

Sample 2: American Council on Education

Focus Group Questionnaire (1- to 1½-hour guide)²¹

Introduction/Icebreaker

1. What have been your most “international” experiences prior to college or university? If you have not had any or many, are you interested in anything in particular? (See list for examples, page 3.)

Experience

2. What type of international experiences have you had since you have been a student? Describe. (See list for examples and provide examples of what the particular institution offers.) (If student has an unlisted experience, add it to our list.)
3. How did you decide to participate in these activities? What were your reasons? Was it required? What did you gain from this experience, if anything?
4. If you have not participated in any international activities or programs, or if you have chosen not to participate in some specific activities, why did you not participate? Were there particular reasons? (If no response, provide possible reasons: not interested, cost, *no opportunity*, *not required*, *too difficult*, *no time*, *intimidating*, *poor reputation*...)

Awareness

5. Whether you have participated or not, do you know about many international activities or programs at your school? Which activities or programs have you heard about? (If little response, list the institution’s activities.)
6. How do you normally find out about these activities (faculty, friends/other students, flyers, school newspaper, adviser...)?
7. Which activities hold more interest for you?
8. How aware were you of the international requirements, programs, and activities offered at this institution before you applied or decided to enroll? Did they influence your decision to apply or enroll?
9. Do you think of your campus as one that places a lot of importance on providing students with knowledge about international events and issues or other perspectives?

²¹ For more information and the results of this project, see the ACE publication *Internationalization in U.S. Higher Education: The Student Perspective* (2005).

10. There is much discussion in higher education about the need to produce globally competent or internationally aware students. What would be the traits of such a student? How important is it to be a globally competent student?

Faculty/Adviser

11. How have faculty contributed to your awareness of international opportunities on and off campus? Do faculty tell you about activities or programs outside of their courses? What have they told you about?
12. To what extent do faculty include international dimensions into their courses, if at all?
Probes:
 - Provide examples or applications of countries or cultures other than the United States.
 - Require or suggest readings by authors or on topics with international perspectives.
 - Bring in a speaker from another country or culture.
 - Bring in a speaker with an international topic.
13. In what other ways could faculty or advisers provide a more international education for you? Other examples or suggestions?

Appreciation

14. Have you benefited from the internationalization efforts at your campus? If so, in what ways? Have they added to your educational experience?
15. How important are these experiences to you? What value do you see in them, for example, personally (social awareness/understanding), academically (academic preparedness), or professionally (career/job skills)?
16. (if applicable) Specifically, have you benefited from the language or international course requirements? If so, how? What value do you see in these requirements?
17. How do you think you will capitalize on or use your experiences (work abroad, career with language requirements, multicultural work setting)? How important is that to you?

Suggestions

18. How would you change, modify or add to the international component of your experience here? Is there a way your college or university could attract you to more activities?
 - More publicity?
 - More classes?
 - Other ways?

Student Consent Form

You have been asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The principal investigator will also be available to answer all of your questions. Please read the information below. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to leave at any time and there will be no adverse affects on your grades or relationship with the University ... or the American Council on Education.

Title of Research Study: Forging New Connections: A Study in Linking Internationalization Strategies and Student Learning Outcomes

Purpose of the study is to:

- Study the level of international skills, attitudes, and behaviors of college students.
- Determine if there is a relationship between an institution's international practices and the students' international skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

Student involvement: Students will be asked to participate in a discussion group with other students from their college or university. They will be asked questions about their campus and educational activities. The setting will be an informal discussion group. The discussion will last approximately 1½ hours.

Possible benefits: Students may become more aware of their college's activities and programs and may gain self-awareness regarding their own international interests.

Confidentiality: Student confidentiality will be protected by eliminating student names from all research records. Your consent form will be kept strictly confidential and housed at the American Council on Education. Upon completion of this project, all consent forms will be shredded. Research staff will have access to student names only during recruitment. Student names will never be used in connection with research findings. Loss of confidentiality may occur, as it cannot be completely secured in a group environment. Participants are free to terminate their participation at any time.

Audio taping: The discussion group will be audio taped for the purpose of transcribing the results of the meeting. The recordings will be heard only for research purposes by the investigator or her associates. Student names will then be eliminated from any documented files of the research results.

Compensation: Students will receive \$40 for their participation, even if they terminate early.

Contact for questions: .../Principal Investigator
American Council on Education
(202) 939-9456 or cii@ace.nche.edu

Signatures: I have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, and possible benefits and risks. I understand that I have the opportunity to ask questions at any time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Printed name of student

Signature of student

Date

Appendix R: Details of a SWOT Analysis²²

A SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis is a useful tool for pulling together information and reflecting upon the internal strengths and weaknesses of internationalization efforts, as well as the external opportunities for and threats to these efforts. SWOTs can be generated at the level of the whole institution, the college, or individual units. If several SWOTs are generated, it is helpful to analyze the relationships among them to determine the most critical meta-issues that need to be resolved. Steps include:

1. Do a SWOT analysis for each element of the internationalization review.
2. Review all the SWOTs.
3. Prioritize and list the top five to seven strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
4. Discuss, make decisions, and fill in the boxes of the worksheet for *Invest*, *Need to Decide*, *Defend*, and *Control for Potential Damage*, based on the following definitions and questions:
 - Invest*: Clear matches of strengths and opportunities lead to competitive advantage. How can our strengths be leveraged to capitalize on a perceived opportunity?
 - Need to Decide*: Areas of opportunities matched by areas of weaknesses require a judgment call. Why should resources be invested in weak programs or infrastructure to respond to a perceived threat? Should resources be divested from weak areas?
 - Defend*: Areas of threat matched by areas of strength indicate a need to mobilize resources either alone or with others. How can strengths be mobilized to avert a perceived threat?
 - Control for Potential Damage*: Areas of threat matched by areas of weakness indicate a need for damage control. How will a weakness make an institution vulnerable, given an impending threat?
5. Compile a list of critical issues needing to be addressed.
6. Evaluate the issues. Which must be addressed, which require more information before decisions can be made, and which can be deferred or dropped without impairing progress?

	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths	Invest	Defend
Weaknesses	Need to Decide	Control for Potential Damage

²² Adapted from Office of Human Resources, The Ohio State University. (2001). *Strategic planning workbook: A step by step planning guide*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University, p. 26–27.