

33rd Annual Conference on the First Year Experience

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Going Global: International Perspectives on The First-Year Experience in Higher Education

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Description and Objectives of the Session

As the first-year experience (FYE) movement gained traction in the U.S., interest in this concept across the globe also grew. Throughout its history, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition has engaged in international efforts that are consistent with its mission, including supporting the development of national networks around the first-year experience and student success in other countries and continents. Further, the issue of internationalization in FYE includes the influx of international students among the incoming cohorts of new students in higher/tertiary education, increasing use of study abroad programs, and renewed emphasis on intercultural competence and global learning as key experiences and outcomes of college. This facilitated discussion will provide an opportunity to examine these trends and explore the direction of the FYE movement across campuses, countries, and cultural contexts.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

Development of national FYE networks in other countries

1. What are the needs of first-year students in your country? How is higher/tertiary education addressing those needs?

2. Are there noticeable trends in the FYE experience in other countries or continents that you are aware of?
3. What have been the drivers for development and change with respect to FYE networks in respective countries and across the globe?
4. Which academic and non-academic supports do universities need to have in place to best meet their first-year students' needs and manage their expectations with regard to their first-year experience?
5. What are some current and emerging best practices for orientation and first semester programming?
 - Peer support (mentoring, tutoring, conversation partners, SI Leaders)
 - Using social media to help students integrate into the university community
 - Techniques to communicate and manage new student expectations

Intercultural competence, global learning, and study abroad

1. How are intercultural competence and global learning identified as priorities for your first-year students?
2. What are the appropriate metrics to evaluate and assess the development of this competency among first-year students? What is a reasonable threshold of success in these areas for new students?
3. Has there been a noticeable increase in study abroad programs as a key experience in college?

4. What other methods besides study abroad are being used to foster the development of global learning and intercultural competence (e.g., course-based models, service learning, study away programs within the country)?

International FYE students

1. What are the specific transitional needs and expectations of international students?
 - Cultural, language and social barriers
 - Adjust to a new educational system
 - Programs that teach international students about their rights and responsibilities
 - ESL support outside of the classroom
2. Should we target specific sub-groups of international students in first-year programming?
3. How can we ensure the integration of international students (and therefore enhance their sense of 'connectedness'[\[1\]](#))?
 - Rethinking orientation as a process that starts before arrival
 - Using social media to help students integrate into the university community: success stories?
 - Peer support (mentoring, tutoring, 'cultural brokers', conversation partners, etc.)

Overall

1. Have there been other noticeable trends in the internationalization of the FYE movement across campuses, countries, and cultural contexts?

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