Using an External Advisory Board to Support Internationalization

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Overview of Texas A&M

Texas A&M is among the 4 largest US universities

- Profile of current students
  - 68,600 students
    - 53,672 Undergrad (78%)
    - 14,931 Graduate and Professional (22%)

- Students primarily from Texas (94% of undergrads)

- International Student Profile
  - 5915 International students (8.6%)
    - 1215 Undergrad (2.2%)
    - 4700 Graduate and Professional (31%)
Overview of Texas A&M

Very active in global experiences for our students

• Last year 5539 students went abroad (3848 Open Doors data)

• #1 public university in USA for Study Abroad (Open Doors)

• Students visited 102 countries last year
  – 69 to Canada
  – 349 to Mexico
Overview of Texas A&M

Highly Intensive Research Agenda

- > $900 million (US) research expenditures
- Faculty doing research in over 120 countries around the world
- Global research footprint
- Over 45% of research publications include international co-author

- Latin America
- European Union
- Pacific Asia
- Middle East
- Africa
- Antarctica
International Advisory Board

25 years of Globalization at Texas A&M University
International Advisory Board

And 100th year anniversary of Texas A&M’s first research project with Mexico
The International Advisory Board:

- Created 25 years ago
- Comprised of ~40 members from business, government, higher education
- Some are alumni but majority are not
- Nominated by other board members, distinguished alumni, university administrators and deans
International Advisory Board

International Advisory Board members

• Serve in advisory capacity to university leadership
  • President and Provost
  • Chief International Officer
  • Deans
  • Department Heads

• Identify strategic opportunities for new partnerships

• Generate contacts within government, business and education sector of other countries

• Identify and create internships, student placements in their countries of expertise
International Advisory Board members

- Participate in the University's international activities
- Build an international network for the University
- Promote awareness of international programs and issues
- Help the University build strategic partnerships
- Proposed new curricular initiatives
  - International Affairs, International Studies, Certificate program in National Security
Enhance student experiences by

- Direct mentoring of students on building international portfolio
- Interact with students groups that have international focus
- Provide financial resources to select students
- Provide guest lectures to enhance curriculum
- Oversee student international awards
How to recruit members to an International Board

• Leadership must express need and purpose for the Board
• Agenda driven
• Keep ongoing communication
• Build a reporting structure to engage but keep control
• Realize that most ideas are not useful and they have little understanding of higher education
• Realize understand curriculum but may have great ideas
International Advisory Board

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• Members want to be useful
• Must have mission for them
International Advisory Board

How to begin building a Board

• Begin with international alumni or international organizations in your community
• Consular corp, expat community, local corporations
• Multinationals that recruit your students or sponsor research
• Use your own faculty as well

But begin locally

• Use this network to build your first board then use their contacts to expand beyond university and local membership
• Majority of our board were never Texas A&M students
Soltis Center for Education & Research in Costa Rica

Gifted by Wanda & Bill Soltis’55 & Family

- Opened in 2009
- Over 2000 students
- Hundreds of faculty research trips
Global Partnerships - Mexico

2015 Hacienda Santa Clara
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

Built by Board member Pablo Marvin