

## How Can Community Colleges Promote Global Competency?

- Expand programs and initiatives to promote global awareness, training and economic development.
- Encourage inclusiveness relating to race, ethnicity and religion.
- Broaden the study of foreign languages and cultures.
- Enhance international study and exchange for students and faculty.
- Promote the U.S. community college model and recruit international students worldwide.

## Facts—International Students and Study Abroad:

- International students at community colleges increased by 57.9% between 1993-2003.
- Over 84,000 international students now attend two-year institutions.
- International students at community colleges contribute more than \$1.87 billion annually to the U.S. economy.
- Nearly 4,000 community college students study abroad.

## Our Government Recognizes the Role of Community Colleges

*“America’s mission in this new century must be to welcome more foreign students to our nation and send more of our citizens abroad to study.”*

Condoleezza Rice, U.S. Secretary of State

*“We believe we can not only double the number of foreign students in U.S. community colleges... but also bring international recognition to the many roles that community colleges play in our country...”*

Karen Hughes, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

*“We have dedicated ourselves to informing students all over the world that the United States is the welcoming place it always has been.”*

Maura Harty, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs

## Building the Global Community:

### Joint Statement on the Role of Community Colleges in International Education

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

Over the last two decades—as our world has become more interdependent and complex—community college leaders have broadened the definition of “community.” For the well-educated person, learning competency and engagement must transcend time, place and culture. Colleges must offer programs that support a more international view and active engagement on the part of faculty, businesses and community leaders.

To that end, the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees reaffirm, on behalf of their respective memberships, a commitment to the importance of the globally educated learner and to building the global community.

## Joint Statement on the Role of Community Colleges in International Education

*“Community colleges should develop strategic plans for global awareness and competence that respond to the needs of the community’s learners, businesses, and institutions.”\**

We live in a time of continuous economic and social change driven by increasing globalization. Traditional economic boundaries have given way to emerging economic imperatives, both at home and abroad.

Enhancing global awareness is not only in the community’s self-interest, but it also serves the nation as a whole. The ability to understand, appreciate, and communicate effectively—irrespective of national and cultural origins—frees the forces of economic development and allows ideas, capital and innovation to move unimpeded.

Fulfilling a vital mission for the nation’s higher education structure, community colleges are transformative institutions

serving virtually every community. As a multi-billion industry focused on serving learners, strengthening businesses and entrepreneurship, and helping communities develop and grow their economies, community colleges also are guardians of educational access and opportunity helping to nurture and sustain our democracy. The programs and services provided by community colleges contribute to informed citizenship, the pursuit of intercultural understanding, enhanced diversity, increased prosperity, and most importantly, student and individual preparedness in an increasingly interdependent global economy. Community colleges are, in effect, “stewards to the world.”

Community colleges are conveners and facilitators within their communities. They welcome students and faculty from around the world who are interested in accessing the community college experience and the transformative power they provide. Colleges have a responsibility to acknowledge global understanding and communication as integral to their mission. Indeed, they are an important voice in the nation’s public diplomacy, one sought and utilized by both federal and state governments.

Community college leaders—their governing boards and the chief executives that lead them, as well as their

administrators, faculty, and staff who oversee programs and services—have an obligation not only to embrace global education, but to engage their communities in understanding its importance. Colleges draw business leaders and employers, staff from governmental entities, and community volunteers in service organizations into discussions about global issues and their impact.

Our colleges also welcome and embrace international students into their campuses and local communities, strengthen international programs and support services, and promote faculty and student exchanges. Moreover, they reach out to higher education institutions abroad for greater collaboration and formal partnerships. These responsibilities have grown in importance as continuing tensions and threats affect nations and peoples around the globe.

In short, a rededication to global education is required that will inspire and shape new educational strategies initiated to promote the shared goals of global connectedness and understanding.

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\* *The Knowledge Net: A Report of the New Expeditions Initiative* (American Association of Community Colleges and Association of Community College Trustees, 2000).

## What Community College Leaders Can Do:

### Boards

- Adopt a policy indicating support for international education.
- Request periodic reports on progress.
- Recognize students where appropriate.
- Take proactive role in working with business contacts to promote international education.

### CEOs

- Take active role in promoting campus leadership to support international education.
- Establish leadership role for directing international education.
- Provide funding for travel and other international-related activities, as appropriate.



One Dupont Circle, NW -  
Suite 410  
Washington DC, 20036  
[www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)



1233 20th Street, NW -  
Suite 605  
Washington DC, 20036  
[www.acct.org](http://www.acct.org)