Indiana State University

# Global Competency

Teaching Intercultural Communication and Creativity in Universities to Prepare Graduates For the Global Workforce

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**Abstract**

Universities are leaving students vastly unprepared to succeed in the globalized workforce upon graduation, due to a lack of global competency. This article examines the use of intercultural communication and creativity as necessary resources for students to gain global competency. First, global competency is defined. Next, the need for intercultural communication and how this need can be met by universities is discussed in depth. Lastly, the same is done for creativity in the context of the real-world and education. Surveys and statics of employers, professors, and students are applied to this examination. Additionally, methods to integrate intercultural communication and creativity are discussed as well. Major findings reveal that, although challenging, implementing intercultural communication and creativity in universities is desirable and necessary for global competency and student preparedness.

**Introduction**

Over the course of the last several years, the workforce has become increasingly globalized, yet, upon graduation American students are vastly unprepared to compete and thrive in this new work environment. Students at the collegiate level lack the proper skill sets associated with intercultural communication and creativity needed to prosper in a globalized world. This issue came to my attention when I found myself in an internship abroad with no knowledge as to how to work effectively with my new coworkers at a company called Post Bellum. I did, however, have an accompanying class at Anglo-American University, in which Jeff Medeiros began to help me lay the foundation needed to develop my skills in the context of intercultural communication and creativity. However, the fact that throughout my years in

university, the only exposure to intercultural communication and creativity I received was the result of me actively pushing myself to study abroad was not lost on me.

Medeiros required that I read Thomas L. Friedman's *The World Is Flat*, which became\the basis of my intellectual understanding on the what, the why, and the how of the pressing issue of student unpreparedness.  Friedman cites two important dates as profoundly shaping our lives–11/9 and 9/11 (Friedman 290).  November 9th, 1989 marked the fall of the Berlin Wall, which, as Friedman states, "unlocked half the planet and made the citizens there our potential partners and competitors" (290). Suddenly the world became an open market for collaborations between people from vastly different cultures and American students found themselves beside foreigners more than any generation before them had. On the contrary, the United States drew back after the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, becoming closed off to the outside world in a sense (291).  However, these attacks did not make the workforce any less globalized.

The 9/11 attacks certainly did not slow down the rapidly globalizing world, but they did reveal widespread global incompetency across the country. Before 9/11 Americans believed that they were an untouchable superpower (Hunter 24). Therefore, it does not come to a surprise that that when two planes crashed into the World Trade Center the nation was shocked and at a loss as to how to rationalize what they had never expected to happen. This myopic world view made Americans intellectually unprepared to deal with the tragedy (25). However, had Americans understood Islamic Extremists to any degree, their minds would have been able to rationalize the event after the initial shock. This phenomenon of global incompetency highlights the fact that our students are in danger of being unable to work and compete in the globalized world.

Developing a more broad and profound understanding of others on an individual level as well as a cultural and national level will allow students to learn how to work effectively with people of different customs, values, and languages. Yet, universities often brush global competence under the rug, ignoring the importance of intercultural communication and creativity. In a driven society the result of learning is productivity, thus requiring capability, which in turn requires communication and creativity. These skill sets are necessary in all disciplines. Successful collaboration is unattainable without excellent communication. Additionally, a combination of the arts with both soft and hard sciences creates revolutionary technologies such as the iPod or Google, thus making creativity an integral part of a successful individual, business, and society (Friedman "Flat").

Although it is well-known that college students remain globally incompetent upon graduation, a solution has yet to be found and successfully implemented, thus I propose to reveal how intercultural communication and creativity in education can produce globally competent and successful students. First, for the purposes of this paper "global competence" must be detailed and defined. I will draw upon my research to generate what best defines the term, as there is no agreed upon definition at this point in time.

Next, I will focus on the tools I believe generate student success on a global playing field –communication and creativity. Why is being able to communicate with people from other backgrounds and cultures crucial to success in business? What role does creativity play in the development of global competence and how does it benefit the workplace? I will define "intercultural communication" and "creativity" in order to establish concrete terms. This is necessary as each individual has their own preconceptions about what intercultural communication and creativity entail. Naturally, an attempt to synthesize each of these

preconceptions into a coherent and favored definition is heavy-handed, but necessary for the nature of this paper. I will draw upon surveys conducted specifically to gain insight as to what employers are looking for in the hiring process. Both statistics and open-ended questions will be used from said surveys.

Lastly, I will discuss how universities can better prepare students for collaboration and innovative problem solving. This proves to be tricky, as creativity is often viewed as a natural born gift, lower in importance when compared to science and mathematics, and a worthless resource in many fields. However, I will counter this with research on how crucial intercultural communication and creativity are in fields such as business, science, and engineering. I will do so individually, directly following the corresponding topic and my analysis of its role in the global workforce. Real-life classroom examples, statistics, and studies implemented by universities using various survey methods will be used as evidence. In doing so, I will reveal how crucial it is that universities develop skills that will produce globally competent students ready to join the global workforce.

## Defining Global Competence

> "Holy mackerel, the world is becoming flat. Several technological and political forces have converged, and that has produced a global, Web-enabled playing field that allows for multiple forms of collaboration without regard to geography or distance – or soon, even language" – Thomas L. Friedman ("World").

Global competence is a relevant and necessary tool for success after college. However, 'global competence' is a hazy term and thus necessitates a tangible and working definition. A panel of experts in the field of international education and human resource management at a Delphi Technique conference determined that global competence meant "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others" and using this

knowledge to "interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment" (Hunter 1). Other definitions include awareness concerning the wider world (on at the very least a basic and general level), acting against social injustices, and tolerance of differences (Murphy 1). While various definitions do exist, for the purposes of this paper I have selected the definition adopted by the U.S. Department of Education, created with efforts on the part of the Asia Society and the Council Chief State School Officers, as it offers a concrete and in-depth view of what it means to be globally competent. Therefore, global competence is to be defined as the desire and interest to study and learn about the world, the ability to ask and explore how the world operates and other globally significant questions, as well as the ability to respond with data that has been collected and analyzed from credible sources (of both local and national natures), and connects the local to the global. In addition to a working definition, I have included more detailed criteria students must meet to become globally competent, according to the U.S. Department of Education, Asia Society, and Council Chief State School Officers: (1) students recognize and understand that their own perspective is shared by some but not by others and in doing so must be able to find similarities and differences between these perspectives; (2) students have the ability to create a new perspective by integrating several different perspectives; (3) students effectively communicate on both verbal and nonverbal levels in collaboration with groups made up of many who differ in terms of social, economic, political, and cultural factors; (4) students creatively, innovatively, and ethically hold the capability of change, generate ways to make a difference, and assess and understand the potential consequences; (5) students must be proficient in technology and media on the global level (Singmaster 48). Lastly, because English has increasingly become the common language of trade and communication around the world, globally competent students must be well-versed in English (49). However, this aspect of the

definition is slightly less relevant because this paper is focused on the United States, in which students are taught in and expected to have a grasp on the English language.

Graduates that embody the skills associated with global competence are becoming more sought after by employers in the rapidly globalizing world.  A study conducted for the Association of American Colleges and Universities revealed that of the business executives questioned, 96% stressed the value of intercultural skills, which were defined as "being comfortable working with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds" (Singmaster 48). However, it is important to note that the terminology used was "comfortable" rather than proficient. Ninety-one percent of these business executives also believed that "all students should have educational experiences that teach them how to solve problems with people whose views are different from their own" (Singmaster 48). Additionally, a U.S. Business Needs Survey conducted in 2014 highlighted the desire of nearly a thousand executives in the global playing field of business, sales, marketing, and finance, which was the presence of experts of international affairs to increase the profit in their own line of work (Singmaster 49).

Despite the demand for global competence and the economic and military dominance of the United States across the globe, American college graduates remain vastly unprepared to compete and succeed in the global workforce (Hunter 5). Employers are displeased with universities as they have not prepared graduates to meet the needs of business. A lack of global competence is detrimental to graduates as employers can now seek qualified candidates beyond the limitation of geography (8). Additionally, becoming globally competent will set students above their peers, as they will acquire skills sought after by employers through this new-found competence.

**The Necessity of Intercultural Communication**

> "People in your organization may have vastly different concepts of work, interpersonal communications, and group harmony. Multicultural communications skills, therefore, are a must. The good news, they are surprisingly easy to practice"—Tomas Garza (8).

The importance of "internationally educated professionals" and the learning of soft skills have never been as important for students as they are today as the workplace is now multicultural by nature (Waugh 98). Without these skills, one will surely fail when faced with the task of working in a culturally diverse environment. The first step in intercultural communication is understating the cultural norms of those one will interact with (99). If one does not effectively use their understanding of these norms, successful interactions in a culturally diverse workplace will be far and few between. Culture-specific knowledge allows future employees to learn how to adapt their own behavior in order to achieve a common goal through the interaction (99).

As the world becomes increasingly connected workers become exposed to great opportunities to exchange information and work with people from around the globe (Fall 412). Therefore, it is undeniable that training in intercultural communication is an essential and desirable skill for future employees (413). Furthermore, intercultural communication is more than mere verbal interactions, as it is inclusive of situational behaviors as well (414). An employee that is competent in intercultural communication "displays openness to others, is aware of and shows regard to differences, and has experienced these differences enough to be aware of them" (Fall 414). It is important to note that the 20th century's workforce is also being shaped by the increase in numbers of women and minorities, thus increasing the need for excellent communicators (Oliveira 253). These skills are important because intercultural communication allows organizations to create and share values of social, historical, and cultural

natures that have yet to exist, but are constructed through the creativity and work of multinational teams (254).

As a result of the globalization of the playing field, multinational groups are managing projects, solving problems, innovating, and much more as collective teams. There has been an upsurge of these multinational teams in last 30-40 years, with no signs of the globalization process slowing down anytime soon (Levitt 9). While some people find diversity problematic as they believe it is difficult to manage, others view diversity as a powerful tool (10). Studies have shown beneficial results, such as the use of creativity and the increase of quality and productivity, while others have revealed increased conflict and stagnant decision-making. Regardless, diversity is the new face of an emerging global playing field, and therefore must be managed in a way that produces positive outcomes. The key to success, or innovation and improved production and quality, is producing students that can properly communicate across cultures to create new ideas and work effectively in the multinational teams that are no longer a rarity, but rather the norm of the 20$^{th}$ century.

Steven R. Levitt of the University of Texas at San Antonio conducted an in-depth study on the cultural factors that affect the dynamics of international teams which revealed the desire of employers to hire employees able to be comfortable and work with dynamic tensions that exist between any two cultures (Levitt 18). Interviews were conducted with 27 individuals who had management/supervisory positions, worked on multinational teams, and spent a portion of their work experience abroad. Among these individuals, work had been completed on teams in several different countries in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America. Not surprisingly, different cultures valued different approaches to conducting business. For example, individuals from Asia and South America agreed that while they admired some aspects of the

way by which those in the United States conducted business, they concluded that business in the United States was immediately jumped into, instead of taking the time to develop personal relationships that would result in good business relationships. An important feature to the building of these personal relationships was the recognition of the individual's cultural identity, thus facilitating the need of employers capable of identify cultural differences and norms (12).

Another example of differences that can cause tensions can be seen the respondents revealing that Mexicans tended to avoid confrontation, and Australians tended to be extremely direct. However, they did note that Mexicans that had worked closely with Americans were often more direct as well (Levitt 12). This could be problematic, as one group would often agree with what they were instructed to do whether they truly understood the task, and another group would often forgo sensitivity in making statements or demands.

Although these were observed differences by the participants, prejudices and ethnocentrism continue trouble culturally diverse teams as well (Levitt 16). Therefore, it is important to account for the needs of members of other cultures, such as the development of personal relationships, and to validate the individual identity of the other team members by recognizing differences (17). For example, one respondent mentioned an incident in which the United States and Libya worked together on a joint project. The Americans worked non-stop 12 hour days for two months, and found themselves frustrated with the Libyans who did not work at the same high-intensity level as their fellow Americans. Instead, the Libyans worked shifts from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Thursday. However, the respondent came to terms with this as they realized that there were two different goals at play –the Americans want to finish the project as soon as possible to return home, and the Libyans were simply aiming to get the project done on time (18). For this reason alone, it is crucial for future employees to be able to balance

their values with the values of their other team members. Additionally, it is important to understand the differences in these values so as not to misinterpret actions, as the respondent originally did, believing that the shorter workday was the Libyans way of communicating laziness, which led to unnecessary frustration.

Thomas Garza, an expert in conflict resolution, suggests the use five important tips to create a cohesive multinational team through the understanding of cultural differences. The tips include keeping an open mind, understanding cultural backgrounds, practicing active listening, watching nonverbal communication, and maintaining personal touch (Garza 8-9). Acquiring such a skill set will prepare and enable future employees to be productive team members amongst a variety of different personalities, values, and approaches. Therefore, intercultural communication is key aspect to successfully conducting business.

**Intercultural Communication in Education**

> "In order to prepare graduates . . . . higher education institutions need to do more than offer a series of internationally focused courses or send students abroad to have them become globally competent. Students must possess a high degree of international understanding and intercultural competence before becoming globally competent" –William D. Hunter (42).

Although learning a second language is an important aspect of intercultural communication, in this section I will focus on intercultural communication beyond linguistic knowledge. The reasoning behind this is that it is often more damaging to make cultural mistakes than it is to make linguistic mistakes (Xue 1492). Therefore, speaking the language alone is not enough to generate a successful interaction with a native speaker of said language (1493). Additionally, knowing a foreign language does not prepare students to work with cultures beyond their native and second languages.

There is a huge gap in intercultural communication, as its value has often been overlooked by universities. Although some students are capable of developing this skill without explicit teaching, it can take several years of experience before any true knowledge and understanding are acquired. A major issue in teaching intercultural communication is that culture is fluid and ever-changing (Fall 414). However, there are many ways in which professors can prepare their students because the skills necessary for intercultural communication are flexible and can be applied to any and all interactions.

One method stands out as the most obvious choice in terms of how professors can generate students that are capable of communicating in diverse groups --studying abroad. Studies show that students that go abroad have a significantly higher level of global engagement than those who do not (Murphy 14). For example, those working in medical fields were better communicators after spending over 3 months outside of the U.S. (Fall 414). This is significant as it demonstrates that intercultural experience is directly correlated with communication skills on an intercultural level. Additionally studies conducted concerning the development of intercultural awareness "are routinely conducted immediately following the participant's return from abroad or shorty after graduation" (Murphy 2). This is problematic because the information gained is short-term and does not consider long-term outcomes. Unfortunately, not every student is lucky enough to have this opportunity due to time constraints and financial situations. Students without these limitations may simply opt to state in the states instead of studying abroad as well. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, I will exclude studying abroad as a necessary part of developing intercultural communication skills as well. Universities must instead work to enhance their students' abilities to better prepare them for the global workforce though other methods (Fall 414).

One important method for professors is to create classes with a deliberate learning objective of the development of intercultural communication skills. Canada, for example, has implemented an online course designed to help students learn this crucial skill set. This course is designed around the middle two phases of The Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity – Polarization and Minimization. Polarization is the stage at which people view the world in terms of an "us" verses "them" mentality. This is detrimental to good communication, as similarities between one's own culture and the cultures of the world are overlooked or completely degraded (Waugh 99).  In this stage, students must learn that cultural differences are not necessarily better nor worse, good nor bad. The following stage, Minimization, is significant as well because students develop a deeper understanding of cultural values though this process (99).

The course consisted of four sections and ten different units, totaling 30 hours per section. A total of 98 students were enrolled, all from various backgrounds in terms of culture and linguistics (Waugh 102). The studies focused on cultural differences via verbal and non-verbal communication and made use of Discourses Completion Tasks through which students responded through both oral and written means. Students were presented with a concrete learning objective: the development of intercultural communication skills. Situations in which errors in communication could cause misunderstandings, conflicts, or safety issues amongst team members were given to students who were instructed to identify these errors and explain how to correct them (101). Additionally, students listened to successful interactions between culturally and linguistically diverse groups, and were asked to implement the strategies they identified as usefully in their own assignments (102). From the 98 students, 10 were randomly selected to gage the level at which the objective was met. Of these students, 12% had successfully moved

from the Polarization to Minimization stage, demonstrating their abilities to look past stereotypes in order to discover and discuss different types of communication (104).

Although the success of the online course was not groundbreaking, it offers insight as to the next steps professors can take in implementing a learning objective of intercultural communication skills to their own classrooms. Professors can instruct their students to listen audio case studies, video, and podcasts of culturally diverse groups in order to identify which aspects were well executed and which could be improved. This course would need to be translated into a face-to-face class and certainly needs to undergo more development. However, the idea is important to build upon as a great starting point to generating new ideas on how to teach students, in classrooms, how to be successful in their interactions with people of different backgrounds than their own.

Traditionally, courses to teach intercultural communication are aimed to prepare students to be efficient used cognitive learning, using tools such as lectures and readings. However, instead they should prepare students "to function in culturally diverse contexts" through an approach that is multidimensional (Liu 19).  Creating a productive method that strays away from the norm is still seen as a challenge by many professors and universities as a whole. Despite the challenge, active engagement is what allows students to learn and enhance their understanding of different cultures (20). Students need to engage in the process of learning methods, understating concepts, and developing intercultural relationships (20). Professors could introduce more group-based problem solving, which allows students to develop communications skills that can be translated into intercultural communication skills. More group work enables students to state their own views, receive feedback, argue, discuss, and negotiate which students that hold different values than themselves (21).

A study on implementing on group work was conducted in which 82 project groups were formed. The groups were assigned to actively participate in a cultural event that did not reflect the culture of at least one group member. The United States often highlights similarities and minimizes differences when sizing up other cultures, making this activity important to combat this common error (Downey 108). The entire group was expected to conduct research about the culture of the event they selected in order to have the necessary background information before engaging in the activity. Group members had to identify possible problems that could occur between groups of people with differing cultural backgrounds, discuss the causes of this problem and make suggests as to how to resolve the problem (Liu 22). A list of local events was provided, with options such as Polish or Greek festivals (22). Students were expected to engage with attendees of the event they chose, observing and noting the differences in their responses, feelings, and thoughts. Next, they connected their experience to what they learned about intercultural communication in the classroom setting. This aided students in learning from group work and intercultural experiences that were different than their own. While creatively seeking ways to resolve potential issues of communication, the students became more globally competent (23).

Surveys were conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Questions ranged from how the student personally felt the project had impact their learning to how working in a group improved their knowledge of other cultures and increased their problem-solving abilities (Liu 23). Open ended questions demonstrated that attending and participating in cultural events and learning about different cultures from first-hand experience were important and useful. Many also stated that the first-hand experience was what allowed them to understand what they had learned in class about intercultural communication and related to people from different

backgrounds (27). Additionally, 74% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that these groups

allowed them the opportunity to view different perspectives, and 63% agreed that they learned

more about different cultures (25). Those who positively reviewed their experience received

higher grades than those who were reluctant to participate (30). Of course the project was not

without difficulties, such as scheduling times and differing commitment levels from group levels

(27). However, despite these difficulties indicated by the students, graduates will have to deal

with these difficulties in their future careers as well. Active learning groups are the way to go

because they enhance intercultural communication skills, and should thus be used by professors

in the university setting.

**The Necessity of Creativity**

> "My favorite story is about [Apple CEO] Steve Jobs' speech at Stanford's
> graduation. He says, "You know, I dropped out of Reed College and had nothing
> to do so I took a course in calligraphy. And it all went into the Mac keyboard!"
> That was not an algorithm. That was a question of style and it helped define
> Apple's niche. Now, that's not to put down algorithms. Apple needed those
> algorithms to enable it all to happen. It's just you've got to have both. It's about
> integrating the two." –Thomas L. Friedman ("Flat").

Creativity has emerged as a desirable graduate attribute among employers (Patel 1). In a

survey conducted in Ontario, Canada, a range of definitions of creativity were generated, but

many of these definitions had overlapping elements (Henderson 155). Professors in the arts and

humanities defined creativity as the "ability to produce novel solutions to problems" (155).

Professors in the hard sciences defined creativity as the "ability to transcend traditional

boundaries, rules, and concepts to develop ideas or products that are new and valuable for

society" (155). Others defined creativity as simply thinking outside of the box. Despite these

broad definitions the survey revealed two crucial elements: (1) the defining characteristic of

creativity the production of something new, demonstrating a central understating of the term and (2) each field believed that their own definition was an integral element in their own field (155).

The definition of creativity has evolved from a complex, artistic trait by gifted individuals to an acquired talent that can be used as purposeful in the collaborative process. This definition of creativity has become crucial to the 21st century workforce as employees are expected to be prepared to deal with the demand for global experience in complex relationships (made easier through intercultural communication and creativity). There is great criticism of the education sector for failing to produce creative leaders which are needed for economic success, international competitiveness, and international collaboration (Rampersad 1).

Universities are beyond the myth that creativity is a birth trait that cannot be taught, and must therefore begin to develop these skills so that their students will not graduate as unemployable (Rampersad 1). Significantly, "with the globalization of business, creative tasks themselves have begun to transcend national boundaries" (Chua 190). Most of the challenges faced by businesses today are faced by solving problems in a creative manner in the context of a multinational environment (190).

Businesses seek employees with creativity because innovation is not possible without creative thinkers. Take the iPod, for example. Sony had the technology, design, and music access needed to create the iPod before the workers at Apple had even started to consider a niche in the business of music. Apple was not innovative in design or technology, but in its re-imagination of the business model that had already existed in relation to music. Apple made iTunes music cheap in order to generate consumer desire for the iPod, despite the higher cost. Aside from being revolutionary in a business sense, the iPod and iTunes radically reshaped the way in which people interacted with and shared music (Gobble 58).

The Internet has allowed the creation of business models, such as that of the iPod, which could not even have been imagined just a few decades prior (Gobble 58). This is why businesses need creative/innovative employees to sustain and drive their success through new ideas. Future employees must be able compete and collaborate on an international scale in order to come up with the latest and greatest technologies. Creativity and innovations are necessary for business to generate income, growth, and advantage over other businesses (Alexander 423). Innovation does not exist without creativity. The direct result of innovation is creativity (Petkovska 61). One must first use their creativity to come up with new ideas before they can transform the ideas into products or services (62). Since universities do not teach either of these, one must push for the teaching of creativity as a basis before we can incorporate innovation into education as well. Regardless, universities must incorporate creativity in the classroom in order to produce employable graduates.

**Creativity in Education**

"Integration is the new specialty. The generalist is really going to come back. The great generalist — someone who has a renaissance view of the world — is more likely to spark an innovation than the pure engineer" –Thomas L. Friedman ("Flat").

Global competence is not a common focus found in U.S. classrooms at any grade level. Less than 1% of students studies abroad or interacts with other cultures in K-12 alone (Singmaster 149). Although I believe these factors to be important to implement at a lower grade level, I am not arguing for the introduction of global competence into lower level education. Global perspective should be widened at a young age, but many complications are involved, especially when it comes to the approval of parents. For now, teaching global competence will

be easier to first achieve on the collegiate level, as students are adults as well, capable of making choices and decisions for themselves.

Although the need for creativity, innovation, and global competency is significant and urgent, there are many issues in modifying the current educational system. Introducing creativity into the classroom is difficult because it is often viewed as a relative concept. Additionally, coursework generates an understanding between professors and students –assigned work is an academic exercise. This is extremely limiting, as it confines the expectations and requirements for the finished product. Students have little room to venture off from what has been assigned, and therefore put less time, thought, and commitment into the project as they are limited to one method of approach. In order to combat strict boundaries, experimental learning should be incorporated into the required curriculum for all college-level students (Brown 149). Although experimental learning can be challenging in terms of time constraints and relating projects to the learning objectives, this method has a positive impact on learning as well as creativity by providing students with experiences and forcing them to think outside of the academic box they are too often restricted to. Australia has begun research on implementing work-integrated learning (WIL) in education, requiring classroom studies to be combined with learning through work experiences. An answer as to how creativity can be developed through these placements is currently being sought after (Rampersad 4).

Experimental/work-integrated learning is necessary in teaching creativity to improve employability. Teamwork, analytical thinking, problem-solving, and real world experience increase among students who have the opportunity to engage in this type of learning. Tara Berescik of the Tri-Valley Central School District improved the employability in her students in two different ways. The first method taught students to collect and analyze data at both the

global and local levels. Students examined the ingredients of cheeseburgers, found the local source of the individual ingredients, and determined when those ingredients would be in season around the world. Berescik paired this project with learning objectives based on food sourcing and security. As a result, students started an organization to promote local buying and reduce their carbon footprint. In a separate project Berescik took her students to Ireland to compare research and observation on local fish. U.S. students worked with Irish students by comparing and contrasting clean water and fish population issues in their respective areas (Singmaster 50). By requiring her students to work with students across the globe, Berescik has implemented a level of intercultural communication that will be immensely useful to students after graduation. Although Berescik's class exercises would have fit nicely into the section on intercultural communication in education, I have placed her story in this section as she highlights creative teaching methods that also force students to be creative when coming up with solutions to the tasks at hand.

Another attempt to teach global competence can be seen in Alicia Emsley's assignments on communicable and non-communicable diseases. In Seattle, Washington students are required to take Global Health as freshmen. These students work together to evaluate and solve real-world problems (Singmaster 51). Although this method was fit for a high school level course, the concept could translate and be applied to college courses rather nicely as they allow students to creative in their methods for solving issues currently faced today.

Berescik and Emsley brought creativity, innovation, and global communication and understanding into two fields which are not typically known for this particular skill set – agriculture and health. However, this is not the typical method of teaching, as we run into the issue of the value of creativity. Many scholars, such as Seltzer and Bently, argue that educational

structures must undergo a "dramatic transformation," otherwise the creative capacities of students will stay stagnant (Henderson 149). Yet, while Berescik and Emsley incorporated creativity into their curriculum, many professors and students have high doubts that creativity is essential for success in their fields. In fact, professors in the fields of physics and engineering are strongly opposed, as they believe creativity leads to negligence (Henderson 157). However, instructors enacted the use of creativity in multiple disciplines in a number of universities located in Ontario, Canada. This stressed to professors and students the importance of developing creativity no matter the subject a student is studying. The Ontario Ministry of Training, College, and Universities issued the following statement: "Ontario's colleges and universities will drive creativity, innovation, knowledge, and community engagement through teaching and research" (Henderson 151). This generated thoughts and ideas on how to teach creativity within the confines of different fields. Before this could be implemented, a study was conducted to see how the faculty defined (previously mentioned), valued, and taught creativity at Ontario Universities.

An electronic survey consisting of forced-choice, scale, and open-ended questions to 6,000 full-time instructors at the following eight universities: University of Guelph, McMaster University, OCAD University, Queen's University, Trent University, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, University of Waterloo, and University of Western Ontario. These universities were selected specifically for their diversity in concerts to size, location, and course offerings. Professors were asked whether or not they made the development of creativity a learning objective for students, with 55.1% answering no. Generally, those in the fields of business, social sciences, and health sciences respond negatively while those in the arts and humanities responded positively (Henderson 157).

While it is excellent that the arts and the humanities value creativity, these are not the fields in which we are lacking student development in creativity. Social sciences, health sciences, and most significantly business, are the fields in dire need of development of creativity. Take engineering, for example, it is likely that you will encounter various ways of thinking about engineering that are unfamiliar when working with people from other countries (Downey 108). These differences can be learned from and used alongside creativity to create a new and better ways to carry out work-related tasks.

Although the lowest averages found themselves within fields that shied away from creativity, over all professors highly valued creativity, with 87.8% selecting "extremely important" or "important" (Henderson 156). Additionally, when presented the following statement: "My department/school has a responsibility to develop students' creative capacities as these relate to my discipline," 79.3% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" (156). Clearly, professors do see creativity as being high-value, which asks the question: why is creativity not being taught in universities?

There are several barriers when it comes to incorporating creativity into college classrooms including time constraints, the overstuffing of an already stuffed curriculum, finances, staffing, equipment, and other resources necessary to properly execute the intended learning objective (Henderson 158). However, the biggest issue is the doubt of student attitudes and ability on the part of professors (161). If professors do not think their students have the initiative and are prepared to take on creativity in the classroom, what can employers except from these same students when they enter the global work force? The first step in improving creativity must be the incorporation of creativity into classrooms as a deliberate and intended objective outcome which is actively communicated and taught to the students by the professors.

As the survey suggest, programs tailored to, but not limited by, individual subjects should be designed in order to prep students in their preferred study (162).

American Universities have their own ideas and methods of teaching. Departments within these universities have their own ideas and methods of teaching. Professors within these universities within these departments have their own ideas and methods of teaching. This diminishes creativity within the classroom because, as demonstrated by the survey conducted in Ontario, the value of creativity greatly various amongst professors. At each level, individuals need to work together in generating ways in which creativity can be introduced into their own fields that will be seen as valuable and desirable to students. This is crucial, as we do not need students churning out the same robotic methods, never improving or progressing. Creativity has been reserved as a minor place in the respects of university teaching and learning, but it has become a growing presence within educational discourse (Henderson 149).

**Conclusion**

> "Without the mass production of globally competent employees, those predicting the end of the American century may very well be right" –William D. Hunter (119).

College graduates are becoming more unemployable as the phenomenon of global incompetency continues. The aim of higher education is to prepare students to become not only productive, but successful members of society after graduation as well. However, universities are not equipping students with the necessary skills to work and compete in the globalized world. The definitions of global competency vary, but according to the U.S. Department of Education, Asia Society, and Council Chief State School Officers, global competency is being able to identify similarities and differences in cultures, communicate verbally and nonverbally and work

collaboratively on multinational teams and being able to problem-solve creatively. In order to produce globally competent students, universities must incorporate intercultural communication and creativity into the curriculum, as these are two important skills of globally competent students (Singmaster 48). These skill sets are necessary in all disciplines, as successful collaboration is obtained through excellent intercultural communication and creativity, integral parts of individuals, businesses, and society as a whole (Friedman "Flat"). I proposed how intercultural communication and creativity in education could produce globally competent and successful students, as a solution has yet to be discovered, implemented, and conducted with desirable results.

The first question of this paper asked: Why is being able to communicate with people from other backgrounds and cultures crucial to success in business? Employees in all fields have become more connected, giving them the opportunity to exchange information and work with people from around the globe (Fall 412). This discovery alone proves that intercultural communication is essential for future employees. Due to intercultural communication's importance, next I examined how this skill could be incorporated and taught in classrooms across universities. Naturally, the majority of research pushed for learning a second language and studying abroad to teach intercultural communication (Fall 414). However, linguist mistakes are less harmful than cultural mistakes, and many are unable to study abroad for various reason. Upon a deeper examination, I found studies that suggested group work and attendance of local cultural events as great strategies for helping students improve their intercultural communication skills (Waugh 9, Lui 19).

Next, I examined the following question: What role does creativity play in the development of global competence and how does it benefit the workplace? Research revealed

that Sony had access to the music, technology, and design needed to create the iPod before Apple had considered finding their niche in the business. However, Apple was innovative in creating a new business model from the one that had previously existed in relation to the distribution of music (Gobble 58). Businesses seek employees with creativity because innovation, such as the creation of the iPod and iTunes, is not possible without creative thinkers. Studies revealed that creativity was necessary for businesses to sustain and experience long-term growth (Alexander 423). Due to the demand for innovative problem solving in the workforce, I collected and analyzed research on how universities could better prepare graduates though creativity. In a study conducted throughout 8 universities, 55.1% of professors stated that they did not make the development of creativity a learning objective for their student. Professors in the fields of business, social sciences, and health sciences respond negatively to implementing creativity into the curriculum, but research in each of these fields highly suggests its importance (Henderson 157). After thoroughly examining ways to implement creativity, I settled on Work Integrated Learning as the best possible solution to the challenges faced by teaching creativity in the classroom (Rampersad 4).

Intercultural communication and creativity are becoming necessary skills for survival in a globalized world. Globalization touches all fields of work and therefore all fields of studies as well. Any discipline students finds themselves in will require a degree of collaboration with people from around the globe and greatly differing backgrounds. Additionally, every type of job requires creativity to be successful, as new ideas are always needed to improve already existing structures and products or to innovation something entirely new. Lastly, intercultural communication and creativity are simply important to life in general, as we are constantly in

contact with people from different cultures and must be globally competent to engage

successfully.

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