Revista Internacional de Educação Superior
International Journal of Higher Education

The International Education Handboo: Principles and Practices of the Field*

Manual de Educação Internacional: Princípios e Práticas do Campo

Manual de educación Internacional: Princípios e Prácticas del Campo

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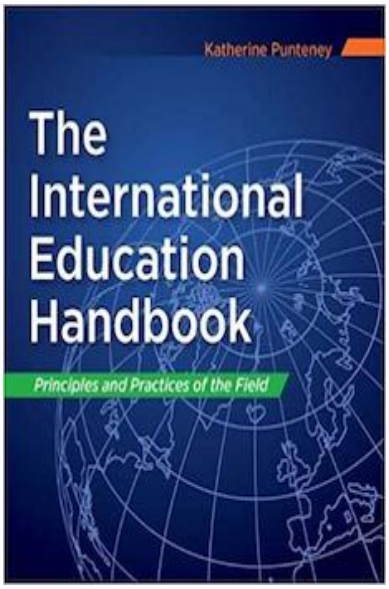

PUNTENEY, Katherine. **The international education handbook**: principles and practices of the Field. Estados Unidos: NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2019. ISBN: 978-1942719267.

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Submmited: 24 July 2020
Accepted: 16 Sept 2021
Published: 06 Dec 2021

doi 10.20396/riesup.v8i0.8665720
e-location: e022022
ISSN 2446-9424

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Published in 2019 by the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), *The International Education Handbook: Principles and Practices of the Field*, by US researcher Katherine Punteney, has become a reference for educators who wish to have an overview of international higher education, to understand the main trends in the sector, and to learn about the practices developed in other educational systems that can be applied to the local reality. The book contains 405 pages, divided into the following 10 chapters: Trends in International Education; Global Competence; Internationalization; Education Abroad; Experiential Learning; International Enrollment Management; International Student and Scholar Services; International Schools; Citizen Diplomacy, and Related Fields.

Right from the introduction, the author expresses her desire to contribute toward the development of the international education profession, related to the management of programs that can help participants — in an ethical and effective way — to engage in interactions with people and ideas of various cultures. Accordingly, sector professionals should develop international education programs that assist these participants in advancing global competence, as well as promoting international academic mobility and campus internationalization activities.

Chapter 1, called "Trends in International Education", introduces the global context and discusses several factors that affect the sector. Among the trends highlighted by the author are: growth of the knowledge economy, massification of education, insufficient funding of higher education, academic capitalism and the commodification of education. Other trends are also mentioned, such as internationalization, the growth of cross-border education, the proliferation of English-language programs, the demand for quality assurance, and competition for global rankings.

Chapter 2 discusses global competence. The author uses this term, but clarifies that there are several definitions and naming conventions to refer to what she calls global competence. In addition to explaining the concept, she also analyzes the five key reasons, cited by international educators, why institutions — at all levels (elementary, secondary, and higher education) — should focus on the development of such competence. Among them are competitiveness, global problem solving, multiculturalism, citizenship and governance, as well as academic benefits.

This chapter also presents the main models that explain how global competence is acquired. Against this backdrop, the author chose to present the example of the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity proposed by Bennett (1986), the intercultural communication competence model proposed by Byram (1997), the process model of intercultural competence presented by Deardorff (2006), and the model developed by Boix-Mansilla and Jackson (2011) called "educating for global competence". The chapter closes with a brief analysis of the principles, methods and tools for assessing global competence.

In chapter 3, the author expounds the concept of internationalization, which is the process of making education more international in focus. She highlights the definition given by Canadian researcher Jane Knight (2004), presenting internationalization as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (KNIGHT, 2004, p. 11). It is worth noting that this process occurs not only in higher education, but is also developed in elementary and secondary schooling. Thus, the concepts presented in the book also apply to other educational levels. Furthermore, the chapter deals with international activities such as curriculum internationalization, research, academic mobility, strategic partnerships, and faculty development, and also presents a model of strategic planning for internationalization, outlined in seven stages (introducing the process on campus, evaluating the current state of internationalization, performing gap analysis, writing an action plan, implementing that plan, and evaluating/redefining the plan), as well as the organizational and contextual factors that help to promote good results. The chapter ends by presenting some of the myths about internationalization, such as the mindset that international rankings reflect good quality in teaching.

The next two chapters complement one another. Chapter 4 presents the modalities of international programs, such as completing an entire undergraduate or graduate program abroad, and academic mobility. On this point, the author draws attention to the need to expand students' access to this type of program, to promote equity and to diversify the types of student loans offered, as she assumes that the international experience — through study abroad — can only reach its full potential when it has greater diversity of destinations and social representation. In Chapter 5, she explores other models of international programs that do not necessarily provide college credits, such as volunteering, international internships and high school programs abroad. According to the author, these programs are based on Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning (1984), which has intellectual origins in the works of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget and is conceived as a holistic and integrative learning theory, combining experience, perception, cognition and behavior, from which critical reflection can sprout. By exemplifying Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning (1984), the author highlights the importance of these programs and presents several models that can make such programs easier to carry out, always with the aim of promoting this critical reflection (KOLB, 1984).

Chapter 6 presents foreign student enrollment management and Chapter 7 addresses the services provided to these students; therefore, these two chapters also complement one another. International enrollment management includes marketing and recruitment, and at a later stage it also entails on-campus follow-up of these activities. It is an expanding market (at least prior to the COVID-19 pandemic); in 2018 alone, five million higher education students were studying abroad (INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, 2018b). The author underscores the value that foreign-student enrollment represents for the economies of certain countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, and Germany. As an example, in the US, in 2018, foreign students contributed $39 billion to that country's economy (NAFSA, 2018a). In turn, the presence of foreign students on campus

strengthens the development of global competence among local students. Hence, there is a wide array of services and adaptations that the host institution must provide in order to receive these students, such as academic, logistical, personal (including psychological), professional, and even immigration-related counseling. The author comments that students undergo acculturation processes when they are abroad for prolonged periods of time. In this case, they gradually begin to question certain elements of their own culture and begin to adopt aspects of the host culture.

Chapter 8 looks at international schools, such as those participating in the International Baccalaureate system (founded in Switzerland in 1968). The author highlights the growth of this type of school and presents models for the internationalization of secondary education, as well as the respective strategies focused primarily on internationalizing the curriculum, fostering international partnerships and mobility programs, and teaching other languages. Technology has also played a major role in the internationalization of the campus and the curriculum of secondary schools, since virtual student exchange has been a useful tool for the development of collaborative projects with foreign institutions.

In Chapter 9, the author addresses the importance of citizen diplomacy, understood as the responsibility that global citizens have to engage in intercultural issues, promoting mutual understanding through personal interactions. Citizen diplomacy is usually understood as a kind of soft power, i.e., influence based on positive relations with other nations. Policies to support this type of diplomacy emerged in response to situations of crisis and devastation, in which international relations had to be reconstructed. In the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars, organizations emerged to articulate this type of initiative, which began to count on the support of the US government, as it was already believed that national security depended not only on military action, but also on support for civil diplomacy, which would show the world the American way of life. In 2012, the US Department of State established the first articulated national civil diplomacy strategy, whose priorities were: expand partnerships for higher education, increase academic exchange and mobility, and promote equity in education.

Given the importance of this type of diplomacy, the author also presents models such as student exchange and fellowship programs, cultural and sports diplomacy, and others. One of the best-known programs is the Fulbright, the largest civil diplomacy project sponsored by the US government.

Lastly, Chapter 10 presents Other Topics that should also be taken into account when talking about international education. Among them, comparative education (concerning the study and analysis of different educational systems); global mobility of students; administration of higher education institutions, with their different organizational types; training on intercultural issues; administration of language programs; engagement in promoting sustainable development through education, and peacebuilding with the aid of mutual understanding (strengthening relationships between individuals, communities and countries).

This all sounds rather ambitious, but it is perfectly understandable when we start out from the basic principle that internationalization should, above all else, be a tool for promoting intercultural dialogue and international cooperation.

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