Making a World of Difference

A Strategic Plan for Furthering Internationalization at the University of Victoria

Office of International Affairs,
Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost

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Summary

One of the core tasks of universities today is to define their commitment to, and priorities for, an area of activities and set of processes commonly termed “internationalization”. The University of Victoria has a relatively short but rich tradition of achieving excellence in selected areas of internationalization across its research, teaching and academic support activities. The challenge now facing the University is to integrate, in systematic and sustained ways, appropriate aspects of internationalization more fully across all dimensions of the learning environment consisting of curriculum, research, experiential learning, student services and a wide range of non-formal curricular initiatives.

This strategic planning document is designed to serve as a framework and guide for these processes over the next five years (2006-2010). The framework identifies four central supporting pillars: student mobility, internationalization of the curriculum, international research (including development projects and artistic creation) and enhancing an international presence and capacity on campus.

Each of these four pillars encompasses a set of objectives as well as specific action strategies understood as central to enhancing the University’s commitment to internationalization in tune with its institutional values and principles.

This draft plan for further internationalization of the University of Victoria has been prepared on the basis of extensive consultation across the University community and beyond. It is hoped that this framework will assist in enhancing the University’s leadership in international education and research.

Office of International Affairs
University of Victoria
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A Strategic Plan for Furthering Internationalization at the University of Victoria
PART ONE: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Introduction

This report, Making a World of Difference: A Strategic Plan for Furthering Internationalization at the University of Victoria, is intended to offer a framework and strategic objectives that can both support and focus internationalization activity throughout the University of Victoria over the next five years (2006-2010). The report seeks to build on the strong vision and commitment articulated in the University’s overall strategic plan A Vision for the Future (2002). This plan for internationalization will complement the overall plan for the University of Victoria that is being consulted on and updated over the same time frame.

While the intention is not to limit the activities of individuals, units or departments, there is a need to define some strategic directions and goals in order to make the best use of internal resources and to ensure a strong foundation is in place on which the University can build. While no single document can do justice to the full spectrum of existing and potential international initiatives, this plan seeks to identify a number of key directions and priorities that will strengthen the University of Victoria’s ability to offer a diverse and welcoming learning environment that informs, and is informed by, global realities and issues.

Terminology

It has been widely acknowledged that “internationalization” is a contested concept that means different things to different people. It has become a convenient global convention among postsecondary educators and administrators to use this term when talking about a wide range of processes and programs associated with institutions’ activities that have an international dimension. Thus the term “internationalization” is used in this document for lack of a better alternative.

In the spirit of recognizing the challenge arising from the task of formulating a strategy around a concept that lacks a widely accepted designation, we are varying our terminology throughout this document. We are using alternative terms such as “world-mindedness”, “global perspectives”, “diversity”, etc., in order to account for the contestations around the use of “internationalization”. We ask the readers to not see this practice as reflective of inconsistencies, but rather as an acknowledgment of the contested nature of this term.

Internationalism is Fundamental to the Nature of a University

There is a broad consensus across the University of Victoria community that a global perspective is fundamental to a university’s existence and identity. In fact, it is well recognized that internationalism has been part of the nature of universities since their very origins. In his opening presentation to the University’s Joint Board and Senate Retreat
(March 5, 2005), Dr. Lewis Perinbam made this point eloquently, and with some irony given today’s geopolitical realities:

The world of learning has always been international. Throughout history students and scholars have moved from one country to another seeking knowledge and exchange of ideas. Taxila University located in what is now Pakistan, reputedly the world’s oldest university, flourished from the 7th century B.C. to the 8th century A.D. Its offerings included politics, philosophy, economics, astronomy, surgical science, agriculture and grammar. It attracted students and scholars from the vast Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. International education continued over the ages in many forms. In the 13th century, the then Arab universities of Toledo and Cordoba, where one of the greatest medieval Jewish scholars, Moses bin Mamoun, had taught, attracted students and scholars from the rich countries of the East – now known as Syria, Egypt, Iran and Afghanistan and the then underdeveloped countries like England.

Dr. Perinbam went on to observe:

Internationalization is a moving target. Today’s generation finds a world of phenomenally rapid change, great complexity and awesome challenges.

The emergence of a rather intense focus on processes of “internationalization” and “globalization” in recent decades needs to be understood within this evolving historical context. As an Aboriginal faculty member pointed out recently, “We [Aboriginal peoples in Canada] have been internationalized for over 500 years.” For most of this time, colonialism and imperialism have been the dominant inter-national processes around the world, and many maintain that they still are.

The University of Victoria is recognized for its research and expertise in many areas of global relevance and importance across the sciences, humanities, fine arts, social sciences, engineering, business, human and social development, education, law and, most recently, medical sciences. A strong commitment to values and principles such as environmental sustainability, cultural diversity, social equity and justice, health promotion, conflict resolution, human rights, community governance and organizational renewal is evident across the disciplines. Such a community-based and socially relevant orientation represents a move away from colonial and imperial values and dynamics. Much of the University’s involvement in international research, curriculum design and community development is informed by such a perspective.

The Current Commitment to Internationalization at the University of Victoria

This report is based upon what has been learned over many years of international work at the University of Victoria. Most recently, the Office of International Affairs (OIA) has undertaken consultation across Faculties and academic support services, and has worked closely on identifying needs and directions with members of the Working Group on Internationalization that assists the OIA with implementing the objectives for internationalization outlined in the University’s overall strategic plan. While international
elements are present in virtually all 27 objectives as defined within the University’s plan (A Vision for the Future: A Strategic Plan for the University of Victoria), Objective 15 (p.19) defines the major overarching internationalization commitments of the university.

**OBJECTIVE 15:**
To integrate and enhance international activities across academic programs, research and development.

**Action:**

a. Develop an internationalization plan that serves to focus international activities and integrate them within the academic fabric of the institution. (VPAC, VPR, VPE, OIA)

b. Advocate for increased international content in the curriculum, and promote knowledge of and sensitivity towards foreign cultures and their political, social and national environments. (VPAC, Deans, OIA)

c. Make effective use of language departments and the English Language Centre in the provision of language acquisition courses to support the expansion of international activities. (VPAC, Deans, ELC, OIA)

d. Offer every interested student the opportunity to gain a portion of their education in another country. (VPAC, Deans, OIA)

e. Assure appropriate support services for our undergraduate and graduate students participating in international activities, as well as for international students who come to UVic. (STAS, Deans, OIA)

The commitment to internationalization in the University’s Strategic Plan is strongly evident in the discussion sections of the document as well. For example, the document states:

*Social change has … made universities international institutions. Internationalization increasingly affects what we do, expanding opportunities open to our students and faculty. Improved travel, communication and international cooperation have made national borders more permeable and less relevant. These trends have brought about changes in what we teach, who we teach, and where we teach, as well as in the nature and focus of our research. These same trends mean that universities must compete globally for resources, research funding and the most talented students and faculty.*


As this quotation articulates, there are many facets to the process of including an international dimension in post-secondary education. The following definition formulated by Jane Knight offers a widely cited understanding of the nature of internationalization in the post-secondary sector:

*Internationalization is* the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education.
According to this definition, internationalization is an ongoing process whereby the University seeks to incorporate and develop the elements of global culture and context in all of its thinking, planning and activities. As already discussed, this process has been underway for some considerable time within the University of Victoria, indeed since its inception. However, there appears to be a need at this stage in the University’s development for a more conscious and deliberate institution-wide emphasis on world-mindedness as a fully integrated dimension of UVic’s identity, curriculum, research, teaching and service initiatives. Such an integrated approach is necessary to ensure that the University as a whole can evolve as a highly effective, influential and globally relevant educational institution.

It is proposed that this commitment to internationalization be formalized in terms of the following vision for the University of Victoria:

To be a diverse and welcoming learning community that integrates elements of global cultures and contexts into its teaching, learning, research, artistic creativity, professional practice, and community service in order to a) support students, staff and faculty to be informed, responsible and effective citizens of the world and b) contribute evidence and innovations to address issues and build capacity in areas of global consequence.

Core Values of the University of Victoria

Following from this discussion, it is suggested that several core values integral to the mission of the University of Victoria will be key to implementing the University’s international commitment.

1. The intrinsic quality and rigour of the research and scholarship that is pursued by faculty and students, and integrated into our teaching and scholarly work, must be a central component in guiding the pursuit of internationalization across the University of Victoria. The benefits of studying in a research-intensive learning community such as UVic need to encompass exposure to faculty members’ international involvements and development projects as well as on-campus investigations.

2. A second key element in ensuring the quality and impact of the University’s international activities is the nature of our students’ experiences and engagement in learning. In addressing the central objectives in the Strategic Plan, ultimately it is the students who will be most affected by the sense of integration across the academic fabric of the institution. As learners, they need to experience the University as a place that helps them to develop “knowledge and sensitivity towards foreign cultures and their political, social and national environments”.

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3. Closely allied to an emphasis on the nature of the students’ experiences is the University’s commitment to **experiential learning and real-life engagement**. Our international co-operative education program has been recognized with a national Scotiabank/AUCC award for excellence in 2004. At the same time, we are seeking ways to extend these opportunities to more students, in a broader range of settings – especially service learning – in even more than the current 30 countries.

4. True to the University’s heritage, we need to continue to be guided by a **commitment to human betterment** in order to truly make a difference in the world, whether locally, nationally or internationally. Our twin University mottos are “let there be light,” and “a multitude of the wise is the health of the world.” The importance of translating research into effective action, of experiential learning as intrinsic to integrative education, and of community service as key to responsible citizenship are long-standing dimensions of the University’s educational commitment.

**The Internationalization of Universities Globally**

Over the past several decades, the internationalization of universities has become a major topic in the debates around the nature and purposes of higher education around the world. If we accept that internationalism is intrinsic to the nature of a university, we need to ask what developments have rendered internationalism problematic at this particular time.

A review of documents produced by international higher education associations and individual post-secondary institutions reveals a number of preoccupations, including, but not limited to:

- A growing awareness of the necessity of understanding the “local” in the context of, and interconnected with, the “global.”

- The implications of vast differences in culture, traditions and wealth between both nations and individuals.

- The need for institutional change and adaptation to rapid and complex global challenges along a multitude of dimensions – scientific, societal, technological, environmental, economic, humanitarian, etc.

- Increasing international competition for the “best and brightest” faculty and students.

- The need to more effectively respond to increasingly diverse students and communities, and to create a “global campus.”

- The challenge of preparing students and graduates for a “global future”, both as professionals and as citizens.
• Financial viability in the face of increasing competition in the post-secondary sector.

The University of Victoria cannot exist outside of these forces and dynamics, and therefore must seek to define its future within the international and global context.

The Evolution of Internationalization at the University of Victoria

The first international student on record at the University of Victoria was from Belgium and enrolled in 1968. In 1981, the University signed one of the very first formal agreements between a Canadian and a Chinese university. In 1992, the first International Liaison Officer was appointed, and in 1998, the Office of International Affairs was established under the Office of the Vice-President Research.

Over its first six years, some of the major initiatives of the Office of International Affairs involved:

• The establishment of a solid basis of support for international collaborative projects with developing country partners.
• In co-operation with the International and Exchange Student Services (IESS) office, the promotion of international student exchanges in many countries of the world.
• The co-ordination of linkages between individuals and programs involved in international activities.
• Advising the senior administration on a wide range of international issues, including recruitment, student support, and related concerns.
• Initiating a partnership with a college in Hong Kong to enable the transfer of well-prepared Hong Kong students to the University of Victoria.
• International liaison and protocol services.
• Drafting and negotiating international agreements with institutions abroad in a range of areas such as study abroad, training, and transfer credit articulation.

In the summer of 2003, the reporting relationship of the Office of International Affairs was transferred from the office of the Vice-President Research to the office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost. The intention was not to lessen the involvement in promoting international research and development projects, but to enhance the integration of internationalization across the institution as a whole. The function of Director of International Affairs was also combined with the role of the Associate Vice-President Academic in order to provide more access to and involvement in the governance structures, policy development and senior administrative processes of the University overall.

For many years, departments, Faculties and research centres across the campus have engaged in a very wide range of international activities and initiatives from individual scholar
exchanges, field schools, seminars and conferences, development projects, innovative delivery of curricula, right up to and including world-class “big science” projects.

In recent years, the University of Victoria has been granted a number of prestigious awards by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) in recognition of excellence in internationalization. These initiatives, which have included the international achievements of students, staff, faculty members and programs across many disciplines and services, have provided a strong foundation. At the same time, there is much left to do in order to actualize the potential for enhanced internationalism throughout the University.

Consultations and Initiatives Undertaken in 2004-2005

Throughout 2004 and into the spring of 2005, various forms of consultation were undertaken by the Office of International Affairs. Early in 2004, the Director and Assistant Director attended Dean and Chairs/Directors meetings across departmentalized Faculties, and with the Dean and key staff in non-departmentalized Faculties and divisions. These consultations frequently led to further meetings with the chair/director and/or members of individual schools and departments to discuss existing international programs or anticipated new initiatives.

Over the 2004-2005 academic year, some of the new developments in internationalization supported or initiated by the OIA and the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost have included:

- Increased budget for scholarships and bursaries for international students to $450,000
- Increased staff and budget for International and Exchange Student Services
- Developed and implemented, in partnership with the Learning and Teaching Centre, the Course Re-design for Internationalization Workshop (CRIW), an innovative model for internationalization of the curriculum, in which so far ten courses across nine departments/schools have participated
- Established five new task groups to address key international issues across campus
- Responded to the South Asia tsunami disaster by co-ordinating University outreach efforts with affected countries, sponsoring sessions exposing the local community to expert information and analysis, and convening a memorial service for the victims
- Supported successful Scotiabank/Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), Canadian Bureau for International Education and Craigdarroch international awards nominations
- Funded support for coaching training for international student advisors
- Established a Student International Activity Fund to assist students seeking to pursue some form of study or work abroad ($20,000 annually)
- Consulted with Faculties and departments on international directions, priorities and aspirations
- Completed program review of Viewwood Community College in Hong Kong partnership with University of Victoria
- Visited potential partner organizations in India with University faculty members in Education and Continuing Studies staff
- Co-developed with the International and Exchange Student Services office a new framework and mechanism for international exchange agreements, and established an International Student Exchange Committee
- Hosted a day-long retreat and produced a report on “Internationalization at the University of Victoria: The Students’ Experience”, attended by 73 UVic staff, students and faculty with 22 student presenters across six programmatic/theme areas
- Facilitated a Joint Board-Senate Retreat on “Further Internationalization of the University of Victoria”
- Supported the establishment of new internships under the national Canada Corps initiative
- Supported a successful CIDA-University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) project application in Brazil

The Working Group on Internationalization originally formed in 2003 was continued and expanded. Five Task Groups were formed to identify and address specific issues in the short-term, as well as to consider priorities for longer-term initiatives. These groups are:

- Recruitment, Admissions and Transfer
- Student Services and Support
- Support for International Graduate Students
- Internationalization of the Curriculum
- Cultural Capacity Building

The deliberations and recommendations of each of these groups have been analyzed and incorporated into many of the recommendations presented in this plan. In addition to this ongoing activity, two of the major retreats mentioned above on the theme of internationalization have informed this plan:

On October 30, 2004, 22 students representing a wide range of international involvements, programs and activities across many academic disciplines were joined by 50 faculty, staff and administrators from over 40 disciplines and units (including the Vice-President Academic
and Provost, Deans, Associate Deans, Directors/Chairs, Coordinators, Counsellors etc.) for a day focused on “the student experience” in relation to internationalization at UVic. A report summarizing the issues raised and recommendations made was prepared and distributed throughout the University, and these recommendations have also significantly influenced the strategic directions and goals being proposed in this document.

Finally, the Joint Board and Senate Retreat on March 5, 2005 addressed many facets of internationalization and indicated strong support for furthering international engagement across the University as a whole. Discussion groups raised issues and made suggestions and recommendations that are also reflected in the proposed four pillars of further internationalization.
PART TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION

International Vision

To be a diverse and welcoming learning community that integrates elements of global cultures and contexts into its teaching, learning, research, artistic creativity, professional practice, and community service in order to a) support students, staff and faculty to be informed, responsible and effective citizens of the world and b) contribute evidence and innovations to address issues and build capacity in areas of global consequence.

Values and Principles

As articulated in the University’s overall Strategic Plan, we are committed to the following values and principles:

1. Freedom of speech and inquiry; critical and analytical thinking; open and rational discussion; intellectual and ethical integrity
2. Recognition of teaching, learning, research and creative endeavours as essential in a healthy democratic society
3. Equal rights and dignity of all persons, and equity in opportunities and employment for all
4. Collegial forms of governance that provide appropriate opportunities for all members of the University community to participate
5. Environments for work and study that are safe, supportive and healthy, foster mutual respect and civility, recognizing that people are our primary strength
6. Public and internal accountability

In addition, the following values and principles related to internationalization are also evident in the University’s commitments:

7. The intrinsic quality and rigour of the research is a key component in guiding the further internationalization across the University of Victoria.

8. The creation of diverse learning environments where students can develop knowledge and sensitivity towards other cultures and their political, social and national contexts, thus fostering the integration of internationalism across the academic fabric of the institution.

9. A commitment to experiential learning and real-life engagement available to all students as part of their academic studies is an important way of enhancing the students’ learning and providing them with the necessary intellectual tools to adopt a more world-minded perspective.
10. True to the University of Victoria’s heritage, we need to continue to be guided by a commitment to human betterment in order to truly make a difference in the world, whether locally, nationally or internationally.

**Areas of University of Victoria International Strength and Focus**

Currently, the University of Victoria is recognized as taking national and international leadership in a wide variety of scholarly areas and disciplines. While there are too many to mention here, a few of the major initiatives include:

- The **Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives** (CAPI) promotes research, policy development and a range of scholarly activities such as conferences, seminars, internships and publications that maintain UVic’s leadership and engagement on the Pacific Rim. These initiatives are complemented by a range of academic programs offered through our **Department of Pacific and Asian Studies** at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- The **Early Childhood Development Virtual University** (ECDVU) represents an innovative approach to addressing the leadership and capacity building requirements of African countries seeking to enhance their social and economic development through addressing the human development needs of their youngest citizens and the families and communities which nurture them. This program was designed and is managed by faculty in UVic’s **School of Child and Youth Care**.

- **NEPTUNE (North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments)** and VENUS (Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea) are transformative ocean observatory projects that are models for the next generation of ocean sciences research world-wide. NEPTUNE is a joint U.S.–Canada venture led by the University of Victoria in Canada and the University of Washington in the U.S. Both projects involve extensive national and international partnerships with leadership from the **School of Earth and Ocean Sciences**.

- Our **Faculty of Business** has embraced internationalization as a core dimension of its various programs, and the majority of students engage in some form of international work and study experience as part of their education.

- All five departments/schools – Music, Theatre, History in Art, Visual Arts and Writing - in the **Faculty of Fine Arts** have combined to offer, in collaboration with the Universidad Veracruzana in Mexico, an innovative, multidisciplinary, and reciprocal international arts experience involving students, staff and faculty.

- UVic’s **Faculty of Humanities** offers undergraduate and graduate programs in eight modern languages, complemented by studies of the classical languages and area studies. The many disciplines in the Humanities foster knowledge of history, philosophy, language, literature, culture, society and the arts in international contexts.
The Centre for Global Studies provides an umbrella structure for a range of global projects, and one of these supports Canada's leadership in promoting the development of a G20 group of nations, in an effort to broaden the international dialogue for global change.

The Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences, Law, Business, Human and Social Development and Fine Arts are collaborating in the support of a European Studies program, and undertaking a range of research and policy initiatives in relation to the functioning and place of Europe in the world.

The work of particle physicists at the University of Victoria is well-recognized internationally for its leading edge research and forms an important node in the global particle physics network.

Multidisciplinary leading-edge research on climate change, integrated energy systems and earth and ocean sciences, involving engineers, economists, geographers, climatologists and many others, is drawing international attention.

A wide range of programs have been developed in the Faculties of Education and Human and Social Development in relation to Indigenous studies and issues, including the areas of Governance, Education, Health, as well as Child, Youth, Family and Social Services.

The Division of Continuing Studies offers a wide range of programs, both free-standing and in conjunction with academic departments, and an active English Language Centre that attract students from many parts of the world to study on the UVic campus.

The Institute for Dispute Resolution has been working in Cambodia to present and resolve public policy conflicts and strengthen democratic institutions and practices, as well as in a variety of related capacity-building projects internationally.

Two projects, financed by CIDA’s University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development Program, are also underway. One project in Brazil addresses urban environmental quality of the Sao Paulo area through tackling consumption issues, waste recovery and mitigating environmental degradation. The other project in Thailand aims at developing coastal and marine resource conservation and management programs that are socially and environmentally responsible, and that build on local expertise and strengths in aquaculture.

The challenge for the University will be to continue to support such areas of strength while remaining open to, and supportive of, emerging international initiatives and opportunities.

Principles for Initiating and Expanding International Initiatives

The Strategic Plan that is being proposed in this document does not attempt to single out specific geographical or scholarly priorities for future support and attention. Such an approach might appear to entail the selection of “winners” and “losers” in UVic’s internationalization process, and presuppose some sense of clairvoyance as to future needs.
and opportunities. Rather, what is proposed is a plan to strengthen the University’s scaffolding, or infrastructure, necessary to ensure an integrated and University-wide approach to internationalization across all programs, activities and services.

At the same time, the University does need a set of principles for making decisions about which directions and initiatives can be pursued and supported when international opportunities present themselves. The following are proposed as guiding principles when such strategic decisions need to be made.

1. The University of Victoria should continue to build on its areas of international research, program and scholarly strength and focus.
2. Where and when possible, and especially when strategic opportunities arise, the University should seek to broaden geographically its international linkages for student, faculty and staff mobility and involvement.
3. Quality partnerships with other universities, agencies and organizations need to be in place or developed in a timely fashion in order to ensure strong foundations for successful initiatives.
4. International initiatives need to have sufficient human and financial resources committed to ensure viability and sustainability over their proposed timeframes.
5. Initiatives need to incorporate the values and principles to which the University is committed.
6. Initiatives need to be aligned with the overall Strategic Plan for the University as a whole.
7. While recognizing the need to be open to moving into new and groundbreaking areas of international engagement, consideration needs to be given to the degree that particular initiatives would complement, reinforce and enhance the success of other UVic initiatives rather than exist as stand-alone activities.
8. Initiatives ought to take advantage of provincial, federal and international priorities and the associated programs in internationalization where such governmental strategies provide a match with UVic’s priorities.

As the University of Victoria grows and develops, and as its international activities expand, additional criteria may need to be articulated and adopted.

A Plan for Further Internationalization at the University of Victoria

Based upon the extensive consultation, dialogue and numerous pilot initiatives outlined previously, the following four areas of action are proposed as foundations for the University of Victoria’s international initiatives, directions and priorities for the next five years:

1. Student Mobility
2. Internationalization of the Curriculum
3. International Research, Development Projects and Artistic Creation
4. Enhancing an International Presence and Capacity

Each of these components will be discussed briefly and specific objectives and actions will be presented for consideration and consultation.

1. Student Mobility

(Study Abroad Initiatives and International Students On-Campus)

A. UVic Students Going Abroad

The University has committed to “offer every interested student the opportunity to gain a portion of their education in another country.” Mechanisms now include: student exchange for a term or year abroad, international cooperative education placements, study/field schools, research project involvement, practica placements, internships, independent study, and athletic and cultural tours. Presently, less than 2% (est.) of UVic students do any formal study abroad. The following goals and strategies are proposed to address the need to increase such opportunities and the participation of students.

OBJECTIVE 1:

By 2010, to have at least doubled the number of students from the University of Victoria having an experience abroad as part of their academic studies (from approximately 600 to 1,200 per annum.)

Action:

a. Strengthen relations with partners and enhance promotion of all existing and potentially active exchanges, as well as new exchanges (e.g. Mexico and the Americas, Europe, Africa, India)

   **Target:** increase number of students by 20% per year over the next five years.

b. Enhance opportunities for students enrolled in language programs to gain an in-country immersion experience in a targeted manner

   **Target:** increase number of students by 20% per year over the next five years.

c. Expand co-operative education placements in targeted areas (both service learning and paid; secure support for service learning placements)

   **Target:** increase number of students by 20% per year over the next five years.

d. Encourage expansion of international professional practica placements and internships

   **Target:** increase number of students by 20% per year over the next five years.

e. Encourage new study tours/field schools in specific growth-potential areas

   **Target:** add one new tour/field school each year over the next five years.

f. Enhance orientation for students travelling abroad with appropriate workshops, development of a handbook, travel registry, and debriefing/sharing experiences on return.
g. Ensure appropriate course availability/transferability to the University and ensure the smooth transfer of credits earned abroad.

h. Provide opportunities for basic language preparation to students going to non-Anglophone countries.

i. Make available improved financial support, both through resources that enable students to do their own fund-raising, as well as through funds raised by the University.

j. Strengthen career planning services to provide our students with a better understanding of how their international experiences are linked to career opportunities.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

There is a need to further enhance financial support for student mobility through assisting students to engage in student-run fundraising as well as through obtaining external resources to supplement internally allocated University resources.

**Action:**

a. Compile a Web resource to assist students with their own fundraising and to design a workshop that can be offered to assist students with the development of fundraising skills and the creation of an individualized fundraising plan.

b. Hold regular workshops to assist students with developing fundraising skills, strategies and plans.

c. Ensure that potential donors are aware of the needs of students wanting to study abroad and engage in the variety of international opportunities potentially available to them.

**B. International Students Coming to UVic**

The University has been attracting increasing numbers of well-qualified international students to its programs in recent years. Between 2002/03 and 2004/05, there was a 50% increase in international enrolments. In 2004/05, international students represented approximately 8.7% of the student body. Although international students originate from over 40 countries, approximately 50% of all international students come to us from five countries: P.R. China, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the U.S.A. The rapid growth in the international student population has placed a strain on existing services, and has raised awareness of the need to enhance the University experience for international students, from first contact through to alumni status. International graduates form a significant group of the UVic alumni family, and we need to stay in close touch during and beyond their studies at UVic.

At the same time, we are cognizant of the fact that these numbers are not fully reflective of the diversity amongst our student body. Many of our students who are not classified as international visa students because they are either Canadian citizens or permanent residents...
come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and further add to the richness of diverse perspectives on our campus.

Many of our students whose primary language is not English are challenged by the rigorous requirements of academic writing. In order to ensure that these students succeed in their academic endeavours, we need to develop innovative approaches that will assist students in gaining proficiency with other primary languages.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**
By 2010, to reach and maintain approximately 10% of the student body as “steady state” for international visa students on campus, with an improved balance of student geographic distribution in the student body.

Action:

In 2005/06, develop a Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) plan that will guide a coordinated and integrated approach for achieving these objectives, with a view to articulating the issues, implications, and specific initiatives for phased implementation over a 3-to-4-year period. The international component of the SEM plan should include the following core elements:

a. An integrated approach to international student recruitment, marketing and communication;

b. Definition, values and plan of action to extend an international service ethos across the University;

c. Student and academic support service plan that promotes student retention, academic success and transition; particular attention will be given to adequate counseling and academic advising services for international students that will help them overcome culture shock and adjust to life in an unfamiliar environment;

d. Innovative and goal-oriented ESL writing programming for students whose primary language is not English;

e. A plan for the renewal of policies, systems and practices that enhance the quality of service, the fair and equitable treatment of students, and optimize the use of available resources;

f. An information and assessment plan to inform the development of enrolment strategies, benchmark existing practices and evaluate the success of strategies implemented.

2. Internationalization of the Curriculum

It is widely recognized that one of the most important aspects of internationalization in the higher education context is the transformation of the curriculum towards becoming more inclusive of a wide range of perspectives that take the world, rather than a narrowly focused geographic region, as their point of reference. This dimension has the potential to reach and influence every student within the institution. It also brings into play the international
expertise and involvements of faculty as well as the existing and planned global dimensions of the disciplines and programs. Of particular importance in this context are first- and second-year courses that lay the groundwork for our students’ academic journey through university and life-long learning.

**OBJECTIVE 4:**
To assist Schools, Departments and Faculties to review and revise their curricula to better meet their disciplinary and academic internationalization goals.

**Action:**

a. Continue offering the Course (Re)Design for Internationalization Workshop (CRIW) as an intensive re-design strategy, aimed at supporting the re-design of at least one course from 80% of academic departments/schools over the next five years; i.e. approximately 40 courses.

b. Offer annual lectures and workshops over the next five years focused on internationalization topics and issues identified as priorities in consultation with Faculties and departments/schools.

c. Continue the ongoing collaboration between the OIA and the Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC) around curricular transformations with a special emphasis on first- and second-year courses. In close collaboration with the LTC, develop a plan for assisting first- and second-year instructors in the incorporation of world-minded perspectives into the curriculum.

**OBJECTIVE 5:**
In partnership with the Learning and Teaching Centre, the Office of International Affairs will support each academic school, department and Faculty across the University in defining explicitly and pursuing its internationalization objectives as part of its academic strategic planning.

**Action:**

a. On the basis of consultations with Faculties, a framework for supporting campus academic units will be developed in 2005/06, including workshops and resource materials appropriate across disciplines, schools and departments. This approach will include assisting faculty to bring their international scholarly work into the classroom, draw out relevant international student experiences, construct assignments to be relevant to international students, and manage linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom.

3. International Research, Development Projects and Artistic Creation

3.1 Assessment of needs in international research

A large number of University of Victoria researchers are involved in some form of international research, either through the “traditional” funding channels provided by the tri-council (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR), or through sponsors such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and
various United Nations agencies, among others. International research tends to be more complex than research carried out domestically due to linguistic and cultural differences and difficulties, the need to enter into collaborative agreements or contracts with organizations in other jurisdictions, and difficulties in understanding organizational and regulatory requirements in the partner’s country, to name only a few.

While anecdotal knowledge exists regarding the particular needs of researchers with respect to international activities, no targeted needs assessment has been carried out to date in this regard. In order to effectively meet the needs of researchers in their international endeavours, a needs assessment should be undertaken in order to provide the University with detailed information on how to best support these researchers.

Pending the completion of such a needs assessment, a number of areas in which the University could improve its strengths in international research are already known:

**OBJECTIVE 6:**
*To determine the needs of all researchers involved in international research activities.*

Action:

- Research Services, in partnership with the Office of International Affairs, will undertake a faculty needs assessment survey regarding international research.

While a needs assessment survey will help to inform a more detailed understanding of specific needs across disciplines, departments and schools, several areas in which the University of Victoria could improve on its strengths in international research are already evident, as set out below.

**3.2 Scholars’ Mobility**

**A. University of Victoria Scholars Abroad**

The research reputation of the University of Victoria is strongly dependent on the ability of the faculty to disseminate their research at national and international conferences. Research Services currently provides limited support in the form of “Scholarly Conference and Artistic Performance Travel Grants.” A faculty member may apply once a year for approximately $1000 on the condition that they are presenting a paper, giving an artistic performance or have a major administrative role in the conference. The budget for this program is $236,000, a number that has not changed in many years, and that only makes a partial contribution to 250 faculty members a year.

Increasing travel abroad opportunities for UVic scholars would provide a strong leveraging effect on external research grants because the number of presentations at conferences is used as an evaluation measure of applicant performance. This effect is still greater when conference papers appear in published proceedings or are disseminated through the Web.
**OBJECTIVE 7:**
To create an enhanced and competitive travel grant program for University of Victoria researchers and scholars that would allow them to increase their participation in international conferences and other activities abroad through the presentation of scholarly papers and artistic performances.

**Action:**

a. The international travel grant program funding should be increased by 5% per year over the next five years, with a long-term goal of increasing both the number of faculty members funded as well as the amount of funding available for each faculty member.

**B. International Visiting Scholars at the University of Victoria**

A program to bring scholars to the University of Victoria as visiting faculty is equally important. While University of Victoria faculty members are often invited to spend academic study leaves at universities around the world, for the most part they are not able to reciprocate with invitations to Victoria. The Lansdowne visitor program currently only allows a department to bring a scholar to Victoria for a few days every few years. Nevertheless, the public lectures given by the visitors are hugely popular and a visitor program could be partially funded through donations.

**OBJECTIVE 8:**
To provide top-up support for scholars on academic leave who come to the University of Victoria from other institutions as a means to attract some of the top people in a wide variety of fields to the University. It would be a requirement that visiting scholars receiving such top-up support would be involved in teaching at least one course per term, as well as contribute to a number of activities such as cross-disciplinary seminars and public lectures in order to broaden the benefit of their presence on campus. It is suggested that such support be made available on a pilot basis for two years in order to assess its effectiveness and feasibility.

**Action:**

a. Establish a top-up fund with clear criteria of eligibility and funding guidelines to assist visiting scholars on leave and attract them to the University of Victoria in order to contribute to teaching and scholarly activities at the University.

**3.3 Effective Management of and Support for International Projects**

Increasing competition for international project funding will make it more difficult for the University of Victoria to maintain its global stature in this area. This is clearly evident when one examines the University’s recent performance in the CIDA University Partnerships in Co-operation and Development Program (UPCDP) competitions where, despite a considerable investment in time and financial resources, several proposals either have not been successful at the letter of intent stage or have failed at the full proposal stage.
Many international collaborative projects are fundamentally different than typical research grants. These projects face unique challenges in terms of culture, government bureaucracy and the difficulty of maintaining effective long-distance working relationships. Beyond this, a more fundamental difference exists in that funding is generally in the form of an institutional contribution agreement. Unlike NSERC or SSHRC grants which are tied to the individual researcher, the agreement for programs such as UPCR projects is with the University of Victoria, and the University as an institution becomes accountable for management and delivery of the project.

Once a project is approved, it is currently the responsibility of the project director to implement the project management strategy. Without adequate project management infrastructure faculty members may find these complex projects a drain on their limited resources, and as a result both the project and the faculty member may encounter difficulties. Project managers would ideally be involved in the project from its inception, would attend all management meetings and be aware of the ongoing progress of the project. The creation of an international project manager position would ensure maintenance of the corporate memory of the institution, building expertise in project development, management and implementation. Ultimately, the establishment of this position would give the University of Victoria a competitive edge in the field of international collaborative research and global education.

**OBJECTIVE 9:**
To ensure ongoing project management support for faculty members and researchers engaged in externally funded international collaborative development projects or other international research or academic projects in need of project management.

**Action:**

  a. Create the position of International Project Manager (initially 0.5 FTE) with responsibility for the management of international collaborative research projects, as well as selected externally-funded academic projects.

Financial support for the preparation of research for development grant applications is a priority if the University is to submit competitive applications to agencies such as CIDA. Quality applications require seed funds to support the development of international collaborations and partnerships. Research Services is currently providing limited seed funding to researchers applying to agencies sponsoring collaborative research for development; however, this seed money support is unbudgeted and needs to be funded as a regular line item to be sustainable.

**OBJECTIVE 10:**
To enable applicants to external funding agencies to engage in extensive and direct discussions with the partners abroad in order to strengthen the quality of the proposal put forward.
Action:

a. Establish an ongoing seed money fund in the core budget to provide start-up money for researchers developing collaborative research proposals with international partners.

3.4 Creating a Closer Link Between International Research and Teaching

In spite of the numerous international research activities in which University of Victoria researchers are involved, the considerable experience thus gained does not always benefit the students in the classroom. Objective 12 of the University’s strategic plan addresses the link between research and academic programs, namely: To ensure that our undergraduate and graduate programs are of high quality, responsive to disciplinary and interdisciplinary developments and student needs, and enriched by the research environment of the university.

The integration of research and academic programs is of particular importance in the international field since many students will not have the opportunity to gain any direct experience abroad. Creating links between faculty members’ international research and teaching is an important strategy towards further incorporating international elements into University curricula. In order to help motivate faculty members to actively and intentionally incorporate their international research experience into teaching efforts, evidence of such linkages should become a regular component of faculty members’ teaching dossiers. Further, an award program for faculty members who have successfully modeled such linkages could highlight the importance of such strategies and serve as an impetus to innovation.

The library plays a vital role with regard to the integration of international research and teaching. An internationalized library with holdings and electronic access to documents in the original languages for films, books, videos, journals, newspapers, etc., will assist our faculty members and instructors in better linking teaching and research activities. This will also allow them to make curricular changes towards a wider geographic and linguistic representation in the classroom.

OBJECTIVE 11:
To support faculty members to create more effective links between their international research and teaching.

Action:

a. Under the auspices of the Learning and Teaching Centre, support faculty members in developing strategies and techniques for effectively linking their international research with their teaching, course activities, assessment strategies and curriculum development.

b. The Learning and Teaching Centre to update templates for faculty teaching dossiers to more fully and explicitly recognize the integration of international research perspectives into course materials and teaching.
c. Create an award program to honour members of the University community who have effectively linked their international research experience with teaching strategies and course design.

4. Enhancing an International Presence and Capacity

A. Strengthening the Non-Academic International Curriculum

A university which seeks to promote international education must address the needs of the large majority of its students who will not be able to study or gain experience abroad for a portion of their formal education. In addition to internationalizing the academic curriculum available to students, there needs to be a range of international activities taking place across the campus that offer opportunities for students, staff, faculty members and the community at large to deepen and broaden their knowledge and experience of global and cross-cultural realities. This “non-formal” curriculum can offer a rich array of films, performances, celebrations, seminars, lectures and cultural events that will enrich global learning and a sense of world-mindedness.

OBJECTIVE 12: To ensure that all students, staff and faculty benefit from and celebrate the international nature of the University and local community.

Action:

a. Raise the awareness and knowledge levels of students, staff and faculty in relation to major cultural traditions through systematic planning and diffusion of activities/information throughout campus life.

b. Support and create opportunities for staff members to participate in international activities and staff exchanges in other countries and cultures.

B. Establishing an International Space

Central to the goal of integrating international activities across the University is the need to create an international space – a focal point infused with international activity that would serve as an attractor and a connector. It should serve as a highly visible, accessible and connective hub for those seeking more international information and involvements, as well as for all international events and programs on campus.

Currently, the University of Victoria lacks such a focal point – an international place on campus – where a) international advisors would be a ready source of reliable and timely information and support, b) students would be able to connect with other students, staff and faculty involved in all aspects of the University’s international services and programs, and c) a sense of belonging and support for international students on campus would be engendered.

Such an international place would assist not only international students, but all University of Victoria students, and could be one of a number of student services clustered in close proximity to one another. Currently there is no place that is visible and accessible as a “one
stop shop” for information and connections to services for things international at the University. Such a venue could also offer an appropriate environment for welcoming and hosting international visitors, including dignitaries from other countries, Canadian Ambassadors, and visiting scholars.

Further, such an international hub would facilitate dialogue between the various administrative and service units involved in the international area and would assist in coordinating the flow of referrals and the inter-connection of services. Finally, this international crossroads would also serve as a meeting place for faculty, staff and students interested in international affairs and issues.

**OBJECTIVE 13:**
To include in the University’s facilities and capital plan space in a suitable location that will provide a welcoming area, including space for computers and resource materials for students, access to a large meeting room (for 75-100 people), and a clustering of international offices in the vicinity (e.g. IESS, OIA).

C. Aligning International Services and Coordinating International Resources

There is a need to align and enhance services and support functions for international students across all dimensions of the University’s learning environment, including those for distance education students. Achieving such coordination and access will require development and implementation of a plan encompassing all student support services within an articulated common philosophy that also aligns with the overall academic objectives of the University.

**OBJECTIVE 14:**
To ensure that international students are accessing all aspects of the University, and that all programs and services are sensitive to the needs and experiences of international learners.

Action:

Create a framework and processes for aligning services to support international student learning across the life-course of the student’s experience at the University in a seamless and mutually supporting fashion, and in tune with the academic objectives for internationalization of the University overall.

**Looking to the Future**

In designing a strategy to guide the University of Victoria’s internationalization efforts for the next five years, we inevitably had to focus our suggestions for increased engagement on certain areas over others. Based on our consultations with a wide range of international education practitioners across the UVic campus, we believe that this document provides the most balanced reflection of how we can build on existing strengths and create synergies with emerging initiatives in order to create the kind of internationally-minded campus environment our University overall strategic plan envisions.
The translation of the Strategic Plan for Further Internationalization into operational terms will be carried out under the leadership of the Office of International Affairs. In this process, the OIA will work very closely with the many academic and administrative units that are front and centre to our internationalization efforts.

The Strategic Plan is meant to be a living document and will thus be subject to regular review and updating. Members of the UVic community are invited to share their thoughts on the evolution of this plan with the Office of International Affairs.