Execute
- Assess
- Scrap, scale or start over



Sustainability is key

- ❑ Is there a legitimate and organic (or fertilized) faculty connection?
- ❑ Is the subject area amenable to external funding (agency, philanthropy, tuition)?
- ❑ Are both parties willing to invest in quantifiable excellence?
- ❑ Is there broad enough involvement, internally or among multiple institutions, to survive departures?



International families have to work together



Why consider a consortium?

- Emerging recognition of the Caribbean
- Emergence of new mobility tools
- Shared risk, assets and infrastructure create economies of scale
- Availability of capacity development resources



Examples?

- *Climate science and public health*
 - Problems are both emotional and economic
 - Problems and causes transcend geography
 - Solutions require culturally-sensitive application
 - Problems cannot be solved by one discipline
 - Information science (for both modeling and connectivity), plays a significant role



This may not be easy ...



What can we do?

- Pursue complementary partner initiatives
 - ▣ Regional tourism, entrepreneurship or youth development
 - ▣ Community development, resilience or health initiatives
- Shared database for academic offerings
- A cluster of globally-relevant dual degrees
- Common research agenda or bi-national centers



Questions?

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