



Global Reach Task Force

Final Report Fall 2024

Acknowledgements

The Global Reach Task Force wishes to acknowledge the support of the Office of the Provost, faculty, staff, and students who collaborated to make this final report possible. We are grateful for the support of Dr. Christopher Donoghue, his student team, and associated faculty members of the Department of Sociology for their assistance with survey data collection.

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Foreword

The [American Council on Education](#) defines internationalization as “higher education’s intentional engagement with globalization” (ACE, n.d.a.). The purpose of internationalization in higher education is rooted in the purpose of higher education itself: to transform lives, exchange ideas, and solve the problems facing humanity. Indeed, globalization and technological change make the real world more interconnected, the economy more globalized, and our shared environmental and social crises more urgent. Universities share a moral imperative to internationalize education in the classroom, research, and dialogue. This may take the form of counteracting racism and xenophobia, offering a safe haven to refugees, and bringing a diversity of minds together to collaborate on solutions for global problems.

Universities have the moral obligation to provide students not only with skills and knowledge, but also to prepare them to engage with people from other countries and with other perspectives. Stepping outside one’s own culture through study abroad—living in a dormitory with students from other countries, and studying a subject through the lens of thinkers and artists from around the world—all help create a place of learning. This is the epitome of what a university can be: a world without boundaries, a world that transforms students, who in turn contribute positively to humanity. If we wish our students to experience a truly liberatory education, Montclair State University (Montclair) must intentionally internationalize and do its utmost to make possible an experience that engages them in an intercultural experience of some kind, be that through technology-mediated classroom engagement with global peers, or physically studying at another institution.

Internationalization also implies an institutional commitment to develop faculty who enhance classroom learning through an enriched curriculum informed by international research activities, creative endeavors, and educational collaborations.

NAFSA’s 2022 data estimates that international students at U.S. higher education institutions contributed \$33.8bn to the economy, creating market demand for services across a variety of sectors, including education, financial, health, and consumer services. New Jersey benefited from 18,946 international students whose participation in education contributed \$700m in revenue, resulting in the creation of 7,161 jobs. Enrolling international students contributes to a university’s bottom line but the impetus for internationalization ought to be more than financial. Most importantly, internationalization is essential for

Montclair's students who gain from participating in shared learning environments with peers from elsewhere. Increasingly, fulfilling the purpose of a university implies transforming the lives of students by educating them to thrive in a global world, regardless of their chosen career path. Indeed, in an American Council on Education (ACE) survey conducted during 2022 among higher education leaders, the top two reasons for institutions internationalizing were to prepare students for a global era, and diversifying students, faculty, and staff. Finally, Montclair is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and our student body reflects the rich diversity of the immigrant populations in New Jersey and the U.S. Our commitment to internationalization should harness the local connections to the diverse communities that our students embody.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Global Reach Task Force Members	3
Foreword	4
Table of Contents	6
Executive Summary	7
Aims	7
Context and Activities	7
Methodology	8
Key Findings	8
Recommendations	11

Executive Summary

Aims

This final report provides recommendations for the intentional development of international education and research initiatives and policies at Montclair State University for the benefit of students, faculty and staff. It lays out an inventory of Montclair's global reach, i.e. internationalization efforts, and provides a set of recommendations to create a coherent future global reach strategy, as well as to strengthen and improve the institution's ability to respond to an international and interconnected academic and learning environment. It also offers insights on how to dynamically adapt to a globalized higher education field.

Context and Activities

In October 2022, Provost Gonzales appointed a task force to investigate and create an inventory of Montclair's internationalization efforts, and propose recommendations for future development. The Global Reach Task Force (GRTF) met from October 2022 through June 2023 to collect data for an interim report. The task force resumed its work in September 2023 to continue its data collection and analysis, concluding in May 2024 with presentations to Provost Gonzales and President Koppell.

When the GRTF first convened in 2022, the University had returned to near-normal patterns of campus life after the global pandemic which had devastated global travel, student recruitment and study abroad activities. New appointment of University leaders at the most senior levels coincided with organizational changes to manage international student recruitment and study abroad programs. The task force collected data from institutional databases used for recruitment, as well as locally-held data from offices tasked with managing international education initiatives. Interviews were conducted with senior administrative officers, leaders of IAI (International Academic Initiatives) and OGE (Office of Global Engagement), graduate recruitment, finance, risk management, budget and planning, OFE/ITDS, and the faculty research organization, Research on Interdisciplinary Global Studies (RIGS). Contemporaneously, the task force evaluated institutional data on international activities dating back to 2016 and its spring 2023 interim report reviewed an inventory of global efforts, and produced preliminary recommendations. In fall 2023 faculty, international student surveys and a study abroad benchmarking exercise produced additional insights for the final recommendations in this report. These final

recommendations incorporate feedback from Provost Gonzales during a presentation on February 28, 2024, and from President Koppell during a presentation in March 2024.

Methodology

This report is the result of an 18-months study collecting, organizing, and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data (including survey and interview data) with respect to Montclair's global reach and internationalization efforts. Drawing on nearly 10 years of data, it provides a track record of Montclair's global engagement practices, including study abroad, international students on campus, global research projects by faculty and related academic and scholarly activities.

Key Findings

Chief among the task force's findings is the urgent need to clearly articulate an intentional internationalization strategy in Montclair's new strategic framework that will replace the SOAR 2025 Plan. Internationalization at Montclair has been ad-hoc, episodic, and unevenly distributed across colleges. The University's current strategic plan and its Mission Statement require urgent updating to reflect an institutional vision that incorporates an intentionality regarding internationalization. *Montclair may need to go further and develop a strategic plan specifically dedicated to its internationalization efforts, based on a clearly articulated vision, and an educational philosophy for internationalization.* The task force recognizes the need to create a new Strategic Plan takes priority. Nonetheless it is clear that an institutional vision for internationalization is currently missing. Feedback from the University's faculty identified a lack of strategy for how the University should intentionally engage with Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Coordinated internationalization efforts that reflect Montclair's institutional culture and its identity of inclusion and social justice can become a means of differentiation for us as an R2 institution. In this regard it is notable that faculty often lead the way internationally with collaborations through their research and other creative engagements abroad. Task force data shows that Montclair lags other R2 research universities in internationalization, despite its well-deserved recognition in a variety of disciplines, and its excellence in outcomes in advancing student mobility. While Montclair enjoys an enviable reputation in New Jersey and regionally, it lacks such recognition internationally. The task force data reveal a global footprint driven by bottom-up efforts among dedicated faculty and staff whose passion for international research, creative activities, and teaching collaborations provide an excellent foundation for further growth. The University should harness these achievements and build its profile strategically and intentionally, with input

from these important stakeholders.

A critical first step for Montclair to be more intentional would be to define a strategic vision and educational philosophy for internationalization to guide and implement an infrastructure for managing internationalization comprehensively. This would include the following mechanisms: an International Advisory Committee (IAC), the use of a social innovation business model to support the work of internationalization, metrics to measure our advancement, and an implementation tracking system. The task force recommends that the IAC, under the auspices of the Associate Provost for Hispanic and International Initiatives in Academic Affairs, should spearhead the implementation of task force recommendations. Among the key activities of the IAC would be the need to ensure some standardization of policy and procedures across colleges, including measures to ensure greater visibility, but also centralized reporting, of all international initiatives beyond studying abroad. Importantly, the IAC would allow a faculty voice which has historically been absent from internationalization efforts. Such involvement would strengthen efforts to be more deliberate in including activities beyond study abroad in internationalization. For instance, as an R2 higher education institution, Montclair State University must focus on international research efforts and dissemination in ways that create both an institutional reputation and international recognition. Creating a culture of internationalization includes celebrating the efforts of those involved in international research and creative works. This is an oversight that can easily be corrected through an annual celebration of such important outcomes.

Furthermore, the University has not consistently collected data on internationalization and collaborations. Montclair could harness such data to demonstrate our impact, and to harness for differentiation. IAI and OGE do valuable work in their specific spheres to collect student data *but the task force believes that we need an institution-wide collection of data sets and metrics that can be used to monitor progress across many variables beyond recruitment and study abroad.* The task force has proposed an initial prototype. Key partners in this data collection effort would be Institutional Research and the IAC in conjunction with the Office of the Provost. Additionally, Academic Affairs has initiated the use of a digital tool, Interfolio, to consistently collect such data at an institutional level. The task force applauds this initiative that will significantly improve our ability to report on international collaborations and outcomes, while also making such efforts visible and shareable. Such initiatives should also include campus-based activities. For instance, the University should host on-campus debates on global and cultural issues drawing from renowned guests (in-person and online) from other parts of the world (even when on controversial topics such as evolution, religion, genocide, critical race theory, etc.). The University should more proactively support Montclair-based academic publications and institutional units specializing in hosting international conferences.

Montclair's most visible manifestations of internationalization are the destinations where our students study abroad, and the countries of origin of incoming students. Benchmarking of our study abroad infrastructure reveals that we compare poorly against peer institutions. Task force data show that we have the lowest percentage of students studying abroad compared to institutions of similar size, and for students from similar backgrounds to those at the University. The majority of domestic students are not able to afford international travel or student exchanges due to economic constraints. Even when our study abroad team offers semester programs that cost less than a semester at Montclair, or generous scholarships, under-represented students sometimes struggle to see themselves in a study abroad program. Young male students are particularly underrepresented in the overall study abroad program. Upgrading our capacity to advise our students through the IAI office must take priority. The task force strongly recommends that an additional advisor be appointed to assist the office with support for domestic students studying abroad and incoming international students. Beyond enabling Montclair students to study abroad, efforts to build technology-mediated infrastructure for courses that contain international content should be accelerated. This could prove crucial should Montclair move in the future to support the offering of online programs, diplomas and/or certificates to students residing abroad in such continents as Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, who may be able to afford to pay for courses, but cannot afford a stay in the United States due to high costs. The Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL) office and IAI will collaborate on mentoring of international students, an initiative that is planned for implementation in fall 2024. Importantly, to prepare our students for career success, the task force recommends that the SEEDS Core Curriculum should incorporate an international education requirement in the curriculum. Additionally, the IAC and the SEEDS team should collaborate to develop, during the implementation process of the SEEDS Core, a rubric or designation that flags such international or intercultural content as meeting our goals of international/global education.

Internationalization efforts would benefit from a strong presence on the Montclair website through a dedicated landing page that offers visitors a quick and concise overview of the University's international engagement, including, for instance, highlighting achievements among students and faculty in receipt of international grants such as Fulbright or other prestigious awards. This page should include clickable interactive maps where visitors may be able to drill down and visualize current data as it pertains, for instance, to how many students are currently studying abroad, how many international students we have and where they come from, how many foreign-born faculty we have and where they come from, and how many of our faculty are currently engaged in international activities and in what countries and institutions abroad they work.

Recommendations

The task force developed recommendations based on insights from data and discussions, integrating the preliminary recommendations in the interim report published in 2023, and available on the GRTF Canvas site. **Table 1: Final Prioritized Recommendations** contains a consolidated list of recommendations generated in March 2024. Task force members, as directed by Provost Gonzales, advise to immediately implement the following four urgent recommendations:

- Establish an International Advising Committee (IAC)
- Refine and adopt metrics recommended by the task force to consistently measure the progress made in internationalization. This implies identifying all possible stakeholders, data sources, and tools on and off campus that have the potential of contributing to a data repository for the purposes of building an infrastructure capable of measuring and tracking all aspects of internationalization efforts at Montclair.
- Implement a tracking system devised by the task force to ensure that recommendations are managed.
- Begin to implement those aspects of the task force recommendations that can be immediately acted upon, such as the annual recognition of faculty international efforts.

These four measures ensure a strong foundation, with minimal investment, to enact the recommendations of the task force. The remaining recommendations that the GRTF identified will be implemented over a longer period and under the auspices of the Office of the Provost, with the IAC playing a guiding role. Once established in fall 2024, the IAC can become the standard-bearer of intentional internationalization whose main goal would be to advise and help the administration track and implement task-force recommendations on an ongoing basis.

Table1: Final Prioritized Recommendations

URGENT	TIMETABLE	FINANCIAL COMMITMENT	RESPONSIBLE/ LEADERSHIP
Construct an International Advisory Committee (IAC)	October 2024	\$10k	Academic Affairs
Develop a strategic plan for globalization of Montclair, using the GRTF final report as starting point	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025	None	Academic Affairs
IAC and the senior Academic Affairs administrator will collaborate to ensure implementation of University policies	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025	None	IAC and Associate Provost
Recruit academic advisor for incoming international students - Develop structures to support retention and success academically	Spring 2024 - Fall 2024	\$55k - \$75k	IAI - Academic Affairs and Dean of Students
Develop a strategy to enact "intentional engagement with the reality of globalization"	Incorporate into strategy for Int. Ed.	None	Academic Affairs and President
Identify one faculty member in each college to be IAC representative and to serve as a liaison	Fall 2024-Spring 2025	None	Associate Provost and IAC
Update the SOAR 2025 Strategic Plan - undertaken by President's Office	Fall 2024 - Spring 2025	Unclear	Provost
Include a Global Education Requirement to be fulfilled as part of the new SEEDS Core with designated courses	Fall 2024 - Spring 2025	None	IAC and CORE Curriculum Committee?
Maintain, augment, and support the post-pandemic swell of study abroad participation through advising, staffing, scholarships, and other efforts [SOAR scholarships for all semesters + source funding to support international students through dedicated scholarships]	Spring 2024 - Ongoing	\$120,000	IAI and Academic Affairs
Standardize International Memorandum of Agreement form for approval by the Provost Office that includes a sunset clause or expiration date for all International Memoranda of Understanding across colleges	February 2024 - May 2025	None	IAI, Global Engagement, IAC
Expand recruitment strategically to new regions and countries that align with Montclair's HSI status and student demand	Spring 2024 - Ongoing	Unclear	Global Engagement, IAI, Academic Affairs

Modernize risk management and appoint risk officer	Spring 2024	Unclear	Provost
Select 3-4 “high” institutions, and interview leadership about how they achieved such high EA staffing	Spring 2024	None	IAC/IAI
Linked to the University strategic planning update, develop a strategy to engage with institutions in Africa, Asia and Latin America to differentiate Montclair	Part of strategic plan for University	None	IAC/Academic Affairs and President
Create a Rubric in the new GenEd that allow for flagging courses as having an international/Global content	Spring 2024	None	IAC and Core Curriculum Committee?
Regularly schedule lunch + learn about research for faculty and graduate students to learn from peers about grants, funding, publishing, and encourage/incentivize presentation of research projects or results on campus by faculty engaged in international/global research activities	Fall 2024 - Ongoing	\$5,000	OFE and Academic Affairs +OSRP
Annually celebrate research contributions that extend beyond book author celebrations as is currently the case	Fall 2024 - Ongoing	\$5,000	Academic Affairs and Asso Provost for Research +OSRP
Use Interfolio update to collect data (beyond Montclair Digital Commons) to create centralized repository of research and international collaborations	Fall 2024	Unclear	Academic Affairs
Incentivize faculty to apply for follow-up funding after receiving institutional support	Fall 2024	Unclear	Academic Affairs/University + OSRP
Clarify all institutional sources of research funding through seminars and/or centralized database through such programs as the defunct SBR (Separately Budgeted Research) and Global Education grants, and ensure a category specifically geared towards international funding	Fall 2024	None	Academic Affairs
Support faculty to write successful grant applications [peer mentors, seminars, specialized office, etc].	Fall 2024	None	Academic Affairs/Office of Sponsored Research
Select 3-4 “high” institutions, and interview leadership about how they achieved such high EA staffing	Summer - Fall 2024	None	IAC/IAI
INTERMEDIATE (to be completed by IAC once established)	TIMETABLE	FINANCIAL COMMITMENT	RESPONSIBLE/ LEADERSHIP

Develop a peer mentor system for new incoming international students (after hiring an advisor). Create monthly check-ins / focus groups to hear concerns for the current international student population	Fall 2025?	\$10k	IAI + SDCL
Create a comprehensive and sustainable International Student Recruitment Strategy founded on sources of international students over the last ten years			
Encourage colleges to engage international exchange faculty			
Bolster internationalization by formally participating in the ACE Internationalization lab			
Create low-cost study-away and/or study abroad/away options for students based on student interests identified in the student survey planned for fall 2023			
Create a center or school on international/ global issues			
Strengthen and consolidate research on interdisciplinary global studies network structures			
Retain the structure for OGE and IAI as of 2022 reorganization but codify the formal reporting structure			
Strategize for research and teaching partnerships, and student pipeline			
Ensure the richness of Montclair internationalization is featured prominently in our campus narrative			
Include global teaching, research, and outreach as valuable contributions for tenure and promotion			
Include international credentials as important criteria for faculty recruitment, and for appointments at senior administrative levels that impact research			
Identify Centers of Excellence at Montclair and how to support these financially beyond the initial founding			
Expand the use of a Digital Measures (or similar) database beyond the FBUS to capture a comprehensive (and searchable) database of international programs and collaborative agreements			
Identify a faculty member and one administrator in each college to be the specialist for international research and/or student needs			
Increase the number of COIL sections and institute a means to manage/track outcomes			
Conduct surveys to find out what Montclair students know about study abroad, what might increase their participation, obstacles they face, & the type of advisors/staff we should add in 2024, 2025, etc.			
Use data from surveys and interviews to develop a plan for an increase in IAI's study abroad staff.			

Clarify and encourage stays/visits to Montclair for foreign researchers or academics.			
Incentivize the hosting of international conferences at Montclair as well as the creation/publication of scholarly journals by University faculty that could help with Montclair as a research institution.			
Encourage faculty exchange programs with foreign institutions that tie the exchange to a related research activity alongside teaching or other endeavors.			
Identify faculty work that has had a discernible/measurable impact internationally and led to changes in the field or related field.			
Engage faculty, with help of OFE, to increase international content in courses			
Build on the revised sabbatical contract (2023/4) that funds global/local research and creative activity during sabbaticals			
Conduct bi-annual survey about research and creative activities among faculty, in collaboration with Associate Provost for Research			
Establish a policy to promote international initiatives, such as: short-term training internships abroad, for doctoral and postdoctoral students, in foreign research centers and academic institutions, stays abroad, for researchers or academics in foreign research centers and academic institutions and carrying out bilateral workshops or seminars in Montclair, with the counterpart research center or institute in the project.			
LONG TERM	TIMETABLE	FINANCIAL COMMITMENT	RESPONSIBLE/ LEADERSHIP
Work with University Libraries staff to build a clearinghouse (database) of Montclair-affiliated and published scholarship about global/international topics and issues			
Collaborate with Alumni Affairs to gauge interest in an Alumni study abroad program			
Encourage college deans to establish a more inclusive practice of faculty involvement in international programs by including junior faculty and utilizing expertise of faculty with significant international experience			
Appoint a global research grant officer (OSP)			
Create more international events and organizations for students to join			