

This article was downloaded by: [. Virginia S. Lee]

On: 23 November 2011, At: 06:03

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



## International Journal for Academic Development

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rija20>

### Enhancing international collaboration among academic developers in established and emerging contexts: moving toward a post-colonial perspective

Virginia S. Lee<sup>a</sup>, Deborah DeZure<sup>b</sup>, Shelda Debowski<sup>c</sup>, Angela Ho<sup>d</sup> & Kang Li<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Virginia S. Lee & Associates, Durham, NC, USA

<sup>b</sup> Office of Faculty and Organizational Development, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

<sup>c</sup> Organisational and Staff Development Services, University of Western Australia, Crawley, WA, Australia

<sup>d</sup> Educational Development Centre, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

<sup>e</sup> Department of Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Available online: 23 Nov 2011

To cite this article: Virginia S. Lee, Deborah DeZure, Shelda Debowski, Angela Ho & Kang Li (2011): Enhancing international collaboration among academic developers in established and emerging contexts: moving toward a post-colonial perspective, *International Journal for Academic Development*, DOI:10.1080/1360144X.2011.616590

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2011.616590>



PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

## **Enhancing international collaboration among academic developers in established and emerging contexts: moving toward a post-colonial perspective**

Virginia S. Lee<sup>a\*</sup>, Deborah DeZure<sup>b</sup>, Shelda Debowksi<sup>c</sup>, Angela Ho<sup>d</sup> and Kang Li<sup>e</sup>

*<sup>a</sup>Virginia S. Lee & Associates, Durham, NC, USA; <sup>b</sup>Office of Faculty and Organizational Development, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA; <sup>c</sup>Organisational and Staff Development Services, University of Western Australia, Crawley, WA, Australia; <sup>d</sup>Educational Development Centre, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong; <sup>e</sup>Department of Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA*

*(Received 18 August 2011; final version received 18 August 2011)*

With the acceleration of globalization, academic developers from institutions and countries with established educational development programs and networks are called upon increasingly to share their expertise and offer guidance to colleagues in emerging higher education contexts. Based on a higher education conference held in Beijing in 2009, this paper captures the learning as the Chinese host institutions and international exchange partners progressed toward a more developed understanding and application of elastic, post-colonial approaches to the interchange. It includes a set of recommendations and guidelines to assist future international exchanges, based on the insights gained throughout this rich experience.

**Keywords:** international collaboration; academic development; established and emerging networks; post-colonialism

### **Introduction**

With the acceleration of globalization, higher education worldwide has become increasingly internationalized (for the distinction between globalization and internationalization, see Altbach and Knight [2007]). Tertiary institutions are more conscious than ever of positioning courses of study globally to ensure the competitiveness of their graduates. A growing number of colleges and universities are opening branch campuses abroad. And throughout Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Latin America, the numbers of universities and student enrollments are increasing dramatically. The need for quality assurance at a time of rapid expansion of institutions of higher education worldwide is imperative. Quality assurance is greatly assisted by academic development, including the development of the capacity of the faculties of colleges and universities to develop a broad-based curriculum and implement new pedagogies to support enlightened global development.

---

\*Corresponding author. Email: [vslee@virginiaslee.com](mailto:vslee@virginiaslee.com)

In this context, academic developers from institutions and countries with established educational development programs and networks are called upon increasingly to share their expertise and offer guidance to colleagues in these rapidly emerging contexts. The potential benefits for both partners of working cross-culturally are threefold, as illustrated in Figure 1. First, all members of the interaction are enriched by re-engaging with their disciplinary knowledge and professional values, beliefs and capabilities, and trying to understand those of others. The need to articulate and justify professional practices and theoretical rationales offers a valuable mechanism for reflection on and reconsideration of those practices and philosophies. The dialog and debate that ensue also offer considerable scope to explore how universal those principles are likely to be. Second, these discussions can facilitate the building of a common theoretical framework and models (Lee, 2011) and a forum to exchange knowledge, resources and expertise that are employable in future international exchanges and collaboration. Third, these exchanges offer an ideal opportunity for the hosts to draw in a variety of stakeholders to encourage their engagement with the emerging frameworks that will take shape through these exchanges.

In order to realize these benefits of international exchange, however, both parties need to remain open and responsive to the opportunities of the exchange, adopting an “elastic practice” (Carew, Lefoe, Bell, & Armour, 2008). Elastic practice describes, “the process of tailoring a specific approach or instance of academic development from the full professional ‘toolkit’ (techniques, experiences, ideas, values, theories) that academic developers collect during their evolution as practitioners.” In the process, “. . .multiple theoretical bases are melded or successively employed to support an adaptive, responsive approach to practice” (Carew et al., 2008, p. 1). Elastic practice is relevant in any arena of our engagement as academic developers (e.g., institutional, national, international), but is often quite challenging in international engagement.

Particularly in interactions between representatives of emerging and established networks, one or both parties can fall easily into modes of engagement that

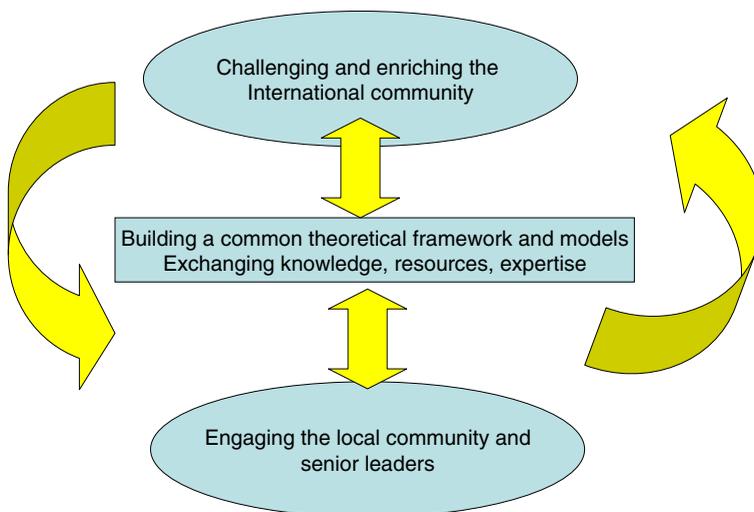


Figure 1. The potential benefits of international exchange.

compromise the potential fruits of international collaboration. These modes of engagement occur when practice is inelastic and fails to adapt to the requirements of the international context. Isolationism, a posture of non-engagement, is an extreme example of inelastic practice. Due to our historic geographic isolation and complacency as the dominant world power over the past 100 years, those of us in the USA sometimes adopt this mode of non-engagement unconsciously. For example, we display isolationist tendencies when we make sharp distinctions between domestic and international engagement, failing to recognize that the lines between these spheres of activity are increasingly illusory (Lee, 2011). Perhaps more subtly we display isolationist tendencies through language and the universal expectation that our international colleagues will accommodate us by communicating in English rather than our assuming the responsibility of learning a language other than English.

Leaving isolationism, two common modes of international engagement are colonial and post-colonial (Manathunga, 2006; Lee, 2011). In an international context, the colonialist mode of engagement is common in interactions between colleagues in emerging and established networks. In this paradigm, representatives from established networks view their international colleagues as like themselves, only at an earlier stage of development. The desire to develop the international colleague may be superficially benign, a genuine and seemingly disinterested desire to help the international colleague become “better.” There is no explicit intention to exploit the international colleague, to serve an agenda of imperialist domination, or to hold the colleague in a bond of obligation and dependency. There is also a comfortable clarity in the mutual roles and expectations of this perspective.

But the mode of engagement is more insidiously colonial, because it ignores (or only vaguely acknowledges) the cultural context and, thereby, the identity of the international colleague as truly other. A practical implication of the colonialist perspective is a still relatively inelastic practice with no accommodation to the otherness of the international colleague, because the otherness is still largely unseen or seen as inferior. Frequently, the result is a truncated and stylized encounter rather than an exchange, bounded by the roles and conventions of ceremony: the honored guest and the gracious host, displaying careful respect, deference, hospitality and cordiality. The impact of the encounter is often more symbolic than real. Little, if any, mutual transformation occurs as a result of international exchange under this paradigm.

By contrast, within the post-colonial perspective, academic developers engage more critically and with greater awareness of the international other. Our practice becomes far more elastic, as we adapt our existing toolkit to accommodate the needs and perspectives of the other. In contrast to the clarity of roles and expectations within the colonialist perspective, international colleagues move into a “contested, unstable space” where, “identities can be explored, interrogated, problematized, blurred and engaged with and cultural change may take place” within the post-colonial perspective (Manathunga, 2006, p. 21). In the process, existing theoretical rationales and professional practices are open to scrutiny and critique. Together, colleagues from existing and emerging networks create a unique adaptation of their practice to the demands of the particular cultural context. In the process our global practice as educators and educational developers becomes increasingly flexible, nuanced and sophisticated in the manner suggested by Figure 1.

In planning and managing cross-cultural interactions, it is also important to recognize the complexity of the translation process that is occurring. Holden and Von Kortzfleisch (2004) suggest that knowledge transfer is a form of translation that can be impeded by ambiguity, interference generated by an individual's own cultural background, and challenges associated with a lack of equivalence when interpreting concepts. These factors can affect the quality of the exchange, the accuracy of the interpreted messages and the efficacy of the translation mechanisms. When the knowledge exchange is also operating across a dual language context, the challenges of building a mutual understanding become even more complex.

In this vein, some researchers have recognized the need for humility in cross-cultural interactions; no matter how conscientiously we prepare for such interactions, it may be impossible to fully know the "other." In turn, the "other" may not be invested in the project of post-colonial engagement. For example, Jones (1999, p. 299) troubles the calls for intercultural dialog in the urban classroom: "What if the 'other' fails to find interesting the idea of their empathetic understanding of the powerful, which is theoretically demanded by dialogic encounters?" Ratima and Grant (2007) problematize mentoring relationships between Pakeha staff and Maori employees, recognizing their different and hidden cultural frames for mentoring. Finally Singh (2009) describes a set of strategies for negotiating cultural ignorance as the "conscientious, but ignorant professor" supervises Chinese research students.

In this context, what are the hallmarks of effective collaboration that assist international colleagues in creating together a flexible and nuanced global educational development practice? As experienced academic developers, how should we engage with colleagues in emerging contexts? We shall explore these important questions in the context of an academic development conference held in Beijing, China in July 2009 with workshops, presentations and keynote addresses provided by an international delegation of 10 higher education leaders and experts from the USA, Australia, Norway and Hong Kong. The conference laid the groundwork for the establishment of an educational development network in China.

This paper captures the learning as the host institutions and international exchange partners progressed toward a more developed understanding and application of elastic, post-colonial approaches to the interchange. It includes a set of recommendations and guidelines to assist future international exchanges between experienced academic developers and colleagues in emerging contexts, based on the insights gained throughout this rich experience.

### **International collaboration: characteristics of a meaningful exchange program**

International collaboration can take various forms and scales ranging from large-scale conferences featuring leaders from many countries to focused consultations provided by international experts with specialized areas of expertise. In many cases the host country shapes the parameters of the collaboration based on their perception of their context and needs. In the case of the collaboration reported in this paper, the Chinese hosts, Beijing Normal University and the Beijing Institute of Technology, intended the conference to have extensive impact on the country's higher education sector and to lay the foundation for a national academic development organization in China. As a result, they identified 10 influential scholars of higher education and faculty development, experienced administrators and faculty development practitioners, and national and international leaders in faculty

development networks from the USA, Australia, Norway and Hong Kong to join the Beijing conference: “Theory, Practice and Implications: Professional and Organizational Development for Chinese Higher Education in the Global Context.” The conference was focused on:

- introducing concepts of academic development and its importance to the quality of higher education to educators in China;
- increasing their awareness of international resources, current research and best practices, and organizations in faculty development;
- identifying and connecting people within Chinese higher education who are interested in the field of faculty development; and
- laying the foundation for a national academic development organization in China.

Delegates from 38 national and regional key universities, supported by the Chinese Ministry of Education, attended the conference.

This section summarizes a number of areas that contribute to an effective learning experience for all parties. It highlights the need for careful planning, for sufficient infrastructure to assist with translating professional understanding across diverse communities, and for sensitive interactions across cultures at all times. The insights shared in the next section of this paper are drawn from the collective review of the experience by both Chinese and international contributors.

### ***Conference design***

#### *Focus and content of the conference*

The program of the three-day Beijing conference was very ambitious. The international delegates wanted to share as much as possible with the conference participants, but soon realized that more was not necessarily better. Post-conference discussion with some active participants revealed that although they appreciated the exposure to practices which were new to them such as organization development, they preferred the sessions to focus more on topics which would address their immediate needs. In retrospect, we recognized that decisions on the focus and content of any exchange program should reference the current faculty development practices in the host country rather than operating on the experience of the delegates from the established network (Holden & Von Kortzfleisch, 2004). For countries where academic development is in the emerging stage, discussions of practices suitable for newly established faculty development centers are likely to be more useful than descriptions of activities performed by established centers. Thus, as with other learning contexts, the needs of the audience need to be a primary consideration.

The mixed background of the participants complicated further the selection of relevant content for the conference. Most Chinese universities do not have a centralized faculty development center. Instead different administrative units such as the academic secretariat and the human resource office carry out training for new staff, teaching appraisal and other traditional activities of centers. Further independent research centers or the Faculty of Education often carry out research on teaching and learning. The composition of delegates reflected these varied offices and roles. Ideally conference organizers would conduct a needs assessment with relevant

groups of practitioners to provide information on a suitable focus and content for the event.

#### *Format for exchanges*

On the advice of the conference organizers, the primary format of the conference was presentations with little interaction between presenters and participants. Once the conference was underway, however, we found that participants appreciated opportunities for interaction with the speakers and were enthusiastic during discussions and group activities. However, the inexperience of the participants in contributing to these activities also required more time and additional guidance on how they would operate. Each activity required some advance discussion of ground rules for participation, the pedagogical principles underlying these processes and a debrief with participants following their experience. The international delegates found this offered an opportunity for useful reflection around their own accepted practices and their purposes.

#### *Presenters and panelists*

The international delegation invited to present in the Beijing conference comprised scholars of higher education and faculty development, experienced administrators and faculty development practitioners, and national and international leaders in faculty development networks. For future meetings, however, a delegation with a different composition might be more appropriate. For example, it might be useful to involve more delegates who have knowledge of Chinese culture and an international perspective. There are a few universities in China that have already set up teaching and learning centers. Professionals from these centers would make excellent partners for future conferences and exchanges. The promotion of existing Chinese experts on higher education and educational development as presenters and panelists is an important goal. They can help identify relevant topics, put issues in the context of China, and share their experience in setting up and running centers in Chinese institutions. Eventually, these pioneers could become the driving force for change in China.

#### *Planning*

Most members of international delegations will have many other commitments to balance with their engagement in an international conference or some other form of cultural exchange. Consequently, the host country or institution(s) should communicate expectations of involvement in conferences and other forms of exchanges as clearly as possible at the time of invitation. Expectations of involvement could include guidelines for presentations, panels and speeches; the necessity for submission of *PowerPoint* presentations and formal papers in advance of the conference including deadlines; and any remuneration or covered expenses. Travel arrangements should be finalized well in advance of departure to ensure the best flights on preferred carriers. And as much as possible, members of international delegations should receive a reasonably final version of the conference schedule and any other scheduled commitments (e.g., dinners, meetings with campus officials) with appropriate briefing and expectations of engagement prior to their arrival in the country.

Organizers of panels with members from different countries should begin planning well in advance of the conference given differences in time zones and

academic calendars and the need to resolve differences in terminology, context and practices among the panel members. In-country, a pre-conference meeting of the international delegation together with relevant experts from the host country would be helpful.

In this instance, the delegation was particularly fortunate in being supported by a local US contact, Mr. Kang Li, a doctoral student with the necessary contacts in China. He acted as a broker during the preparations, ensuring the intentions of the hosts and the information needed by the delegation were well communicated. This is a very critical role to the success of a complicated initiative of this nature.

### ***Communication across cultures***

Effective communication across cultures is key to successful international collaboration (Holden & Von Kortzfleisch, 2004). Two areas of particular importance are issues of language and cultural norms.

#### *Language*

Language is the starting point for effective communications across cultures. The ramifications of unfounded assumptions about language fluency can deeply undercut productive interactions. If there is a common language among members of an exchange, there is a common playing field on which to proceed. But, if the language chosen for the meeting is the native language of some but not all participants, it is important to determine whether there is a need for facilitation across languages to ensure that all attendees understand the ideas presented in the exchange. Even when these efforts are made and sustained, there is, however unwittingly, an inequity and privileging of one language (and, therefore, one culture) over others. Not unlike the concept of white privilege, it may be unseen by the majority group, but deeply felt by others (Johnson, 2005). Bi-lingual and multi-lingual approaches address some of these inequities, but they also add complexity and cost.

*Use of translators.* The first consideration about language is to determine the need for translation during the planning phases and the meeting itself, during interactions in large plenary sessions, in smaller concurrent and discussion sessions, and in more informal settings, such as meals and social gatherings. There are many approaches to the use of translators at conferences, each with its benefits and limitations. Simultaneous translation is often the most useful in large plenary sessions, but it is the most expensive and requires equipment. Alternation of a presenter and a translator conveying short meaningful units of material can be effective and adapted to varied settings, including large lectures, discussion sessions, and informal activities. But the cost can be high to provide a sufficient number of well-trained translators, and presenters can “cover” less than half of the material they would otherwise include. Language specialists who are fluent in both the designated language of the conference and additional languages can be present in the sessions to assist at times when the primary language is not understood. If language fluency among participants is not deemed to be a problem, presenters can simply proceed without translators, taking care to speak slowly, to avoid colloquialisms, to provide written materials in *PowerPoint* slides and/or handouts to assist those who are adept with written language, and to check frequently for understanding.

Because language can be an impediment to communication, the process of transcribing any handouts into the host language is highly desirable. However, the specialist nature of the materials requires review by an expert knowledgeable in both the languages and the discipline to avoid reinterpretation or misinterpretation (Cheung, 2003). The complexity of ensuring the messages are correct can place additional pressures on the delegation to be fully prepared a long way ahead of the meeting. A consequence is that the scheduling and discussions regarding program structures need to be commenced very early in the planning.

*Qualifications and preparation of translators.* Fluency is the essential characteristic of good translation, but it is not the only important one. In the context of academic development, it is important to have translators who are familiar with higher education concepts and vocabulary generally and academic development concepts and vocabulary as well (Cheung, 2003). Because it is difficult to find translators with expertise in two or more languages and the specialized discourse of higher education, it is useful to prepare translators for their tasks. Prior to the conference, when possible, it is useful to provide the translators with the full text copies of the presentations, *PowerPoint* slides, and materials or handouts the speakers will use. It is also advisable to allocate time for the presenters to meet with their respective translators to review the presentation materials, to clarify key terms and concepts, to enable the translators to become familiar with their presenter's accent and patterns of speech, and to respond to questions. Finally, it may be useful to provide a conference or meeting glossary of key terms that are likely to be used throughout the conference and to have that glossary translated into the major languages spoken at the conference. Speakers also need to calibrate their pace carefully to ensure audience members who do have a grasp of their language are able to follow with a modicum of ease.

#### *Cultural norms*

Cultural sensitivity is essential for any international exchange, particularly in clarifying the similarities and differences between the two intersecting cultures. In hindsight, we wish we had greater understanding of Chinese cultural norms, the current and emerging higher education context, and current and emerging academic development practices and norms in China, many of which were different from our own.

*Chinese higher education context and priorities.* We had been invited by our Chinese hosts to introduce Chinese academics to academic development models from our countries (the USA, Norway, and Australia) and from Hong Kong, but it was not our goal to impose any of our existing models. Nonetheless, there were instances in which our lack of understanding of their context undercut our ability to explain concepts clearly and to prioritize which concepts were timely and relevant to them now as they begin to explore the rich and complex world of academic development. For example, because higher education governance in China is highly centralized, discussions of academic governance and faculty roles in curriculum and instructional decisions were new and thought-provoking, but not always relevant to the Chinese context. Had we had more time and exposure to their higher education context, we would have been better able to tailor our efforts to align with their needs, interests, and readiness to move forward.

*Chinese academic development norms and practices.* The conference was designed to explore the possible roles that academic development and academic development networks can play in China as it endeavors to build its higher education system to meet expanding needs. Thus, it was important for the delegates to understand the history and current state of academic development and how Chinese faculty and their leaders envision instructional development and instructional developers. In many ways, the practices used in the USA, Europe and Australia were directly relevant to their context. So, for example, discussion and demonstration of workshops on effective practices in teaching and learning resonated and were well received. But other practices also widely used in the USA, Europe and Australia did not resonate for our Chinese hosts and participants. This should not have surprised us because academic development is, “a field of practice and scholarship that is shaped – in fundamental ways – by the national, institutional and disciplinary contexts in which we work” (Taylor, 2010, p. 1). Two examples clarify the need for a robust and in-depth briefing for international delegates who endeavor to work with emerging academic networks. The first example focuses on the conception of who is qualified and positioned to provide instructional development in Chinese higher education, and the second is the concept of confidentiality in instructional consultations to create a “safe” space in which to learn and to grow.

To meet China’s rapidly expanding needs, one strategy China hopes to employ is to train Master’s level human resource personnel to fill instructional development roles. The trajectory of academic development in the countries represented by the international delegation has relied heavily on faculty, academic staff and teaching assistants, but a model based on Master’s-level human resources personnel may require a different vision for the role, qualifications and training needed to provide it to Chinese faculty and to deliver it on a scale commensurate with the needs of China’s rapid expansion of its higher education system. As studied by Di Napoli, Fry, Frenay, Verhesschen, and Verburch (2010), the roles and responsibilities of academic developers vary widely across national and institutional contexts, and there may have been established instructional development models we could have introduced that more closely aligned with the model that China envisions.

Likewise, the concept of confidentiality in instructional consultations was both puzzling and problematic to attendees. They questioned how any communication in a public university could be truly confidential. Our response was to re-frame the issue, focusing on the purpose confidentiality serves: the importance of creating a safe space in which to grow and to learn more about teaching. Chinese developers may want to consider how to create a safer place in their unique context or even how they can redefine instructional support without the provision of confidentiality or safety. In this example as well, had the delegation known more about Chinese higher education norms, values and practices, we could have been more effective in our selection of relevant policies and practices to feature.

Other concepts were difficult for us to convey, including mentoring, cohort programs such as faculty learning communities, organizational development (Schroeder, 2010) and organizational change, and leadership development for faculty, which is beginning to emerge in North American and Australian higher education (Fullan & Scott, 2009). It was difficult to ascertain whether the challenges in communicating these ideas reflected differences in language and translation, in cultural norms and practices, or simply the novelty of these concepts to participants. These concepts

and practices provide a sampling of the challenging issues we identified as members of an international delegation. It is our hope that they will provide a springboard by which others can better prepare themselves for their efforts in international engagement or at least be prepared attitudinally for similar ambiguous topics and contested territories that are inevitable, particularly between established and emerging academic developers.

***A model of elastic, post-colonial international exchange***

As part of the international exchange process the delegation and host partners undertook considerable review and reflection, a necessary part of moving toward a more elastic, post-colonial international exchange. This resulted in a more developed understanding of the necessary stages and approaches that would benefit a complex exchange experience of this nature. Figure 2 offers a summary of the stages of planning that can assist in optimizing the value from the exchange experience.

A key outcome of the exchange experience was our recognition that international learning exchanges require considerable planning and articulation of

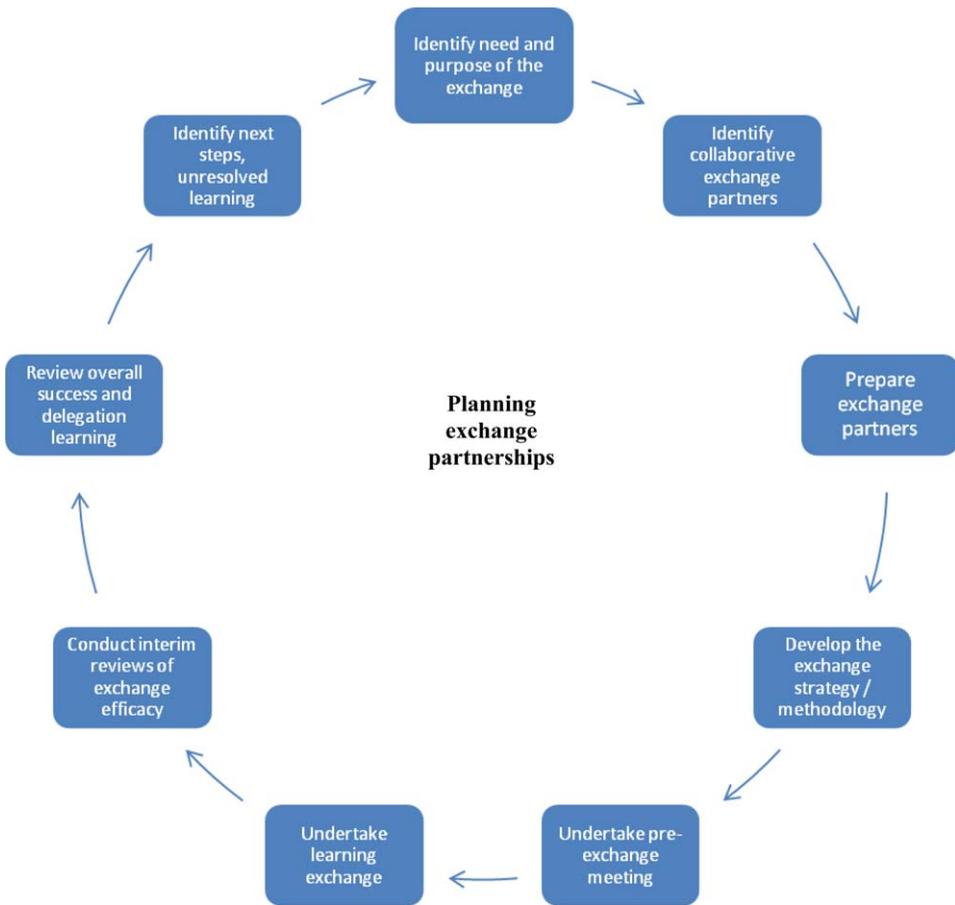


Figure 2. Planning and conducting an international exchange experience.

Table 1. Towards elastic, post-colonial international exchange.

Stage	Elements to consider
Identify need and purpose of the exchange	<p data-bbox="273 375 322 1557">Appoint a coordinator who can liaise with all parties, and who understands the context in which the exchange will occur.</p> <p data-bbox="322 375 371 1557">Determine the desired knowledge base that will assist the likely participants, seeking a balance in skills, expertise and perspectives.</p> <p data-bbox="371 375 407 1557">Prepare an explanatory context document for international partners, documenting:</p> <ul data-bbox="434 375 579 1557" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the current context of the host country with respect to higher education structure, academic development environment and broad trends;</li> <li>• the desired outcomes of the exchange;</li> <li>• the desired exchange mode (e.g. conference, modeling of practice, situated learning);</li> <li>• the likely participants' background, experience and expectations</li> </ul>
Identify collaborative exchange partners	<p data-bbox="611 375 717 1557">Identify potential collaborative exchange partners based on expertise, status, credibility and evidence of capacity to learn and adapt as required (i.e. elastic capabilities including facility with proposed language of exchange, post-colonial orientation, recognition that the learning will be across all contributors).</p> <p data-bbox="717 375 796 1557">Identify local experts as well as international partners. Provide potential partners with the explanatory context document to brief them on their role, the context and the desired outcomes.</p> <p data-bbox="796 375 829 1557">Confirm invitation and the dates of the exchange.</p>
Prepare exchange partners	<p data-bbox="848 375 901 1557">Orient the exchange partners to their host country to ensure they are well-informed about the learning context, learners and expectations.</p> <p data-bbox="901 375 954 1557">Provide an overview of the country's history relevant to the exchange to increase appreciation of the cultural, educational and political context.</p> <p data-bbox="954 375 1006 1557">Clarify current state of audience learning orientation and strategies that may be unfamiliar.</p> <p data-bbox="1006 375 1085 1557">Explain the implications of the translation process in terms of timelines and presentation. Provide a draft schedule; protocol guidelines (including official delegation welcomes, dress-codes, business cards and number and types of gifts required); timelines for preparation of resources and travel arrangements, including letters of invitation if required for visas.</p>

*(Continued)*

Table 1. (Continued).

Stage	Elements to consider
Develop the exchange strategy/methodology	<p data-bbox="260 776 282 1127">Confirm the forms of engagement:</p> <ul data-bbox="321 189 510 1114" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="321 189 369 1114">• ensure modes of learning match current learner frames of reference – or identify preparatory processes to introduce the planned strategies.</li> <li data-bbox="376 189 425 1114">• clarify content of knowledge exchange sessions, mode of delivery, learning outcomes, forms of presentation and time allocated for delivery.</li> <li data-bbox="431 189 480 1114">• explicitly review beliefs, assumptions and theoretical principles on which the presentations will operate.</li> <li data-bbox="486 423 510 1114">• prepare, debate and critique glossary of key terms and concepts.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="544 345 567 1127">Prepare participant guidelines on new/unfamiliar processes and their purpose.</p> <p data-bbox="573 480 596 1127">Identify dual-language participants who can assist with sessions.</p> <p data-bbox="602 438 625 1127">Select and educate translators as to professional concepts and terms.</p> <p data-bbox="631 840 654 1127">Translate prepared resources.</p> <p data-bbox="660 484 683 1127">Maintain strong communication between all planning members:</p> <ul data-bbox="717 189 794 1114" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="717 499 739 1114">• allow additional time for interchange between all parties.</li> <li data-bbox="746 296 768 1114">• engage translators early so that they can be included in the later discussions.</li> <li data-bbox="775 189 794 1114">• participate in online discussions to expedite the formation of a common understanding.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="829 814 851 1127">Prepare complete visit itinerary.</p> <p data-bbox="858 742 880 1127">Confirm goals and intended outcomes.</p> <p data-bbox="886 677 909 1127">Clarify final delegates and their composition.</p> <p data-bbox="915 921 938 1127">Prepare the itinerary:</p> <ul data-bbox="972 452 1076 1114" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="972 864 994 1114">• educational program;</li> <li data-bbox="1001 499 1023 1114">• welcome ceremonies, including names of likely officials;</li> <li data-bbox="1030 784 1052 1114">• overview of host institutions;</li> <li data-bbox="1059 452 1081 1114">• ensure sufficient respite for the delegation between functions.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1115 226 1162 1127">Plan for debriefing sessions throughout the program to review delegate experiences, host member responses and feedback, learning and any emergent concerns.</p>

Undertake pre-exchange meeting	<p>Convene two days before the formal visit.</p> <p>Discuss contextual queries, final program, concepts and philosophies.</p> <p>Provide time for presenters to meet with translators to overview their presentations.</p> <p>Agree on feedback strategy for presenters and develop program evaluation instrument, if appropriate.</p>
Undertake the learning exchange/conduct reviews of exchange efficacy	<p>Seek feedback from audience members.</p> <p>Integrate feedback to the presenters on their pace, clarity, level of content, suitability to the audience and overall effectiveness.</p> <p>Monitor audience satisfaction with program suitability.</p> <p>Review program daily and adapt if needed.</p> <p>Distribute and collect final evaluation instrument.</p>
Review overall success and learning about process, professional knowledge base and practice	<p>Schedule time for intensive debrief at the conclusion of the formal exchange.</p> <p>Include members of the host community in the debrief session.</p> <p>Review the extent to which the desired outcomes of the exchange have been achieved.</p> <p>Review the learning generated for the host community and the visiting exchange partners.</p> <p>Reflect on changes to ongoing professional practice and approaches as a result of the learning experience.</p>
Identify next steps, unresolved learning	<p>Review areas that remain unclear for the host participants.</p> <p>Review areas that need to be clarified by the exchange partners.</p> <p>Identify new strategies that will be integrated by the exchange partners through their international experience in the host country.</p> <p>Plan the next steps to be taken and confirm member roles.</p>

embedded philosophies and personal knowledge and belief systems. While much of the learning and insights gained from the Beijing experience are reflected in this paper, Table 1 offers a summary of the key practices that were identified as critical to a productive and enriched exchange process, organized according to the model in Figure 2. The suggestions are drawn from the reflections of the group and the collective experience of the host and visiting members.

Early planning and recognition of the different conceptual frameworks held by participants underpin a successful exchange program. The importance of surfacing deeply-held assumptions and beliefs about professional pedagogies, practice and rationales is central to the successful translation of one set of established concepts to another sphere of operation. In this process the visitors become learners and greatly benefit from re-engaging with their own professional structures.

### **Summary**

With the steady internationalization of higher education, opportunities for collaboration with international colleagues will only increase, including collaboration between colleagues from established and emerging educational development contexts. In order to maximize the benefits of these exchanges for all parties, we need to be attentive to the dynamics of these exchanges and the kinds of attitudes and behaviors that enhance and hinder them. Large-scale conferences like the July 2009 Beijing conference serve to promote ideas and provide exposure to a wide audience, sowing seeds of future reform and widespread change. Other types of exchanges, whether extended visits or internship with faculty development programs in overseas universities, more focused collaborations between Chinese institutions and universities in the USA and other countries to provide advanced training in educational development, or targeted consultations with single institutions, all hold promise. Regardless of the context, careful attention to the design of the collaboration, consideration of the current status of the host community's development, sensitivity to differences in cultural norms, and effective translation when participants do not share a common first language are important first steps in realizing the promise and potential of international exchanges. A measure of humility in the face of our own cultural ignorance, despite the best of intentions, is essential as well in forging the rich, global educational development practice to which we all aspire.

### **Notes on contributors**

Virginia S. Lee is principal and senior consultant of Virginia S. Lee & Associates, a higher education consulting firm based in Durham, NC. She is a former president (2007–2010) of the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network of Higher Education. Her research and consulting interests include educational development, course and curriculum development, inquiry-guided learning, and institution-wide educational reform initiatives.

Deborah DeZure is Assistant Provost for Faculty and Organizational Development at Michigan State University. Her primary areas of responsibility include support for teaching, learning and leadership for faculty and academic administrators. Her research interests include interdisciplinary and integrative teaching and learning; models of faculty development, including support for mid-career faculty, and faculty mentoring; and the development of academic leadership, in both a national and global context.

Shelda Debowski is Winthrop Professor of Higher Education Development at the University of Western Australia, the President of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) and the immediate Past President of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED). Shelda's research interests relate to educational and academic leadership development.

Angela Ho is the Director of the Educational Development Centre at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Her work focuses and research interests are in outcome-based education, professional development of university teachers and developing the learning capability of university students. She has led a number of large-scale projects on these topics.

Kang Li is a doctoral candidate in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education at Michigan State University. His research interests include faculty, student, and organizational development, leadership, teaching and learning theories, and cross-cultural and international education. He has worked in recent years on several projects, researching graduate student identity development, faculty development, student affairs professionals, and business professional training program evaluation.

## References

- Altbach, P., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3-4), 290-305.
- Carew, A.L., Lefoe, G., Bell, M., & Armour, L. (2008). Elastic practice in academic developers. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 13(1), 51-66.
- Cheung, M.P.Y. (2003). *Representation, mediation, and intervention: A translation anthropologist's preliminary reflections on three key issues in cross-cultural understanding*. David C. Lam Institute for East-West Studies Working Paper No. 14. Retrieved July 23, 2011, from <http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~lewi/WPS/14%20Martha%20Cheung.pdf>
- Di Napoli, R., Fry, H., Frenay, M., Verhesschen, P., & Verburch, A. (2010). Academic development and educational developers: Perspectives from different European higher education contexts. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 15(1), 7-18.
- Fullan, M., & Scott, G. (2009). *Turnaround leadership for higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Holden, N.J., & Von Korfzfleisch, H.F.O. (2004). Why cross-cultural knowledge transfer is a form of translation in more ways than you think. *Knowledge and Process Management*, 11(2), 127-136.
- Johnson, A.G. (2005). *Privilege, power, and difference*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.
- Jones, A. (1999). The limits of cross-cultural dialogue: Pedagogy, desire, and absolution in the classroom. *Educational Theory*, 49(3), 299-316.
- Lee, V.S. (2011). Reflections on international engagement as educational developers in the United States. In J.E. Miller & J.E. Groccia (Eds.), *To improve the academy: Resources for faculty, instructional and organizational development* (Vol. 29, pp. 302-314). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Manathunga, C. (2006). Doing educational development ambivalently: Applying post-colonial metaphors to educational development? *International Journal of Academic Development*, 11(1), 19-29.
- Ratima, M., & Grant, B. (2007). Thinking about differences across and within mentoring. *MAI Review*, 1(3), 1-5.
- Schroeder, C.M. (2010). Faculty developers as institutional developers. In C.M. Schroeder (Ed.), *Coming in from the margins: Faculty development's emerging organizational development role in institutional change* (pp. 17-46). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Singh, M. (2009). Using Chinese knowledge in internationalizing research education: Jacques Ranciere, an ignorant supervisor and doctoral students from China. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 7(2), 185-201.
- Taylor, L. (2010). Editorial. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 15(1), 1-3.