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Introduction to csuglobalaction

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Introduction to csuglobalaction

From its beginning, the mission of the CSU has not only been the training of teachers but the teaching of its students as the youth of the state of California destined for leadership in the state and beyond. For the CSU, teaching has meant a drive for “access and quality” where “the primary focus of the faculty is on students” and while scholarship and research are important, applied research and research that includes students as partners have been foundational characteristics. In this regard, the CSU has been leading the way building a “sound and productive system of comprehensive universities” and as such, the CSU has been “visited and studied by educational leaders from every continent and a multitude of nations” (Gerth, xiii). However, while this section will showcase the teaching across the campuses and therefore draw attention to our domestic classrooms, it will also highlight the programming that the CSU has developed as part of its international reach through opportunities to study in other countries and cultures.

In 2023 we mark the 60th anniversary of CSU International Programs and remember those efforts of Lew Oliver at Chico who began taking groups on guided tours of Italy as early as the 1950s. The Master Plan did not mention the subject of study abroad or the CSU’s international aspirations, but it was not long after that international programming began to take shape particularly under the stewardship of Glenn Dumke, who was appointed chancellor in April of 1962. First, there was a program to France during the academic year 1962- 63. The newly established Chancellor’s Office commissioned a study of international education in that same year, which led to a plan for the “development of a unified state college program” in this area (Gerth, 270).

In 1963 a number of trustees visited 11 countries (at their own expense) with an introduction to all the relevant ambassadors from Governor Pat Brown. By the start of the 1963-64 academic year, programs began in 5 countries: France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and Taiwan. Another report was commissioned in 1966, reported out by 1967 and its generally positive tone set International Programs on its way to becoming a permanent feature of CSU life.

It was not all smooth sailing however as the next Governor Brown (Jerry - elected in 1974) immediately decided to delete all funding for international programs in 1975. Only by sheer dint of determination and skilled lobbying was the still young program saved. Happily, it not only survived, but continued to thrive in the coming years such that, by the 1980s, the CSU was firmly ensconced in the international arena.

In 1997 a task force on globalization was created as the system once again began to consider its role in the international space. This time the effort resulted in the creation of an “Office of Global Education” in the Chancellor’s Office. However, it is interesting to note that Donald Gerth believed that, while the CSU had masterfully evolved as an “important social invention” that it still needed more work on how to address change not only in California, but in the world. He goes so far as to suggest that while the CSU is, and remains the largest system of higher education in the US (and one of the largest in the world) it has “not been international as a whole beyond International Programs...The CSU is a citizen of the global higher education community, a major citizen”, however, he goes on “Exercising the responsibilities of that citizenship is an agenda yet to be developed” (Gerth, 284).

The goal therefore of this section of **csuglobal** is threefold. First, this section is intended to address a perceived gap in the scholarly world for a publication focused on pedagogy and specifically geared to the internationalization of the classrooms and the campuses of the CSU. Second, this will be a useful place to discuss the collective knowledge/best practice/evolving issues around our students going abroad (and those coming from abroad to our campuses) in terms of how they fare and what we can do better. Finally, and to go that extra mile, the journal seeks to be a place where we can discuss the role of California in that global space and how the CSU’s leadership can and should be stronger at the intersection of the local and the global. We aim to act in the world not only as separate campuses, but to better unify that strength for the good of our students and an increasingly global California.

In keeping with this mission, this section of the journal will be led by an administrator and a faculty member. Cari Vanderkar (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo) and Amy Below (East Bay) bring their own powerful voices, but the combination of their experience, expertise and roles in the system could not be better suited to reaching across the staff/faculty boundaries to address the teaching/curricular issues that lie at the very core of the CSU. To that combination, we have also added an Ad Hoc editor Maria Ortuoste (East Bay) who will help support students seeking to publish and engage with the journal – not only in this specific section but across every area of the journal.

More specifically for this issue, Vanderkar and Below offer a strategic overview of the questions that can and should be addressed as part of California's international role going forward as well as laying out the changing challenges of the classroom. If there was ever any doubt that such a section can and should be part of a global CSU, that is instantly put to rest as the themes and questions raised by their colleagues across the other sections are echoed in the practical questions they raise. As an institution that prides itself on the teaching and the practical – we know that the magic happens in the classroom. So it is that we hope this section will provide an opportunity for new collaborations, exciting innovations, and a place for dialogue on the role of the CSU in the development and guidance of California's future global citizens.