Internationalising the curriculum through creating understanding and practice

Dr Sandra Kirk
School of Science & Technology
Nottingham Trent University
sandra.kirk@ntu.ac.uk

Advance HE STEM Conference 30th/31st Jan 2019
Why should we internationalise our curricula?

Selected international student recruitment targets

- Australia: 720,000 onshore enrolments by 2025
- Canada: 450,000 international students by 2022
- China: 500,000 international students by 2020
- France: Increase international student intake by 20% (amounting to 470,000 based on current levels)
- Germany: 350,000 inbound internationally mobile students by 2020
- Japan: 300,000 international students by 2020
- New Zealand: 143,000 international students by 2025
- Taiwan: 58,000 foreign students by 2019
- Malaysia: 250,000 international students by 2025
- South Korea: 200,000 foreign students by 2023
- Ireland: 44,000 foreign students by 2019/20
Global issues

• Climate change
• Energy production
• Food security
• Ageing populations
• Terrorism
What approaches are used in non-STEM subjects?


Developing awareness of diversity of approaches to and understanding of Journalism – Breit et al (2013)

Use of international mobility and reporting back to non-mobile cohorts in Geography and Nutrition – Filipponi et al (2015)

What approaches have been used in STEM?
- Case studies
- Guest speakers
- Global exemplars
- OIL
- exchanges

What are the barriers to full embedding in STEM?
- “add on” activities
- perception of science as already “global”
- lack of truly embedded transformative approach
- lack of effective push from PSRBs and benchmarks
- resistance of home students
- lack of time/academic space/reward for staff
Is “inter-culturalising” more appropriate?

Decolonisation/De-Westernisation

Mgqwashu (2017):

- Curriculum as context
- Curriculum as praxis
NTU Global Voices in Science Programme – a pilot of “inter-culturalization”

SPORTS IN IRELAND
Gaelic Football, Hurling & Football

WILDLIFE CONFLICTS AND RESOLUTIONS
Global Voices

My City: Tirupathi
- Located in Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh.
- One of the holiest Hindu pilgrimage cities in India.
- Well known as a holy city.
- Recently developing a smart city in Andhra Pradesh.
- Has a semi-tropical climate; summer will be warm, rainy season will be from June to September.

Presentation on Everyday Life in my Home City

Everyday Experience in Lagos
- Green shoots on the horizon, etc.
- Postgraduate study, etc.
- Research opportunities, etc.

05 February 2019
Global Voices in Science Programme – feedback

Global Voices:

“Before the debates in class there were segregation of people, UK people sit together and I am sitting with 2 or 3 of my friends from the same country. Before the debate we don’t interact that much, we don’t talk much. In class we say hi and that’s it. After the debate, if it’s in the bus, in the Pavilion, in the canteen if we see each other we try to talk to each other...we are friends on Facebook, so if our countries are playing any sport together we prank each other now!”

“I feel more valued by participating because I got enough space to talk. They never laughed at my English, they never tried to laugh at my idea, they never tried to laugh at my knowledge. So in all aspects I think they valued me – every class member as well as the lecturer, even with my broken English.”
Global Voices in Science Programme – feedback

Home students:

“It’s interesting to see someone who lives there share their point of view. If we were to visit, we wouldn’t get this point of view”

“It’s good hearing the positive side of things. Normally, what you hear about that part of world is always negative.”

“It shows how our countries are similar but sometimes there are kind of cultural twists.”
Global Voices in Science Programme – feedback

Staff:

“International students show some of the things we talk about in science are a lot more complex, it [Global Voice programme] will help my students break out of their Eurocentric, British centric way of looking at things.”

“The value of this is that we can bring somebody who has the experience first-hand. Though we can bring colleagues who work in other places but it would still be second hand, they are not living a 100% in the same conditions as people who live there like the citizens of that country.”
Lessons learnt:

- Experience made all students consider their cultural capital
- Provided a forum for development of inter-cultural competence
- Ensured fuller integration of international students, and home students from different backgrounds
- Requires good organisation, briefing and support for staff and students
- Approach is transferable across all STEM disciplines
- All staff and students could benefit by training in inter-cultural competence
What do you do?
Acknowledgements

UKCISA – funding Global Voices in Science Programme research
NTU – funding International Debates in Science week
Stella Oluwaseun - RA
Clare Newstead – co-researcher at NTU
Shiva Sivasubramaniam – international champion, now at Derby University
Yuan Gao – Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia
Gabrielle Russell-Mundine – University of Sydney, Australia


