

International Higher Education Facing New Political Realities: A Call to the Community for a Compelling Research Agenda and Advocacy Strategy



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Abstract

The international higher education community is now confronting unprecedented challenges as it pursues ongoing federal support for its long-established programs. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the need for a more comprehensive research agenda (*i.e.*, to support the value of international higher education) and suggest how to develop an effective and forward-looking advocacy strategy for pursuing such funding. This paper also highlights the role of U.S. public and land-grant universities in international development and international education—as well as the significant contributions of USAID to international higher education development.

Introduction

On November 12, 2012, Dr. Robert Gates, former president of Texas A&M University, gave the keynote address at the 125th Annual Meeting of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. The theme of his address was the role of U.S. public and land-grant universities in the success of the nation; indeed, he stated that “the economic prominence of this country, I would argue our national security and international influence, are due in no small measure to two visionary laws: the 1862 Morrill Act and the WWII GI Bill.” The Morrill Act has provided for the transfer of federal land to states for the purpose of establishing institutions focused on agriculture and industry and dedicated to the common good. During his address, Dr. Gates emphasized that U.S. public and land-grant universities are underutilized in U.S. foreign assistance programs and could make meaningful contributions to the developing

world—at a time of declining support for U.S. foreign assistance programs and funding for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Indeed, the situation in 2012 is not unlike the one affecting foreign assistance and international higher education today—in an era of economic nationalism and an “America First” political environment.

The Purpose and Structure of the Paper

Over the past half-century, international higher education has contributed to U.S. global engagement, national security, balance of trade, and leadership roles worldwide. Early financial support for international higher education originated with the U.S. Department of State, USAID, private funding from the Ford Foundation, and the Fulbright Scholar Program. However, the international higher education community is

now faced with the challenge of developing compelling, realistic strategies in order to obtain ongoing federal support—and remain relevant in a fiscally constrained, foreign policy-ascendant political environment. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the need for a more comprehensive research agenda supporting the value of international higher education, and provide suggestions to the international higher education community as it develops a new advocacy strategy for ongoing federal funding.

The paper also recognizes the role of U.S. public and land-grant universities in the development of international higher education (from an international development perspective), and reviews the traditional rationales underpinning international higher education namely: the political, economic, sociocultural and academic. The paper also proposes a more nuanced geostrategic perspective for the value of international higher education.

Early Developments in International Higher Education and U.S. Public and Land-Grant Universities

U.S. public and land-grant universities pioneered and excelled at international higher education from the perspective of international development. For example, they have played a leading role in improving lives in the poorest countries by bringing these countries closer to self-sufficiency via agricultural education and research through enhanced farming techniques and increased food production leading to the eradication of poverty. During the 1980s and 1990s, Bangladesh and India, in particular, became agriculturally self-sufficient with support from U.S. citizens and foreign assistance projects. The associated public and land-grant universities continue to

contribute to world economic and social development by providing business, education, engineering, and technology-related expertise. Indeed, many of the leading universities in the developing world trace their establishment and/or institutional capacity to U.S. foreign assistance programs. Today, many of these institutions—particularly in South and Southeast Asia—are among the most prominent research institutions, in their respective regions of the world.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, U.S. public and land-grant institutions began organizing regional consortia to compete for project development grants and contracts in order to respond to complex, large-scale technical assistance projects, which were funded by the Ford Foundation and later by USAID and the World Bank. These consortia initially focused on agricultural research projects that were designed to establish and/or strengthen agricultural skillsets in less developed countries through (i) supporting graduate students from abroad (*i.e.*, for post-graduate study at member universities in the United States), and (ii) sending U.S. faculty abroad to support the establishment and/or strengthening of counterpart institutions through institutional development leading to enhanced capacity. Thus, the history and successes of U.S. foreign assistance to the development of higher education, in less developed regions of the world, are profound.

Higher education consortia have also played a key role in the internationalization of U.S. public and land-grant universities and the development of international higher education generally. International higher education technical assistance projects have specifically been designed (i) to support the capacity of ministries of higher education in long-term

planning and development, (ii) as effective forms of cultural diplomacy, and (iii) to support national security through the promotion of an awareness of diverse political systems, cultures, and languages.

Notable among the early, prominent leaders in the field of international higher education development were the (i) Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities, Inc. (MUCIA), comprised of the “Big Ten” research universities; (ii) Southeast Consortium for International Development (SECID), comprised of the leading public and land-grant universities throughout the Southeastern United States; and (iii) the Consortium for International Development (CID), representing leading research universities that are located in the Western United States.

The internationalization of higher education (and its successful role in U.S. foreign assistance policy) can thus trace its origins to these early development efforts by leading U.S. public and land-grant universities. During the past 50 years, international higher education has played a significant role in establishing and sustaining U.S. global leadership by contributing to U.S. global engagement, the nation’s national security, and more narrowly (but significantly) as an export/trade commodity. More recently, U.S. colleges and universities have focused on internationalizing curricula, diversifying faculty, and expanding international student demographics. The rationales for these initiatives have included a need to (i) establish and/or expand the institution’s “brand” and student enrollments (for financial reasons), (ii) achieve greater diversity among student and faculty compositions (for sociocultural reasons), and (iii) keep up with benchmarked universities in an effort to be globally engaged and competitive. While

international higher education efforts have varied greatly—by type and level of institution—they have included (i) establishing, expanding, and/or strengthening study-abroad programs; (ii) fully integrating aspects of international affairs (and cross-cultural dynamics) into curricula, (iii) financially supporting faculty exchange and twinning programs (with partner institutions abroad), and (iv) establishing cooperative programs for joint degree-granting programs and/or “greenfield” campuses often with financial support from host countries.

The financial support from college and university administrations to establish and/or expand the international profiles of an institution depends primarily on the objectives of the institutions—and their commitments to accomplishing these objectives. However, in one form or another, federal funding (*i.e.*, via the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of State, and/or USAID) has contributed significantly to these international higher education efforts. USAID has arguably made the most significant and lasting contribution to international higher education development at the institutional level.

Some Contributions of USAID to International Higher Education

Beginning with its founding in 1961 during the Kennedy administration, USAID has contributed to poverty elimination by supporting university development via partnership agreements with America’s leading public and land-grant universities in the areas of agricultural research and education namely, in Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Peru. In Indonesia, the Bogor Agricultural University has become one of the leading providers of agricultural technology and

expertise in Indonesia. USAID support contributed to (a) the “Green Revolution” in India throughout the 1960s and 1970s (in order to further developments in the agricultural sciences) and (b) the establishment of international agriculture programs at both U.S. land-grant universities and counterpart universities throughout South and Southeast Asia. The Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A&M University represents a more recent example of the successful utilization of USAID funding for agricultural education. A few years ago, the Borlaug institute was awarded a three-year cooperative agreement, with USAID, to establish partnerships between U.S. and Indonesian universities.

Another noteworthy example of USAID’s contribution to higher education development was its initial support for the establishment of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Kanpur. Beginning in 1961, and for a period of ten years thereafter, USAID, in cooperation with the Government of India (GOI), contributed financial support to the Kanpur Indo-American Program (KIAP), which was designed for cooperation with MIT and other leading, U.S. research universities. The success of that investment by USAID (*i.e.*, in the development of the Indian Institutes of Technology) was followed by support for the development of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM). Both systems of higher education are now considered among the best in India’s higher education system and heralded as lasting examples of the success of U.S. investment in international higher education abroad.

In 1961, USAID, in cooperation with Harvard University, contributed to the establishment of higher education in business studies

throughout Central America with its early financial support for the INCAE School of Business in Managua, Nicaragua. INCAE is today a fully accredited school of business and considered to be among the leading business schools in the world. At around this same time, USAID also made a significant investment in the establishment of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at the University of Karachi in Pakistan, which is known as one of the first business schools outside of North America. Today, IBA is an independent university.

A less well-known success story (*i.e.*, in the area of business and management studies) is USAID’s contributions to the Royal University of Phenom Penh in Cambodia in the late 1990s—namely, technical assistance in the planning and development of the Faculty of Business Studies. After the Khmer Rouge reign of terror, USAID provided financial support to recruit U.S. expertise to evaluate curricula, operations, staffing and to develop a strategic plan for the study of business, management, and law in Cambodia. Today, the Faculty of Business Studies is Cambodia’s National University of Management, which is the only university in Cambodia with classes taught entirely in English.

USAID support for private higher education abroad also has a long and storied history that has included financial resources for technical assistance to establish medical education at the American University of Beirut in the 1960s and support to the American University in Cairo for more than 50 years. Most recently, and substantially, USAID has provided the financial foundation for the establishment of the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) in Kabul. AUAF received its initial support from USAID beginning in

2006 (*i.e.*, during the George W. Bush presidency); under the presidency of Barack Obama, it received a renewal of support through 2019. A key mission of the American University of Afghanistan is to provide access to higher education for young Afghan women.

The Recent Trend in International Higher Education

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) recently indicated that the overall enrollment rates at U.S. higher education institutions have been steadily declining over the past seven years (*i.e.*, since 2010). Indeed, from 2000 to 2010, college enrollment increased from 15.3 million to about 21 million students (*i.e.*, by nearly one-third), according to the center's statistics; however, enrollment has declined by 0.5 percent in each subsequent year. This decline sharply contrasts with the rate of enrollment of international students in U.S. higher education institutions. For example, the number of international students (*i.e.*, enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities) has risen by 7 percent alone since 2015, according to data in the 2016 *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange* (which was released by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, prior to the president's recent executive order). This same report also noted a nearly 3 percent increase in the number of U.S. students studying abroad during the 2014-2015 school year. The total number of international students currently enrolled in U. S. institutions is approximately one million.

Several theories have been proposed to clarify this contrast (*i.e.*, between the overall de-

clining participation rates among U.S. students in higher education and the increasing enrollment among international students). A recent suggestion is that an improving U.S. economy has presented opportunities for U.S. citizens to reengage in the labor force (*vs.* pursuing higher education); this may also account for declining graduate school applications. Important drivers of international student enrollments likely include (i) increased global mobility and (ii) the reputation of U.S. colleges and universities, which are generally regarded as providing quality education programs that are ranked among the best—if not the best—in the world. For example, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB-International) reports that there are some 13,000 business schools globally; however, the United States continues to be the primary destination for international students who are interested in studying business. Furthermore, the nation's leading schools of science and engineering attract some of the most gifted students and faculty worldwide; indeed, many of these students and faculty have contributed significantly to the nation's scientific, technological, and commercial advances. (More current and potential threats to international student enrollments are discussed later in this paper).

The Rationales Underpinning International Higher Education

For the purposes of this paper, international higher education represents the totality of institutional activity involved in the development and/or pursuit of higher education internationally. In today's global environment, the need for individuals who are culturally experienced, competent, and able to compete internationally has become essential. *Global competency* has been defined as “having an

open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment (Hunter, 2004).” Furthermore, de Wit, in his 2009 book entitled *Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe*, identified four rationales (*i.e.*, academic, political, economic, and sociocultural) supporting international higher education.

The Academic Rationale

The search for knowledge, on a global scale, has been the pursuit of man throughout recorded history (*e.g.*, the concept of the “itinerant scholar” is prevalent in the history of ancient civilizations) (Bridges and Bartlett, 2008; Altbach, 2006). While elements of expanded political influence and economic gain have factored into the objectives of these intellectual pursuits, the search for learning has been the primary motivation over time. These pursuits were especially prevalent during the Middle Ages and regionally in the Middle East.

Several modern considerations, related to an academic rationale for international higher education, have been outlined by The American Council on Education (2015), including:

- **Expanding higher education capacity.** In countries wherein the demand for higher education exceeds the seats available (or quality is a concern), study-abroad scholarships may be implemented as a way to extend the reach of the existing higher education system to a larger proportion of the population.

- **Improving higher education quality.** Policies and programs often promote the quality of higher education domestically (*e.g.*, the development of faculty capacity, expertise, and identification of best practices from peers abroad) via a focus on scholar mobility, research collaborations, and incentivizing multifaceted institution-level partnerships.

- **Enhancing prestige and rankings.** In some cases, internationalization policies are correlated with initiatives to create “world-class” universities that are raising the visibility and stature of a national higher education system globally—and improving the status of a country's institutions (in global rankings).

- **Creating and advancing knowledge.** Collaboration may be driven by a broader goal of creating and advancing knowledge (*i.e.*, a key function of the higher education enterprise) along with higher education capacity development, internationalization policies, and programs targeting scholar mobility and research.

The Political Rationale

As the United States ascended to world dominance during the twentieth century—particularly following World War II—so too did presidential policies and congressional legislation, including legislation designed to exert political influence and U.S. democratic ideals. One significant aim of these policies and legislation was to prevent the recurrence of tyranny and world conflicts. One of the most

effective means of exerting political influence was—and continues to be—provisions of financial support for the development and delivery of international higher education programs. These programs include the Fulbright Scholar Program (which is the oldest and most prominent), the Eisenhower Fellowship Program, which seeks to identify young international leaders committed to making the world more peaceful and prosperous, and USAID’s Democracy Fellows Program focused on good governance and human rights around the world.

A key objective, in support of this goal (exerting political influence and U.S. democratic ideals), was the establishment of strong and mutually beneficial international relationships—at both the individual and institutional levels. Nye (2004) characterizes these efforts as the exertion of “soft power”—specifically, the “power of ideas and culture [are leveraged] to influence the friendship, disposition, and action of others.” The Fulbright Scholar Program is arguably the most effective demonstration of these “soft power” efforts. The “soft power” approach rests primarily upon a strategy of “co-opting” policy positions and decisions among nation states and global entities *vs.* “coercing” or “inducing” outcomes, based on approaches that leverage military superiority and/or economic power. The United States, despite its relative military and economic capacities, therefore, has invested in policy strategies and programs that promote peace, human rights, and mutual understanding.

The Economic Rationale

The expansion of the global economy over the past 30 years has generated demand for a sophisticated and technologically astute

workforce. This is particularly apparent in the U.S. information technology and higher education sectors wherein a multicultural workforce has become the norm. Additionally, rapid advances in science, technology, engineering, and math—the so-called STEM subject areas—require a country to maintain a strong national pool of talent if it is to remain competitive and viable. Indeed, the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada have all contributed to developing a highly competitive, globally sourced workforce.

Increasing international student enrollments have indeed contributed to the availability and quality of this sophisticated labor pool. According to NAFSA: Association of International Educators, international higher education in the United States has evolved into a \$36 billion industry, which supported nearly 400,000 jobs nationally during the 2015-2016 academic year. In Australia, the international higher education industry is estimated at \$20 billion, according to a 2016 report by the Australian Department of Education and Training. Similarly, international higher education in the United Kingdom has approached \$18 billion, according to the 2016 UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) Report.

The fact that international higher education is now recognized as a significant trade/export product is remarkable from a financial perspective; however, as an export product, it is also subject to increasing sensitivities—especially political change. For example, a recent survey in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, (dated March 13, 2017) entitled, “Prospective International Students Show New Reluctance to Study in the U.S.,” noted the increasing hesitation of international students to enroll

in U.S. higher education programs due to the Trump administration's recent policy affecting entry to the United States from select countries. If such reluctance is the beginning of a trend—and a shift in global destination—it may have significant implications for university budgets, state and local economies, and longer-term national competitiveness. Indeed, Pankaj Ghemawat and Phillip Bastian, in a recent article in BizEd (the professional publication of the AACSB) entitled “Anti-Globalization and Higher Education,” also recognize this point and suggest that:

Even where the letter of immigration law does not (yet) preclude student inflows, two major problems arise. First, because studying overseas, particularly for a degree, involves a major commitment of time and resources, it is rational for prospective international students to worry about how relevant policies might change in response to a general rise in xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment andeven in the absence of policy restrictions on students, the deterioration in the climate surrounding foreigners is likely to have a chilling effect on international student exchanges.

The Sociocultural Rationale

Sociocultural rationale is seen as a way to recognize and respect cultural differences. This involves simultaneously recognizing and understanding the role and place of a country's culture and language vis-à-vis other languages and cultures. Researchers, such as Knight (1997) and Qiang (2003), view (i) sociocultural rationale as the preservation and promotion of national culture and

(ii) internationalization as a way to respect cultural diversity. This view places particular emphasis on an understanding of foreign languages and cultures, the preservation of national culture, and respect for diversity. This type of educational program (*i.e.*, providing direct experiences with foreign countries and cultures) is widely supported in the literature and viewed as essential to reducing geopolitical conflict and establishing sustainable and peaceful international relations (Zolfaghari, Sabran, and Zolfaghari, 2009; Nye, 2004; de Wit, 1998; Van der Wende, 1997). In an era of internationalization and globalization, the sociocultural rationale has perhaps the strongest intuitive support as a rationale for international higher education.

A Geostrategic Perspective

While the geostrategic perspective is a more nuanced perspective that supports international higher education and is gaining increased recognition, it is still receiving insufficient attention in the research literature. This perspective recognizes the integration of sociocultural, economic and political rationale; however, it involves a pronounced shift towards a focus on geopolitical and economic development (*i.e.*, in the form of strategic alliances via institutional global engagement). Peterson and Helms (in a paper, “Challenges and Opportunities for the Global Engagement of Higher Education,” initially presented at the Beijing Forum in November, 2013 and later reprinted by the American Council on Education) indicate that:

At the government level, motivations for encouraging higher education's global engagement largely parallel those of institutions. Chief among these is economic competitiveness,

which is linked to institution's goal of preparing students for a globalized world. A country's economic competitiveness depends on the competence of its workforce; in a globalized world, a competent workforce is one that is able to operate cross borders.

The authors further emphasize that: “Global engagement initiatives in the higher education realm are often part of broader public diplomacy efforts through which governments exert “soft power.”

Knight (2015) also notes that the increased mobility of students and scholars (*i.e.*, both physically and remotely) across national boundaries is a primary vehicle for the promotion of geopolitical alliances—and how continuous advances in information and communication technology make virtual work a viable method for integrating a global workforce. Indeed, this trend further highlights (i) the need for university graduates who possess an ability to perform at a high level within diverse political and cultural environments and are technically competent; (ii) the unprecedented demand experienced by graduates when they have the knowledge and skills necessary to take on challenging, internationally focused assignments and leadership roles in politically sensitive environments; and (iii) an acceleration of international competition for the “best and brightest”—and demand for universities to produce high-caliber, globally astute graduates. Concurrently, however, a tendency towards nationalism (*i.e.*, in many parts of the world) is accelerating at the same time that countries are increasingly struggling with supporting sought-after, tax-funded international higher education programs. Consequently, this may present opportunities for international higher education,

strategic alliances and public-private sector engagements that lead to greater U.S. corporate and national competitiveness abroad.

Beyond Traditional Rationales: Measuring the Value of International Higher Education

While each of the four rationales underpinning international higher education have been theoretically well-established in the literature and remain intuitively relevant in today's globally connected world, only the economic rationale has been reasonably quantified. Due to the increasing competition for scarce resources (*e.g.*, among public colleges and universities that depend upon federal, state and local funding), there is a need to effectively measure the value of international higher education more broadly in order to effectively argue in support of public funding. For example, does possession of a costly, internationally focused MBA degree, or a similar graduate degree, benefit both the recipient of the degree and society in a clearly quantifiable way? Or is such a degree merely a “signal” to potential employers that a prospective employee possesses certain intellectual qualities and cultural sensibilities?

In other words, in today's highly competitive and globally integrated world, what is the value proposition of a formal higher education degree *vs.* a series of highly adaptable, short-duration certification programs? Would a series of internationally oriented Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) be equally effective (*i.e.*, as a formal university degree)? If we agree that the completion of a traditional, internationally focused university program is inherently valuable, how do we measure the international component of the degree? For example, is there a way to “map”

specific learning outcomes in international higher education programs in accordance with measurable, post-graduation results? Some of these concerns were articulated by NAFSA Deputy Executive Director Kevin Hovland, in a *Times Higher Education* article wherein he indicated that:

In a highly competitive environment, what do institutions mean when they promise that their students will graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to become leaders in a connected, interdependent, global future? How do they translate such lofty goals into concrete learning outcomes? How do they map those outcomes on to courses and across the curriculum? What is the role of co-curricular and experiential learning in helping students to gain the necessary skills and knowledge?

Perhaps ironically, one of the primary skills that international educators impart to their students is the ability to analyze, quantify, and develop strategies that are relevant to politically and economically complex environments. However, based on the relative dearth of metrics and data in the empirical literature, application of this methodology (*i.e.*, to the rationale for international higher education) has been overlooked; for example, what should be measured? Is it the dollar value of tuition paid by foreign students and the contribution of these dollars to the U.S. economy? Do we capture metrics (*e.g.*, the number of foreign students who remain in the U.S. following graduation and obtain jobs wherein they contribute to the GDP)? Do we measure the number of patents produced by foreign students who graduate from U.S. engineering schools? Do we somehow measure

the career advancement of graduates enrolled in international higher education programs vs. those who choose not to pursue such education? The answer, of course, is that there are a myriad of variables upon which to measure these programs economically but few if any (*i.e.*, other than anecdotal) to measure the sociocultural and political rationale.

Individuals, such as Jeffrey S. Lehman, the vice chancellor of New York University's campus in Shanghai, have described their study-abroad experiences as having profoundly changed their worldviews. Lehman studied in France via a Sweet Briar College junior year study-abroad program and noted that "nothing else [he] learned in all [his] years of formal education would matter so much to [his] adult life as that moment of intellectual rebirth." Lehman further explained that a significant (*i.e.*, transformative yet difficult-to-measure) element of the program was the opportunity to attend classes and live with foreign students who challenged his thinking and expanded his understanding. Thus, a corollary objective of this paper is a call to the international higher education community to establish a more comprehensive research agenda—one that would support both economic and "soft power" rationale.

Suggestions to the International Higher Education Community for a Compelling Advocacy Strategy

So, what is the future of international higher education in the United States—particularly as we confront accelerating international educational competitiveness, economic nationalism and a more aggressive U.S. foreign policy? Will U.S. universities continue to be the preferred option for international students?

Will U.S. colleges and universities—especially public institutions that are highly dependent upon state and federal funding—continue to invest in increasingly costly international programs? Will U.S. students continue to seek a higher education that emphasizes international learning and cultural understanding? Indeed, the international higher education community must now mobilize to develop a realistic advocacy strategy predicated upon a limited national budget (*i.e.*, for cultural and foreign assistance programs) into the foreseeable future.

Thus, there are a myriad of complicated implications and questions for U.S. universities as they proceed with developing and implementing international higher educational policies. For example, the recently proposed but yet to be passed presidential budget might prompt the following questions: (1) How will international higher education remain relevant in the context of potentially declining federal and state support? (2) What are the implications of declining domestic student enrollments and tighter budgets for international higher education? (3) How will increasing competition (from both domestic and foreign universities) for international student enrollments affect instructional quality? (4) How will U.S. colleges and universities maintain a balance between national and international student enrollments—especially when pushed by central administrations to increase international student enrollments? (5) How will U.S. colleges and universities maintain and/or improve academic quality and student performance when forced to moderate entrance requirements (*e.g.*, in order to maintain enrollment targets and support institutional overhead, tenured faculty positions, and low-enrollment departments)?,

and (6) How will the international higher education community promote and adopt realistic and measurable policy goals in a highly restrictive funding environment?

As federal and state funding for higher education continues to tighten, publicly supported colleges and universities that wish to expand—or simply maintain international higher education programs and curricula—will need to articulate and present “business-like” plans for funding. Any associated argument for support (*i.e.*, based upon cost-effective plans that stress measurable, direct returns on taxpayer investments) will have a greater chance of succeeding.

Below are several suggestions for the international higher education community to consider as it pursues a compelling advocacy strategy. While these suggestions may seem harsh to some within the community, they are meant to elicit a plan of action that is *realistic* and *potentially successful* within highly challenging political and economic environments:

- **First, the international higher education community must recognize that this is “not business as usual.”** The community faces perhaps the most difficult time in decades; proposals for international higher education funding will be highly scrutinized. Consequently, the community must change its traditional approach. For example, international higher education advocacy groups like the Association for Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), the International Education Council (IEC), and The Association for the

Advancement of International Education (AAIE) must indicate how a proposal for federal funding (*i.e.*, for international higher education programs) will “specifically” enhance national security, national economic performance (competitiveness), and U.S. workforce development. Also, whenever possible, these organizations will need to demonstrate how federal support (*i.e.*, for international higher education programs) can strengthen geostrategic aspects of U.S. foreign policy; this is guaranteed to get the current administration’s attention.

- **A corollary (*i.e.*, to the first suggestion) is that the international higher education community must recognize that it is dealing with a private-sector administration.** The president and his senior administration think like businesspeople because they are businesspeople; thus, it is essential to advocate for federal funding like businesspeople. For example, the community must recognize that asking for federal financial support (*i.e.*, for international programs) too generally will not work (*e.g.*, by simply stating that “support for international higher education is the right thing to do”). If the international higher education community is not able to clearly articulate how its international programs result in a “strengthened U.S. international presence,” the community will not be successful in funding these programs.
- **The international higher education community must recognize, and accept, that the new leadership at the**

Department of Education is focused on primary and secondary education (vs. higher education and international higher education)—although there is some indication of support for technical/vocational education. Thus, interest in (and financial support for) international programs is far from a priority. Furthermore, federal support for international higher education (except for the flagship Fulbright Scholar Program) and other cultural programs within the Department of State will be significantly curtailed (or eliminated)—unless, of course, Congress steps in to avoid such results. In sum, always emphasize the obvious: “economic strength, national competitiveness and workforce development.”

- **The international higher education community must do more to emphasize “metrics.” Emphasize measureable results!** While the number of jobs associated with international higher education programs (and the macroeconomic impact of international higher education programs nationally) will help to drive the debate, this is an insufficient basis for the development of associated strategies. However, this paper identifies a number of other significant measureable opportunities. In an era of “economic nationalism,” cost-benefit will win the day—and the funding.
- **The international higher education community must do more to educate the public and its political representatives about the local and**

state economic benefits of its programs. For example, repeatedly emphasize how programs contribute financially to local and state economies and make sure that local and state political representatives know (and appreciate) this.

- **The international higher education community must repeatedly stress that international higher education is a \$36 billion growth “industry.”** Anticipate that the general public especially educators and politicians, still do not view higher education—and particularly international higher education—as an industry. Therefore, whenever possible emphasize the bigger picture; as an industry, how do international higher education programs improve the U.S. balance of trade?
- **If these suggestions are difficult to accept and implement, recruit someone who can help make the case. Always remember that international higher education has indeed helped “Make America-Great”—and will continue to do so.**

Summary and Conclusion

The United States has a long and proud tradition of leadership in world economic, political, and social development and diverse funding streams (*e.g.*, from the U.S. Department of State, Ford Foundation, USAID, and other private-sector initiatives) have played a critical role in international development. Fur-

thermore, U.S. public and land-grant universities have played key institutional roles in international development and international higher education in the fields of agriculture, business, engineering, science, and technology. Historically, many of the contributions in these areas can be traced to early international higher education consortia (*e.g.*, MUCIA, SECID, and CID). One consortium that remains active is the Texas International Education Consortium (TIEC), which includes Texas A&M University. This consortium continues to represent Texas universities in many internationally related higher education activities and programs.

However, today, in a complicated and challenging political environment, funding for all U.S. foreign assistance programs is, and will continue to be, severely constrained. As the nation faces a number of profound fiscal challenges (*e.g.*, historically high national debt, unsustainable entitlement programs, and inadequate economic growth), federal budget support for international higher education programs will grow increasingly constrained. Additionally, some might argue that the importance of support for international higher education is even more critical today (and in the coming decade) as the country faces serious, rapidly evolving, geopolitical crisis points. The concluding question then (*i.e.*, before the international higher education community) is: How will the community create a compelling research agenda and advocacy strategy in response to these challenges, and also contribute to the resolution of these geopolitical crisis points in an era of declining financial resources and “economic nationalism?”

The Views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the positions of any of the institutions to which they are affiliated (e.g., the George Washington University, the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, the Bush School of Government and Public Services, or Texas A&M University).

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Dr. Herbert J. Davis

Dr. Davis has more than 35 years of experience with business and international affairs. His geographic areas of interest and expertise include South Asia, the Middle East, and the Gulf Region (GCC). Dr. Davis has held senior management positions with the United States Chamber of Commerce, including vice president for international affairs. During his career at the Chamber, he was directly involved in founding three bilateral business councils representing U.S. corporate interests in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Bahrain. He also founded and managed the South Asia Regional Energy Coalition (SAREC) at the Chamber.

While at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Davis worked closely with the Executive Office of the Clinton and George W. Bush Administrations and various departments of the U.S. government. From 2010-2013, he was the Team Lead and Acting Chief of Party for the USAID-funded Iraq Financial Development Project under contract to AECOM International Development Inc.

Dr. Davis was named global management research professor at the George Washington University in 1996 for his contributions to the international development of the School of Business and to the George Washington University. Earlier in his career, he was the provost and visiting professor of business at Indiana University, with responsibility for the University's international campus in Selangor, Malaysia.

Professor Davis has served as a visiting scholar at the East-West Center, senior Fulbright professor to Bangladesh, and as a visiting professor at several universities worldwide (*e.g.*, the University of Western Australia, Victoria University of Wellington, Concordia University of Montreal, and the National University of Singapore). He is the senior editor of *National Culture and International Management in East Asia*, published by Thomson Business Press (UK) and *Management in India: Trends and Transition*, published by Sage, India. Professor Davis received his Ph.D. from Louisiana State University. During the 2016-2017 academic year, he served as the Senior Scowcroft Fellow in International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University.

Dr. David A. Ragland

David A. Ragland is an international business consultant. He has held senior executive positions with such corporations as Time Warner Inc., AIG, and Marsh and McLennan. His regional areas of interest are Latin America and Europe. Dr. Ragland received his Executive D.B.A. degree from the Instituto de Empresa (IE Business School) in Madrid, Spain.

The Bush School of Government and Public Service

Mark Welsh, Dean and Holder of the Edward & Howard Kruse Endowed Chair

Founded in 1997, the Bush School of Government and Public Service has become one of the leading public and international affairs graduate schools in the nation. One of ten schools and colleges at Texas A&M University, a tier-one research university, the School offers master's level education for students aspiring to careers in public service.

The School is ranked in the top 12 percent of graduate public affairs schools in the nation, according to rankings published in U.S. News & World Report. The School now ranks thirty-third among both public and private public affairs graduate programs and twenty-first among public universities.

The School's philosophy is based on the belief of its founder, George H.W. Bush, that public service is a noble calling—a belief that continues to shape all aspects of the curriculum, research, and student experience. In addition to the Master of Public Service and Administration degree and the Master of International Affairs degree, the School has an expanding online and extended education program that includes Certificates in Advanced International Affairs, Homeland Security, and Nonprofit Management.

Located in College Station, Texas, the School's programs are housed in the Robert H. and Judy Ley Allen Building, which is part of the George Bush Presidential Library Center on the West Campus of Texas A&M. This location affords students access to the archival holdings of the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, invitation to numerous events hosted by the George Bush Foundation at the Annenberg Presidential Conference Center, and inclusion in the many activities of the Texas A&M community.

The Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Andrew S. Natsios, Director and E. Richard Schendel Distinguished Professor of the Practice

The Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) is a research institute housed in the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. The Institute is named in honor of Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.), who had a long and distinguished career in public service serving both as National Security Advisor for Presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush. The Institute's core mission is to foster and disseminate policy-oriented research on international affairs by supporting faculty and student research, hosting international speakers and major scholarly conferences, and providing grants to outside researchers to use the holdings of the Bush Library.

“We live in an era of tremendous global change. Policy makers will confront unfamiliar challenges, new opportunities, and difficult choices in the years ahead I look forward to the Scowcroft Institute supporting policy-relevant research that will contribute to our understanding of these changes, illuminating their implications for our national interest, and fostering lively exchanges about how the United States can help shape a world that best serves our interests and reflects our values.”— Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.)