

CCIE Speech
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The Global Community College
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Introduction:

Ohlone College is named after the Ohlone Indians who lived for over 5,000 years in the San Francisco Bay area before European settlement. The population of many thousands lived here in peaceful coexistence, not as organized tribes but as separate village groups with different languages and religions. The abundance of food sources and mild environs, along with the cultural diversity, made for a high sustainable way of life that was uprooted and all but destroyed less than 200 years ago. Today there is only a small remnant of the Ohlone people, but the lessons they teach us are legion.

Ohlone College strives to honor and learn from our namesake to emulate a highly diverse community with different beliefs and practices, living and learning in peace and harmony with one another and with the natural environment. Over 100 different languages and dialects are spoken among our 18,000 students and their families. No one ethnic group comprises more than 25% of the population. It is this very diversity that our students, 30% of whom are not yet permanent U.S. citizens, cite in surveys as the most enjoyable aspect of learning at Ohlone. So with all of these immigrants and diversity, why would we need or otherwise be interested in international education? Don't we already have an international college?

What we have is a multi-cultural but not necessarily an international or some might say a global institution. Fremont has the largest population of refugees from Afghanistan of any U.S. City. But what do students from there know of the experiences of immigrants from Mexico or Viet Nam or Serbia? I was recently talking to a business student of Chinese background and another who was Latino and I asked them if they thought knowing each others language might be useful in today's global economy. They both gave me shakes of the head and blank stares. They were unaware of the global education imperative which stems from a number of dynamics of few of which are the following:

Students in our biotech program will work with marketing and labeling of local products in 10 or more languages. The acid rain now falling on this city is coming from southeast Asia, our golden eagles are dying from infection by migratory birds that eat toxic pesticides in Argentina, humans

are dying of AIDS from Africa and we have bird flu from China. Tobacco use among youth is climbing world wide due to U.S. exports. Costs for building our new campus skyrocketed due to diversion of 80% of world steel supply to China. Our gas prices have soared because of dependency upon the Middle East oil. Everyday our newspaper carries the story of a Bay Area young man or woman killed not in San Francisco or Oakland or Fremont but in Iraq in a war being fought over oil.

All of our classes and lessons in colleges and universities are important, but none more important today than those which inculcate in our students an awareness and a frame of reference brought about through the subject matter of global environment, languages and culture and peace studies.

This afternoon I am presenting Ohlone College as a case study of an institution that is striving to emerge as a global college.

By global college I mean that in the day to day life of the college there is an underlying awareness of connectedness to other parts of the world. The “think global act local” paradigm is imbedded in the college culture. Students, faculty, staff and the community at large are in ongoing dialogue about the major issues impacting the global society including education, environment, health, housing, food supply, commerce, and security.

NAFSA has recommended the following steps that each campus should undertake in moving toward the global college:

- review and revise if necessary its mission and curriculum to include an emphasis on international education, both in the general education and in the disciplines;
- specifically review the status of foreign language instruction, area studies and international relations on campus
- recognize the importance of international study and travel for faculty development
- pursue both the enrollment of overseas students and study abroad programs and provide needed support programs for both groups of students
- look to its potential role in development assistance and other overseas education service

- give high priority to international education programs in its resource allocation processes and diversify funding through philanthropic and business support
- promote collaborative efforts with other academic institutions and businesses to maximize and share resources

These seven steps have been followed by Ohlone College in our planning and program development process.

In January of 2004 we embarked on a comprehensive five-year strategic planning process. At that juncture Ohlone College did not have significant engagement in international education. We started our planning process with a four hour session in the college gym when classes were cancelled and all full time employees and many of the students came together to share what was most important to them and the goals for realizing our shared values. A second forum was held a week later when over 150 community leaders came together for the same type of planning exercise.

A shared governance steering group compiled all of the forum findings and the college council subsequently adopted 7 major college goals with accompanying measurable outcomes that comprise our 5 year district strategic plan.

The item ranked of most importance by college and community alike was international and multicultural education. The first goal statement of our adopted strategic plan therefore reads:

Promote appreciation for and understanding of diverse races and culture by expanding the diversity of college personnel, international education offerings and exchanges, cross-cultural curricula, and ethnic/cultural events.

A task force was created and funding was provided to create an agenda for moving forward toward attaining this goal. Our external scanning told us that in the Bay Area the countries that are having the most impact on our economy and the job prospects of students are China, India and Mexico. These three countries comprise the ethnic origins of over 50% of our students. Also given that the City of Fremont Sister Cities program included India and Mexico, we had a natural base on which to begin.

As we launched our program, the very first item that came up was Study Abroad, which due to previous budget cuts had been eliminated at Ohlone. The program was reinstated with a program that had already been prepared—a semester in Sydney Australia. To that we added two week immersion programs in China and India. Semester studies in China, India and in Mexico are also now under development.

We have a partnership with Alliant International University who in late 2004 began offering a doctoral program on the Ohlone campus. Alliant has a special focus on multi-cultural education and they have a campus in Mexico City which has been opened up to the Ohlone faculty for classes to be offered from two week to a full semester in residence. Thus through this partnership we acquired our Mexico studies site.

Also in 2004 an emeritus professor from mainland China, who is a Stanford graduate and who has a daughter living in Fremont, visited with me and we began to design an exchange program with a university that was interested in starting a community college—something as we know is not common place in China. We sent a delegation in the summer of 2004 to explore exchange relationships and agreements were signed with the Taizhou Radio and Television University and Community College. Since that first exchange we have hosted several delegations from China and with help from CSU East Bay have formal agreements with four of them including the Taizhou community college, a Shanghai vocational college, the private university in Hongzhou and the Shanghai Theatre and Dance Academy. We have had both students and faculty go on exchanges.

I met with a group of our students that went to China last June and it was truly amazing to hear them share the learning that occurred and changes in perspective they gained through just two weeks in the country. None of them had ever traveled outside of the U.S. before, most not outside of California. The group included African American, Latino, Asian and other ethnicities, something that surprised the Chinese hosts who also had their views of Americans changed for the better by the visit. Students stayed in the local dorms which by comparison were very substandard and for which they were not initially prepared. But they adjusted and they learned a great deal. They also had meals and visits in the Chinese student's homes. Most are keeping in touch via email.

Next month the Shanghai Dance academy will bring 24 of their students to perform here and in April we will send 20 of our dance students to their city. There will also be home stays as part of these exchanges. We have faculty teaching courses in Shanghai and we are also doing in-service education for the English teachers in Taizhou via internet.

The local chamber of commerce with a group called USA China Links has sponsored over 30 delegations of business people from mainland China in the past 24 months. The college has provided instructors to discuss topics like international business and the silicon valley business climate with these visitors, several of whom have established joint ventures with companies here in Fremont.

Some of the international outreach is developing through contract education and we see strong potential for this to increase. For example an Ohlone professor teaches Cisco's corporate managers in India through a summer contract program and another will teach multi-media in Shanghai on contract. Other areas we will be contracting include radio and television, international economics and business. This brings extra revenue to our college as well as valuable faculty development opportunities.

The more we have engaged China the more demand we have for intensive English instruction to support our international exchange partnerships. As a result we contacted Mission College and we are working with them on developing an Intensive English Language Institute. It will be located at nearby DeVry University where we are renting 100 dorm spaces to house our institute students. In addition to contracted English instruction for businesses, the institute will be serving about 40 students per semester who are coming to Ohlone College but do not have sufficient TOEFL scores to enter directly.

Regarding international languages, as I said most of the local biotech companies label and distribute their products for at least ten different languages—most of which are now taught at Ohlone. On the weekends we have a Chinese language school with over 1,000 enrollments and we are seeing more student interest in Farsi and Tagalog language as well.

This brings me to international student enrollment at Ohlone. In 1993 the program had dropped to only about 50 students. There was no outreach other than word of mouth. No special admissions materials, no website

presence, no recruitment whatsoever was in evidence. There was no designated international student advisor. Since that time a number of things have changed.

Now we not only have an international student advisor, we also have a full-time director of international programs and a part-time coordinator for the China exchange programs.

Since these staff members are here with us today let me introduce them to you: Eddie West is our new international program director, Xisheng Fang is our China exchange program coordinator. Gary Mishra is our international student advisor. Kay Harrison is the faculty member who chairs the international education committee. Josephine Ong McBride is the director of our foundation that helps support the programs.

Now we have both printed and web-based information materials for international students and we have subscribed to an international recruitment data base. We have entered into agreements with two private firms to recruit students in Asia. The first group of 20 will arrive in January. However, we have already seen a doubling of enrollments of students from various areas due simply to the improved information services. We will grow the international enrollment to between 200 and 250 students within the next three years.

Ohlone College has the largest population of deaf and hard of hearing students among the California Community Colleges. We are the only community college with a comprehensive program leading to degrees for deaf students and those serving this population. The Deaf Studies program has responded to the new college priority in recruiting more international students. They received a grant from Nippon Foundation to exchange with the Japanese Sign Language Institute in Tokyo. The Director is one of our graduates. Faculty and students are going between Fremont and Tokyo with this program. We currently have 12 international deaf students from Africa, Asia, Europe and South America.

Last year we asked how many of our faculty spent some portion of their summer vacation in another country. Over 40% responded that they had and shared what they experienced at a group session. It is very natural for our faculty to embrace the global college model because they are already personally and professionally engaged in a myriad of international activities.

It has really been inspiring to see how the entire college has responded to our international education goal. Midway in our 5 year plan, the list of new activities that have arisen since we set the goal for international education is two pages single spaced. Just some examples:

All of the sabbatical faculty leaves this year are international in scope. In the performing arts we have seen music and theatre professors develop performances with international and multi-cultural themes. The international task force received funds not only from the college but also the foundation to sponsor artists and to support music acquisition and licenses to increase the repertoire. I sing in the college chamber singers and we toured eastern Europe last summer performing in English, Latin and German. We also performed on campus works from Africa and from South America—one of which was an original work commissioned by our college. I already mentioned that dancers are coming here and going to China and the next chamber singer tour will be to China.

We established through the President's Office and the foundation a program we call The World Forum. The idea is very straightforward. Twice each semester at the noon hour we have a guest lecturer on a topic of global relevance. Following the speaker there is a question and answer hour. The Forum is held in the college gym and the audiences have ranged from between 900 and 1500. The topics have included: China and the global economy, Africa and world hunger, Iraq and Afghanistan, global environmental change, Israel and Palestine conflicts, Mexico and immigration, and next month Darfur, Sudan.

Many professors give their students assignments related to the forums and the student and faculty evaluations of the Forum have been very positive. We also open the forum to members of the community. In every case there is new learning, lively debate and difference of view point expressed. We bring in people who have first hand experience with the subject at hand—mostly people with academic background but not solely. They receive a modest stipend and travel costs are paid when requested. To a person they have been very excited about this program and would have come even without reimbursement in most cases.

Last year Ohlone College received a Title III grant to develop learning communities specifically and to promote active and collaborative teaching strategies more generally. The international-multicultural goal is also

engaging this work as professors select broad themes such as the global environment or the world AIDS crisis as the theme around which the different courses of the learning community are inter-related. In our health sciences curriculum there is a growing interest in cultural immersion for care providers in better understanding how people from Mexico, China and India might view their health issues different from people in this country. A two week immersion program has been developed in Guadalajara for local nurses and nursing students and then we receive a group from there to be with us for two weeks.

Beyond the on-site international exchanges lies our Apple Partnership with Pod casting curriculum world-wide. Also, with our corporate partners, Ohlone College will be instituting work/study internships abroad.

The final area I want to share is in environmental sustainability which is another one of our goals and which of course has extreme global implications. We are building a new campus just a two miles from here in Newark. It is the first community college campus in the country that is constructed with Green Architecture and which will achieve a Gold Level of the LEED standards for sustainability. The campus roof is covered with solar panels for electricity self generation. Under the ground are four miles of geo thermal coils to provide natural heating and cooling of the building. All landscaping is native and drought resistant. The campus theme is promoting healthy and sustainable communities and features specialized curriculum in health, bio medical and emerging technologies for international commerce.

Yesterday I missed the opening session because I was in Phoenix with 20 other college and university presidents. We were crafting a compact we want to have signed by 1,000 institutions in the U.S., Canada and Mexico who will commit to reducing green house gases, sustainable practices and widespread environmental education with their students and communities.

Next month I am presenting a paper with our new campus architects at an international conference in Canada. We have companies here in the Bay Area that also have operations in Mexico, China and India and who want to collaborate with introducing sustainability practices on a global basis. We are developing new curriculum in environmental technologies and sciences with an international emphasis. Our exchange universities in India and China are also interested in environmental sciences and I believe that will be

the next large area of growth because as someone said the other day: The environment is itself now a very big business opportunity.

Here in the Ohlone Community College District our slogan is: “A World of Cultures United in Learning.” We loaned the theme to this year’s CCIE conference for which we are pleased to serve as sponsors. I hope that it is encouraging to you that we have come along as far as we have in a relatively short time, often guided by the examples of strong programs in this room, and have formed partnerships with Mission College and CSU East Bay and Alliant International University to grow our version of the global college.

CCIE as an organization is a valuable ally in this work. I believe that as an organization not only can we continue to network with each other and build even more effective global colleges at our institutions, we can also reach out to those who were where Ohlone College found ourselves just three years ago. We can demonstrate that with a consensus developed at the college and in the community, and with good strategic planning and resource commitments in place, there will emerge a broad range of activities and programs that will energize the entire campus community. Our community college students will especially benefit from this work because so many of them are disenfranchised by both local and global circumstances. They cannot engage this new global society effectively without the tools of language, economics, cultural understanding and technology that can serve them as they face outsourcing, downsizing and re-engineering of U.S. commerce. And they must achieve academically, because as Tom Freedman says in his book: “You can’t now just be a B-minus student in America when there are millions of A students in China and India ready and able to take your job!”

Last year a 21 year old man stood on the Ohlone College stage as a graduate and accepted a scholarship to attend the prestigious Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley. He told the audience that just 4 years prior, he stood outside of a bombed out village and was the only one of his family members in Afghanistan to survive the ordeal. He recalled hopelessly looking up to the sky and wondered if he should go on living. Today he is at UC Berkeley, doing very well. He told us that we cannot even imagine what a different world it is for him now compared with just a few years ago, because of his sponsors and the college opportunity in the U.S. they made possible. His story is the story of why we are all here at CCIE.

But there is more to his story. The other students here need to understand their responsibility to help rebuild that Afghan village. The students here need to learn how to resolve issues at home and abroad through peaceful, non-violent means. We are also gathered here because our students will decide whether or not our entire world is interconnected *in the future* in a way that is like the Ohlones before us-- peaceful and in harmony with the earth. Thank you.