

Ten Actions that will Accelerate the Internationalization of CALS¹

Executive Summary

One of UW-Madison's five strategic priorities is to *accelerate internationalization*. At a time when we are reminded daily of our global connectedness, it is essential that the University of Wisconsin not only continue its many contributions to the world community, but also strive to increase the international involvement by its faculty, students and staff.

The following *Ten Actions that will Accelerate the Internationalization of CALS* are the result of a task force study commissioned by Dean Elton Aberle in October 2004. The rationale behind the suggested actions may be found in the body of this report, and the supporting data from Task Force queries are provided in the appendices. The Task Force is grateful for the cooperation of many individuals – faculty, staff, students, university administrators, foundation officials and business leaders – that provided information for this report.

Recognize and Reward International Activities

1. Encourage faculty and administrators to include a phrase similar to “*Interest or experience in the international dimensions of the discipline is desirable.*” in the hiring of new faculty, and to recognize international activities of faculty and staff as positive values in merit pay, tenure and promotion exercises. The Task Force acknowledges that these changes will need to work their way through departmental and divisional committees and their acceptance will come only after the faculty decides that accelerating internationalization within CALS is important. Other major universities report that active support by top administrators was extremely helpful in bringing about these changes in hiring and promotion procedures.

2. Initiate an annual award for faculty/staff excellence in international work. Award excellence in bridging UW research and teaching to the world -- the Wisconsin Idea gone global! The award should be similar to the CALS teaching awards with a bit of money attached. A specific international award would provide the opportunity to showcase the benefits of international work and to accentuate CALS' support of international activities. Being the first such award on campus, it would serve as a model for other colleges.

¹ Report to Dean Elton Aberle by the Task Force on Accelerating the Internationalization of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison, August 8, 2005

Help Faculty and Students Pursue International Activities

3. Develop new funding sources for international activities and extend the services of CALS International Programs so participation in international research and study abroad programs might be increased. Seek scholarship monies to support international experiences for undergraduate and graduate students. This recommendation calls on the CALS International Programs (CALS-IP) office to continue their present activities of providing information on international opportunities and logistical support to faculty and staff, but also, to better advertise and extend its services to an increased number of CALS faculty, staff and students, including incoming students and visiting scholars. It is also recommended that CALS-IP be more active in identifying new funding sources for international research and study abroad programs.

The survey of CALS faculty and staff indicated a need for additional assistance from college administration in handling the logistics (travel, visas, housing, etc.) for incoming students and visiting scholars as well as CALS faculty, staff and students studying and doing research abroad.

CALS undergraduates state that *cost* is the biggest barrier between them and an international experience. There is not only the out-of-pocket cost for travel, but also the potential of foregone earnings if a student decides to travel instead of work. Departments are encouraged to expand the use of their scholarship pools to include international travel and activities.

A specific activity under this recommendation would be to encourage CALS administrators and faculty to work with CALS-IP and the UW Foundation in seeking support for international research and study abroad initiatives. CALS International Programs should develop and advertise a process by which faculty and staff are invited to present ideas for discussion with the UW Foundation. Through this process CALS faculty and staff will be able to tap the UW Foundation's in-depth databases.

4. Develop a web site that serves as the portal for international information. The CALS International Programs web site should be redesigned so it directs CALS faculty, staff and students to a wide range of international opportunities. Best practices, success stories and current international activities in the college and on campus should be highlighted. The web site may serve as a clearinghouse for agricultural and life science related international opportunities from government agencies, and allow faculty, staff and students the opportunity to receive emails when new updates are posted.

Develop Globally Competent Students

5. Develop a model describing the "global CALS student" and use it in publications and undergraduate recruiting. The model should outline several levels of international competence that can be achieved by CALS undergraduates. Encourage the dean, department heads and college recruiters to emphasize that CALS is a

place a student can receive the global perspective they need to be successful in the future. The CALS International Committee is encouraged to develop an international certificate so CALS undergraduates can receive recognition for their efforts in attaining global competence.

6. Develop a course designed to discuss international topics in the agricultural and life sciences. The course would be a three-credit course for freshmen and sophomores that would meet the CALS international course requirement. The Task Force survey of CALS students found that 70% of the sophomores and 61% of the seniors would take such a course if it were offered. The course may include preparation for a variety of short-term study tours that would take place following the course, i.e., either during winter break or during May.

7. Charge the CALS International Programs office with the task of insuring that CALS' internationalization initiatives are well integrated with campus-wide programs so duplication of effort is avoided and students' access to resources are not restricted by barriers between colleges. The Task Force recommends a combined campus-wide publicity campaign to make students aware of the study abroad programs and international activities of all UW-Madison schools and colleges.

Help Departments Take Leadership

8. Establish incentives and opportunities for departments to develop integrated study abroad or other international opportunities for their undergraduates. Several CALS departments (Biochemistry, Dairy Science, Horticulture, Nutritional Science and Wildlife Ecology) have developed topical seminars that meet during the fall semester and culminate in a winter break study tour. The programs are popular with students and have proven to be an excellent way of introducing undergraduates to the international aspects of a discipline.

Deepen Private Sector Links

9. Work actively with private sector companies and government organizations to develop internationally focused internship and fellowship opportunities for students -- both on-campus and at off-campus domestic and international sites. Establish a working relationship with UW's Office of Corporate Relations to increase contacts with companies that share CALS' international interests. Reinforce the college's willingness to work with Wisconsin companies as they seek to better understand global trends and develop international business strategies.

Develop an Action Plan

10. Charge the CALS International Committee with the task of developing and energizing an action plan for “accelerating internationalization” in CALS. The committee should set goals and measure progress toward the goals. Only through such monitoring can CALS be certain its limited resources are being invested in strategies that actually produce the desired outcomes. The results of careful monitoring and analyses would make a substantial (and publishable) contribution to improving the effectiveness of internationalization efforts at comparable universities across the country.

The CALS International Committee should work with the “Study Abroad Faculty” that have previously been identified in each department and may also want to recommend individual faculty for the designation of "CALS International Faculty." The committee members should see their roles as *champions* of international activities in the college.