Facilitating Global Computing Education Through Study Abroad and Collaborative Projects

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Abstract
This panel presents the results of the ITiCSE 2005 working group on facilitating student learning through study abroad and international projects. It discusses ways of adding international experiences to student learning, barriers to international learning, and how to do more. Dialogue with the attendees will broaden the discussion.

Keywords: collaborative projects, study abroad, international experiences

1 Introduction
Computing, like all other science and technology subjects, is inherently international. Hardware and software R & D in universities and multinational corporations involves international collaboration between groups of scientists located round the world. The application of computing is equally international. Information Technology is the basic building block for corporate systems everywhere. Geosourcing, the outsourcing of business processes and operations around the globe, blurs the boundaries of enterprise IT systems.

Students (and faculty) need to be prepared to operate in this global environment. For students, this involves both career preparation and broader personal enrichment. Organizations need employees who will maintain and enhance their competitiveness on a global, rather than purely local, market. Governments strive to achieve a workforce that can function at the cutting edge of a knowledge economy.

2 Discussion
This panel has a two-fold purpose. First, it presents some of the results of the deliberations of the ITiCSE 2005 working group on facilitating student learning through study abroad and international projects. The following sections briefly identify some of the topics that came out of the working group deliberations and that the panellists will discuss. Second, it opens the dialogue to all the attendees at the panel session, to get feedback and further input on how all of us can improve the international experiences for all our computing students.

2.1 Ways of adding an international experience to student learning
Adding an international dimension to student learning offers students (and often faculty) the opportunity to understand how individuals in another country practice a particular profession, in this case the research, design, development and application of computing theories and artefacts. The international dimension also allows students and faculty to strengthen language skills and cultural understandings of countries beyond their own. There are three main ways in which an international dimension can be added to student learning: student and teacher exchanges, joint projects involving real or virtual collaboration, and study abroad. The panellists will share their experiences in these approaches, as well as discuss ways in which they can be augmented and improved.

2.2 Barriers to international learning
Experience has shown that there are several barriers to international learning for students, which can be categorized in the following ways:

• Personal
• Financial
• Institutional
• Cultural.
The panellists will discuss these various barriers and help show some ways in which they can be overcome.

2.3 Doing more

The ITiCSE working group participants recognize that there are other things that can be done to expand international opportunities for computing students. The panellists will discuss, and will seek feedback from the attendees, on how we can, for example, leverage the experiences of international students that attend our home institutions. Other leveraging opportunities from faculty experiences and our own students that go abroad will also be explored.

3 Panellists

The following are members of the panel:

- Ursula Fuller, University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom
- Annegret Goold, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia
- Cary Laxer, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute, Indiana, United States
- Alison Young, Unitec New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand

The panellists represent a diverse set of teaching institutions and geographic locations. All firmly believe in the value of international experiences for computing students.