

THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING INITIATIVE: MOVING FORWARD FROM LESSONS LEARNED

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Abstract

Auburn University will share the goals, development process, program content, and outcomes of an innovative strategy promoting global learning and the development of faculty global competencies to adapt to the needs and demands of higher education in the 21st Century. Conducted in 2018 and 2021 (and planned again for 2023), The International Perspectives on University Teaching and Learning Symposium is a three-day meeting exploring new and innovative avenues of global teaching and learning informed by theory, research, and practice, as well as current and future trends impacting international undergraduate and graduate education. The symposium created a unique micro community of faculty, graduate students, and administrators from diverse cultural, national, and academic backgrounds to discuss global issues affecting teaching and learning in the academy. Based upon a premise, with apologies to Thomas Friedman, that the “University is Flat”, the symposium fostered this community through an intimate setting that included pre-symposium workshops, concurrent presentations, keynote speakers, and multiple shared meals and experiences to encourage networking. Additionally, a unique feature of the symposium was our Conversation Starter book of presenter-contributed essays and an associated speed-dating-style roundtable format designed to guide participants, in intimate small groups, through a discussion of important topics rather than listening passively to presentations. A special topic issue of the *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* journal entitled *Global Perspectives on Higher Education Teaching and Learning* was produced. This initiative represents a novel approach to supporting and developing all members of the academic community to expand their knowledge of pressing issues of global higher education including sustainability, access, quality, and impact.

Keywords: *Faculty development, university teaching, symposium, global competencies.*
