

IIUM at 25

The Path Travelled and The Way Forward

Edited by
Syed Arabi Idid



IIUM Press

IUM at 25: the Path Travelled and the Way Forward

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The IIUM: Internationalizing Higher Education

*Abdul Rashid Moten**

Introduction

The hallmark of the new millennium is the ever-increasing interdependence of people of various cultures. People, capital, ideologies, media images, and cultural impulses travel around the world more rapidly and efficiently than ever before.¹ Responding to the needs of global man, higher education policies have become increasingly internationalized.² Policy-makers and educators stress internationalization as a principal goal for higher education.³ This required them to bring about changes in the research agenda, alter the curricula, establish linkages with other centres of learning, and make the composition of professional staff and student bodies more pluralistic. The policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions to cope with the global academic environment is generally referred to as internationalization.⁴

The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), from its very inception, looked upon education from a global community perspective. On June 12, 1982, Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, informed his audience that:

An International Islamic University will be sited in Malaysia to cater for Muslims as well as non-Muslims ... I hope that this University will benefit Muslims, including those who constitute minorities in countries without or with limited Islamic educational facilities.⁵

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1 See Appudurai, A., *Modernity at Large Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (University Of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1996).

2 Altbach, P.G. and Knight, J., "The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities," *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 11, No. 3-4 (2007), 290-305.

3 Yang, R. "University Internationalization: Its Meanings, Rationales and Implications", *International Education*, Vol.13, No. 1 (2002), 81-96.

4 Altbach, P.G. & Knight, J., "The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities," 1.

5 Mahathir Mohamad, "Islam and International Politics" in *Winds of Change: The Mahathir Impact on Malaysia's Foreign Policy*, Murugesu Pathmanathan and David Lazarus eds. (Kuala Lumpur: Eastview Productions, 1984), 126.

It was the only public university in Malaysia, established on May 20, 1983, under the Companies Act 1965, which was authorized to accept foreign students into its undergraduate programmes. Consequently, the IIUM felt the pressure of internationalization much earlier than other universities in the country. The Constitution of the University is emphatic. Article 3 (vii) states: "The University shall be international and Islamic in character."⁶

This chapter attempts to analyze the institutions and practices related to the international dimension of higher education at the IIUM and the success achieved thus far. It attempts to answer the following questions: What activities are pursued by the IIUM to create an environment that nurtures promising individuals to compete globally? What approach is adopted by the IIUM to respond to the needs of students, faculty and their communities so that each has the ability to prosper in the interconnected milieu of the 21st century? Do the leaders of the IIUM profess a common body of thought, wisdom or insights with respect to higher education and internationalization? What achievements have been made so far towards achieving the mission of internationalization? The answers to these questions are provided under five subheadings: the leadership, the vision and mission, the policies and offices, the faculty members, and the students. To address the above questions, a study was conducted, in which data were obtained from interviews, participant observations, and published and unpublished documents collected from various offices at the IIUM. This paper discusses the results of this study.

The Leadership Dimension

It is generally agreed upon by scholars that the success of internationalization depends first and foremost upon the highest levels of university leadership. The impetus for internationalization at the IIUM comes mainly from the highest level of the university administration. Over the last twenty-five years, the administration, led by the Rector and his deputies, has been driving the process of internationalization. The University authorities understand that the internationalization of the campus and community is both an opportunity and a challenge, and feel an urgency to deal with it.

Those in charge of programmes, curricula, and initiatives have looked for solutions to the challenges of globalization. The first Rector of the University, Professor Dr. Muhammad Abdul Rauf (1983-1988), a product of Al-Azhar and Cambridge, came with a notion of globalizing education for the welfare of the *ummah* and humanity at large. Even though he did not articulate it in writings, "Internationalization has always been embedded in

6 International Islamic University Malaysia, *Memorandum and Articles of Association* (As of 12th December 2002) (n.p., n.d.), 2.

his mind.”⁷ The second Rector, Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman (1988-1998), a graduate of Cairo University and the University of Pennsylvania, always reminded the members of the Senate that the mission of the University is to prepare students to face the challenges of the twenty-first century. It was during his tenure that the university’s vision and mission were clearly laid out. The third Rector, Professor Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan (1999-2007), a product of Universiti Malaya and Columbia University, emphasized the internationalization aspect seriously, guided the formulation of the university’s vision and mission and highlighted internationalization as one of the major missions of the university. His emphasis was to develop the university from all possible angles to achieve an enhanced international presence. The fourth Rector, Professor Dr. Syed Arabi Idid (2007 - present), who graduated from the Universiti Malaya and the University of Wisconsin, believes that the IIUM has firmly established itself as one of the preferred institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. He would like to see the university “among the top-ranked universities in the world.” To him, “... we are on the right track. We have put our academic programmes in place and are constantly revising the curricula and evaluating those programmes offered.”⁸ Under his leadership the university has shifted its focus from a teaching-based to a research-based university. According to him, “This drives our lecturers to be more competitive, as they must now size themselves up with other researchers.”⁹

The university considers institutionalization as central to its mission and not a marginal endeavour. The impression gained through friendly exchanges with colleagues and those in authority is that internationalization helps achieve international academic standards for teaching and research. It is assumed that by enhancing the international dimension of teaching and research, there is value added to the quality of the higher education system. Those in charge of programmes, curricula, and initiatives are looking for solutions to the challenges of globalization and to enhance the international presence of the university. It must be noted that the IIUM operates under the direction of a Board of Governors, with representatives from the eight sponsoring governments (Bangladesh, Egypt, Libya, Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey) and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

The authorities adopted several stances to promote and implement programmes aimed at internationalization. These include: the curriculum, student/faculty exchange, technical assistance, and international students. They emphasize the development of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values in students, faculty, and staff. They stress the creation of a culture or climate that values and supports international/intercultural perspectives

7 Interview with Professor Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan, June 30, 2008.

8 *New Straits Times*, Tuesday, May 20, 2008.

9 *Ibid.*

and initiatives. The emphasis is upon creating a culture or climate to support a particular set of principles and goals. Finally, they lay emphasis on the integration or infusion of the international/intercultural dimension into teaching, research, and service through a wide range of activities, policies, and procedures.

The Vision and Mission

Being committed to internationalization, among other principles, the university authorities strove hard to define the university's direction by formulating vision and mission statements. Through a short, succinct, and inspiring statement, the university informs the public of what it intends to become and achieve at some point in the future. The broad, all-inclusive and forward thinking vision statement of the university is summarized in Article 4 of the Constitution of the IIUM as follows:

Inspired by the worldview of *Tawhīd* and the Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge as well as its concept of holistic education, the University aims at becoming a *leading international centre of educational excellence* which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the Muslim *ummah* in all branches of knowledge (emphasis added).¹⁰

To achieve the above vision, the authorities formulated a seven-point mission statement. While all the statements are international in character, points five and six make pointed reference to internationalization, and they read as follows:

- v) to exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic world-view and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.
- vi) to enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilization dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.¹¹

In an attempt to motivate students, faculty, and staff, and to give them a sense of priority, the third Rector, Professor Kamal Hassan, summarized the wordy seven-point statement into the four salient missions of *Integration, Islamization, Internationalization, and Comprehensive Excellence (IIICE)*.¹² Not to be missed in the mission statement is the emphasis not merely on excellence in the academic sense, but on the development of balanced and integrated personalities ready to face the challenges of the 21st century. The Postgraduate Programmes brochure of the university proclaims: "There is

¹⁰ International Islamic University Malaysia, *Memorandum and Articles of Association*, Part I(5), 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 3-5.

¹² *Ibid.*, 5.

absolutely no other Islamic University in the world like the International Islamic University Malaysia.”¹³

The Strategic Planning Report and the Offices for Internationalization

In addition to vision and mission, internationalization requires the university authorities to develop a policy or strategic plan for internationalization and to establish an institutional mechanism to implement those policies. The IIUM had recognized the significance of strategic planning when it adopted its vision and mission statements in 1995. The university took it seriously in 1999, and succeeded in producing its Strategic Planning Report 2001-2010. It provides a framework for the future direction and development of the university in realizing its mission of IIICE.

The Strategic Report stated the goal of the university “To be the leading model of an International Islamic University based on the principles of integration of knowledge and comprehensive excellence for the progress of Malaysia and the Muslim *ummah*.”¹⁴ The Report identified a set of measurable targets which include, inter alia, that 20 percent of the student population is to comprise international students and that 25 percent of the academic staff is to be made up of international personnel.¹⁵ One of the objectives of having international staff and students on campus is “to expose the local students and staff to other cultures of the world and vice versa.”¹⁶ The Report emphasized that the university students “should possess a global outlook, be multi-skilled, and capable of being non-partisan in intellectual discourse.”¹⁷

The Report, it must be noted, is comprehensive—detailing the eight core components for the strategic planning of the university—including academic programmes, students, postgraduate programmes, research and consultancy, infrastructure and facilities, human resources, finance, and smart partnership/networking between the university and governmental bodies, industry and other special interest groups. It meaningfully chose the sunflower on a single-tone background colour on the cover (see Picture 3.1). The explanation given is that the sunflower is prominent for its perfect structure that symbolizes the university’s goal of perfection in its planning and strategies; the petals reflect the various faculties and departments supporting the vision and mission of the university, and the background

13 Garden of Knowledge and Virtue, *Postgraduate Programmes* (Kuala Lumpur: Centre for Postgraduate Studies, 2007), 2.

14 Planning Unit, Office of the Deputy Rector (Planning and Development), *Strategic Planning Report, 2001-2010* (Kuala Lumpur: Office of the Deputy Rector, 2001), 3.

15 Ibid., 10.

16 Ibid., 16.

17 Ibid., 20.

represents “a common vision shared by all the members of the University community.”¹⁸

The university has established several institutions to implement the recommendations of the Report. Internationalization, in the beginning, was assigned to the Office of the Deputy Rector (Academic and International Affairs), which was later on transferred to the newly created Office of the Deputy Rector (Internationalization and Innovation). This office has a special wing known as International Cooperation and Exchange (ICE).

Picture 3.1: The cover design of the Strategic Planning Report 2001-2010



The ICE is directly responsible for ensuring that all academic degrees and academic staff at the levels of teaching, research, consultancy, publications, and participation in international forums and seminars, and the infrastructure and facilities of the University are of “international standard”.¹⁹ As of June 2008, the university had signed a total of 79 “Memoranda of Understanding” (MOU) with universities, research institutes, and other agencies in 35 countries including Australia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Emanating from this collaborative network of linkages is the student exchange programme,

¹⁸ Ibid., inside cover page.

¹⁹ “Internationalization Agenda in the International Islamic University Malaysia,” supplied by Shamsul Azhar, the Director, International Cooperation and Exchange, IIUM.

whereby several IIUM students went abroad for studies on scholarships from the host institutions. Five students received scholarships to study at the University of South Australia while a student exchange programme is in progress with Doshisha University, Japan. Exeter University, U.K., and the School of Oriental and African Studies, the University of London, have expressed interest in collaborating with the university in the areas of Islamic Banking and Finance, and Islamic Law. The unit also makes effective use of international educational partnerships to recruit overseas students. One successful tactic in this regard is to promote the IIUM as an institution where one can get the best of the West and the best of Islam. This is stated explicitly in the mission statement of the university: "To promote the concept of the Islamization of human knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, the dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University."²⁰ The unit is engaged in aggressive marketing to build the image of the university as the centre of academic excellence and to attract qualified staff and students to the university.

There exists a special unit, the International Students Division (ISD) to cater for the needs of the international student community. The ISD divides its functions into several units: Students' Activities and Services, Immigration, and International promotion. The members of staff help students in matters concerning accommodation, finance, as well as academic and personal problems.

Of the myriad services provided by the ISD, two deserve special mention. One is the Visiting Students' Programme, which provides short-term learning packages for foreign institutions or interested individuals. During 2004 to 2007, the university received a total of 153 students to pursue short-term programmes. Of these, 96 came from the U.S. for intensive Arabic or Islamic Studies courses, 36 from Mexico for courses in Islamic philosophy, while the rest came from Algeria, Germany, France, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Bosnia, and Sudan for courses in Engineering, Economics, and Islamic Finance.²¹ The second is the Student Exchange Programme, aimed at exposing students to different cultures and learning environments overseas. The Exchange students are to act as ambassadors of the IIUM to promote its Mission and Vision. Between 2004 and 2007, the university had sent 42 students to pursue their studies. Ten were sent to the U.A.E., ten to Jordan, eight to Japan, three to Australia, and eleven to Indonesia. In return, the university received four students, two each from Australia and the U.A.E.²²

Lastly, it is necessary to take note of the Student Development Division (S-Dev), which was established on August 22, 2003. This division provides

20 International Islamic University Malaysia, *Memorandum and Articles of Association*, Part I(5), 4.

21 Information supplied by International Students Division, IIUM, June 18, 2008.

22 *Ibid.*

counselling and guidance to students in their extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, and organizes informal training programmes to cultivate leadership qualities, Islamic personality, and intercultural understanding and friendship. The Speech & Interpersonal Communication Enhancement Department under S-Dev deserves special mention. This unit provides technical and professional advice to students pertaining to debating and public speaking activities in three languages: English, Arabic, and Bahasa Melayu or the Malay language. This unit is a member of the Australasian Intersivity Debating Association (AIDA), the World Universities Debating Council (WUDC), and the Asian Debating Council (ADC).

The IIUM debaters have been taking part in debating championships all over the world. They emerged champions in the world debating championship in 2008. They also won the best speaker and championship trophies in World Universities Debating Championship (English as a second language category) in 2006. The Arabic debating team emerged champions and 1st runners-up in The Asean Arabic Debate Championship 2007.²³ Besides debate and mooted activities, IIUM students also take part in international level programmes in the form of tournaments, competitions, educational visits, and humanitarian missions. In May 2006, for instance, students went on educational trips to the Arabian Peninsula and to Perth, Australia. They also took part in Humanitarian Work in Aceh from 26th July to 2nd August 2006. In April 2006, another group of 28 students participated in a humanitarian mission to Kampong Champ and Kandal in Cambodia.²⁴

Faculty Members

The champions of internationalization in the University are not simply the authorities led by the Rector and his deputies but also the faculty members with a tendency to compare their performance with their colleagues in universities abroad. The university began with 34 academic staff in 1983 which gradually increased, as of April 2008, to 1664 in 14 faculties.²⁵ Of the 1664 academic staff, 80.82 percent are Malaysians and the rest are internationals, representing 42 countries. Of the total strength, 548 are teaching at the pre-university academic level. Of the remaining 1,116 staff, 655 hold Ph.D. degrees, of whom 62.75 percent are Malaysians and 37.25 percent are international. The university policy is to hire only Ph.D. holders as academic staff. Some 7 percent of Ph.D. holders are professors, 10 percent are associate professors and 22 percent are holding the position of assistant professors (see Chart 3.1). The Malaysians who do not hold Ph.D. degrees

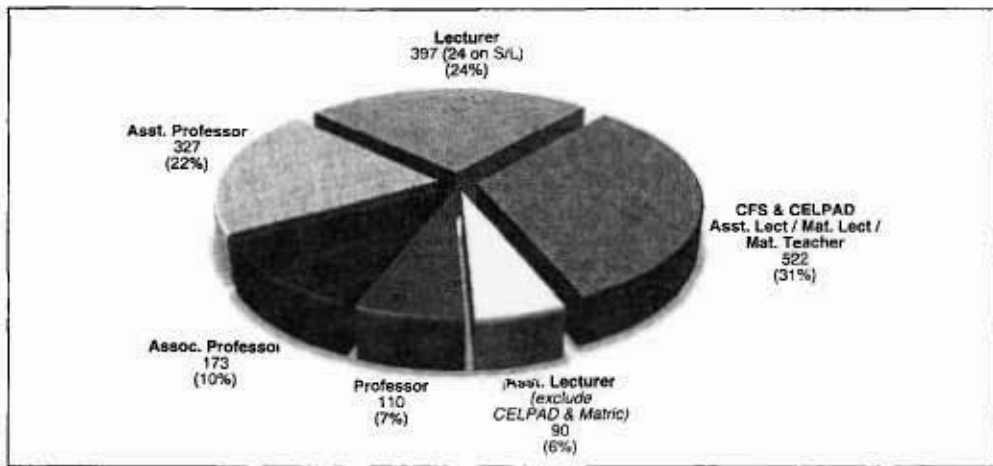
23 Information supplied by the Director, S-Dev, June 23, 2008.

24 See Student Development Division, "Annual Report 2006," [online] available from http://www.iiu.edu.my/cac/?page_id=135, accessed June 27, 2008.

25 Data supplied by the Management Services Decision, IIUM, June 23, 2008.

are sent for higher studies immediately after they are recruited as assistant lecturers and lecturers. In 2007, the university approved paid study leave for 106 staff to pursue higher studies. From 1989 to April 2008, a total of 466 Malaysians with higher degrees have resumed duty.²⁶

Chart 3.1: IIUM Teaching and Academic Staff According to Post as of April 2008



Source: Data supplied by the Management Services Division, IIUM

The IIUM faculty is made up of a distinguished group of scholars, whose doctorates or other professional degrees are from leading universities around the globe. They contribute to and edit professional and scholarly journals, author texts, undertake research, participate in international seminars and conferences, and are frequently consulted by corporate and other agencies. The imperative to learn from other academies and outstanding individuals is consequently high on their minds. While they listen to eminent experts and Nobel laureates invited by the university to speak at seminars and forums or to conduct workshops they, in turn, visit leading research institutes and academies to familiarize and update themselves on the role of scientific academies in the development of nations as an agent of change and growth. The academics are motivated by the opportunities available for sabbaticals, conference attendance, and conference organizations. Within every part of the IIUM, there is growing awareness of the international context of excellence.

The IIUM has many scholars with experience in the design and delivery of internationally oriented programmes, including the development of materials and programme delivery. Demands upon these individuals' time are enormous. Faculties are beginning to address the issue by pulling together advisory committees to focus on international issues and opportunities. Most

26 Ibid.

faculties have been extremely active on the international front exchanging students and faculty, and carrying out international projects and joint research as well as delivery programmes overseas. The Kulliyah (Faculty) of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences has been offering a "Diploma in Islamic Studies" in Singapore. The programme is designed and delivered by the IIUM faculty. Likewise, the Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences has been offering a Diploma in Islamic Banking and Finance in Singapore. They have also advised Mindanao State University in the Philippines on Islamic Accounting courses. The Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences has also been organizing international conferences in accounting in collaboration with Cardiff University, UK, and Trisakti University, Jakarta. All other kulliyahs have similar programmes in collaboration with universities and institutions overseas. The IIUM staff also takes part in various international competitions and have won many medals for their research activities. They won 2 Gold, 7 Silver, 1 Bronze in the 34th International Exhibition of Invention, New Techniques and Products in Geneva, Switzerland in 2006, and 5 gold medals in the IENA 20: Nuremberg held on November 4, 2006.

The teaching and research activities of the faculty have helped the IIUM achieve the status of a leading international academic and research institution imbued with Islamic values. There are many universities around the world that design their academic programmes taking the IIUM as a model. In some cases, these universities, for example, the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, requests senior IIUM faculty to help design their programme. However, there are many cases where scholars, having worked for several years at the IIUM, returned home and either occupied top positions in other universities or established their own universities following the IIUM model. Three of these universities deserve brief mention: the Islamic University Chittagong (IUC); the Asian University of Bangladesh (AUB), and the Riphah International University, Islamabad (RIU).

The Islamic University Chittagong started functioning in 1995 with three faculties, e.g. the Faculty of *Shari'ah* & Islamic Studies, Faculty of Modern Sciences, and Faculty of Administrative Sciences. It is one of the largest private universities, with 287 teachers and around 7,500 students from home and abroad. Professor Dr. Abu Bakr Rafique is the Pro Vice-Chancellor of this University. He was an Associate Professor in the Department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage, IIUM, from 1990-1996.²⁷ The Islamic University Chittagong has signed MOUs with several universities, including the IIUM. "The agreement includes credit transfer facilities and teacher exchange programmes." The University's mission is to "follow a policy of continued Islamization of academic curricula" and to inculcate the Islamic values about life, nature, and the universe with a view to channelizing the

²⁷ Data procured by Dr. M. Yousuf Ali through personal communication with Professor Abu Bakr Rafique.

minds of the future generation towards better ways of thinking and living."²⁸ The university has several administrative divisions, one of which is called the "Foreign Affairs Division." The third Rector of the IIUM, Professor Mohd Kamal Hassan, is one of the trust members of the IUC.

The Asian University of Bangladesh (AUB) was established on January 4, 1996 as a private university in Bangladesh. It comprises five schools of business, science and engineering, social sciences, arts, and education and training. The President of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh is the Chancellor, and Professor Dr. Abulhasan M. Sadeq is the Vice Chancellor of the AUB. Professor Sadeq was the Founder Dean of the Research Centre and Professor of the Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia. The academic curriculum of the AUB was developed initially during his stay at the IIUM, and later with the help of experts from reputed international universities abroad. The AUB follows the full credit hour semester system as in the IIUM. The medium of instruction is English. The AUB has linkages with a number of overseas universities and is a full member of APICS, an international accreditation body based in Switzerland. The AUB's mission is "to disseminate knowledge in an ethico-human approach reflecting the identity of our nation with its heritage, values and principles."²⁹

Riphah International University, established on February 27, 2002, is located in Islamabad, Pakistan. Its faculties of Health and Medical Sciences, Engineering and Applied Sciences, Computing and Information Technology, Management Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities are designed to produce a new generation of professionals needed for the country and for the *ummah*. Professor Dr. Anis Ahmad, who served as the second Dean of the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, is the Vice Chancellor of RIU. Riphah International University is committed to a value-based integrated educational philosophy. The university's mission is to produce a new generation of professionals, researchers and leaders "with concern for the welfare of humanity." Its mission statement reads: "Establishment of State-of-the-Art Educational Institutions with a focus on Inculcating Islamic Ethical Values." According to the Vice Chancellor, "Our academic programmes meet international standard and are accredited by professional bodies of the country."³⁰

28 International Islamic University Chittagong, *Diary 2005* (Chittagong: IIUC, n.d.), 5.

29 Asian University of Bangladesh, <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/8161/about.html>, accessed June 9, 2008.

30 Vice Chancellor's Message" [online] available from http://www.riphah.edu.pk/vice_message.php, accessed June 3, 2008.

The Students

From its very inception, the university provided an international environment and international experience for all its students. This was done by creating innovative on-campus courses, programmes, and events of learning that allowed both international and local students to interact with one another and to think outside their regional or national “boxes.” In 2008, there were approximately 18,000 undergraduates, of whom 10.74 percent were international from 125 countries—short of the 20 percent targeted in the Strategic Planning Report. There were almost 5,000 postgraduate students, including international students, who constituted 32.57 percent of the total.³¹ As shown in Table 3.1, the IIUM graduated the first batch of 153 students, of whom 17 were international, in October 1987. The number of graduates increased to 4,116 in August 2008. Of this figure, 464 were international. The international students comprise roughly eleven percent of the total student population. About 30 percent of the total postgraduate students who graduated in 2008 from the IIUM were international.

The university thus has a very broad mix of students of varied cultural backgrounds. The student population is predominantly Muslim. However, there are 169 Buddhists, 147 Hindus, 82 Christians and 26 Sikhs. These IIUM students are enrolled in various courses and degree programmes. The broad spectrum of qualifications and modes of study allow the university to offer something to everyone in the world community, Muslims and non-Muslims. Such a wide mix of people and backgrounds contributes to the learning process, bringing students together in a common quest for knowledge and skills. They are expected to be skilled and experienced in cross-cultural communications. They find it beneficial to have at least a speaking knowledge of at least one other language in addition to their mother tongue. They are exposed to English, Arabic, and Bahasa Melayu. This is due to the fact that the medium of instruction is English, with Arabic used in courses related to the study of Islamic sciences. In addition, elementary Malay is compulsory for international students.

Table 3.1: Number of IIUM Graduates from 1987 to 2008 by nationality

YEAR OF CONVOCATION	UNDERGRADUATE			POSTGRADUATE			TOTAL
	M'SIAN	INT'L	TOTAL	M'SIAN	INT'L	TOTAL	
10 th October 1987	107	17	124	29	0	29	153
16 th July 1988	102	24	126	158	0	158	284
29 th July 1989	163	17	180	205	0	205	385
28 th July 1990	181	19	200	297	3	301	501

31 Data supplied by Admissions and Records Division, IIUM, June 24, 2008.

YEAR OF CONVOCATION	UNDERGRADUATE			POSTGRADUATE			TOTAL
	M'SIAN	INT'L	TOTAL	M'SIAN	INT'L	TOTAL	
20 th July 1991	309	54	363	518	2	520	883
1 st August 1992	494	36	530	652	23	675	1,205
22 nd August 1993	497	46	543	566	28	594	1,137
21 st April 1994	684	69	753	673	42	715	1,468
8 th August 1995	922	73	995	640	40	680	1,675
21 st January 1996	409	29	438	3	13	16	454
18 th August 1996	798	77	875	543	39	582	1,457
16 th March 1997	461	61	522	27	34	61	583
24 th November 1997	694	80	774	370	40	410	1,184
28 th November 1998	1,248	199	1,447	442	115	557	2,004
14 th November 1999	1,255	196	1,451	540	107	647	2,098
9 th and 10 th October 2000	1,422	188	1,610	519	102	621	2,231
22 nd and 23 rd September 2001	1,426	259	1,685	487	100	587	2,272
29 th and 30 th October 2002	1,702	205	1,907	256	70	326	2,233
23 rd to 25 th August 2003	2,014	222	2,236	354	124	478	2,714
22 nd to 24 th August 2004	2,280	169	2,449	495	161	656	3,105
20 th to 22 nd August 2005	2,285	171	2,456	515	158	673	3,129
26 th to 28 th August 2006	2,927	234	3,161	458	198	656	3,817
25 th to 27 th August 2007	2,997	243	3,240	438	182	620	3,860
23 rd to 25 th August 2008	3,169	249	3,418	483	215	698	4,116
TOTAL	28,546	2,937	31,483	9,668	1,797	11,465	42,948

Source: International Islamic University Malaysia, 24th IIUM Convocation (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM, 2008), 177

The university supports these students through over 70 internationally oriented clubs and organizations. The majority of these organizations are designed to promote cultural interaction among all IIUM students and the Malaysian community. The university also hosts an annual "International Cultural Week" that brings students, faculty, and Malaysian businesses and government leaders together in a "melting pot" of cultural activity. The Ummatic week, organized on a yearly basis since 1997, enhances understanding and closer relationships among the citizens of the world. During the week-long programme, students and faculty members from the participating countries offer a variety of food, fashion, accessories, and traditional dances to the visitors. Five continents are on display every year.

Additionally, each department has its students' forum and each kulliyah has its students' association, which links all the departmental forums. These forums and associations organize their own functions, assist departments in organizing national and international seminars, educational trips, debates, and sports. They organize programmes that promote cross-cultural awareness and integration between Malaysian and international students. One example of such programmes was a mini concert, "Language as a Reflection of Culture," staged by students of the Centre for Languages and Pre-University Academic Development in February 2008. Over 50 international students took part in this concert, reciting poems and singing Malay patriotic songs in front of a crowd in the Cultural Activities Centre of the IIUM. The concert, held annually, gives the international students an opportunity to practise their Malay and strengthen brotherhood among the students despite their different races and cultures.

Further Internationalization

The IIUM's international strategy is evolving and being implemented at a number of different levels. The internal and external forces giving shape to the IIUM's international strategy, the directions in which the university is moving, and the specific action being taken to benefit from the strategies adopted are all important indicators of the vitality of the internationalisation mission of the IIUM. Some of these strategies, however, need further refinement and revisiting.

Effective delivery of internationally oriented programmes depends on faculty members and non-academic staff in terms of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. While research is generally recognized as being international in nature, teaching and administration have sometimes been internally and domestically oriented. Given the competitive and multi-variant nature of the new international environment in which the university must operate, there is a need to train further and utilize the rich pool of human resources at the IIUM

so that they can successfully grapple with the forces of internationalization and globalization.

Internationalization also requires the IIUM to nurture its reputation for excellence, in part, by welcoming international students and supporting them in the pursuit of their scholarly and professional objectives. It is essential that barriers to participation be removed and that a proactive stance be adopted to increase the participation rate of international students. Since the Asian financial crisis of 1997/1998, there has been a steady decline in enrolment of international students into the various programmes of the university. Any significant decline in international student applications/admissions, coupled with a decline in available financial support for outstanding overseas students could have a negative impact on the advances which have been made in the IIUM's international reputation for comprehensive excellence.

Some universities in the West have developed data collection procedures for recognizing and tracking international visiting researchers and post-doctoral fellows. These scholars represent a significant potential benefit to the university and to Malaysia because they can facilitate scholarly cooperation, faculty and student exchanges, and carry the IIUM's reputation and influence with them as they work in other societies. For quite a few years, the IIUM thrived as an intellectual hub, with some of the best brains and saw its student numbers soar. This did not last long, however, as the economic downturn gripped the world, forcing the university to review its administration and financial management. To attract top quality academicians to come to the IIUM and stay, as suggested in the Strategic Planning Report, "the University must be able to offer an attractive remuneration and benefit package. The current package that is based on the government remuneration system has severe limitations to fulfil future requirements." It would probably be useful for the IIUM to develop a simple brochure explaining the vision and mission of the university and the facilities available for use in responding to requests for information from international scholars who may have some interest in coming to the IIUM as post-doctoral fellows or as visiting scholars.

Finally, the Research Management Centre of IIUM is trying to put together a preliminary database inventory of internationally based awards and funding sources. This should be available online. There is a need for a more focused approach to ensure that qualified IIUM candidates are nominated for international recognition.

Conclusion

The IIUM has a strong, experienced, and capable base of expertise upon which to build. There is considerable order and systematization within various organizations, which has enhanced the IIUM's ability to make major

advances in internationalization. Internationalization is one of the major missions of the University and permeates most aspects of the institutional life. IIUM strategies, policy guidelines, and supporting procedures and institutions should work together to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness with which the university works on international initiatives. Finally there is a compelling need to develop further incentives and supporting organizational structures to facilitate participation in international initiatives.