

# **Globalizing Austin Peay State University**

## **White Paper by Faculty Leadership Program**

April 29, 2014

This proposal addresses the need for, and benefits of, Globalization at Austin Peay State University. The current lack of globalization impacts student success by depriving them of contact with other cultures leaving them out of current trends in higher education that aim to prepare students to be employable in the global marketplace. Globalization should be a high institutional priority. The argument to direct resources to the Globalization of APSU includes the following: international students (F-1) have higher graduation rates, they pay out-of-state tuition, and they do not use loans and therefore do not default on loans (Kwai, 2009). International students would contribute a greater proportion to the funding formula and eventually to overall university funds. In addition to the value of increasing international student enrollment, the globalization of APSU includes projects such as increasing our international programming and globalizing course content (J. Steinberg, personal communication, April 2014). Our new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) accentuates high impact practices and transformative learning experiences (TLEs) which are inherent in international programming and course content. Campus globalization directly influences study abroad, service learning, undergraduate research, internships and other experiences insofar as they enrich student perspectives. We want to create a campus culture of globalization to maintain Austin Peay as a leader in higher Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Seven initiatives for a path to Globalization at Austin Peay**

- Recruitment of international students and growth of ESL program
- Creation of a global fellows program
- Create a living and learning community in student housing for international students and language majors
- Create a global experience checklist on the new student e-portfolio
- Reallocate resources to the International Education office
- Internships with international companies
- Create a Global Center

#### **I. Recruitment of international students and growth of program**

International students create bridges between the United States and their countries of origin and enrich global perspectives in US classrooms and research labs. In addition, out of state tuition dollars support programming and services on campus for all students. Within our international student body, there is need to expand the range of countries from which we recruit. For example, the Saudi Arabian government puts limits on the scholarships they award to ensure that only 30% of potential international students may be from Saudi Arabia. (C. Kelso, personal communication, April 2014). At a time when we should be increasing revenue in our ESL program, we are instead seeing declining enrollment. Enrollment in ESL classes dropped from 25 international students in Fall 2012, to 9 in

Spring 2014. We need to recruit from a wider range of countries in order to build the ESL program and attract more international students.

Austin Peay has surprisingly low international student presence (Figure 1). In AY 2013-14, 50 international students were enrolled at Austin Peay. National Association of International Educators ([www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org)) did research on the economic impact of international students (Figures 2 and 3).

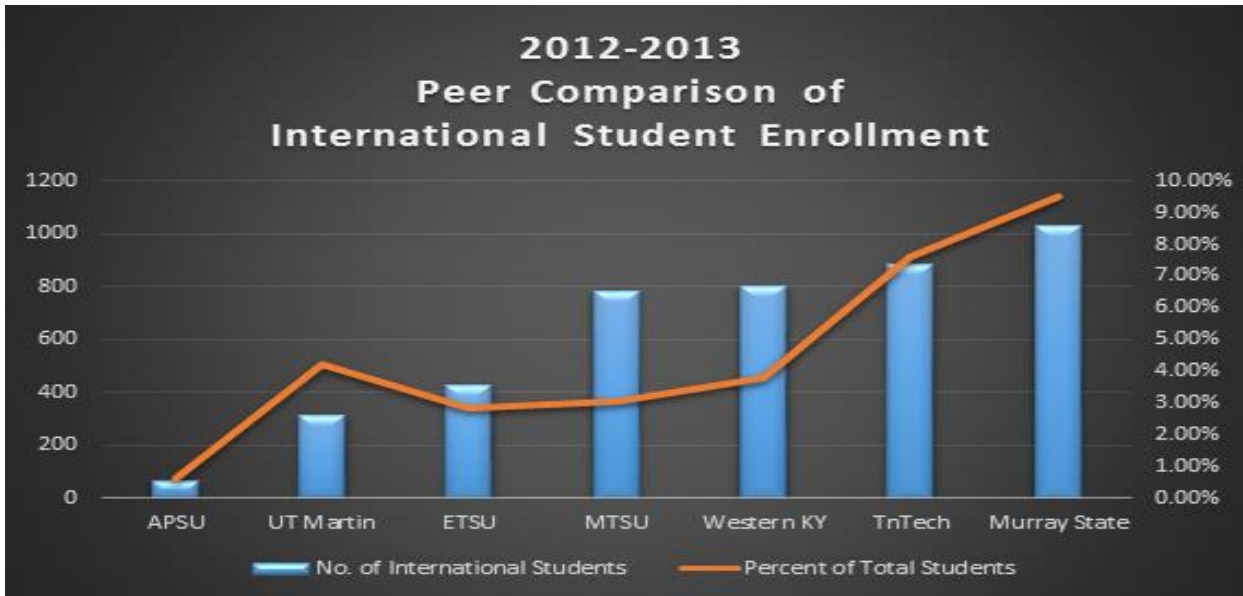


Figure 1. International Student Enrollment for 2012-2013 for Peer institutions

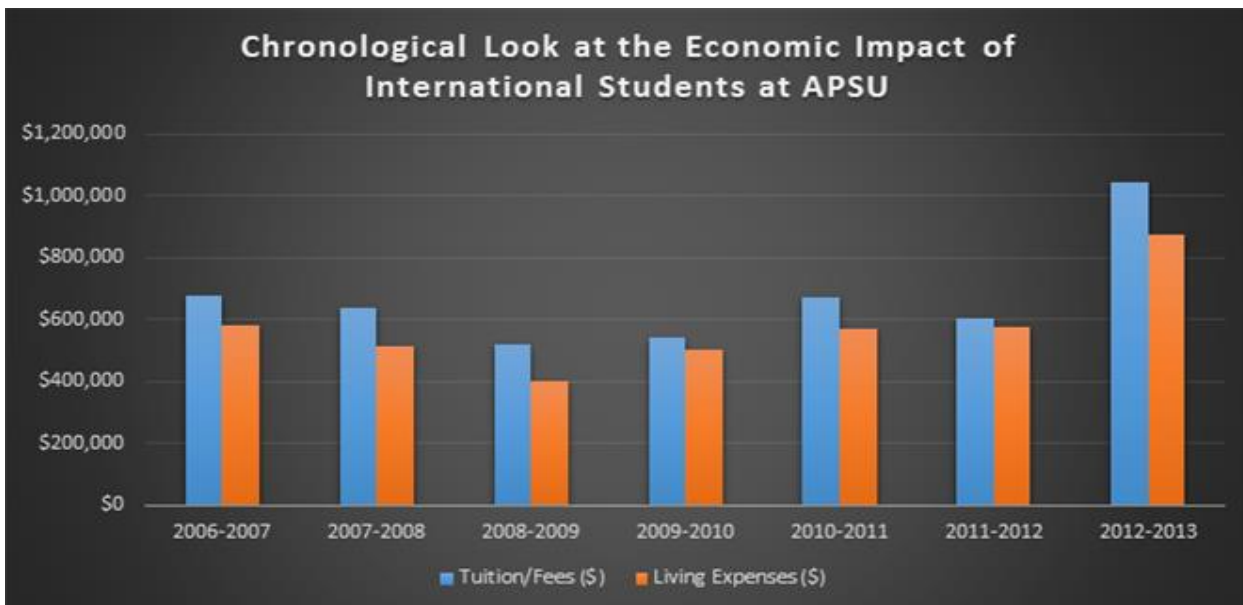


Figure 2. NAFSA Data for Economic Impact of International students at Austin Peay

Our neighbor and peer institution, Murray State University's ESL program generates \$50,000.00 per semester for each ESL course. They currently have 752 international students in AY 2013-14 (3% of student enrollment) [www.murraystate.edu/esl](http://www.murraystate.edu/esl). UT-Martin is a smaller comprehensive regional institution yet had 313 international students in AY 2012-13; the tuition and fees generated from international students were \$5,588,000.00, the living expenses \$3,904,000.00 and created 62 jobs (www.nafsa.org).

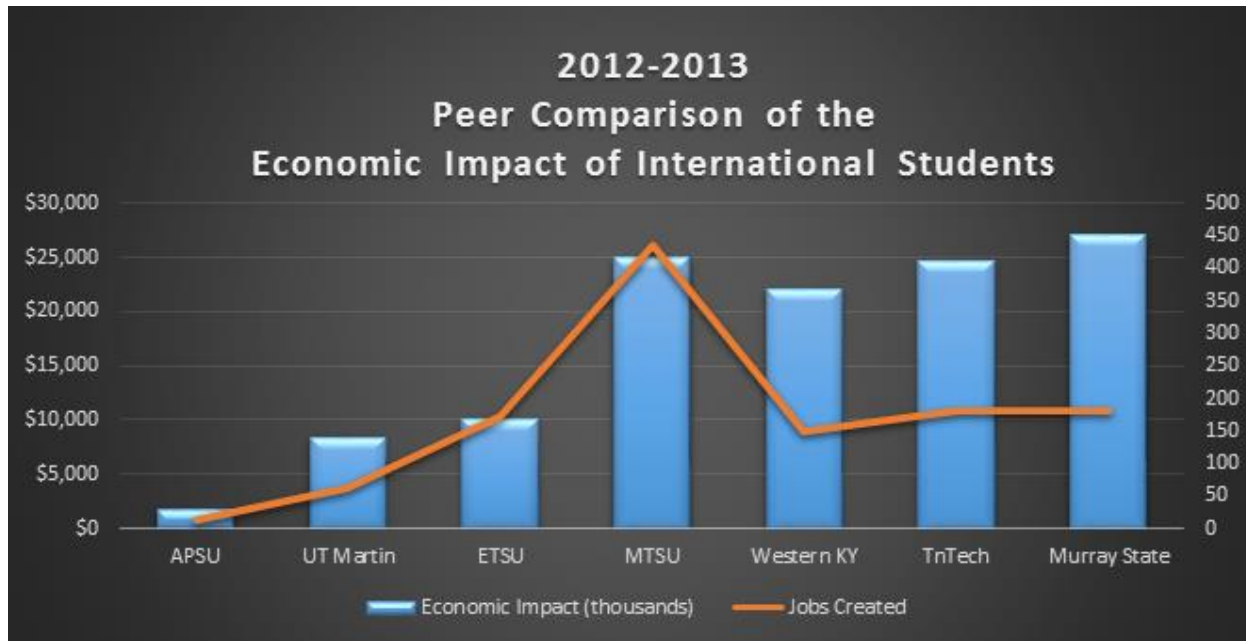


Figure 3. NAFSA Data for Economic Impact of International students at Austin Peay and Peer Institutions

To further support globalization of Austin Peay our website needs to be more accessible and visible. The website is the first interaction any student has with our university. Welcoming pages on the website, with targeted translations would facilitate our recruitment efforts and demonstrate our commitment to globalizing our university.

## **II. Creation of a Global Fellows Program**

Our faculty includes members from at least 20 countries who have tremendous potential for contributing to globalization efforts. In addition, all faculty, staff, alumni and community members should be invited to participate in the project to globalize the campus. Efforts would include recruiting through personal networks, creation of new programs, and internships. The Global Fellows will be a resource and advocate for centers and student clubs such as the Hispanic Cultural Center, African American Cultural Center, Military Student Center, Non-Traditional Student Center and the International Student Organization. We will be a resource for supporting interdisciplinary academic efforts with faculty such as class visits, research-sharing, and planning initiatives for student success. This body could be a global advocacy group with rotating leadership. The mission of this group is to support globalization of the campus. Our Global Fellow program will develop and refine Austin Peay's global initiative and support the expansion of disciplinary dimensions.

### **III. Create a Global Living/Learning Community in Student Housing**

A large portion of student learning is experiential, occurring outside of classrooms. We propose to identify international and other interested students via their housing application and offer them the option to live in a global living community. The physical premises, with space for programming will enhance the global experience. Building relationships will help student retention rates. The QEP focuses on transformational learning experiences like those that a dedicated housing area can provide. In recent years, similar communities existed at Austin Peay. According to the Director of Housing Joe Mills, past efforts succeeded when sponsored by an individual or a specific office.

### **IV. Create a Global Experience Checklist in the New Student E-Portfolio designed for the QEP**

The QEP requires students to document their TLEs in the new student e-portfolio. We propose that this documentation includes a list of global experiences. The list might include such activities as

- Study abroad
- Internships with international companies
- Foreign language courses
- Participation in living/learning communities
- Classes with a clear international component (these could be given a designation symbol in the course catalog)
- Attendance at events with a clear international component
- The Peay Read when the book has a clear international component
- Volunteer work in ESL centers
- Working at events like International Night
- Being a First Friend for exchange students
- Being conversation partners through the ESL office
- Undergraduate research with international component

### **V. Increase Resources in the International Education office**

The International Education Office is of primary importance to international activity on a campus. Ours will need to expand its function yet it is understaffed and underfunded. Its focus is primarily in two areas: facilitating study abroad programs and exchange programs. According to our research, a recruitment officer is needed in order to make successful increases in recruitment rates (C. Wilkerson, personal communication, April 2014). Reallocating resources in Student Services and Academic Affairs to activities with a global focus would show university commitment to the mission of globalization. Until we are able to hire a recruitment officer we may be able to utilize faculty or staff who already travel or have international interests for recruiting purposes.

Peer institutions that have been successful at recruitment have more staff than our International Education office:

1) UT-Martin International Programs and Admissions has one director, two assistant directors, one administrative specialist and two administrative assistants, as well as nine ESL instructors.

2) Murray State Institute for International Studies has one director, one administrative assistant, five international admissions personnel, and three in international student and scholar services. ESL is the third division of their institute, with a director, an associate director, and seventeen instructors. The fourth division, Study Abroad, has four personnel, totaling 33 personnel for international education.

In addition to increasing staff in the office of International Education, an appropriate centralized infrastructure would need to be put in place to coordinate the efforts, communicate information to internal and external constituencies, and foster collaboration.

## **VI. Increase Internships with International Companies**

Providing real-world experiences fostered through collaboration with global enterprises would allow students opportunities to achieve growth beyond the limits of the classroom. Within the global environment and with the technologies available, distance and location are becoming less of an obstacle for employers. Internships, both where the students are physically present and where they work from a remote site, will provide key experiential learning experiences. The current proposal at Austin Peay for a Masters of Arts program in Global Studies includes an internship, which culminates in a thesis and portfolio. We need to expand the number of partnerships that we have with global enterprises, such as corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and nonprofit agencies with a global presence.

## **VII. Create a Global Center**

The creation of a Global Center was conceived as an antidote to the sense of isolation or compartmentalization that students and faculty experience. Since only a small percentage of our students can take advantage of Study Abroad, the Center's programs can bring the global experience to them. The Global Fellows Program will create and support programs organized by the Center. We envision a Center to facilitate global education campus wide and for all students to experience cultures from around the globe.

## **Conclusion**

A globally competent student gains knowledge, skills and attitudes from a globalized campus. These include knowledge of one's own culture within the global arena, and an awareness of global issues and interconnectedness, skills such as the use of diverse cultural frames of reference to solve problems, foreign language skills to extend access to information and further bridge the cultural gap, and attitudes that promote the understanding of cultural complexity and ambiguity, and a willingness to seek out global opportunities.

Globalizing our campus can only succeed with an infrastructure that is supported by the institution. The QEP gives us a platform for shifting the culture on our campus towards globalization.

## Sources

Global Studies Foundation Institutional Grant:

<http://www.globalstudiesfoundation.org/ShowContents.cfm?CategoryID=75>

Impact of Study Abroad on Student Retention and Success:

<http://globaledresearch.com/study-abroad-impact.asp>

International Student Retention Annotated Bibliography:

[http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedFiles/Chez\\_NAFSA/Resource\\_Library\\_Assets/Networks/MR/2013%20Internl%20Student%20Retention.pdf](http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedFiles/Chez_NAFSA/Resource_Library_Assets/Networks/MR/2013%20Internl%20Student%20Retention.pdf)

Kwai, C.K. (2009). *Model of International Student Persistence: Factors Influencing Retention of International Undergraduate Students at Two Public Statewide Four-Year University Systems* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Michigan State University - Internationalizing the Student Experience:

<http://undergrad.msu.edu/programs/ise>

National Association of Foreign Student Advisers website (<http://www.nafsa.org/>)

Return on Investment Analysis of International Education:

<http://www.internationaleducationgateway.org/Return%20on%20Investment%20in%20International%20Education.pdf>

THEC Fact Book 2012-2013 (see page 16):

<http://www.state.tn.us/thec/Legislative/Reports/2013/2012-2013%20Factbook.pdf>