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Reyes L. Quezada

Ana Ulloa Estrada

Jerry Ammer

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The Internationalization of a Catholic University's Graduate Education and Professional Programs: Preparing Global Educators, Family Therapists, Counselors, and Leaders for the 21st Century

Catholic colleges and universities are preparing Pre-K-12 educators, clinicians, and leaders who bring international perspectives and experiences, can think and practice globally, work for social justice and equity, and can demonstrate foreign language competencies in their professional work. Recruiting informed faculty who can develop international partnerships that foster and extend student learning and training programs is one way to produce globally competent and culturally proficient professionals. This can only be achieved if Catholic institutions of higher education and its colleges, schools, and programs of education develop globally relevant and informed graduate programs, course curricula, research agendas, and applied professional experiences, including a professionally meaningful international experience requirement for graduation.

This focus section continues the earlier conversations of Reyes Quezada and Paula Cordeiro, dean of the University of San Diego's (USD) School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES), in their roles as guest co-editors of the winter 2007 issue of *Teacher Education Quarterly* entitled "Internationalizing Colleges and Schools of Education: Educating Teachers for Global Awareness." The purpose of the theme issue was to feature effective programs and best practices that have been initiated by colleges and schools of education. Quezada then expanded this work to an international audience by guest editing a special issue in the journal *Teaching Education* that is published at Queensland University of Technology in Australia. The special issue was entitled "Internationalization of Teacher Education: Creating Global Competent Teachers and Teacher Educators for the Twenty-First Century," and was intended to stimulate dialogue at an international level among teacher educators. That special issue focused on identifying effective programs and practices specifically in teacher education programs. This focus section builds on the previous work by inviting Catholic colleges and universities, particularly schools and colleges of education, to articulate their strategies for preparing students to succeed professionally in an increasingly interdependent world, including providing students with international training experiences and a globally in-

formed program of study. It is critical to recruit diverse faculty with international experiences and backgrounds, and to provide professional opportunities for faculty to develop as global educators, scholars, and practitioners. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is critical for the leadership of Catholic colleges and universities to embrace openly and support international and global initiatives. Examples include articulating the relationship of internationalization to the Catholic identity, mission, and vision of the university; providing opportunities and financial support for faculty development; and providing institutional support for international partnerships, student and faculty exchanges, and curricular offerings.

The articles in this issue address and demonstrate some of the following questions: How do we as faculty define and pursue internationalization in Catholic colleges and universities? How do we operationalize and assess international competence in Catholic higher education? And, how can Catholic colleges and universities ensure that all of its graduates acquire the cross-cultural knowledge, skills, dispositions, and best practices of their respective disciplines in an era of globalization?

In the fall of 2007, SOLES began planning for the implementation of an international experience requirement for all graduate students in the Department of Learning and Teaching, Leadership Department, Marital and Family Therapy Program, and the Counselor Education and Clinical Mental Health Programs. The adoption of an international experience requirement was a response to a university-wide mandate. This mandate supports the notion that USD will become a more culturally diverse and culturally competent community through recruitment at all levels, and through deepening transborder and international educational partnerships and involving students and faculty in international learning experiences. SOLES faculty with diverse experiences in the area of internationalization began to develop policy at the department and program level framing questions to identify what it means to internationalize and set a vision for the internationalization of all graduate programs. What is the purpose of curriculum internationalization? What “counts” as an international experience? What do we expect as learning outcomes? How does internationalization fit within existing program goals? How do we facilitate these goals? The policies created were voted on by each department or program in April and presented to the dean for approval in May 2008. The outcome, our *School Vision Statement and Strategic Plan*, promotes the development of highly effective, socially responsible, and marketable students through international programs. All students enrolled in degree programs are required

to participate in an international experience prior to program completion. Implementation of the internationalization experience requirement policy began in September 2008.

Four research articles from faculty in two departments and two programs in the SOLES provide diverse examples of opportunities for graduate students to engage in international experiences and curricula ranging from short-term learning abroad courses to student teaching abroad. In each of the essays, graduate candidate experiences and perceptions are summarized and presented in relation to how they developed—and in some cases—were transformed into more culturally and globally proficient educators, counselors, leaders, and family therapists as a result of their international experience.

The focus section begins with an article by Reyes L. Quezada entitled “Global Student Teacher Transformation Experiences: Living the Faith through the Shared Christian Praxis Learning Process.” Using Groome’s (1976) Shared Christian Praxis Learning Process, Quezada examined the reflections of six university student teachers on the development of their global teaching ideology while student teaching abroad. Four themes were identified, including student development as world citizens; evolution as globally competent professional educators; acquiring knowledge of cultural and comparative educational systems; and the importance of self-monitoring to improve efficacy and instructional practice.

The second article by Ana Ulloa Estrada focuses on “The Intersection of Catholic Social Teaching, Internationalization, and Marriage and Family Therapy: Lessons from the Borderlands.” These issues are discussed in the context of a graduate level course on human diversity that focused on the lives of people living in the borderlands and culminated in a 1-day cultural immersion and service-learning trip to Tijuana, Mexico. Students learned firsthand about the legacies of colonialism, poverty, and injustice as well as the strengths and resilience of rural Mexican families and communities to transform these experiences into new cultural and business practices, healing, and survival against many odds. Excerpts from student essays suggest that students were able to grasp the paradox of CST and the painful realities and suffering of many families in the borderlands, applying this learning into their clinical training and practice. Estrada discusses the importance of and potential for faculty and students to create a space in Catholic higher education domestically and internationally in which the clinical practices of marriage and family therapists could be informed by CST, generating new knowledge and energy to work for social change, peace, and justice well beyond the borders.

Paige Haber and Cheryl Getz describe a 2-week global study course for graduate students in an article entitled “Developing Intercultural Competence in Future Student Affairs Professionals through a Graduate Student Global Study Course to Doha, Qatar.” The course sought to develop intercultural competence with Qatari and Middle Eastern perspectives and culture, help students understand the unique challenges in higher education student affairs for Qatar and other Middle Eastern countries, and identify ways for students to apply learning from the course to student affairs practice. These learning outcomes are discussed in the context of the profession of student affairs and USD’s Catholic mission. An overview of the global course components is presented along with student and instructor reflections on the course. Challenges from the course are discussed followed by recommendations for similar global study courses.

The final manuscript by Erika R. Nash, Ian Martin, Lonnie Rowell, Peggy Hetherington, and Susan Zgliczynski, entitled “The Internationalization of a School Counseling Program at a Catholic University: Reflections Generated by a Community of Practice,” examines the internationalization experiences of five faculty in a counseling program and how they have internationalized its program and curriculum through a university internationalization initiative, determined leadership by the dean, study abroad opportunities, international partnerships, and professional development opportunities for faculty. The study incorporates the authors’ shared reflections on internationalization efforts and seeks to highlight the strengths and challenges associated with the work completed to date in the counseling program.

The articles in this focus section represent the diversity of voices and disciplines involved in the initial internationalizing efforts of SOLES graduate programs at USD. The authors present qualitative data and analyses of student perspectives of their international experiences that illustrate how candidates in their respective programs successfully completed their international graduation requirement. Further, each author draws upon the Catholic identity of USD and/or Catholic Social Teaching in their journey toward internationalization. We are confident that we have provided a springboard for faculty, students, and administrators in schools, colleges, and departments of education at Catholic institutions of higher education to engage in meaningful discussions and to develop creative initiatives toward internationalizing its students, faculty, programs, colleges, and schools. We would like to thank the authors and peer reviewers for their help with this focus section.

Reyes L. Quezada, Ana Ulloa Estrada, and Jerry Ammer, *Focus Section Co-editors*