California State University, Stanislaus

CSU Stanislaus Global Learning Profile (ACE)

IC3 Question 1 EL 101

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General Institutional Overview

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California State University Stanislaus (CSU Stanislaus) is a 7,500-student university located in a rapidly urbanizing region of California’s agricultural Central Valley. The area’s produce and related agricultural technology are marketed around the world. Equally powerful in shaping local life are global forces that have made the 10,000-square-mile service area one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse in the world. The CSU Stanislaus service region is home to large communities of Spanish, Portuguese, Hmong, Punjabi, Khmer, Lao, Basque, and Syriac speakers, as well as descendents of the Northern Europeans who settled the valley at the turn of this century and families who fled the Dust Bowl in the 1930s.

The primary mission of CSU Stanislaus is the delivery of high-quality academic programs taught by faculty who are dedicated to student learning. In 1999, CSU Stanislaus was awarded the highest level of reaccreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The WASC accreditation report strongly endorsed the campus strategic goals and described a campus climate characterized by respect for a diverse student body.

CSU Stanislaus clearly demonstrates its commitment to access for all eligible students through the composition of its student body. Students are full time, part time, first-time freshmen, transfer students, and reentry students of all ages, economic levels, and ethnic backgrounds. Minority students make up 50 percent of the student body, adult learners 46 percent, and part-time students 38 percent. CSU Stanislaus demonstrates the reality of the term “new majority student.”
Recognition of CSU Stanislaus' reputation as an institution committed to serving the new majority student reaches beyond the region. *Hispanic Outlook* lists CSU Stanislaus among 100 U.S. colleges that are particularly hospitable to Hispanic students, and the U.S. Department of Education has granted CSU Stanislaus the designation of Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), which is defined as an institution that has at least 25 percent Hispanic full-time enrollment, with 50 percent of that enrollment qualifying as low income.

CSU Stanislaus enumerates the following strategic goals in *Pathways to the Future: Our Vision and Strategic Commitments*:

- Creating a campus climate conducive to excellence in teaching and learning.
- Maximizing student access throughout the region.
- Addressing the needs of a highly diverse population.
- Internationalizing the curriculum.
- Promoting research activities of faculty and students.
- Providing the appropriate academic support services.
- Promoting and rewarding continuous professional development of faculty and staff.
- Creating dynamic co-curricular programs and services in support of the academic mission.
- Expanding and creating new partnerships throughout the region.
- Creating the institutional processes necessary to accurately assess progress.

Aggressive recruiting efforts and expanding financial aid programs have made CSU Stanislaus increasingly accessible to new majority students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. Part of this accessibility means that academic programs must be available in nontraditional times and ways. Since 1999, CSU Stanislaus students have been able to take a full general education program and complete many majors in classes offered after 4:00 p.m. For two decades, the university has offered courses to students in remote locations by instructional television on flexible schedules, including many evening and weekend courses.

At CSU Stanislaus, vigorous pursuit of access and diversity goes hand in hand with the highest attention to student retention. The university has developed a variety of support structures designed to promote advancement of students of varying ages, experience levels, and ethnic and language backgrounds. The Educational Opportunity Program and Student Support Services provide academic advising, support, and assistance with study skills for low-income, first-generation college students. The Faculty Mentor Program provides students from historically underrepresented groups in higher education with their own personal faculty mentors and a year-long program of activities and workshops designed to ensure retention and graduation. The Reentry Program provides similar assistance in a supportive environment for adults who have deferred their education for five years or more.

CSU Stanislaus enjoys strong partnerships with its neighboring institutions. Eighty percent of transfer students are community college transfer students from Modesto Junior College, Columbia College, Merced College, and Delta College. CSU Stanislaus has longstanding articulation agreements with these schools, under which any community college student who completes the lower division transferable coursework requirements of the California State University System is guaranteed admission to any of the partner institutions. CSU Stanislaus and the local community colleges have formed the Higher Education Consortium of Central California, which serves as a regular forum for discussion of joint projects and collaborative efforts.

**Overview of Internationalization Efforts**

The foundation upon which international knowledge, attitudes, and skills for
all CSU Stanislaus students will be built has been developed in a thorough, thoughtful, and systematic manner. In 1998, the CSU Stanislaus University Educational Policies Committee—a faculty governance body charged specifically with oversight of the curriculum and other academic issues—organized a Globalization Task Force composed of faculty representing all three colleges of the campus and chaired by the director of the Office of Global Affairs. This effort launched university-wide discussion and planning regarding how to ensure the effectiveness of CSU Stanislaus curricula and programs in preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century. The Task Force’s mandate was to assess the current state of internationalization on campus and to chart a course for the future. This effort included the development of goals for international learning, defined as the Building Blocks of Global Literacy. The next step was the development of a university-wide implementation plan that serves as a large-scale map by which the campus may arrive at its ultimate goal of internationalization. Since the steps to internationalization carry curricular and resource implications, the work of the Globalization Task Force, including the implementation plan, has proceeded through required channels for consideration and is completing its review by appropriate curricular committees and the Faculty Senate, assuring buy-in from all constituencies.

The university has made substantial progress; more than 20 faculty members recently undertook a curriculum review project, in which they have reviewed curricula and instruction and developed new or revised syllabi to promote internationalized learning outcomes, supported by appropriate faculty development. The process has initiated formal, university-wide discussion regarding the establishment of a foreign language requirement for graduation. The campus has received a $440,000 grant from the Keck Foundation for the creation of a state-of-the-art language laboratory that will assist students in developing usable language competency. Language faculty members have developed the STAN Language Assessment. Based on the Interagency Language Roundtable examination, the STAN Language Assessment establishes language proficiency standards that can be shared across colleges in languages not supported by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages assessment guidelines. The STAN Language Assessment is adapted to local language needs and is currently available and used in Spanish, Portuguese, Hmong, and Lao.

The following three achievements are particularly noteworthy:

1. **Establishment of the Faculty-initiated Office of Global Affairs**
   Serving as a catalyst for the campus internationalization plan, the Office of Global Affairs is a fully institutionalized campus entity charged with ensuring the ongoing globalization effort. Begun in 1984 with a U.S. Department of Education Title VI-A grant, the office became an official institution in 1999. The six staff members report directly to the vice provost for Academic Affairs. The Office of Global Affairs demonstrates tangible evidence of CSU Stanislaus’ commitment to internationalize and guarantees the requisite staff time and resources to continue the effort. This office has garnered more than $3 million in support of international education projects.

2. **The BRIDGE**
   The BRIDGE, a community outreach and field research center jointly sponsored by CSU Stanislaus and Modesto Junior College, serves an ethnically diverse neighborhood of Modesto that is home to a large population of Southeast Asian refugees. Scores of CSU Stanislaus students have gained an authentic cross-cultural and linguistic immersion experience without leaving the CSU Stanislaus service region by participating in service learning in their majors at the BRIDGE. Faculty members have revised more than 20 course syllabi to incorporate cross-cultural projects.

3. **Establishment and Maintenance of Critical Languages Program**
   The Critical Languages Program provides CSU Stanislaus students access to language learning opportunities not normally found in other universities of similar size and location. Adhering to the format of the National Association of Self-instructional Languages Programs, the Critical Languages Program offers elementary and intermediate levels of
instruction in Arabic, Hmong, Japanese, Lao, Mandarin, and Russian. The format is flexible and allows for the addition of new languages as students demand and regional needs dictate. (Faculty members teach Hmong, Lao, and occasionally Khmer in direct response to local needs.)

**Internationalization and the New Majority Student**

The internationalization strategies outlined in the *Globalization Task Force Implementation Plan* meet the needs of the new majority student in the following ways:

- By focusing on the curriculum. The implementation plan requires the university to ensure that international content is embedded in the curriculum in both the majors and the general education program, so that all students will have access to the knowledge, skills, and values that make up the building blocks of global literacy.
- By broadening avenues to authentic cultural and linguistic immersion. The BRIDGE currently provides such a venue. The implementation plan calls for development of credit-bearing opportunities in local heritage communities to simulate a study-abroad experience for place-bound students.
- By providing recognition for languages other than English learned at home and offering a way to certify competency in those languages.
- By conceptualizing study abroad as essential to the curriculum. This means making study abroad accessible in terms of both cost and duration. The winter term in Cuernavaca, Mexico, is a model of such accessibility. The program provides a three-week, low-cost immersion experience. Students take courses toward majors in nursing, teacher education, psychology, and social work while studying Spanish and living in the homes of Mexican host families. Students can make major progress toward professional goals. For example, teacher education students can complete the nine-unit CLAD (Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development) requirement for entrance into the teacher credential program during the winter term in Cuernavaca. In 2003, 19 of the 30 participants were new majority students. Low-cost exchanges coupled with aggressive outreach and financial aid assistance are also making overseas study accessible to new majority students, who make up 25 percent of CSU Stanislaus’ 2002–03 study-abroad students.

**International Learning Goals**

The Globalization Task Force has developed the following goals for international learning:

**Knowledge of:**

- World history, philosophies, religions, and economics.
- World and regional geography, including ecosystems.
- The complex relationships among California’s Central Valley and other national and world regions.
- Forces that are reshaping the world, including economic globalization, population pressures, the information technology revolution, religious/ideological conflicts, and environmental strain.
- The relation among diverse interpretations of “universal human rights” and government structures, economic policies, cultural beliefs, current conflicts, and other issues.
- Relationship between individual majors and global issues faced by students after graduation.

**Values and perspectives that reflect:**

- An appreciation for the diverse cultures represented in the local community, and a respect for them as a source of information about the larger world.
- A willingness and ability to recognize the roots and bases of one’s own beliefs, perceptions, habits, customs, and behavior, and the
understanding that others may differ in these areas.

- A willingness to modify opinions when confronted with new evidence and to recognize when one is making a judgment without adequate information.
- A desire to act as a responsible, responsive global citizen.

Skills that demonstrate:

- The ability to express—in both written and oral modes—the knowledge, values, and perspectives described above.
- The ability to speak, read, and understand—at a minimum level of proficiency—a language other than English.
- A capacity to see issues from more than one perspective, together with a recognition of one's own perspective and an understanding of how culture influences perspective.
- An ability to place discrete events into their global context (e.g., historical, economic, cultural).
- The ability to critically analyze issues related to responsible global citizenship.

Assessing International Learning Goals

CSU Stanislaus has begun an innovative means of assessing student achievement of international learning goals. Under the auspices of a U.S. Department of Education Title VI-A grant, the Office of Global Affairs has established a Certificate of Language and Cultural Competence available to students in all academic majors. To earn the certificate, students must demonstrate competency in a foreign language; knowledge about the history, current affairs, and culture where the language is spoken; real-world experience in that culture either through study abroad or through immersion in local heritage communities; and an understanding of the global issues relevant to students’ academic majors. Students earn the certificate not on the basis of coursework or seat time, but by demonstration of skills and knowledge. They demonstrate oral and written language skills by taking the STAN Language Assessment. They demonstrate knowledge of the history, current affairs, and culture of the world areas in which the language is spoken through either a cultural competency assessment or a portfolio designed in consultation with a certificate adviser. They work with a faculty adviser to plan a project in which they demonstrate understanding of global issues relevant to their major.

While a diploma attests to academic work accomplished, a competency certificate means that a student has certain skills that are transportable to the workplace. University representatives are disseminating information about the certificate to the local business community, who will find it a valuable tool for hiring purposes. Although in its infancy, the Certificate of Language and Cultural Competence has the potential to drive curricular changes in much the same way as an authentic assessment instrument. This program will hold CSU Stanislaus accountable to its goal of global learning for all students.

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