

Report 2: Review of International Organizational Structures at Research Intensive Universities

**Submitted to: Janice Deakin
Submitted by: Julie McMullin**

March 11, 2011

Revised: November 14, 2011

The University of Western Ontario

Introduction

Through the consultation that was undertaken for “Report 1: International, First-Year, Enrolment Management” it became clear that there is a need for enhanced continuity of services and coordination of international matters at Western. Currently, there are many international activities in which members of Western’s community are engaged. Often, however, there is a lack of communication regarding these activities and there is some confusion about who is responsible for what. Furthermore, there is confusion about the mandate of the Educational Partnership Advisory Committee and its terms of reference. As a result, it became clear that a review of Western’s organizational structure around international activities was needed.

Research

Western’s organizational structure was reviewed and compared with the organizational structures in place at other research-intensive universities in Canada, the United States, and Australia. There was no attempt to do a comprehensive review of all possible organizational structures. Rather, a search was conducted with an eye toward best practices.

Models of International Organization

There are many different models for the organization of international activities on campuses in Canada, the United States, and Australia. Western’s structure is similar to other research-intensive universities in Canada (e.g. UBC, McMaster) whereby there is a VP Research and International Relations who is responsible for developing international research activities as well as developing international relationships and educational partnerships. In this model, a Vice-Provost Academic is typically responsible for international recruitment of undergraduate students and providing services for international students on campus. Study abroad and exchange programs often fall under this portfolio. Responsibility for International graduate students usually falls under the portfolio of a Dean or Vice-Provost of Graduate Studies. Faculties in this model are often engaged in other international educational activities as well.

Key challenges in the organizational structure described above is that because responsibility for international activities is dispersed, important opportunities may fall through the cracks and communication is often a challenge. Furthermore, there are competing priorities within each portfolio, which could lead to internationalization processes being under-resourced in terms of both time and money.

To achieve continuity and coordination of international activities and to help alleviate some of the challenges associated with the model described above, a

widespread practise among Universities in the United States (e.g. Yale, Indiana, NYU) and Australia (e.g. Melbourne, Sidney Monash) has been to establish integrated international offices. Internationalization efforts are further ahead in the US and Australian Universtiy systems than they are in Canada. Thus, looking to these models may provide insights into best practices in this regard.

The standard approach among the G8 Universities in Australia is to have a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, International (or Global Engagement), which seems to be at the same level as a VP in Western's system. What is unclear is whether the Deputy Vice-Chancellors in the Australian system report directly to the Vice-Chancellor or whether they report through the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor. In any case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors in the Australian system are responsible for their International or Global offices. Services and activities that fall within these portfolios include education abroad, international undergraduate recruitment, international student services, and educational partnerships. Notably, the Vice-President model has been employed at some universities in the US as well (e.g. Indiana).

A third approach is to have a Vice-Provost International with a direct reporting relationship to the Provost (e.g. Harvard). In this model, international offices are established that are responsible for similar types of international activities as described above in the Australian model.

The University of Alberta (which likely undertook an exercise similar to the one contained in this report) established "University of Alberta International (UAI)" in 2006-07 under the leadership of a Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (international). The Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President-International reports directly to the Provost. The organizational chart for UAI is attached in Appendix A.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Canadian Bureau for International Education commissioned a report in 1994 on Internationalization of Higher Education in which the author of the report wrote the following:

The establishment of an international office or a position dedicated to international activities is a critical factor. A designated position or office demonstrates to the university or college community as well as external partners the importance and commitment to international affairs....

Information exchange, advisory support, fundraising, advocacy, policy development, training of faculty and staff, are but a few of the different functions that an international office coordinates or oversees in the internationalization process (Knight, 1994: 13).

Although this report and its predecessor have not considered all international activities that are underway at Western in detail, it is clear that a more efficient and effective organizational structure for internationalization is needed. And, more resources are needed to fund these activities. *It is therefore recommended that an organizational structure similar to the model in place at the University of Alberta be adopted at Western.* The shell of this model is outlined in Appendix B.

References

Knight, Jane (1994). "Internationalization: Elements and Checkpoints". Ottawa: CIBE Research No. 7.

Appendix A

uai organizational structure



