Communication

Bridging Countries and Cultures through Accessible Global Collaborations

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Abstract: This paper discusses and provides two case studies on a postsecondary, accessible, global project among students in Russia, China, and the United States. The project design was to engage diverse students in an international conversation to explore their place in the world and envision their future as individuals, innovators, workers, and/or leaders in this globalized world. The three countries chosen, Russia, China, and the United States, are world powers and are pivotal countries for building international bridges. This paper highlights the evolution of the project and students' vision for developing ongoing student-centered international research projects. It is the hope of the authors that educators reading this article will be inspired to embark on other accessible global projects designed to enhance language and cultural competence with and among all college students.

Keywords: accessibility; global education; international programs; universal design; pedagogical practices; inclusivity; China; Russia; USA

1. Introduction

The advantages for pursuing a global approach in undergraduate education are extensive. Globalization creates opportunities for sharing knowledge, technology, and social values as well as intercultural knowledge and competence. Globalization or internationalization is an integral component of higher education systems today [1]. The term, globalization and internationalization have many meanings with some common characteristics notably, cross-border interaction and the pursuit of growth. International-student mobility has become one of the indicators of higher-education quality [2]. Academically mobile students tend to demonstrate a higher level of personal maturity, global outlook, intercultural competence, and engagement in international career exploration [1,3–7]. Faculty worldwide are encouraged to internationalize their curriculum and advance global education.

In the United States (U.S.), the purpose of internationalizing the curriculum is to infuse strategies for preparing students of the 21st century with a worldview and to balance nationalistic interests [8]. The term Study Abroad is generally the term used to describe programs for students who engage in international travel as part of their curriculum. Internationalizing the curriculum and Study Abroad are often not in the same academic unit. In Russia, internationalizing the curriculum and travel programs are under the umbrella of international academic-mobility programs for the purpose of interdisciplinarity and integration to overcome national isolation and acquire a global perspective [9]. Although this collaboration is between Russia, China, and the United States, this article focuses on the insights of students and faculty at The Chita Institute of Baikal State University and the University of Minnesota as these authors have embraced a research approach to their activities. The collaboration in China was through the international communications office in 2017–2018.

The inclusion of virtual activities to explore and gain experiences in border crossing is a low-cost, low-stakes approach to increasing opportunities and interest among students who have been marginalized in international mobility or study abroad programs [7]. As the authors have embraced Integrated Multicultural Instruction Design (IMID) for promoting success for all students [10], adding an international component seemed to provide a potential, necessary, and logical improvement. IMID is a student-centered model developed to advantage students who were once marginalized in postsecondary education without disadvantaging students who enter the academy from a position of privilege or an understanding of the cultural capital needed to be successful.

2. Background

The authors of this article have been working together since fall 2014 attending to their students concerns for enriching their disciplinary knowledge with global perspectives. Their students want to know first-hand how students from other countries see themselves, view students from other countries, and how this informs their disciplinary knowledge. Their students want to know if students worldwide have access to the same disciplinary knowledge and how their life experiences integrate with their disciplinary knowledge. The authors share a commitment to engaging students in their respective institutions in international collaborations so that their undergraduate education years, regardless of economic constraints or barriers to international travel, become a time to explore what it means to be a citizen of their country and how that identity informs, filters and prepares them for a more globalized world. It is important for all students, not just the economically advantaged, to experience international friendships, collaboration, study, and perspectives while discerning their place in the world and exploring career options [11]. UNESCO in 2017 reported that in 2015, only 2% of tertiary education students studied abroad [12]. In terms of participants' gender and social characteristics, women from higher socioeconomic brackets dominate the participation in international programs, particularly, study-abroad programs [13].

It is also quite evident in the literature that there is underrepresentation of students from lower socioeconomic tiers in international programs and global studies. Students marginalized within their local campus culture are also marginalized in the international programs of their institution [14,15]. Students envision the replication of the barriers (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.) they face at their home institutions occurring abroad and/or accentuated abroad because of the host countries' culture norms or their lack of familiarity with the culture and language of the host country.

In a study focusing on the differences in factors that influenced intent to study abroad between white and nonwhite students, an integrated model of student choice looked at human and financial capital that might influence the core benefit–cost nature of decision-making about study-abroad intent. The perception is that study abroad will add costs to undergraduate education, may lengthen time to graduation, is a complex process to navigate, and carries some risks (personal-comfort level based on identity issues (gender and race) and language barriers. Although study-abroad programs address and ameliorate these issues, student perceptions continue [16].

Students who identify with disabilities also share some reticence for traveling abroad. National and local laws for educational accessibility and accommodations vary. For the most part, in Russia and China, except for new building occupancy permits, accessibility can be limited. Educational accessibility and accommodations are also limited. Due to financial constraints in higher education in many counties, students with disabilities requiring unique technology or human support can only take advantage of higher education if they bring these resources with them to campus [17–19].

Designing and implementing a program that connects all students with students from other cultures, while being grounded in familiar surroundings, can only help bridge the gaps in resources and dispositions identified in the literature [1,20]. In fact, there is research that documents greater gains in intercultural competencies when students' participation in activities related to internationalization at home [21].

2.1. Country Specific Descriptions

A brief description of the tertiary students in China, Russia, and the United States will further introduce why the authors embarked on this project to engage undergraduate students in international experiences. Each country has a unique need for this type of experience. As Tables 1 and 2 below identify, USA has a high ratio of inbound tertiary students (5%), with China being the highest source of their inbound students [22]. At the other end of the spectrum, China has 2% outbound students as the percent indicates and the United States has the lowest percentage of its tertiary students studying abroad (0.4%). Although Russia has a low percentage of outbound tertiary students, as a nation it is experiencing greater success in inbound tertiary students than China but lower than the United States.

Table 1. Inbound and outbound tertiary student in 2015 as a percentage of total tertiary students.

	United States	Russia	China
Inbound Students	5.0	3.9	0.4
Outbound Students	0.4	0.9	2.0

Table 2. Inbound and outbound tertiary student in 2016.

	Outbound from United States	Outbound from Russia	Outbound from China
Inbound Students to Russia	160		10,693
Inbound Students to China	0	0	
Inbound Students to United States		5156	309,837

When examining the data more closely, it is evident that the cross pollination of these countries in real numbers is quite limited other than outbound Chinese students to the United States and Russia [22] (Table 2).

Study abroad is just one aspect of international and global initiatives. Since the adoption of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 1999, virtual mobility has been a principle and essential component of university education [20]. In the United States, apart from massive open online courses (MOOCs), collaborative online international learning (COIL) is a term used for the past six years to describe virtual international learning opportunities [20]. Internationalizaton at Home (IaH) is another term introduced by Bengt Nilsson in 1998 and used in the literature to encompass informal and formal, international, or home-based initiatives that are intentionally designed to promote intercultural, international and global learning [23]. The activities described in this paper broadly fit an IaH model. The major difference between COIL and IaH is COIL usually infers a course- and research-based program between collaborating higher education institutions, whereas IaH can involve course- or extracurricular-based programs without a disciplinary research focus.

2.1.1. Chita, Zabaykalsky Krai, Russia

Notwithstanding all the technological advances in communication, global openness, and interconnectedness, young people in Chita often feel isolated from what is going on in the larger world. They do feel the influence of globalization, but they see themselves as outside observers rather than actors in the system of international business, economic, and academic interaction. In this connection, one of the critical tasks of professional instruction is to get students to know the system of values and customs of the countries they are going to deal with in their professional life. Student are exposed to the way business is conducted and the way government works in those countries. Whatever students do in their future professional life, they are advantaged by seeing themselves as members of a global community. That is why the idea to bring students from different countries together is important to Chita students and faculty. Students and faculty embrace the opportunity to get an experience of cross-border interaction and joint research.

Many students in Chita learn both Chinese and English. Being the most important (universal) language of international communication, English is taught in all schools and colleges of the

Trans-Baikal region of Russia, regardless of degrees or majors. Chinese is in local curricula for territorial reasons—the region borders on China, its main trade partner. Due to Chita's remoteness, however, synchronous contacts with students from English-speaking countries are rare, as are academic contacts with Chinese counterparts. Modern communication technologies hosted by higher educational institutions can provide students with international involvement through the use of video chats, Skype conferences, and person-to-person contact.

2.1.2. Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

The University of Minnesota (UMN) has an institutional goal of engaging 50% of the undergraduate student body in study abroad or formal international experience before they graduate. Unlike students from Chita, students in Minneapolis do not feel isolated. Technology and widespread use of the Internet allow students to feel more connected in the United States and the rest of the world. The University of Minnesota also has a large international undergraduate population, (2816, 13%) so there are opportunities for domestic students to interact with foreign students formally or informally on campus [24].

In the U.S., nearly 50% of undergraduate students are not interested in or do not believe that study abroad is possible in their undergraduate years. Much of the reluctance is due to finances, and the lack of foreign language skills or the ability to complete undergraduate four-year curriculum in a timely manner with a semester abroad [13].

The international program, described below, was designed as an extra-curricular activity at the University of Minnesota in 2017–2018, fitting into the IaH model for internationalizing the undergraduate experience. Student engagement was dependent on motivation outside or a course grade or academic credit. These two factors affected participation. As the literature indicates, students who previously had an international experience domestically or abroad are more prone to participate in international projects [13].

The U.S. has greater success in having foreign students studying in the United States than having U.S. students studying abroad. Many campuses, including the University of Minnesota, therefore seek to engage domestic students with international students that are already on campus [21]. This project introduced a third alternative, virtual connecting and establishing relationships between and among undergraduate students from Russia, China, and the United States while they are studying at their home institutions.

3. Case Studies

This is a preliminary qualitative examination of the strengths and weaknesses of two student-centered, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects designed with access at their core. Both projects (International Students Day and the course-based economic project) were built around University Instructional Design (UID) and Integrated Multicultural Instructional Design (IMID), emphasizing access for all and minimizing privileging one group over another [10]. The report focus on the general principles of designing these international projects first, then will focus on the three-hour International Video Conference followed by the Chita Institute of Baikal State University course-based economics project. The authors consider these activities to be a pilot project engaging three countries, three time zones, and three campuses. In the 2018–2019 academic year, more in-depth formalized projects will be conducted and evaluated.

3.1. Formation

The authors use a critical multicultural pedagogy in their disciplinary fields and infuse international perspectives into their courses encompassing extracurricular activities, as well as research. Over a period of four years, the authors had ongoing virtual communications, primarily bimonthly audio/video conference calls and two face-to-face meetings, one in the U.S. and one in Chita, searching for ways to incorporate their professional commitment to the internationalization of their

curriculum with student engagement at the core. Both authors also had a cadre of students who were motivated to know more about undergraduate students from other countries and develop a more intercultural competence and a worldview informed by person-to-person conversation rather than being informed primarily by political and media outlets. The students in Chita as in Minnesota, requested more international perspectives in the content and approach to course work. Given the global tensions and the belief that the U.S., Russia, and China are global powers, conversation on how to build a three-way connection seemed more feasible than just a connection between Russia and the U.S. students.

When adding an international component, there are privileged stances that countries can make. For instance, in Russia and China, many elementary and secondary students take English as a second language. One could use that privilege to hold international dialogues in English; however, that would privilege students in the U.S. who are more fluent in expressing themselves in English. For the purpose of equalizing the ability of students from each country to participate fully, it is more appropriate to use a UN approach to dialogue as is described later in this discussion.

3.1.1. International Students Day Format

Through the international office at the University of Minnesota, in June 2017, a contact in the Office of Global Affairs at the Harbin Institute of Technology accepted the offer to participate in the development of this first formal activity, a Tricountry Video Conference centered on commemorating International Students Day (ISD). International Students Day was chosen as it is a nonpolitical commemoration of multiculturalism of international students for promoting active citizenship and student solidarity. ISD is commemorated around the world, and has a history of student support in Russia, China, and the U.S. An idea that was conceived in March 2017 is now materializing. An international conversation began with the goal to help undergraduate students see their place in the world and envision their future as individuals, innovators, workers, and/or leaders in this globalized world, using people-to-people conversations to contextualize what they read and study. The opportunity, requested by students and advanced by their faculty, "connected" students with their world peers. An ongoing relationship developed to foster students' educational goals and global visions, to see the similarities and differences in their hopes and career plans as they occupy one world. The intention achieved was that international exchanges between faculty, students, and curriculum could grow from a well-defined collaboration and exchange.

The design of this first international video conference incorporated the principles of multicultural instructional design and COIL. Fusing these two core methods of teaching and learning lead to a virtual mobility experiment and the beginnings of a collaborative online international learning course. The basic principles of the project were:

- Student centered;
- collaboratively designed;
- all Materials (including audiovisual materials) translated (Chinese, Russian, and English);
- all communication and products accessible;
- all online platforms met global access standards set by host countries.

The primary delivery design was contingent on identifying and implementing information and communication technologies (ICTs) that were compatible among Chinese, Russian, and U.S. educational institutions. Identifying these resources is a dynamic process. Technologies and restrictions on use of software products have made the selection of products for virtual, online education in China, Russia, and the United States challenging, as many products do not meet country-specific content-filtering criteria. The prioritization was to look for a way to legally communicate (without a workaround and/or a virtual private network (VPN) application) and in multiple languages. Finding a platform to store files, edit files together, store videos with closed screen captioning, and host "live" transcriptions in each language so that each site had access up-to-date transcripts of all verbal utterances

became the focus for identifying ICT. Although China primarily used Baidu as a search platform and repository, one could not access the site without use of Chinese characters. Google products are not used in China, and difficult to use in Russia. Russia uses primarily Yandex products, which are in multiple hosted languages, including English and Chinese. Yandex became the platform for hosting all the audio/video/print files. Each site could access the platform and materials in their own language, as well as in two other languages as they wished. No campus was dependent on the use of YouTube for video files. One could upload MP4 video files, and each site could use the platform of their choice to view the files. For audio files, MP3s were uploaded to Yandex and could be accessed by their platform of choice. Word files could be created in Yandex or uploaded to it as Microsoft Excel, Word, or PowerPoint files. Yandex also supports storing Adobe Acrobat and jpg files. Yandex uses Microsoft Word Online to allow for the editing of files in real time with multiple authors. Word Online made the hosting of synchronous language transcripts possible to support translation and accessibility. In reports of accessibility for the Google, Baidu, and Yandex platforms, Yandex outperformed the other platforms in most categories (cognitive, upper limb, vision, and hearing) [25].

Another technological feat was finding a video-conference platform that met accessibility guidelines and was accessible to the three countries. UMN identified two Cisco products, WebEx and Acano, to host the conference and to provide a stable virtual environment for all three countries. Although the preference was to use WebEx as the platform in Video conferencing, because of room restrictions on UMN campus, Acano was successfully used. Both of these platforms are part of the UMN technology support services so clients (Russia and China) did not need a special license to participate. There was no additional cost to linking the three countries in a video conference by IP address.

Once the technological issues were solved, the program was collaboratively designed. The format approved by students and faculty at all three sites included,

- Welcome and introductions;
- ice breakers between major activities which were called "tea-time" activities, as that is the more common term in Russia and China;
- Closed-Caption Videos from each of the campuses talking about what it is like for undergraduates at each campus to start the tricountry discussion of similarities and differences,
- Three student presentations, one from each participating country on a conference theme (personal educational goals; hopes and dreams for broadening ones understanding of each other; and the role of the world wide web in promoting or hampering communication), followed by a three-way group discussion;
- Next-steps discussion, "What would you like to see in the future"; and
- a site recapping the day's events, thank you, and signing off.

Students were the core of all the activities. As appropriate, faculty were facilitators. The one additional element of this collaboration was that, before the video conference, each student provided a picture, short bio (4–5 sentences), and contact information (social-media addresses, email, etc.). Copies of these introductions were available at each site to support students recognizing names to go with faces and voices.

3.1.2. Chita Institute of Baikal State University Course-Based Economics Project Format

Another project that brought students from Russia and the U.S. together was a collaboration within an interdisciplinary course on the U.S. economy. This course was part of the fourth year students' curriculum in the Global Economy department at Chita Institute of Baikal State University. The importance of an interdisciplinary approach to teaching has long been recognized, especially when it comes to professional training coupled with foreign-language proficiency [9]. The U.S. economy course is interdisciplinary in that sense.

First, all the issues to be discussed in the economy courses touch upon national identities of the countries in scope. Economics is placed in an historical and cultural context. It is perfectly in keeping with the key concept that education processes be guided by: knowledge before judgement.

Second, while all the theoretical courses in the Global Economy curriculum are naturally taught in Russian, the U.S. Economy course is taught in English. Within this course, students had an opportunity to do a research project on an American socio-economic topic and present their research at the end of term in a class session. The faculty member from UMN was not teaching during the January–April, 2018 term so linking two classes was out of the question. In order to accommodate the 4th year undergraduate student in Russia, a cadre of interested student and community members from Minnesota were recruited to work on the 4–5-week projects with Chita students studying the U.S. economy. The topics of interest were:

- Social policies affecting healthcare, social security, temporary assistance for needy families, food stamps, education, unemployment insurance;
- Income inequality including data, reasons, history, protest movements;
- foreign trade including data, major trade partners, trade deficits, most exported/imported goods, trade restrictions;
- the New Deal developments in the U.S. during the 1930s and 1940s;
- government shutdowns;
- U.S. monetary and fiscal policy; and
- the concept of "the American Dream" and development of "Manifest Destiny", its history, and one's present-sday understanding.

For this project, a closed group was established in Facebook where participants could video chat, post papers, and engage in dialogues within a private space. Facebook is accessible with support contingent on the browser selected by the user and the adaptive software (Jaws, Dragon, etc.). UMN as an institution cannot require students to use Facebook for class activities. Students are only required to use an authorized Learning Management System (LMS). Since the students from UMN were volunteering to participate in this project and not assigned as part of their course work, Facebook was acceptable. Even though most Russian students have a VKontakte (VK) account for online social media and social networking services (a Facebook equivalent), and UMN students were open to using VK for this project, in the end most students found that Facebook was friendlier for setting up a closed network for posting. Chita students conducted research on one of the issues listed above individually or in groups of two or three students using the following process:

- They shared drafts of their presentations with U.S. citizens (UMN students and community members) of different ages and backgrounds to ask for their personal view/experience/ideas about major economic and social aspects of life in the U.S.
- UMN students and community members answered questions posed by Chita students about their topics.
- UMN students and community members found documents, resources, and personal statements about the research topics to share with Chita students.
- UMN students and community members read papers written by the Chita students and provided comments and clarifications.
- Russian students analyzed the feedback in their papers and presented the results in class and at an annual youth conference.

4. Results

The International Students' Day project involved 45 students from the three biggest universities of Chita (Baikal State University, Chita State Medical Academy, Trans-Baikal State University), six students from University of Minnesota with 9 community member observers, and six students from Harbin

Institute of Technology. It was a tricountry video chat for students from Russia, China, and the U.S. to share their vision of the world and where they are in the world. The numbers here support the observation from the faculty that Chita students want to engage with communities in other countries. The quotes that follow further support this claim.

> We are all part of global community. . . . we should be interested in news about events taking place in different countries of the world; take part in various international forums, festivals, international conferences; get acquainted with people of other countries; travel; learn foreign languages; study the history of our own state and other countries, observe how relations between states changed in different periods; learn more about the lives of people in other countries, their culture, their behavior. . . . Most people want to live in peace with others, to accept and understand the traditions and ways of different nations, cultures and religions. In order to better understand the thoughts of people of other nations, it is necessary to study the languages of the countries and nationalities, to learn their culture, the history of the state. We should also show greater understanding of other nations, their culture and ways, appearance, national identity. And, of course, in any situation, we must remember that we are all humans. (From Chita students' presentation)

The Chita Institute of Baikal State University course-based economics project involved all the students from the U.S. Economy (18 students) course plus the Minnesota participants for a total of 28 members interacting in Facebook with the 15 papers. Some of the economic projects were subsequently submitted to an annual undergraduate student research project contest in Chita. They were highly ranked above their peer researchers and undergraduate institutions. The project gave students the necessary first-hand information and personal interaction experience that is critical for better global understanding and further practical use of the theoretical knowledge they learn in classes. Although academically, this project was a credit bearing for students in Chita, students in Minnesota volunteered to participate and added to the research done by the student in Chita. It was a venture in intercultural communication using the IaH process with much student satisfaction in Minnesota and Chita as captured in these statements, "please accept my gratitude for taking time to answer my questions. I was very glad to get your opinion! You made a valuable contribution to my understanding of the problem"; "your opinion is very important for us and useful for this research", "Thank you so much for the skype today! It was VERY interesting and important for the project!"; "I like your references to fiction, specifically Great Gatsby and Citizen Kane, in explaining the American Dream. These were good choices, and very relevant to the topic"; and "thanks a lot for your help! I am very grateful to you that you answered not only my questions, but also expressed your own opinion on the issue. I'm glad you liked the topic. It is very important for me. I really like your point of view. I will certainly take into account it in my report!" As much of the other feedback and communications between students were not within the closed Facebook group or on Skype, the authors did not capture a sampling of all the feedback.

Although most students from China and Russia were engaged in a first-time experience interacting with American students, most UMN students have had previous interactions with international students from Russia and China. There are numerous Russian and Chinese student groups on campus. The depth of conversations and interactions with the students from Harbin and Chita were quite different than interacting with the international students on the UMN campus who are from western Russia, not Siberia, and southern China, not Heilongjiang. This student-centered project will grow this year into a three country, course-based project addressing accessibility issues and reaching out to students who have been marginalized and are not quite ready for international travel.

5. Conclusions

The above projects were exploratory and first attempts to bridge nations and cultures. The groundwork for handling the technology aspect of this project are resolved. The identification of

professors interested in advancing internationalization of their curriculum and engaging in research projects and publications to advance intercultural communications are set. The key to COIL and IaH projects is the faculty developing a relationship around shared international goals and interests, and a commitment to support students in advancing their worldview through intercultural communications. A faculty member at Harbin Institute of Technology that has similar internationalizing the curriculum teaching and research interests is identified and will be joining the authors in 2018-2019. There is a commitment by all three faculty to continue a UN approach to conferences encouraging all students to present in their native language.

Building on the first experiences and a commitment to engage in scholarship, the following components will be reviewed and incorporated in the next case studies of this international collaboration:

- The creation or adaption of an intercultural competency instrument to measure student growth in a systematic way;
- formal institutional research review and approval for collecting data from students;
- pre- and post-assessments of students' academic content and intercultural competency growth as a product of their engagement;
- Survey of students' general characteristics that would help identify which groups of students seem to benefit most from virtual international experiences (gender, age, income, past international travel or international experiences, identity affinity groups, etc.); and
- identification of formal processes and documentation of students' collaborative work.

With the addition of these components, the case studies will add to the scholarship of virtual international collaborations.

Based on the experience of the two case studies and the formal meetings between the faculty and their students, students from Russia and China made another request. In students' effort to acquiring a second or third language communication skills, having real conversations with people fluent in the language is paramount. There are three avenues being explored to advance this outcome of the collaboration.

1. The instructor in Chita and her students started an American Movie Club five years ago to watch prominent American films and discuss them afterwards. It was that activity that sparked the relationship between the Chita Institute and the University of Minnesota. Through a nonprofit group, Siberian Bridges, connections were developed between the Chita Institute and the University of Minnesota faculty. The Chita movie project, along with improving students' language skills, helped students understand the culture, the reality, and the characterization of some American people. This experience whetted the appetite of the young people in Chita to know more about America independent of politics and media. The logistics of a synchronous movie club between the three countries with international films is still being discussed. Given the time parameters (Coordinated Universal Time −5, +8. and +9) there are challenges this activity presents that a conference or coordinated class session does not pose. Each country has morning and evening courses that can be coordinated but movies with popcorn traditionally is an evening activity in all three countries. A resolution to this request has not materialize yet.

2. During summer 2018, an evening of conversation with Americans was held in Chita. Over 75 residents from Chita attended via word of mouth to have a conversation with six English-American speakers. In travels to Harbin in summer 2018, similarly, students from Harbin had their first in-person conversation with an English speaker, struggling even though they had many years of English language preparation and could pass a TOEFL test to study in the U.S. Students had limited experiences with actual conversations. Although these activities are not goals for internationalizing the curriculum, they present other needs for language development among students in the three countries. How to address this student need and request is still in

discussion, but there are many ways to synchronously accomplish this goal. Although English conversation will privilege English speakers, it is possible that attracting second language learners studying Chinese and Russia in Minneapolis and Harbin could add to the efforts to provide equitable opportunities for all students.

3. The development of a new course at the Chita Institute on Asia-Pacific Transnational Economic Cooperation, integrated with English as the language of instruction, is being pursued by instructors in Chita. The course also seeks to involve Chinese participation. It is an outgrowth for this project and addresses student concerns for an undergraduate curriculum infused with international perspectives and intercultural skills.

Using a UN approach has been helpful for developing intercultural awareness among the three countries without privileging U.S. students, but it has also uncovered an underlying concern from Chinese and Russian students to have opportunities to develop their English language skills as English is used in many international settings. At this time, adding a component to our internationalization efforts that support English-language development seems to be appropriate to meet the needs of second-language learners.

This paper was designed to encourage the reader to embark on a project to internationalize their curriculum, promote intercultural competence and a worldview informed by person-to-person conversation rather than being primarily informed by political and media outlets. Integrated Multicultural Instructional Design behooves professionals to stretch the boundaries of instruction to be inclusive of the global skills and competencies while leveling access for all students. One globalized world—equitable access for all can be achieved.

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