



International Education in the International Prospective

Final report of Martin Glogar

Background

Due to a combination of logistical difficulties and personal reasons, the actual program differed from the proposal in a few aspects. Some features changed – the stay postponed from Spring to Fall semester, instead of Baruch College I interned at two other colleges of the City University of New York, and despite the plan, I officially could not work for the Institute of International Education, as this institution sponsored my visa, finally also the selection of the courses I enrolled to at Teachers College differed from my proposal – what however remained were the main goals and objectives.

The aim of my program was to overcome shortcomings in the theoretical knowledge about international education and accelerate my professional development by further trainings to be fully able to engage in internationalization processes at Masaryk University (MU) and in the international projects I participate in on behalf of MU. I am confident that the opportunity I have been provided through the American Fund for Czech and Slovak Leadership Studies has helped me to reach these goals.

American Partners

The first partner of mine was Columbia University, where I was enrolled as a non-matriculated student. Through that I was able to participate at many challenging academic, cultural and social events of this vibrant community, could observe an environment of top global-class institution, draw from their activities and projects, and at the same time attend courses both at Columbia University and at Teachers College of Columbia University (Teachers College).

The second most critical partner of my program was the City University of New York (CUNY) where I was allowed to engage in their internationalization activities. CUNY as a large urban public university, comprising many colleges across New York City, serves much larger body of students and community and the city at large, on the other hand faces economic, administrative and academic challenges that are in a way more demanding than the ones ahead of Columbia University. At CUNY I worked primarily at the College of Staten Island (at its Center for International Service; CSI), and at Kingsborough Community College (at its Office of Academic Vice-Provost, KBCC). During my stay however, I was meeting representatives of other colleges, primarily through central meetings organized by CUNY International Education Coordinator who provided me with the view of the “system headquarters.” All this activities were extremely useful for me to apprehend its internationalization policies, as well as CUNY administration in general.

I was intending to do an internship also at the Institute of International Education (IIE), but that could not take place on the official basis, as IIE sponsored my visa. I was however – on irregular basis – meeting different people from IIE, such as Tony Claudino, a former employee at MU and current Fulbright Student Program Outreach Director at IIE, Raisa Belyavina from the Research and Evaluation and other staff from IIE at their New York office. Through these contacts I was able to get to know better another level of actors in international education, as IIE is a private nonprofit agency that plays an important role in international education globally, although it is not an academic institution.

I was fortunate to do my program in New York City, which enabled me to benefit from its extremely wealthy resources beyond the offering of the official partners. The city proved to be invaluable for reaching the third of my goals (networking), as I could work unintentionally on this constantly through visiting many different institutions and meeting many interesting people outside my originally planned program.

Brief Evaluation Statement

The overall program objective was to gain knowledge and practical experience regarding internationalization, with the following general goals:

- Familiarize with the theoretical and practical concepts of international education.
- Map out the recent trends of internationalization of higher education.
- Learn about research methods in international education.
- Receive training in management, leadership and higher education administration, with special focus on international education.
- Understand an American approach towards international education and compare it with the European model.
- Meet our current North American partners and see into enhancing the existing cooperation, and also explore the possibility to enlarge their network.

I have managed to accomplish the above mentioned objectives: Some of these goals were reached to a full extent, others less; some of them were completed in strategically planned activities, others emerged as a byproduct or I can recognize my fulfillments only in a large context of the whole experience.

Detailed Evaluation Statement

In order to tackle the above mentioned goals I deployed three main methods – Executive training seminar, Internship, and networking.

Executive training

As a student at Columbia University, taking a half semester load, I cross-registered two graduate courses at Teachers College and audit some courses at Columbia University. I decided to enroll to the following two courses: Purposes and Policies of Higher Education (ORLH 4010) and Education and Development of Nations (ITSF 5590), and on irregular basis thanks to the generosity of the instructors I could audit two other (Contemporary student issues and policies; Central Europe 1878-1956).

The 'Purposes and Policies' was an excellent survey course that helped me to grasp structure and character of the American Higher Education system. It helped me to understand the history, components, major participants, and forces that have shaped the American academia, and its effects on the global higher education scene. Internationalization was recognized as one of the most critical issue and I hopefully was able to contribute to our discussions by bringing in my own experience, as well as European points of comparison.

My participation at this course was assessed by a grade A-.

The 'Education and Development' examined the relationship between education and the development of nations, especially among the emerging countries. Within a variety of contexts and from a number of theoretical and stakeholder perspectives, employing different units or levels of analysis to do so, I was able to realize opportunities as well as threads internationalization represents for the less developed countries. In the light of the recent intensification of contacts MU has in the relevant regions, it was extremely practical to learn about them, get to know the literature, and primarily discuss them with the fellow students (who in many cases were natives or with professional experience in these countries).

My participation at this course was assessed by a grade A-.

As far as the courses I audited, I chose them to either complement them with my American program (Student issues and policies) or with the courses I organize at MU to compare the teaching methods and literature (Central Europe).

Internships

In addition to the observation of practices and functions at the Teachers College and Columbia University that I could have done as a student, I also interned at two colleges of CUNY where my possibility to encounter administration and management personnel and issues was organized in more formal way.

At the College of Staten Island (at its Center for International Service; CSI) I involved in a few projects, but the main focus of mine was the strategy of internationalization. The start of my internship coincided with the arrival of the new director of the Center, Dr. Stephen Forst, a respected leader in the international education, currently serving as Vice-President of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, was also interested in reviewing the internationalization strategy and allowed me to take part at this process. In order to measure,

but in the same time also promote internationalization across the college, I was also assigned to prepare a Departmental Internalization Rubric. That was an invaluable opportunity to get to know the internal internationalization processes.

At Kingsborough Community College I worked under Dr. Reza Fakhari, the Academic Vice-Provost. I was invited to evaluate the running international projects – regarding bilateral agreements, mobility projects, faculty-led programs to Europe, engage with the Honors program, etc. The primary goal at KBCC for me to start working at a brand new initiative, which under a name “Salzburg Global Seminar in New York” is to allow local students, especially from the community colleges, get a global perspective to their academic careers.

Networking

One of my professional responsibilities at MU is to take care of international partnerships with other institutions, as well as mobility of MU students to these institutions. I have therefore used the opportunity to visit North American partners, such as the University of Toronto (UofT), Brock University, Juniata College, or Edgewood College. These visits were not just pure ‘inspection’, although this was important as well, but it also helped to take off some of the projects, such as a new summer school on business strategies in Europe, which will be carried out in the cooperation with UofT, or setting up a scheme that will allow exchange students from Masaryk University studying at Juniata College, obtain after successful completion of bachelor studies at MU and fulfilling extra requirements also a degree from Juniata College.

In addition to enhancing the existing links, I was also networking with other people and institutions, e.g. the local Czech community in NYC around Sokol, the Bohemian National Hall, or the Czech community in Astoria.

Organization and Time Schedule

With the visa delay and further reconsideration, I postponed my stay from spring to fall 2013. Overall, I extended the proposed length (5 months) of my stay in the US by another 3 weeks, as I arrived in early August and left at the end of December, but the beginning as well as the end of the program was spent by visiting friends and travels across the United States. Although not explicitly connected with the program (and not part of the cost breakdown below), I believe that this helped me to understand better the complexity of the American culture and values. As far as the actual time spent in New York City working on the core of the program – i.e. studying at Teachers College and interning at CUNY – it amounted to over 4 months.

Program Cost

Item	Cost estimate in US\$	Actual Cost in US\$
Executive training tuition (for 6 points – estimated tuition per credit for 2012-2013 is \$1286) and college fee (\$388)	8,104	8,469
Internship	0	0
Administrative fees (visa, registration fees, NAFSA conference registration fee [\$750], etc.)	950	1,090 (fee for visa sponsorship – 750; Sevis Fee – 180; visa fee payable at the Embassy – 160)
International travel	800	1,200 (23,425 CZK)
Local transportation (\$104/mo. x 5 + \$600 national airfare)	1,120	448 (112x5)
Medical insurance	635	673.82
Monthly maintenance (\$1805/mo. x 5 – based on Fulbright standards for NY)	9,025	9,325 (housing – 7,325, meals – 2,000)
Contingency	500	700
Total	21,134	21,899.82

The final figure of the actual cost of my program was just slightly higher than the one of the estimated cost, but they differ more when broken down to each item. Overall the cost of the program was higher than expected, which is due to inflation between the time of applying and of arrival, and that the cost is generally higher in falls than in springs (that applies to international travels especially). I also did not anticipate paying visa sponsorship fee, but had no other choice than to do so. This extra expense was however evened out by not paying the NAFSA conference fee (as the conference took place in May). The support of my home institution and employer Masaryk University, allowed me to save program money for the domestic travel, as I was able to cover some cost of the trips from their resources. Given my family circumstances, I ended up paying actually more than the chart above shows, but I consider that a wise investment.

Program Benefit

The program helped me become more professional, and to grow as a person and a leader. Possibility to study at a global class institution in the field I had been professionally engaged for a few years, and also to meet other experts in the field, discuss with them current trends, as well as be engaged in the internationalization of higher education institutions were extremely inspiring and encouraging for my own work. There are many small ideas I gained that I am planning to employ into my work at MU, not to mention positive attitude and overwhelming American proactive approach to dealing with issues and problems.

On the institutional level, in addition to the experience I am bringing, my stay helped in intensification of the relations and links MU has with the North American institution such as those mentioned in the networking section of this report. In addition I am bringing a proposal from CUNY that might lead to an agreement allowing exchange of students between the two institutions.

Risks

The program had provided me with a few challenges, which with the knowledge and experience of today, could have been tackled better.

First of all, to obtain the US visa proved to be extremely complicated, far more time (in this respect I have to express my gratitude to Mr. Martin Herman for his diligent assistance in this process) and also cost consuming. Another big challenge was the fact that in addition to my AFCSLs program I kept the work for MU. Although officially it was just a half load, at times this took more than that and that prevented me from enjoying the cultural offering of NYC. All these duties kept me extremely busy and required constant multitasking.

On the personal level the most difficult task was a search for the accommodation, and the cost of living in NYC in general.

Although these challenges were quite demanding, I believe they were part of the 'package' and overall experience that helped to develop my leadership skills and capacities, and at the same time step into shoes of a New Yorker.

Acknowledgements

I would like to use the opportunity to express my gratitude to all the people who made this experience happen. First of all I would like to mention AFCSLs board in general and Mr. Martin Herman especially. Mr. Herman helped me not just as far as the actual funding is concerned, but he provided excellent support before and throughout my stay. I would also like to Mr. Tony Claudino and his family for his help in setting up contacts in NYC at IIE, CUNY and Columbia University, as well as the practical assistance with living. I am grateful to all my mentors and teachers from all the institutions I studied or worked at during my stay. Last, but not least I would like to thank my wife Jana and daughter Mariana for their decision to come along, and for their tolerance and support when I did not have enough time to spend with them.