

Wisconsin Technical College System Districts Making a Commitment to International Education

International Education Recognizes Global Reality

Geographic and political boundaries have become increasingly porous as a functioning “global society” finds new paths each day to touch our lives economically, technologically, and culturally. The breadth and depth of global interdependence can both stagger and invigorate. International education in the

Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) recognizes opportunities in these unprecedented circumstances and stands ready to help our students, faculty, and staff—and the communities we serve—to thrive in this new global society.

A Global Society Redefines Community Service

Accepting that each WTCS school’s mission focuses on service to its community, it becomes clear that eroding boundaries redefine community and reveal a new education and training landscape. Each global contact—from casual e-mails to formal trade agreements—by the citizens and enterprises of a district extends that community to the far limits of that contact. From enrollment expansion to business/industry partnerships, the diverse needs, influences, and opportunities implicit in the new virtual community each college serves can be met, mediated, and made most of when international education enhances each college’s vision.

This new global view does not limit WTCS colleges to the far horizon, however. It encompasses the foreground as well. Even as the WTCS international education effort extends itself to the world, it welcomes the world to Wisconsin and each district, capitalizing on the infusion of diverse contributions and contributors. Traditional labels have previously identified the far view as international and the near view as multicultural, but international education now recognizes them as two ends of one spectrum.

Recognition of Needs Drives Initiative

In 1996 the WTCS Standing Committee on International Education sponsored a DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) occupational analysis by a diverse panel of industry, labor, government, and education experts to determine skills needed when working in an international/multicultural environment. This was followed in 1997 by Governor Thompson’s request that the Wisconsin International Trade

Council (WITCO) “... study the state’s international education programs to ensure that young people throughout Wisconsin are properly trained and prepared to become the first truly global generation.” The resulting 1998 WITCO task force report recommended state assurance of international education programs yielding: (1) a basic global perspective for all citizens, (2) a wider range of specific

international business training, and (3) continued employee training for businesses expanding international trade.

Responding to the WITCO report, Governor Thompson asked involved agencies, including WTCS, to review existing policies related to international education. July 1999 saw the presentation of WTCS Policy Paper No. 99-2, “International Education Activities in the Wisconsin Technical College System,” to the WTCS Board. The paper explains:

Increasingly, Wisconsin firms need workers and managers who understand the vital role of international trade and marketing and who can apply these principles and practices on the job and in their own companies. They need employees who can communicate with others despite differences in language and tradition. They need employees who can appreciate and work with others despite cultural traditions that differ from their own and who can

function comfortably in diverse settings. Finally, they need workers and managers who bring to their job a global perspective commensurate with the global marketplace in which their employer is operating.

Referencing the American Association of Community Colleges’ international education policy statement which notes, “Community colleges are strategically positioned and experienced to respond to this educational and economic development imperative ...” the state board paper concludes that the rationale for WTCS international education efforts “... is implicit in the importance of international trade to the state and nation.”

In accepting revisions proposed by Policy Paper No. 99-2, the WTCS Board affirmed support for international education, called for continued examination of barriers to international education, and directed district boards to establish their own policies on international education activities—program review, international student enrollment, and international travel.

What Each District Can Do

In support of the WTCS Board’s revised policy and the WTCS President’s Plan of Work, the WTCS Standing Committee on International Education encourages all 16 districts to directly commit to the initiative, both in their mission statements and through the development of strategic plans, objectives, or end statements which integrate the work of active district international education committees. The Standing Committee offers its knowledge and experience in support of all district efforts to

become exemplary institutions in global education and training. To that end, model mission statements and policy templates accompany this white paper. The world, in essence, has moved into our districts. As we would with any new resident, our districts can open our doors wide, establishing a relationship that offers the best of WTCS to the world and garners the best of the world for the WTCS, our students, and our communities.

International/Intercultural Education

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Businesses and industries in the Northcentral Technical College District are becoming increasingly dependent on a highly competitive global economy for their success. To prepare the district workforce for participation in this international society, Northcentral Technical College must provide a global educational experience for students and serve as an international intercultural education resource for its communities.

As mandated by the state board, all international activities will be developed and annually reviewed using the following criteria to ensure that they:

- Are necessary training components of district programs.
- Provide significant benefit to students and employers.
- Do not divert resources from the district's primary programs.

The Northcentral Technical College (NTC) international efforts will focus in the following areas:

Internationalization of Curriculum

The NTC has a responsibility to develop programs and courses designed to meet specific international marketplace needs. Workers must have the skills necessary to do business internationally and to live in a culturally diverse society.

In order to accomplish this, NTC will review existing programs and establish comprehensive guidelines to ensure that the needs of employers and students are met for training that is relevant to an international economy and globally competent citizens. Such an assessment will consider whether: (1) program curricula should include international subject matter, (2) faculty possess the requisite expertise or experience to teach international subjects and skills determined to be necessary, and (3) program advisory committees, where appropriate, include persons with international knowledge or experience.

Training and Other Services for District Audiences

NTC is committed to develop and provide services and training that assist central Wisconsin's business, industry, and community sectors to compete in the global marketplace. The college will assist its business counterparts by:

- Implementing needs assessments to assess the district's international business endeavors and resulting training needs.
- Developing grant proposals that address international services and training needs.
- Initiating and supporting collaborative efforts with local, state, and national organizations that serve as resources and networks to enhance central Wisconsin's international business endeavors.
- Developing language and cultural services to meet growing needs.

- Providing technical assistance and customized training throughout the world for district companies who have developed facilities, business linkages, and training needs in other countries.

Training and Other Services for/With International Audiences

Competing in a global marketplace requires both political and cultural expertise and understanding, in addition to technical skills. Therefore, the district shall provide a broad range of international/intercultural experiences that will introduce other cultures to the campus and the district to further the understanding of other nations and stimulate interest in international studies and trade.

These activities may include the following:

- Enrolling students from other countries in NTC programs and courses where excess capacity exists and/or where additional capacity can be developed. (See Policy 236 Admissions Policy—International Students)
- Providing support services to assist international students within the college and community.
- Developing sister city/sister school relationships with international counterparts.
- Providing for student, staff, and faculty exchanges or other professional development experiences with comparable educational institutions in other countries.

International Travel

International travel is a necessary component for a complete international program. Faculty and student exchanges lead to greater awareness of different cultures. Changes in curriculum result from these experiences, ultimately benefiting students. The development of sister school, sister city, and other educational and community relationships necessitates international travel by staff, faculty, board members, students, and members of the community. In order to provide training and service to international locations, international travel may also be necessary. (See Policy 302, International Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy, for approval process to be followed.)

Funding International Endeavors

In its efforts to provide appropriate international activities, the district will not reduce the quality of district offerings or divert resources from its primary programs. External funding sources will be aggressively sought for appropriate international activities. “Indirect” dollars generated from these funds will be used to fund new or expanded activities of an international nature. Staff costs associated with the coordination and procurement of these external dollars will also come from the “indirect” fund. However, because some of that effort may be directed at activities to benefit district staff, students, or businesses/industries, it may be appropriate to fund a portion of that effort with state and local tax dollars.

Contracted Services to Students, Other Entities. In all contracted activities, including those contracts with international entities, as well as with district businesses for provision of international training and services, the district will utilize sources of funds which are not local or state tax revenues or student fees. For monitoring purposes, a segregated fund will be established which tracks costs associated with providing services to international students and entities. Staff whose responsibilities

are directly related to those services will be supported through this fund. All contracted services under 38.14 of the Wisconsin statutes will be approved by the NTC board of trustees.

International Students Not Part of a Contract. International students who are not part of a contracted service will pay out-of-state tuition or apply for tuition waivers, as authorized by the state board.

Other Services to District Staff, Residents, Business/Industries. Services provided of an international nature to district staff, residents, or business/industries may appropriately be funded through the use of local or state tax revenues. These may include costs associated with coordinating resources and networks used to enhance Central Wisconsin's international business endeavors, funding faculty to develop international curriculum modules, etc.

Travel. All efforts will be made to utilize nonstate and nonlocal tax revenue to fund international travel. However, travel that provides services to NTC staff and students, district residents, and business/industry may be supplemented by district funds. This might include assisting faculty or students with funding as part of staff or student exchanges, etc.

Travel costs related to serving international students or entities will not utilize local or state tax revenues or student fees. All international travel not part of a contract under 38.14 of the Wisconsin statutes will ultimately be approved by the district board of trustees.

Background on Northcentral Technical College

NTC is a vocational technical college with campuses in Wausau, Antigo, Medford, Phillips, Spencer, and Wittenberg, Wisconsin. The mission of NTC is to facilitate learning of high value for individuals, businesses, industries, and organizations which builds a competitive workforce in a changing global society. Therefore, international education is a major focus at the college. NTC took a proactive approach to internationalizing not only the college but also the community. In 1988 the college began providing contract training for international audiences. Over the last 12 years, the college has provided training in numerous occupational fields for nearly 500 international students and professionals from more than 30 countries. The college provides community-based internship training for international students and professionals in legal, business, government, and nongovernment/nonprofit organizations. In addition, training projects have included the sharing of curriculum, curriculum development techniques, and teaching methods for faculty and administrators from international colleges and universities. Training has occurred both within the Wausau area and overseas. As a result of these programs, over 100 Wausau families have hosted international guests in their homes and community organizations. Each year the international participants volunteer approximately 2,000 hours of service to the community, and business and industry benefit from the work of 46 unpaid international interns within their organizations.

The college's international initiatives have been expanded to provide global learning opportunities for district students and international services for business, industry, and the community. In fact, the

college's board of trustees passed a resolution to provide service to district companies at any location in the world at the same high quality and value which they receive in the college's home district. The college has garnered several grant-supported international programs, established sister school and sister city relationships, and led the district in international efforts. NTC has active sister school relationships in Germany, China, and Ukraine. These relationships focus on the exchange of curriculum, faculty, staff, students, and community members.

A few of the college's innovative international programs include: YWCA Community Leadership for International Women, United States Department of State Community Connections With Ukraine Program, the Central Wisconsin International Business Network, and the Solar Cooker Project. As a result of the college's international programs in Ukraine, the Marathon County Board recently passed a resolution to form a sister county/sister city with a Ukrainian site.

In order to internationalize curriculum and establish these types of global services for business, industry, and communities in our district, it was necessary to:

- Create commitment within the college to support international activities.
- Involve the community, business, and industry as partners in globalization efforts.
- Form strategic partnerships with educational institutions and funding agencies.

Please contact our president, Robert C. Ernst, or our director of international intercultural education with specific questions about the steps we took. We would be happy to work with you!

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