

A Note to the Reader About Terminology

It is difficult, if not impossible, to undertake an examination of internationalization without encountering confusion and disagreement about the use of terms. Many commonly used words in this field mean different things to different people, and convey different approaches and philosophies. There is no single term that covers all the concepts encompassed by the words *international*, *global*, and *intercultural*, and people most often choose one of the three terms as a marker for the bundle of concepts. The task then falls to the reader to choose among the many possible definitions of a single term.

We do not have a simple answer for this linguistic dilemma.¹ But we do think it important to explain our choice of terms and how we use them, as well as to strive for as much consistency as possible in this handbook.

First, the name of the series: *Global Learning for All*. As our work with institutions has broadened from a focus on what institutions do to what students learn, we felt it important to emphasize learning in our language. We use *global learning* as a shorthand for three related kinds of learning: global (denoting the systems and phenomena that transcend national borders), international (focusing on the nations and their relationships), and inter-

cultural (focusing on knowledge and skills to understand and navigate cultural differences). Thus, we define global learning as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students acquire through a variety of experiences that enable them to understand world cultures and events; analyze global systems; appreciate cultural differences; and apply this knowledge and appreciation to their lives as citizens and workers.

We refer to the process by which institutions foster global learning as *internationalization*. We have chosen a term that emphasizes process to underscore that institutions can produce specific types of learning only through an ongoing and intentional process. We thus use Knight's definition of internationalization, as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of postsecondary education."²

Internationalization is often used synonymously with one of its many component activities, often reflecting a specific institutional strength or priority. For example, for some institutions, recruiting and integrating international students into their communities are the dominant strategy for internationalization, and in their discourse, *internationalization* will refer primarily to those activities. For others, study abroad

¹ See Green, M. and Olson, C. (2003). *Internationalizing the campus: A user's guide*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education, chapter 1, for a discussion of terminology and definitions commonly used in the literature.

² Knight, J. (2003, fall). Updating the definition of internationalisation. *International Higher Education*.

is a key approach, and so their use of the general term will refer only to the advancement of these programs. This substitution of a part for the whole fails to capture the multiple dimensions of internationalization and the processes needed to ensure that it penetrates the institution's activities and ethos, both broadly and deeply. Thus, we also underscore that internationalization involves many different initiatives, processes, and stakeholders across the campus so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Although it might seem more consistent to do so, we chose not to use the term *globalization*. We did so because globalization is a term that, in addition to being descriptive, also has negative connotations. For some, globalization describes the unstoppable flow of ideas and goods around a world in which national borders are of diminishing importance. However, globalization has increasingly become a loaded term, implying the hegemony of the capitalist system, the domination of the rich nations over the poor, and the loss of national identity and culture. To date, *global* has preserved its linguistic neutrality, while *globalization* has not.

Thus, we use two shorthand expressions: *global learning* encompasses international, global, and intercultural learning; and *internationalization* describes processes that lead to enhancing the international, global, or intercultural dimensions of an institution or system. The latter refers to what institutions do (the inputs or processes) and the former to what students learn (the outcomes).

Finally, we use the term *comprehensive internationalization* throughout this series. By that we mean a strategic and integrated approach to internationalization in which institutions articulate internationalization as an institutional goal (if not priority), develop an internationalization plan driven by sound analysis, and seek to bring together the usually disparate and often marginalized aspects of internationalization. The distinction between "internationalization at home" (denoting activities such as internationalizing the curriculum, pedagogy, or co-curriculum; and looking to international students as a resource) and "internationalization abroad" (denoting student and faculty mobility programs, delivery of programs abroad, and international projects) is an important clarification when one is reviewing the various institutional approaches and strategies. However, it is the synergy among the various elements—at home and abroad—that promotes comprehensive internationalization.

As an institution pursues internationalization, it will have to sort out its own lexicon. Failure to clarify terms early on can cause confusion later on, but creating a lexicon should not be an end unto itself. Most institutions find that they need to have this discussion, and even if it leaves some ambiguity in its wake (which it undoubtedly will), the act of exploring important concepts and their meaning will have laid a rich foundation for further work.