



*2010 Mestenhauser Lecture on
Internationalizing Higher Education*

Intercultural Matters: The Internationalization of Higher Education

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The University of Minnesota, founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation and the world. The University's threefold mission of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service is carried out on multiple campuses and throughout the state.

Intercultural Matters: The Internationalization of Higher Education

Honor, gratitude, opportunity, kindness, appreciation—these are all words that you, as audience members, expect to hear from a speaker at the beginning of this kind of lecture. And I want to use them all, but I am so aware of the imperfections inherent in language. These expected words cannot possibly convey to you my feelings in being asked to give this lecture. Here I am, back at the University of Minnesota, giving a distinguished lecture in honor of one of the people, Josef Mestenhauser, and one of the university's programmatic strengths, international education, that literally and fundamentally changed my life. I confess to being filled often with emotion as I prepared this lecture, because—my goodness—what a coming together of the parts of my life this is! Meredith, Gayle, Kay, and most of all Joe, what a gift you have given me in allowing me to present today a synthesis of my personal narrative—my intellectual core and the practical administrative portion of my career.

The thesis of this lecture honoring Josef A. Mestenhauser is simple—the study, the practice, and the engagement in intercultural communication are keys to the goal of internationalizing higher education.

I chose “intercultural matters” as the core of this presentation because “intercultural” began to matter to me soon after I came to the University of Minnesota as a freshman in 1966. I chose “intercultural matters” as the core of this presentation because intercultural matters have been at the core of who I am since that time—with different manifestations in terms of focus, sometimes practical and personal and sometimes intellectual. In this lecture I will consider a range of “intercultural matters” by way of making the argument that an exploration of “intercultural” and what that means is often overlooked, explicitly and implicitly, in discussions and work on the internationalization of higher education, and by way of making the argument that “intercultural” does matter in the work to achieve the goal of internationalizing higher education. For me “intercultural matters,” considered in the context of internationalizing higher education, direct us to the human, individual, personal, and most of all to the interpersonal domains of internationalization.

In discussing intercultural matters and making the case that intercultural matters, I will weave together three disparate but personally very connected threads. I begin with a description of international education at the University of Minnesota in the mid-1960s and describe how it transformed this small-town Minnesota girl by directing her to the position that “intercultural matters.” I will then turn to an

exploration of the enduring intellectual passion of my life, which is the study and teaching of intercultural communication. Finally, I draw upon the last two decades of my career as a university administrator—as a provost and as a president—to offer some advice and practical suggestions for ensuring that attention is paid to intercultural matters in the inevitable globalization of our world. While the three parts of the presentation suggest linearity and a stacking of argument upon argument to build the case, I instead ask you to consider each section as part of a tapestry that weaves into my overall argument that intercultural matters.

Let me acknowledge at this point that I am not offering in this presentation definitions of “intercultural communication,” “intercultural,” or any of the other terms that we use freely and frequently. I ask for your indulgence at the onset, because the “conversation” will, I think, be easier if we set aside discussion of definitions for now.

I begin with a description of international education at the University of Minnesota in the 1960s.

In September 1966 I began my studies at the University of Minnesota as a first-year student. I was a young woman from a small Minnesota town, not of the world but eager for it. When I was younger, my understanding of the world outside my small home town was limited and shaped primarily by library books, and later by novels and a ravenous appetite for learning about domestic and international issues. “Book knowledge” is the apt descriptor. I went to the University of Minnesota because of its debate program and its fine Speech Communication Department. (I had done debate and speech in high school; Bob Scott, Ernie Bormann, and Bill Howell, faculty members in UM’s Department of Speech Communication, each judged me in high school debate or speech competitions.)

At the University of Minnesota, I found also a panoply of student-focused, learning-focused, interculturally focused international education activities that grabbed my spirit, my passion, my ideas, my time, and yes, redirected my future. During orientation week I signed up for the American Brother-Sister program, which paired me with a British graduate student for frequent conversations; the American Life Seminars, which were discussions for about 20 to 25 international students and five to ten U.S. students at the homes of faculty members, during which we deliberated about various aspects of American life; and, most importantly, the Student Project for International Responsibility (SPIR). The latter, a program I believe was unique at that time, had as its goal the development of student leadership in international education. Based on a framework that linked knowledge to practice to action, SPIR interns in the first year of the program were afforded multiple opportunities to learn about the world, about international affairs, and about issues that both divided and brought people together. In our second year, our focus as SPIR students was on internships with the various international organizations and programs on campus. The program’s goal was to develop student leadership for international educational activities and organizations on campus. Amazingly, the

university's student association then had a vice president for international affairs, another unique marker of the distinctiveness of the international education agenda at the University of Minnesota.

Incredibly, as a freshman at the University of Minnesota, I met and began learning from Joe Mestenhauser and Forrest Moore, the associate director and director of what was then called the International Student Advisor's Office. I had the opportunity, even as a freshman, to learn, discuss, query, and interrogate the world with these forceful and passionate thinkers and proponents of international education. There is a lesson in that early experience that I will return to later.

In each of the international education programs and activities in which I participated, it was the intercultural that mattered. The experiences were face-to-face, or interpersonal. The experiences drew upon, literally depended upon, cultural differences. The experiences assumed that knowledge would facilitate or help to produce "understanding," "respect," and "tolerance," because the act of gaining knowledge was always linked to interactions with others—culturally different others—and the querying and questioning capacity of humans in communication with one another. The programs assumed that intercultural experiences would promote positive outcomes. At their core, each program linked human symbolic capability to learning about, with, and from others who were culturally different.

In my sophomore year, I applied for one of the University of Minnesota's then-seven reciprocal exchange programs with foreign universities. The program involved a Minnesota student who went to and was supported by the foreign university, and a student from that foreign university who came to the University of Minnesota with similar support. I applied to Osmania University in Hyderabad, India. Many people have asked me why I applied to go to India, and I have typically acknowledged that, rather than choosing to go there because of some deep abiding interest, it was because of the British; I could anticipate being able to function in the English language. My goal really was to fulfill the book-created fantasy of study-abroad during my junior year.

I was selected as the alternate for that exchange program, but several months later Joe's office called to let me know that the woman originally selected had decided not to go, and as the alternate I could now go study in India. I had a couple of months to prepare the logistics and myself for this year-long experience in a foreign country.

The international education office (Joe) then moved into high gear to orient me and prepare me for my year in India. They gave me numerous articles to read about the United States, including articles about American culture and politics. I don't think I fully understood the motivation behind this preparation. I imagine they explained that I would learn a lot about who I was culturally, and also that I would become my nation's actions in the eyes of others (we were engaged militarily in Vietnam at that time). They gave me an article to read by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck¹ on a concept called "value orientations," which to this day is one of the

central ways that I think about the range of human experiences across cultures. And there were, of course, recommendations of articles and books on India.

I received advice as well from Indians studying or working at Minnesota; all of them were men. Their advice was much less intellectualized, more personal, and more directed to my communication style and characteristics. They suggested, for example, that I tone down my extroverted personality—that I try to be more demure and quiet—so that I would “fit in” with the Indian women with whom I would live in the university’s hostel. As I travelled to India, leaving Minnesota and getting on a plane for the first time in my life, I pondered, in particular, that advice.

I lived and studied at Osmania University in Hyderabad, India for the 1968-69 academic year. And the mystery of mysteries to me was that I did “fit in.” I interacted well, navigated cultural norms, enjoyed the food, made friends who remain my friends today, became part of families, understood much, and was at least consciously competent most of the time. I reflected on this mystery. How was it that Jolene Koester, small town girl, German Lutheran, of working class parents, extroverted, inexperienced with other cultures and points of view, previously unwilling even to try unfamiliar foods, lived matter-of-factly and with relative ease in a country and among cultures that are literally and figuratively across the globe from where I originated. I tried to imagine myself living and studying at the Freie University of Berlin—another exchange site—and thought that while on the surface the differences would not have been as great, I also felt—knew in my heart—that for some reason India was the better place for me to be.

During that first year in India I generated most of the intellectual questions that have bedeviled and delighted me since. How do cultural differences affect interpersonal communication? Why does one person adjust and interact successfully in a new culture and another does not? What psychological characteristics predispose people to competent interactions in another culture? Are there particular matches or configurations of cultures that predispose individuals from those cultures to communicate competently with one another? Can we predict which individuals are more likely to be successful in another culture? Can we train, orient, and teach people how to interact more effectively in another culture? If a person is competent in interacting with people from one culture, will he or she be more likely to be competent in interacting with people from another culture? Experience was the driving force for my study of intercultural communication, but also importantly for studying intercultural communication competence.

I returned to the University of Minnesota with questions unanswered, feeling disconnected, marginal, and cold! And there again was that welcoming, supportive, international education environment that drew me in—an international house and a student job working with Kay Thomas on an orientation program for Fulbright scholars who were studying in the United States. Bob Moran, Paul Pedersen, and Michael Paige were also part of that international education office. Importantly, there were changes in my academic home of speech communication, where Dr.

Bill Howell had begun teaching a course on intercultural communication. This academic program was a comfortable and welcoming intellectual home to me, filled with the energy of studying communication theory while also allowing, and even encouraging, the study of “intercultural matters.”

After graduation I went on to the University of Wisconsin for a Master’s degree, went back to India to do research, decided that doctoral study was not for me, and ended up back at Minnesota in the heart of the international education environment that had been nurtured by Joe and Forrest—then at the International Study and Travel Center, working ultimately as the educational coordinator. After several years of that work, I decided that my career goal was to direct an international education office at a university, and to do that I knew I needed a doctorate, so back to graduate school I went. I had become part of what in international education circles is still called the “Minnesota mafia.”

It is important to emphasize again that these international education activities and endeavors that engaged me at the University of Minnesota for more than a decade were, at their core, intercultural, with the primary goal and method of fostering face-to-face interaction between and among people of differing cultural backgrounds. So I knew first-hand that intercultural matters and I knew that I was “hooked” on intercultural matters.

Now let me move to the second thread of this argument that intercultural matters are at the core of internationalizing higher education. I will do so by drawing upon the scholarly and pedagogical specialty of intercultural communication. This section of the lecture considers three major sets of ideas—the scholarly study of intercultural communication, the study and teaching of intercultural competence, and why the intercultural should be more prominent in the work of international education.

When I decided to do a Ph.D. in speech communication, the Speech Communication Department at Minnesota had just agreed to partner with study abroad programs to offer two experimental courses. I was hired to develop and teach those courses. One was a pre-departure or orientation course to help students prepare for their own intercultural matters. The other was a re-entry or post-study-abroad course, where the “intercultural” was viewed from the perspective of the disassociated returnee.

That pre-departure orientation course shaped my expectations and desires for a good textbook in intercultural communication, and thus shaped and influenced what I brought to the writing of our textbook, *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures*².

I taught the two courses for the first time in the winter quarter of 1978. The study of intercultural communication in the discipline of communication was essentially still in its infancy. Yet the core concepts in that introductory course were remarkably similar to those in the basic intercultural communication courses taught today. They included value orientations, verbal codes, nonverbal codes, persuasive

and argumentative structures, stereotypes, ethnocentrism, culture shock, and various techniques to improve “success” in intercultural communication. The textbook I used, *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication* by John Condon and Fathi Yousef³, was arguably the first interpersonal intercultural communication textbook. Its content and structure are present still in today’s most widely used intercultural communication textbooks. Additional concepts now included in some scholars’ teaching and in most of the basic intercultural communication textbooks include an understanding of the dynamics of the impact of racism, living in a multicultural United States, the impact of power, and issues of cultural identity.

However, scholars who call intercultural communication their home have dramatically changed the landscape of this specialized area of research in terms of both the research questions and the methodologies they choose to pursue. The early years saw a great deal of emphasis within the framework of Everett Rogers’ work on the diffusion of innovations.⁴ But today’s intercultural communication scholars now consider a wider range of subjects. Some choose to focus on the study of communication phenomena within one culture; they work to unpack the cultural nuances of origination and enactment, such as the use of silence within the cultural groups,⁵ or culturally-specific forms of talk.⁶ Much of this work is done qualitatively but some of it is quantitative explication of the presence of communication phenomena or constructs, often first identified in studies in the United States and then quantitatively measured and tested within another culture.⁷ Many quantitative studies are comparative in nature and goal.

You heard my recitation of the early questions that motivated me intellectually, and I confess those same questions have shaped my work—my scholarly writing, my pedagogical writing, my teaching, my consulting, and yes, even my non-international administrative work. My original interest, and one that has been sustained throughout my career, focused on the interpersonal domain and how variations in culture influence the construction of meanings when interacting individuals come from different cultural backgrounds. I have similarly been driven by the original perplexing mystery of how and why I could experience intercultural communication with South Asian Indians in a manner that was successful, effective, and competent.

Over the past decades, a large body of work that informs most inquiries into variations in cultures that affect intercultural communication had its genesis in the scholarship of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck.⁸ Their seminal work, published in 1960, attempted to make sense of the systematic variations described both between and within cultures. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck argued that each culture determines its preferred solutions to a relatively common and stable set of problems or questions that all humans ask. Specifically, they asked: What is the human orientation to activity? What is the relationship of humans to one another? What is the nature of human beings? What is the relationship of humans to the natural world? And, what is the orientation of humans to time?

While later theory and research have challenged, reconceptualized, and refined these five orientations of cultural patterns, Kluckhohn's and Strodtbeck's work stimulated other exceedingly influential research by Geert Hofstede⁹, and more recently by Robert J. House and his team of 170 investigators called Project GLOBE, or the GLOBE studies.¹⁰ Hofstede's early work described four dimensions on which cultures varied—power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, and masculinity versus femininity. Hofstede later added three more dimensions in response to criticisms that his work had a Western bias and missed critical aspects of non-Western cultures.

Hofstede's other contribution was methodological. He conducted large multinational (and thereby, multicultural) empirical studies documenting the variations between cultures on these dimensions. The GLOBE studies built on and improved the nature of the dimensions, as well as contributed to greater methodological sophistication in conducting cross cultural comparisons.

Each of these lines of research has the critical limitation that it looks at the average behavior of the group or culture, rather than the behavior of the individual. However, this approach to understanding cultural variations has been important and highly influential in the field of intercultural communication. For me, these variations in cultural patterns are the heart of intercultural communication.

I earlier asked you to indulge my inattention to providing definitions. But let me reference a simple, elemental definition of intercultural communication—one that I reject: intercultural communication occurs when people from different cultural backgrounds create shared meanings. This definition fails on two dimensions—first, it sidesteps the critical question of what culture is and second, it is too simplistic to capture the complexity of human interaction over time.

As Ron Lustig and I were writing the first edition of our textbook, we did struggle to offer a meaningful definition of intercultural communication to students who would use the text. We were aware that all individuals represent, in varying degrees, the characteristics of their own culture. We were also aware that while individuals originate within one or more cultures, their identification with that culture and its central characteristics will change over time. And we were further aware that at that time—the early 1990s—the term “culture” was (and still is) used freely and applied to all kinds of groups within those larger aggregations that we consider to be more legitimately labeled as cultures. Therefore, we defined culture as, “a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices, which affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people.”¹¹ For the textbook, and for our work in teaching students, we intentionally defined culture as applicable to much larger, societal levels of organization. We have steadfastly chosen not to include in our definition of culture what we regard as professions, hobbies, friendship groups, religious groups, and other social aggregates. Paralleling this approach, we defined intercultural communication as occurring when large and important cul-

tural differences create dissimilar interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently.

Critical questions we asked (and still ask) of ourselves and our students include: What differences among groups of people constitute cultural differences? How extensive are those differences? And how does extended communication change the effects of cultural differences? Our exploration of these questions convinced us that the degree to which individuals differ is the degree to which there is interculturalness in a given instance of communication. Situations in which the individuals are very different from one another are most intercultural, whereas those in which individuals are very similar to one another are least intercultural.

All these esoteric arguments, which laid the foundation for our textbook on intercultural competence, resonated for me at the recent NAFSA conference where Christian Bode, who is the general secretary of the German Exchange Service, stated, “it’s the difference that makes the difference.”¹² In other words, differences are at the heart of intercultural communication and international education. Differences are often the unspoken characteristics and goals of study abroad programs and faculty exchanges and experiences in another educational system. Differences, then, are key to intercultural matters.

Ron Lustig and I also specifically chose not to use terms such as “interethnic” or “interracial” communication. We see intercultural communication as the broader term, with race and ethnicity contributing to the perceived effects of cultural differences. Similarly, consistent with common scholarly usage, we chose to use the term “cross-cultural” to refer to the study of a particular idea or concept within many cultures.¹³ From my perspective, much research in intercultural communication is really cross-cultural research—certainly useful and important, but not directly intercultural communication research.

Again, I return to my central argument that intercultural matters.

That first intercultural communication or pre-departure course I taught in the Speech Communication Department allowed me to continue to pursue my personal and intellectual interest in how, why, and in what ways individuals are successful in intercultural communication. For that class I asked how, in what ways, and with what tools can students learn about intercultural communication in order to increase their competence? I didn’t use the term “competence” in the courses I taught then. Instead, I relied on the word and goal of “successful.” But in the mid-1980s, influenced by the work in the communication discipline on communication competence, I began to frame my research explorations into successful or effective intercultural communication as “intercultural competence.” Then as Ron and I worked on our intercultural communication textbooks over the years, that work solidified the importance of framing students’ understanding of the desired outcome as intercultural communication competence. Our work draws heavily on Brian Spitzberg’s outstanding work on communication competence.¹⁴

The definition we offer of competent communication is, “interaction that is perceived as effective in fulfilling certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also appropriate to the context in which the interaction occurs.”¹⁵ There are several key elements to this definition. First, competent communication is a perception, because it is best determined by the people who are interacting with one another. In other words, communication competence is a social judgment about how well a person interacts with others. Because competence involves a social perception, competence will always be specific to the context and the interpersonal relationships within which it occurs. Therefore, whereas judgments of competence are influenced by an assessment of an individual’s personal characteristics, they cannot be wholly determined by them. Communication involves interaction between people, and competence involves social judgments that deem the communication to be both appropriate and effective.

The literature on communication competence also repeatedly identifies three elements needed to increase the likelihood of an individual receiving that perception or social judgment of competence. Those three components are knowledge, motivation or affect, and skilled actions.

Recall the questions that my original Indian experience generated for me, which were at their core linked to my amazement that my intercultural communication with the Indian women in the Ladies Hostel and with their families was comfortable, familiar, and the basis for long-lasting friendships. How could I have displayed “right” or “correct” verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors? This question, derived from my personal experiences, led to more abstract explorations around issues of competence. What personal characteristics make one more likely to be judged as competent in another culture? How do the individuals’ cultural differences in communicating affect the likelihood of achieving competence? Can we educate, train, and assist individuals and increase their likelihood of being intercultural competent? And if the answer to that last question is “yes,” then what needs to be included in that education, training, or preparation?

Perhaps you can already intuit the answers to those questions, which framing intercultural success as intercultural communication competence provided for me. Within the definition were answers to why some individuals are competent in one culture and not another: competence is contextually based. Within the definition are pointers that help us understand how differences between cultures shape the outcomes for those culturally-different individuals who are engaged in communication. Within the definition are answers to the question of how and why I — with my extroverted, outgoing personality—could be successful with my female Indian friends and their families, though the male Indian scholars at the University of Minnesota had predicted just the opposite.

Within this conceptual framework is the sense-making for the materials that the International Student Advisor’s office had me read in preparation for my Indian sojourn. Within this framework are the organizing principles underlying the helter-

skelter but always predictably present set of elements in orientation programs for study abroad students and for international students and scholars coming to the United States: culture-general knowledge; culture-specific knowledge; consideration of stereotypes, racism and ethnocentrism; tapping the affective dimension of human beings; and the focus on skills that emphasize the importance of learning language and specific verbal and nonverbal do's and don'ts.

Thus, once again, in intercultural matters those early experiences at Minnesota and the preparation I had received to study and live in India were brought into a coherent pattern. Again, the study of intercultural competence has allowed me to pursue those questions up to the present for myself and for those students who use our textbook in their classes.

As the third leg of this exploration of intercultural communication theory and research, let me explicitly make the argument that intercultural communication and competence should be more central to the dialogue, work, and efforts directed toward internationalizing our colleges and universities. Perhaps another way of saying this is to ask, how does the intercultural intersect with much of the traditional and advanced work on internationalizing higher education?

For me—because I am a scholar of communication—intercultural matters. Because I cut my teeth on a set of activities and perspectives that saw international education as grounded in the interpersonal dimension, intercultural matters. Intercultural communication is the interpersonal dimension of international education. It is not the institutionalized side of international education, which focuses on what happens with the ongoing structures and processes of the institution, such as its curriculum, formal programs, and research activities. Rather, and another way of saying this, it is the personal side of international education.

I should make explicit here that it is probably in this point that I most deviate from one of my original international education professional mentors and teachers. For while Joe Mestenhauser has argued vigorously and correctly for systemic changes in higher education institutions in order to ensure that international education becomes commonplace, I argue equally vigorously for the centrality of the interpersonal—the intercultural!—in the role of higher education institutions as they internationalize. Those have been my interests. Those have been my passions. It is the intercultural—interpersonal communication within intercultural encounters—that matters most in the conversations, work, efforts, and outcomes of international education.

Finally, let me now offer some practical advice to leaders, faculty members, students, and administrators who are committed to ensuring that the global world is reflected in our higher education institutions. Some of these specific suggestions are shaped by my belief in the importance of intercultural matters in our universities, and others by my longevity in wearing a university administrator's hat. All are designed, ultimately, to influence the organizational priorities of universities, to ensure that intercultural matters.

1. Wherever you “sit” professionally in the university, support the offering of specific courses for students who plan to participate in any kind of intercultural intensive experience, whether in the communication department or in other appropriate academic homes. Such courses, which are essentially beginning intercultural communication courses, should provide culture-general knowledge about the key elements of culture that influence an individual’s construction of meaning, and should be grounded in culture-specific examples and understandings. Provide in the coursework all three dimensions of learning—knowledge, motivations, and skills. Work to ensure that students in the course experience the impact of differences before they go to live, study, or work in a culturally-different environment. If your role in the university is one that does not give you the power or financial resources to make this suggestion happen, then build alliances directed toward the outcome of making it happen.
2. Broaden the university’s understanding, efforts, and programs for how opportunities are created for students (and faculty and staff) to experience differences. For example, like most U.S. urban areas, Minneapolis-St. Paul now has families from other than the dominant European-American cultural background. Use the “intercultural” that is here at the university and use the cultural differences in the Twin Cities. Develop and support efforts both within and external to the university that place students into work groups and environments with culturally-different others, such that they must produce a product or an outcome that requires working in intercultural teams. Said in another way, use the intercultural opportunities already present within the university setting to create intercultural learning environments.
3. Embrace the cultural communities in the United States as integral parts of the international education agenda. A global world now exists here, within the boundaries of this country. Words and categories such as “minorities,” “underrepresented” “previously underrepresented groups,” and “multicultural education” often create divides that keep international educators from advancing their goals, because international education is conceived of as occurring only across political boundaries (that is, outside the United States). Explore the cultural riches within the United States. Organizational structures within the university, along with ideological divides, create barriers, lost opportunities, and diminished possibilities.
4. Study and build on the successful examples of competent intercultural communication within your university. For example, at California State University, Northridge, I always learn from our student leadership. In each of the 11 years that I have been university president, the students elected to lead have been from a variety of cultures. They work competently interculturally to make the student government work. They understand that they are communicating interculturally. They use the communication skills taught in

intercultural communication classes to work toward effective and appropriate communication.

5. You recall that at the beginning of this lecture I described the incredible opportunity that I had to learn from Joe Mestenhauser and Forrest Moore, when I was a freshman at the University of Minnesota. I said there was a lesson in that early experience that I would return to later in this lecture. Major research universities, and large comprehensive regional universities like mine, have devalued the practice of senior faculty members and administrators working with incoming students. And when senior faculty do structure work in this way, it is usually to work with only a limited number of honor students. I would like to see this practice change for a variety of reasons, but for now let me just say that it is through frequent and structured interactions with senior faculty members that students have tremendous opportunities to learn how they can explore and live intercultural matters.

Now onto advice derived from my administrative work.

6. Become part of the strategic focus and planning process of your institution, and build cross-institutional alliances. Said another way, international educators need to become “players” in their universities, and the avenue to achieve that goal is to understand that most universities have a strategic focus as well as a planning process to support its development and implementation. While not all universities will have international education as part of the institution’s strategic focus, those committed to international education should consistently be a part of their university’s strategic focus. Such presence and participation allows the international educator to take advantage of opportunities and moments to advance the cause of international education within the larger strategic focus and to build critical alliances.
7. Work for structural change; work for institutional change. Don’t spend time and energy on programs, efforts, or initiatives that have no chance of being supported in the longer term. If you are doing a pilot project, work to ascertain that the individuals involved have credibility, so their work will be accepted and outlast them. Avoid funding a pilot project with one-time dollars if there is little hope for ongoing resources to support the project over time. Don’t go for the bright light that burns intensely but burns out quickly and is no more.
8. Understand that deans, vice presidents, and, yes, presidents have constraints. Administrators juggle the institution’s strategic focus with day-to-day operations. Whatever your position within your university’s organizational structure, try to understand the institution’s world and decision-making from a university perspective, not just and wholly from the perspective of your specific content responsibilities. As you seek support for a project, initiative,

or position, use your intercultural communication skills—respect, perspective taking—to consider the worldview of others in the organizational hierarchy. Understand that deans, vice presidents, and yes, presidents do have power, but in order to accomplish what they want over a period of time, they must use that power carefully. I used to joke with my staff, particularly in the early years of being a president, by asking, “Can I do that?” They would respond, “You can do anything you want; you are the president.” The reality, however, is that every time I use power “over” rather than power “with” I expend my political capital. And the likelihood of accomplishing permanent change thereby diminishes because change does not occur when it is forced rather than embraced.

9. Understand that change is slow. The enormous power of international education at the University of Minnesota did not happen overnight or even quickly. The enormous footprint of international education at the University of Minnesota happened because there were tenacious champions such as Forrest, Joe, and Kay. The goal is to make the change survive your time in the leadership role.
10. Finally, there is inevitability about the global being present within our universities. What is not inevitable is that the knowledge learned about other cultures will produce motivations and behaviors that allow us to construct meaning in an appropriate and effective way—or competently. Thus, my final suggestion is to move beyond the more superficial ways in which we operationalize international education. The goal of international education efforts is not just knowledge, but rather understanding that leads to competent intercultural communication.

So, let me conclude today’s lecture by again emphatically asserting that it is through the intercultural and making the intercultural matter that the goals of international education will be achieved. From those decades-ago international education activities that focused and depended on the interpersonal intercultural communication of U.S. and international students, to my formal study of intercultural communication and communication competence, and, culminating in my administrative work as a university provost and president, I have learned and experienced that intercultural matters. In each of the international education programs and activities in which I have participated, it was the intercultural that mattered. The thesis of this lecture honoring Josef A. Mestenhauser, is simple—the study, the practice, and the engagement in intercultural communication are keys to the goal of internationalizing higher education.

¹ Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, *Variations in Value Orientations* (Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson, 1960).

² First edition: Myron W. Lustig and Jolene Koester, *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993). Most recent edition: Myron W. Lustig and Jolene Koester, *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures* 6th ed. (Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, 2010).

³ John C. Condon and Fathi Yousef, *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975).

⁴ Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (New York: Free Press, 1962).

⁵ Keith H. Basso, "To Give Up on Words': Silence in Western Apache Culture," *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*, ed. Donal L. Carbaugh (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1990), 303-320.

⁶ William B. Gudykunst and Stella Ting-Toomey, *Culture and Interpersonal Communication* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988), 99-116.

⁷ See, for example: Stella Ting-Toomey, "Intimacy Expressions in Three Cultures: France, Japan, and the United States," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 15 (1991): 29-46.

⁸ Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck.

⁹ Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001); Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival* 3rd Ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).

¹⁰ Robert J. House, Paul J. Hanges, Mansour Javidan, Peter W. Dorfman, and Vipin Gupta (eds.), *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004).

¹¹ Lustig & Koester (2010), 25.

¹² Oral comments made at the NAFSA annual conference in Kansas City, MO: June 1, 2010.

¹³ For a thorough discussion of these topics, see Lustig & Koester (2010), 29-33.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the concept of communication competence, see Daniel J. Canary and Brian H. Spitzberg, "A Model of Competence Perceptions of Conflict Strategies," *Human Communication Research* 15 (1989): 630-649; Daniel J. Canary and Brian H. Spitzberg, "Attribution Biases and Associations between Conflict Strategies and Competence Outcomes," *Communication Monographs* 57 (1990): 139-151; Robert L. Duran and Brian H. Spitzberg, "Toward the Development and Validation of a Measure of Cognitive Communication Competence," *Communication Quarterly* 43 (1995): 259-275; Myron W. Lustig and Brian H. Spitzberg, "Methodological Issues in the Study of Intercultural Communication Competence," *Intercultural Communication Competence*, ed. Richard L. Wiseman and Jolene Koester (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1993) 153-167; Brian H. Spitzberg, "Issues in the Development of a Theory of Interpersonal Competence in the Intercultural Context," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 13 (1989): 241-268; Brian H. Spitzberg, "An Examination of Trait Measures of Interpersonal Competence," *Communication Reports* 4 (1991): 22-29; Brian H. Spitzberg, "The Dialectics of (In)competence," *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 10 (1993): 137-158; Brian H. Spitzberg, "The Dark Side of (In)Competence," *The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication*, ed. William R. Cupach and Brian H. Spitzberg (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1994): 25-49; Brian H. Spitzberg, "Intimate Violence," *Competence in Interpersonal Con-*

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¹⁵ Lustig & Koester (2010), 65.



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