ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE THROUGH CROSS-BORDER INITIATIVES

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York University:
• international as a strategic priority (University Academic Plan)
• objectives:
  – York as a national leader in international activities
  – make international opportunities available to all students who wish to participate
• priority to enhance the student experience

Beyond York:
• internationalization is a priority for many universities in Canada and elsewhere
• increased interest in international links from government
BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

For students:
- broaden horizons
- enriched educational experience
- international engagement leading to new perspectives
- cultural awareness
- new career paths and opportunities

For institutions:
- international partnerships
- enhanced profile
CHALLENGES

Students:
• costs of study abroad (travel, loss of income)
• family responsibilities
• integration of international experience with degree studies
• language barriers/culture shock
• bureaucratic obstacles

Institutions:
• identification of appropriate partners (quality, location, programs)
• development of international experiences fitting a range of disciplines
• opportunities for cultural immersion
• provision of supports
• must provide a range of opportunities to experience the international, including “international at home”
• international must be pervasive: available and meaningful in all programs and through extra-curricular activities
• need to offer support: financial and advisory

• examples of opportunities to gain international experience:
  – language courses
  – degree programs
  – exchanges
  – internships
  – research
  – students learning from each other, e.g., “global house”
  – local communities
• letters of recognition of international experience
• international summer internships: worldwide and university-wide

• unique features:
  – financial support for students → accessibility
  – placements arranged by York → strategic direction

• application of theory to practice

• integration of international experiences into educational experience
• with other institutions and government
• Ontario/Baden-Württemberg exchange agreement provides a model for collaborative agreements
• Ontario Maharashtra-Goa agreement
• development of institutional and cultural links