International Business: Teaching resources/methods

Panel discussion

Robert Hoover, Professor of Marketing, Idaho State University

Glenn Doolittle, Jr. Professor of International Business & Management, Santa Ana College

Kelly Jett Murphrey, Director of the Center for the Study of Western Hemispheric Trade, Texas A&M CIBER

John Lewis, Associate Professor of International Business, Missouri Southern State University

There are three levels of internationalization: awareness, understanding and expertise,” said Kelly Murphrey, a national and international speaker on global entrepreneurship. “Awareness, which is actually the lower level, is the most difficult level to get the students to move to. They may think they have an awareness of globalization, but once they’re in an overseas environment they’re not as comfortable as they thought they’d be.

“Understanding is that area that most of us are always teaching, but we can increase that level by using certain resources. The upper level of expertise is the area of specialization, which is a lifelong pursuit.”

Referring to Bloom’s Taxonomy of educational goals (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis), he said, “Most of our material typically is filled with knowledge and comprehension and very little of application-analysis-synthesis. So I encourage you to think about these items and what you can pull in to move up to the upper levels of learning.”

Practical” is the word Glenn Doolittle, Jr. used most when describing the needs of community college students. Doolittle is the international business coordinator at Santa Ana College, which has one of the largest IB programs at the community college level.

“The traditional college textbooks don’t work very well for us,” Doolittle said. “Resources at the community college level need to be entertaining and they need to be practical” so students can take what they learn and go out and get a job.

“Most community college students will not go to work for multinational companies; they will work for very small companies, 10 employees and under. Therefore, the curriculum has to be designed to give students the skills that will enable them to get a job with these small companies.”


Many companies have the ambition to assess and then access non-US markets, but they don’t have the time or resources to do it,” said Robert Hoover whose international business background spans three decades. “We put together a course that helped companies bring the resources of the university to bear on this in such a way that they could then determine whether or not to enter a market.

“What I try to do in class is help students understand that companies and consumers make brand decisions in a product category. Once you recognize this, you recognize there is competition for the consumer's dollars.”
International Business: Teaching resources/methods

Panel discussion

Among Hoover’s recommendations:


Technology is changing the dynamics in the classroom, noted John Lewis who specializes in teaching the managerial aspects of international marketing and international business operations. “I think it’s important to start using some of the technology, whether it’s the Internet, video, or a blend of technology and traditional teaching resources,” he said.

Missouri Southern State University’s International Trade Resource Catalog contains a listing of available publications, videos, CDs and other databases. Lewis recommends US Government agencies:

- International Trade Administration www.ita.doc.gov
- Office of the United States Trade Representative. www.ustr.gov
- For a listing of foreign embassies embassy.org

Each of these sites has links to many other agencies that will prove helpful.

Wrap Up Discussion

“The world that we knew in the 70s is definitely not the world of 2000-plus,” said Prof. Robert S. Spich, Anderson School at UCLA. “The word internationalization is passé and now we talk about globalization.” There was a time when international was relatively benign and international business was seen as beneficial. But globalization activists are pointing out that it’s no longer so benign or beneficial. Also, terrorism and home security are very real issues and CIBERs have been charged with taking a look at what those issues seem to mean.

So I don’t think we can be naive about international being loved. We’re dealing with a more complex, dynamic world and our explanations are going to have to be more sophisticated.

About 15 percent of Americans are internationally oriented, he said. “Our programs have to be aimed at increasing that percentage of people. Therefore, there is a constant need for championship of international business education.”

Spich is concerned about over reliance on the Internet, which he said “is not necessarily the final and only source of information about things. Information without theory is just factoids and incoherence.”

He talked about the power and importance of ideas. “Part of our job as educators is to teach coherence and engage people in a discussion of ideas. Then all of the stuff that’s out there enriches those fundamental ideas and provides some reality for them.”