

# INTERKULTURELLE STUDIEN

Band 5



Elmar Schreiber | Jutta Berninghausen (Ed.)

## GLOBAL COMPETENCE FOR THE FUTURE

Employability – Mobility – Quality

Collaboration and Current Developments

**Kellner**  
Bremen • Boston

# Global Competence for the Future

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Current Developments



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## **Intercultural Studies: Edition 5**

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## Contents

Elmar Schreiber, Jutta Berninghausen	
<b>Preface</b>	6
Connie Lee Gunderson	
<b>Introduction</b>	7

## Shaping the Future with Bologna

Elmar Schreiber	
<b>The Bologna Accord: From Paris (Sorbonne 1998) to London (2007)</b>	
Development and Impact on the German Higher Education Area	15
Peter Gaehtgens	
<b>Global Competence for the Future</b>	31

## Gaining Global Competence at Hochschule Bremen

Elmar Schreiber	
<b>Hochschule Bremen: History with Future – Realizing the Ideas of “Bologna” at a German University -</b>	43
Jutta Berninghausen	
<b>Making a Name on the International Market: From Exchange Program to Multicultural Campus</b>	61

## Achieving Employability for a Global Market

Dirk Emmerich	
<b>Global Competence for the Future: From the Point of View of a Global Logistics Service Provider</b>	75
Tilmann Achstetter and Gerd Klöck	
<b>Tiger BioTec: Science Based Training for Employability in Life Science Industry</b>	81
Bodo Schaab	
<b>International Business Education Really Matters: The Survey of BIM Graduates 2006</b>	87

## Promoting Mobility

Ulrich Teichler <b>Internationalization, Globalization: Where Are We Heading?</b>	107
Mathias Otten <b>Beyond Mobility: The Formation of Intercultural Orientations in Higher Education</b>	117
Henrike Evers <b>Bologna Meets Bremen: Increased Mobility and Internationalization at Home – Has Bologna Reached Its Aims?</b>	135
Ulrich Hößler <b>From International Exchange to Intercultural Competence</b>	145
Darla Deardorff <b>What Is Intercultural Competence</b>	157

## Enhancing Quality

Stefan Bienefeld <b>Developments In Structures of Quality Assurance Systems In Europe: More of A Dynamic Reform Process or A Step Back?</b>	169
Stephan W. Bieri <b>From Form to Content: “Bologna” as a Quality Reform</b>	185
Karin Riegler <b>Quality Culture in European Universities</b>	197
Hans Reiner Friedrich <b>Institutional Quality in Higher Education</b>	209
Jürgen Kohler <b>Internationalization, Employability, Quality: Moving from Isolated Slogans to Identifying Coherent Links</b>	221

## Conclusion

Connie Lee Gunderson and Katrin Nissel <b>Taking the Next Step: From Internationalization of Higher Education to Integrating Multicultural Diversity</b> – Summary of an Open Space Discussion –	231
Author Index	239

## Acknowledgements

This book is based on an international conference, held in December 2007. The Hochschule Bremen invited all of its national and international partners to discuss how to better promote mobility, enhance quality and achieve employability in higher education. Over 100 cooperation-partners from more than 30 different countries attended the conference which thus enabled us to discuss these issues within a true international framework. In particular, the conference helped to further strengthen our ties and to create a “think-tank” for the future. We would therefore like to thank all of our international guests for sharing their expertise and insights at the conference.

We also wish to thank the speakers and authors who have generously contributed to the discussions at the conference and in this book.

Our special thanks goes to Prof Mönch, our former Rector, who was the founder of the consequent internationalization process at Hochschule Bremen and thus contributed to shape the international profile of our Hochschule.

Last but not least, we are very grateful for the excellent lecturing of our colleague and friend, Connie Gunderson, who contributed much work and effort communicating with the authors and the publisher, arranging all articles and finally turning this work into a book.

We hope that the publication provides a helpful resource to those committed to enhancing global competence. A promising future for our students and colleagues is our sincere wish.

Elmar Schreiber

Jutta Berninghausen

## Introduction

The theme of global competence in twenty-first-century education and business practices has received much interest, and rightly so. Providing students with an education that is culturally responsive increases their ability to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing environment. Offering businesses globally qualified graduates who have knowledge and understanding of culture, language, geography and global perspectives secures and improves their marketability. Most importantly, global competence reminds all of us that we must work cooperatively as we face challenges that effect every corner of our earth.

*“This is the great challenge facing countries at the beginning of a new millennium: to give its citizens a thorough understanding of the world and its crosscurrents, to help them see what others value and believe.”* Excerpted: Securing America’s Future: Global Education for a Global Age, Report of the Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad (NAFSA), 2003

What are the necessary global competencies that one seeks to develop in students? How can universities and businesses cooperate in this endeavor? Identifying global competencies is indeed the first step. But a greater query lies in showing how to develop global competencies within the university setting and how to strengthen working relationships between education and business at an international level.

On December 10th-11th, 2007, The University of Applied Sciences Bremen brought together international representatives from universities and businesses interested in promoting understanding of the world through education. The conference focused on three fundamental topics relevant to higher education with a global perspective:

- Achieving employability
- Promoting mobility
- Enhancing quality

Participants assessed the current situation in education and business, considered goals and strategies, and provided advice on ways to strengthen education for international understanding and global competence. The discussions revealed a great deal of ideas, a number of



promising innovations and considerable interest in integrating global perspectives into higher education curriculums.

This book is a compilation of the conversation surrounding global competence that occurred at the University for Applied Sciences in Bremen. Lectures, workshops and an open space session formed the structure in which participants exchanged information, ideas, experiences and visions for moving forward. Here is a brief introduction to the chapters.

## **Shaping the Future with Bologna**

In June 1999, in the Italian city of Bologna, a process began to redefine European education. Ministers in charge of higher education in 29 European countries met to declare their commitment to improve the future educational opportunities for students and faculties. This commitment was and is based on acknowledging the importance of international exchange and global perspectives.

Dr. Schreiber describes the historical perspectives of the Bologna process and how its development has affected the German educational system. Dr. Gaehtgen's article, "Global Competence for the Future", challenges governmental institutions, university administrations and students to balance theory and analysis with practical "hands-on" experiences in the marketplace. Reform amid mistakes is underway and a sincere openness to differences will be essential to move the process forward in a responsible manner.

## **Gaining Global Competence at the University of Applied Sciences Bremen**

Concrete examples of "learning by doing" are invaluable as we travel the road to more effective university programs and international diversity. This chapter highlights two illustrations how the Bologna process applies theory to practice.

Dr. Schreiber offers insight into the transformation process of educational institutions committed to the Bologna process. He presents the steps necessary to transform university system's study programs to insure high quality education for students by describing the "Bremen model"

utilized to incorporate changes in the degree programs offered at the university. Clear goals and sustained effort have placed the UAS Bremen at the top of the list of international competence and global awareness.

Dr. Berninghausen strategizes how to enhance the intercultural learning process for students and businesses at Hochschule Bremen. Motivated by a commitment to prepare students to become global citizens with a secure self-identity, she has developed a diversity management approach that helps establish a multicultural and diverse campus. A multicultural component integrated in a university setting is an invaluable resource affecting all levels of professionalism by promoting genuine change and raising awareness of the importance of intercultural competence.

## **Achieving Employability**

Most important to employers, according to a study by Michigan State University, are resourcefulness and adaptability.

*"All major hiring companies need global citizens. Global sensitivities, global perspective, global insight, along with maturity and a capacity for risk-taking, are exactly the skills every major organization is looking for – in every industry."*

Kevin Gill, Global Director of Staffing for Honeywell

To meet the needs of globally directed companies, recruiters look for employees to have skills and knowledge that reflect an understanding of practical international and intercultural experience. Mr. Emmerich shares his convictions about the importance of higher education and business working together to impact future developments in the global arena.

What about creating a "virtual company" at a university to support the integration between education and business? Mr. Achstetter and Mr. Klöck offer the reader insights into "Tiger Biotec", a project at the University of Applied Sciences Bremen that successfully bridges academic curricula in biology and life science industry. It was clearly shown that through the program, participants received critical skills necessary for successful career development.

Another project undertaken by the University of Applied Sciences Bremen was done by the Department of Economics in 2005-2006. The Business Administration/International Management (BIM) program, under the guidance of Dr. Schaab, completed a study to evaluate the competencies and advantages of an international double-degree program, assess intercultural added values, and review graduate students' entry into the workplace. The results clearly demonstrate the intercultural added value for students and businesses.

## Promoting Mobility

*"By studying foreign cultures and languages and living abroad, we gain a better understanding of the many similarities that we share and learn to respect our differences. The relationships that are formed between individuals from different countries as part of international programs and exchanges can also foster goodwill that develops into vibrant, mutually beneficial partnerships among nations... Collectively, the same skills and talents that bolster an individual résumé can make the country more secure and economically competitive."*

An Adventure in Teaching. An Experience in Learning.

As the technologies of travel, communications and information have brought the entire world within our reach, our need to understand international and global phenomena has expanded. The importance of providing students with the opportunity to study in other countries cannot be overvalued. Programs that engage participants actively in the life of the country they are visiting—through study, living arrangements, research projects, service or work—can develop competence as well as knowledge.

A historical overview of the past two decades in the major lines of internationalization and globalization in Europe is provided by Dr. Teichler in his article "Internationalization, Globalization - Where Are We Heading?" As international experiences become normalized, as the needs to improve teaching and research are seen from a global perspective, we must continue to be stewards in the advancement of education and its prospects for future career opportunities.

The “soft dimensions” including socio-cultural patterns in institutions are often overseen or neglected, as Higher Educational systems attempt to undergo a paradigm shift in global education. Dr. Otten describes a conceptual typology of different intercultural orientations in international higher education.

Ms. Evers provides the reader with a critical inquiry into the success of the Bologna declaration’s aim towards increasing mobility among international universities. Qualitative and quantitative aspects of transitional mobility and internationalization in Germany are highlighted as well as the experiences drawn from studies by the University of Applied Sciences Bremen.

Knowing that cultural exchange programs do not necessarily result in intercultural competence, Mr. Hößler illustrates an extra curricular study program developed by the University of Applied Sciences, Regensburg and the University of Regensburg that provides a theoretical foundation along with practice oriented exercises to assist students in intercultural interaction and competence.

Finally Dr. Deardorff discusses a model used in the United States to help define intercultural competence, a term that is often debated among scholars. Studies have helped US scholars find a common descriptive language so that experts are better able to “understand” each other. This model can provide one framework to improve communication across international boundaries.

## **Enhancing Quality**

As Dr. Bienefeld states in his article, “Developments in Structures of Quality Assurance Systems in Europe: More of a Dynamic Reform or a Step Back?”, the term quality is often disputed. It is a multifaceted concept and may be defined differently depending on whose perspective is relevant at any given moment. So how do universities enhance the quality of their curriculums? What measurements are used to determine high or low quality? Bienefeld provides the reader with a brief historical perspective of quality assurance in Europe and a reference point called the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area that was formed in 2005.

Bologna has offered European universities a unique opportunity to redesign higher education. How to develop the systemic structures will be the challenges that the universities will face. To mobilize resources required to keep college campuses alive and flourishing, Dr. Biere points to the importance of universities taking responsibility to build their profile, expand their services, especially with the introduction of graduate programs, and to develop means of assuring quality through a managed structure which assures, among other things, accreditation.

Program accreditation for universities has been one avenue for quality management. This style of accreditation has its focus on content, resources, and structures of scholastic programs. Dr. Friedrich introduces the reader to a new pathway to assure quality in higher education. It is an alternative to "institutional" or "system accreditation".

With her article, Dr. Riegler explores the conceptual and terminological viewpoints of "Quality Culture" in European universities. She provides information about the Quality Culture Project undertaken by the European University Association from 2002 - 2006 with 134 higher education institutions in 36 European countries. The project's aim was to provide momentum for bringing an awareness of the concept of quality culture to the university campus.

And how can universities plan and implement study programs which pay attention to an international perspective, with all of its complexities, and assure high quality? Dr. Kohler describes the importance of ulterior aims in planning study programs. He integrates competency facets and injects learning devices to produce outcomes that meet the educational purposes of students. These academic links, when understood, furnish a holistic overview of the elements necessary for quality in higher education.

With program and systemic quality in our higher education systems, graduates can be assured that they can meet the challenges of a global marketplace. Moffatt, Director of the San Diego State University International Student Center reminds us,

*"A global-ready graduate [is] a person with a grasp of global systems, global issues, the dynamics of how things are interrelated and interconnected in the world, and how society can best address global issues."*

## **Taking the next step**

In the final chapter, "Taking the Next Step", Katrin Nissel and Connie Gunderson provide the reader with an overview of the open space session held during the conference, where participants shared ideas, concerns and visions to enhance and expand international cooperation and coordination both in higher education programs and business opportunities.

Connie Lee Gunderson  
Bremen, June 2008

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# Shaping the Future with Bologna

