***Scholars in Action: The 2011 UNI Symposium on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity***

**Breakout Session 5. The Global Scholar**

**Main Conclusions:**

**1.** There is no overall consensus as to the definition of global perspective. To measure it, it must be defined. To improve it, it must be measured.

**2.** Passion for global engagement among faculty must be supported by administrative leadership and peer acceptance of those global activities. The gap between global engagement and institutional rewards for engagement must be narrowed.

**3.** Global engagement is decentralized across campus. Centralized data capture is needed to understand the extent of engagement and allow the university to build upon the successes of those who are engaged and diffuse information among students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

**Session Notes:**

To start the discussion, the session organizer and facilitator defined the focal issues that pertain to global scholarship at UNI and suggested questions to guide the conversation. The ideas were first debated in smaller groups and then shared and discussed with all session participants. Group discussions focused on:

1. Defining global perspective
2. Drivers of global engagement for faculty, staff and students
3. Institutional role and involvement

***1. Defining global perspective***

The group agreed that global perspective has to be defined if we hope to measure it.

Some issues pertaining to defining global perspective include:

* recognizing who we are and what is important to us and coming to the realization that differences are okay and that they exist in important ways
* international students and businesses and faculty experience and departments are all there and the connections are important
* it’s not just us – we need to make sure that others around the world know what we are and that we are open to others

The group discussed approaches to measuring global perspective once it is defined. Measuring global perspective would include:

* finding existing data that could be analyzed
* information about existing partnerships and faculty exchanges
* information about the ways in which courses and faculty research contribute to global perspective

Another issue raised was the expansion of global perspective within our faculty. The group suggested a few ways to expand global perspective at UNI:

* awareness of the opportunities that exist
* share networks and expand areas of interest and share with faculty and students
* convince faculty that this is a necessity
* find out specifics of institutions we have connections with

The group identified a number of critical gaps that need to be addressed:

* As an institution we haven’t developed a definition of what a global perspective is; is it part of our central mission?
* What are we doing now? – this info needs to be gathered and analyzed
* Do we have the tools/resources or ways of developing these?

***2. Drivers of global engagement for faculty, staff and students***

The group offered a lot of ideas about what they thought are the drivers of global engagement. The group particularly felt the first two issues of the issues listed below are very critical:

* Administrative support; particularly the department head level support was seen as critical in engaging a faculty, though higher level support is needed for institutionalizing the practices.
* Peer acceptance of global activities: for legitimization as well as tenure/promotion decisions.
* Availability of information about opportunities and what it takes to be effectively engaged.
* Funding for travel and any extra money to make the assignment whole. The group felt that they do not get paid enough to pay from their pocket for such activities.
* Help in dealing with logistics about the differences between two nations/cultures.

Other issues raised were:

* Have a faculty workshop to connect those who have been abroad with those interested in such opportunities.
* Have an agreed upon definition of a “global scholar” at institutional level and common understanding of the internationalization of the campus.
* Have a more balanced approach to the “*global activities at UNI*” versus “*global activities abroad*”.
* Seek clarification of the role (and views) of the Board of Regents.
* Have a more clearly defined person/group responsible for enhancing global engagement; currently there are a number of people involved in this on ad hoc basis.

The group also debated the difference between “*culture immersion*” versus “*networking activates abroad*”.

***3. Institutional role and involvement***

The group first established that there is a formal international network of relationships at UNI represented by 70 partnership agreements with academic institutions in 40 countries. The issues raised were:

* the quantity of international agreements signed might not translate into the quality of global involvement and international collaboration
* a system of measures is necessary to capture the extent and depth of global activities at UNI

The group raised the following issues:

* Capturing global engagement activities

The group members felt that there is a disconnection between UNI as an institution and individual faculty /staff /students when it comes to recognizing global engagement. More is happening than is being captured and recognized, e.g. networking through IT (email, internet, Skype, etc.)

* In-service support of global engagement

UNI as an institution can provide services that support global engagement, including IT training and support, conferences on global engagement, show-casing examples of global engagement, building support /discussion groups or associations

* The support infrastructure should include tools for spreading information on global activities
* Inventory of the existing infrastructure will help to revise the use of the limited resources and to distribute them in a more efficient way

The group also briefly discussed what would be considered international experience or engagement (“cross-border” versus “intercultural”).

The group felt the critical gaps to address are:

* inventory of the existing support infrastructure and revision of the existing procedures
* availability and diffusion of informational on global activities at UNI
* forums for discussing global engagement
* a more active application of IT for the purpose of global engagement