

## **Globalization of Ohio University: the Process**

We know that as institutions of knowledge exchange and discovery, universities strive to produce graduates who will serve as global leaders, innovators, and citizens for a sustainable world. And we also know that it is our job in university leadership to support faculty and staff in this very challenging endeavor. At Ohio University (OHIO), as a newly-appointed Vice Provost of Global Affairs and International Studies (2014), along with my team, we were asked by the President to support OHIO to build its global strategy. Utilizing OHIO's engaged community of stakeholders we embarked on a multi-step process that continues today to guide and define our decision making and investments in globalization.

The first step was to search for inspiration and guidance in our university vision statement, which fortunately already prioritized global learning and experiences:

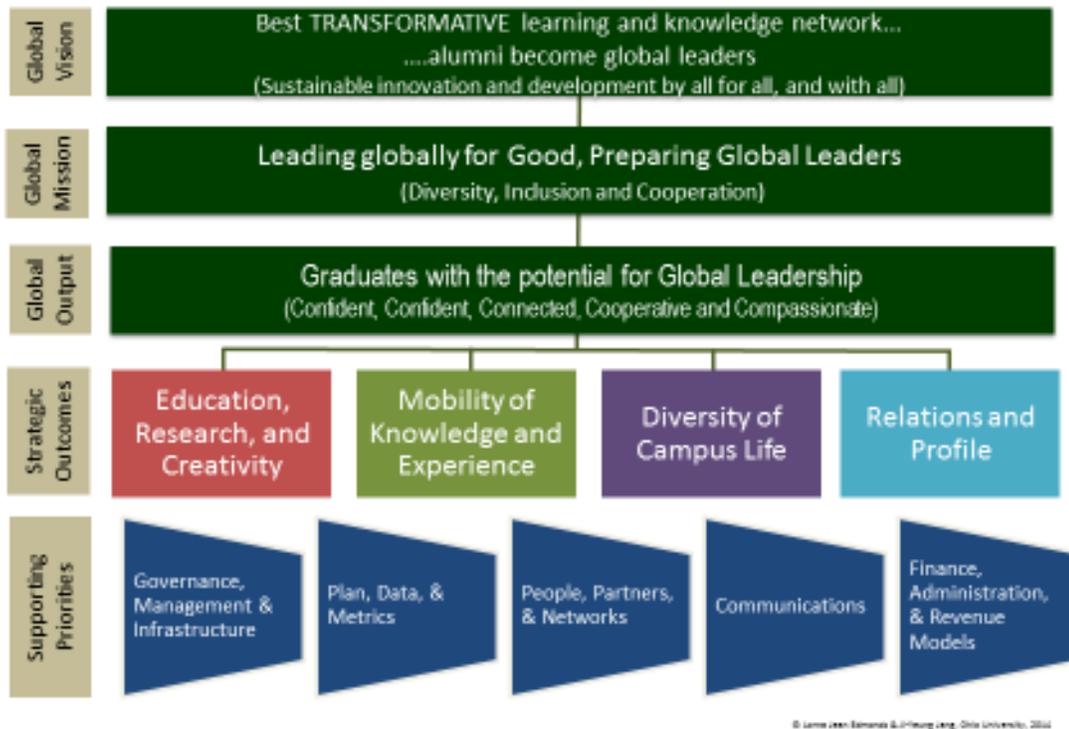
*“Ohio University will be the nation’s best transformative learning community where students realize their promise, faculty advance knowledge, staff achieve excellence, and alumni become global leaders.”*

This vision statement requires campus-wide globalization and a thoughtful strategy, leading to our next step, which was pan-university questioning and information gathering about OHIO and also about global trends generally and higher education specifically. We were led by key questions such as, “What can aid our university to be nimble and inclusive as we strive to achieve strategic goals for globalization in an ever-changing world?”, “What institutional strengths can we call on as we internationalize global learning?” and “What barriers will we need to address?”

Our third step was thus identifying key stakeholders and holding a series of global strategy meetings while sharing information broadly as we advanced the process of information gathering. We asked participants to collectively map out and shape the story that we wanted to tell about our institution to ourselves internally, to our current and prospective students, our alumni and partners and to the outside world—how can our future build on our past and our excellence? Can we create a framework or guiding principles that give meaning, focus, and nimbleness to what we intend to accomplish as a global university? Out of these meetings and discussions came the ideas and concepts that we would use to refine our framework that would guide institutional story-telling, decision making and strategic investments.

The chart below shows the most current strategic framework for globalization that was ultimately used throughout the strategy development process and continues to do so as we advance our strategic interests to this day.

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBALIZATION



Source: <https://www.ohio.edu/global/resources/strategy.cfm> [11]

Once an initial version of the framework was developed, our fourth step was to share it widely with the university community, gathering input from all levels and departments across colleges and campuses and among partners. These meetings resulted in revisions that ensured that our vast array of activities and programs found a home in one of the four outcomes or in the supporting priorities. It also served to benchmark our current story before we defined our strategic priorities that would guide us on the next phase of OHIO's globalization efforts. The process of collaboratively and iteratively building this framework took a year, but it was a year well spent.

With this comprehensive set of materials and proposed investments, the next year was then focused on sharing it widely through various fora including our web presence but most importantly through ongoing face to face engagement. Step five was the identification of what investments were required to leverage our past and our excellence to build our future as a truly global institution.

A sixth round of pan-university stakeholder, our international policy and decanal executive meetings led to the identification of three strategic priorities and set of activities with investment requests for the next five years: recruiting and supporting global students and alumni with a focus on the international community; achieving excellence in a global academic mission with a focus on supporting faculty and staff recruitment and development; and creating a supportive environment for an informed global

community with a focus on internal and external relationship management and coordination that increases global visibility, performance and mainstreaming. Of equal significance was the emergence of *'diversity, inclusion and cooperation'* as the defining agenda for the university's global mission of *'leading globally for good; preparing global leaders'*.

OHIO's strategy for globalization and strategic priorities for 2016 to 2020 were identified and presented to the Board of Trustees Academic Committee. It was a critical step in this ongoing and iterative process of effecting change as it formalized OHIO's globalization strategy while remaining enabling. The approach presented and supported recognized that circumstances around the institution will continue to evolve and that although OHIO's global strategic framework will remain constant, the strategic priorities and its activities will continue to evolve. And evolve it will as the world grapples with the complex nature of, but imperative for investing in *'innovation and development that is sustainable for the benefit of all, with all and by all'* and as we also extend our reach into the universe. The role of higher education and the imperative for an enabling global strategy to drive its investment choices has never been more important.

A well-integrated strategic framework with a transparent and accessible process of information sharing and storytelling makes innumerable impacts. Most important is its nimbleness to support the university to continuously adapt to an ever- changing world and produce the plans and activities to achieve its vision. Many new initiatives have emerged since this process began which support the implementation of one or more of the three strategic priorities. The imperative to globalize the curriculum was identified as a strategic area for investment and development, which led to a series of *'globalizing the curriculum'* workshops and the publication of this book! It led to the OHIO Student Senate creating its first ever *'Global Vision'* with a *'Bill of Rights'* that embraces globalization. Of significance, is that all of us—administrators, department chairs, faculty, students and alumni—we are now all able to see the depth and breadth of our global activities and, more importantly, the impact that they are making. And this framework has provided a means of benchmarking current practices to identify metrics to measure progress. It is enabling the university to align its supporting resources and infrastructure to facilitate an ongoing process of engagement for operationalizing the strategy.

The university now has a common tool and language to continue to discuss and report on its strategic priorities of globalization and opportunities for collaboration that will foster cooperation, synergy and even greater impact. The rewards are self-evident—a road map and commitment to graduating citizens and leaders who are *'confident, competent, connected, cooperative and compassionate'*. It is with this skill set and enthusiasm that will enable them to enrich livelihoods and contribute to the sustainability of our *'world within the universe'* and the infinite possibilities ahead of us!

*~Lorna Jean Edmonds, PhD, Vice Provost and Ji-Yeung Jang, Associate Director, Office of Global Affairs and International Studies, Ohio University*