Running Head: International Curriculum in the Secondary School

Putting the ‘World’ Back Into “World Class Education”

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Abstract

Following September 11, 2001, students and teachers have realized that the role of curriculum is in need of dire change. As an educator, one can be quick to point out that American education is lacking in the department of international understanding. By addressing this issue, each subject evaluated to comprehensively focus on the idea of an international-rounded curriculum. This idea addressed in the La Pietra Report (2000) talked about the need for change in higher education. Now more than ever, we need to address this issue in the secondary and elementary schools.
Putting the ‘World’ Back Into “World Class Education”

Education in the United States for a long time has been criticized for the attempts of educators and the design of the curriculum. Looking back on one’s secondary education, there is a sense of parts missing. Students are ill prepared in several subject matters upon entering college. Society is critical of the design of American education. Without necessary educational intervention, American students’ will continue to lack the fundamental skills necessary to compete in the twenty-first century global society. Consistently American students score lower than their international counterparts in subject matter such as world geography and history.

Essential for the formation of the secondary curriculum Diane Ravitch (2002) puts together a list of seven essential lessons for the schools following September 11th. This list is important because it helps to define the infrastructure necessary to create a curriculum that caters to the society.

“It’s OK to be patriotic” (Ravitch 2002, 6). Before September 11th, patriotism was all but been forgotten in the American classroom. Some students did not feel comfortable in expressing their views about America. The idea of being patriotic was taboo and the only symbol of American patriotism was the presence of the American flag, the playing of the National anthem. Students should be able to feel an attachment to our country. While also being able to realize that, this country is the country that gave them their rights and freedoms.

“Not all cultures share our regard for equality and human rights” (Ravitch 2002, 7). American can feel apprehensive about cultural differences. Even in the United States, white middle class students are uncomfortable with their African-American lower class peers. In far to many classrooms, America education does not celebrate cultural differences. Students are wrapped up in the idea of cultural stereotypes such, as Asian-American students are smarter and
more talented than my peer group. Students lack necessary information that once we were fearful of the Asian Americans particularly the Japanese. We had our own idea of concentration camps during World War II and we moved the Japanese to these facilities to ensure that our American ideals would be free from tampering. The American government has not offered a settlement or an apology for their actions during World War II.

“We must now recognize the presence of evil in the world” (Ravitch 2002, 7). Evil is throughout the world. As Americans, we once believed that we were immune to terrorism on our grounds. The last time of a terrorist attack on American grounds was on December 7th, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. It is then that we felt our “age of innocence” had ceased and no longer were we immune. On September 11th, again our confidence was shattered; we had for so long, believed that we were once again immune, and once the events had occurred we began to place blame on first the Arabs, then the Taliban, and currently the failure of the American intelligence. In part, September 11th is a failure on all our parts; we as a society believed that we were immune; we assumed that we had the best leadership and intelligence and those thoughts failed us.

“Pluralism and divergence of opinion are valuable” (Ravitch 2002, 7). As a society, we need to look not only at the American cultures and at the opinions that we are provided, but we need to also look at the other cultures and their opinions to us. Anti-American sentiments are not just from the Arab cultures; surprising to many the French do not like us either. If we transcend beyond our opinions of our American culture and then realize that we are just a part of a pluralistic society, we will be better off as individuals and educators. I will be going into the idea of a pluralistic society later in this paper, but there are more lessons that need to be addressed.
“Knowledge of United States history is important” (Ravitch 2002, 8). How much history does an American student know? We patronize Christopher Columbus, finding him to be the real world hero, even though before Columbus discovering America and realizing that the world was round. In fact, it has been proven time after time, that individuals like Plato and Aristotle, had already discovered that the world was round. We spent so much time learning about Columbus and information before the Civil War, that several history classes I took, never got past the 20s. I had been unable to learn about how, as Americans, we fit into the global society. I feel that necessary changes in the infrastructure of our schools, by having students take a first course that is before the civil war (one year in length) and then the second course from the civil war to the present (again one year in length). Changing this format is necessary that students will be able to learn our present position in the American society. We should also look at our place in society. How did we help France following World War II to the point that French now despise Americans? The changes in the world perspective of America has changed over the years, unfortunately we seem not to teach the history behind those actions. Without teaching, the important portions of cultural understanding, we will continue to produce students who are unable to understand where Americans fit into the global society.

“Knowledge of world history and geography is important” (Ravitch 2002, 8). Students are not immune to the attacks of other countries, the character attacks, and American students are unable to identify some essential information regarding the locations of key countries. Students also do not have an understanding of cultures, when given a world history model that is from the American perspective. If we, as educators, seriously look at the world history and geography curriculum and teach from a perspective that is beyond an American perspective, we will be able to provide a model that is effective to teach to a becoming pluralistic society. If we could
understand the beliefs of major ethnic groups, we would be able to create a curriculum that is
diversity sound. We should avoid the quick Americanization of students and be able to take their
cultures, emphasizes them and learn from them. Although, some educational institutions try to
remove the diversity of students and fit them into the model of a perfect American student,
instead of emphasizing their culture and teaching other students about it.

“We must teach students to appreciate and defend our democratic institutions” (Ravitch
2002, 9). While staying in Washington D.C. a few years ago, I was walking past the Korean War
memorial on the memorial was the statement, ‘Freedom is not free.’ It took me a while to
understand that statement, because I had always believed that it was free, I had been born an
American citizen and I was guaranteed freedom the instant I was born. In fact, in hindsight, the
statement was correct. Many people had died needlessly to get where we were today. Hundreds
of thousands of people had died throughout our history, fighting for our freedom and the freedom
for other countries. When I saw people protesting the war, in a way I was a bit on their side, but
for selfish reasons. In truth, all we as Americans were trying to do in Iraq is allow them the same
freedoms that we have by removing their brutal dictator and replacing it with democracy.
Although, this argument could be turned the other way and this is true that not every country can
afford to run a democratic society. Some countries have their political structures, which work for
them, and as Americans, we have no right to move in and try to change their ways.

The globalization of education is going to take many trials and tribulations. We must
realize that this change cannot happen overnight. It will have to be evaluated and changed to fit
the academic needs of students and the educational system. By transforming the rich, powerful,
and irrelevant perceptions of globalization and make it available to the great masses of the world.
(Cappon, 2002), is a key point. Globalization of education is important; we look at the
educational system today and notice that there is a lot of room for improvement and change. Although, we must be able to address the learning styles of all cultures (Cappon, 2002), which will be a time consuming process.

Although, if we do not address the learning styles and the basic pedagogy needed to address each student’s learning, we might be unable to have students learn effectively and therefore, we might begin to fail with the education system. Every student’s basic and applied knowledge should not be another commodity, but a benefit that increases appropriately when shared (Cappon, 2002). In fact, if we look as each learner as a valued individual we will be able to move from a society that lacks understanding of America’s place in the world, to understanding that we too are just a part of the infrastructure. Therefore, by strengthening civil society we will be encouraging economic development (Cappon, 2002) and individuals well versed in the understanding of globalization.

Another aspect of changing the academic curriculum to a global curriculum is to take the educational model and increase subjects such as technology, foreign languages, and business. By encouraging students to take intense computer courses and developing technology skills allows them to apply to other courses (Barnish, 2002) and to real life situations in time being. Today, being able to understand technology, not at a basic level but at a level that is competitive is an important aspect of the working-class today.

By studying international business students must learn about subjects like history, geography, and economics that shape various companies (Barnish, 2002), if students can understand the basic fundamentals of such things like, how the geography in the Czech Republic is important to their economic structure and the economics of the United States. Will help students realize that America is not a big country on the map but rather just another place in the
world. Although, students need to learn most importantly how to communicate, so by increasing the time spent in the classroom students, learn six years of foreign language, instead of the four years typically given in a traditional school (Barnish, 2002). English, understandably, is a very common language, but in most places such as the Czech Republic (which has had little exposure to American cultures) does not have a great number of individuals who are versed in speaking the English language.

We should be promoting the learning of foreign languages beyond French, Spanish, and German and add in languages that will help us to communicate with fellow members of our society. English, is not the official language of the United States, it is just the most spoken and until it becomes the official language students need to learn about other languages.

Finally, another important part, and this is not mentioned as a subject, but we should require students to participate in community service. With an informal service component, students learn beyond their connection to the world, but their connection to their community (Barnish, 2002). This is very important to have them look beyond their white-middle class background and realize that immigrants, although they have escaped poverty and injustice, in America, many immigrants are still trying to find their way. By promoting students to look at the society, they will realize that they are just one tiny part of this world. If we take a more intense look at the curriculum, we will be able to apply subjects to a great mass of people.

Then, once students have graduated from high school they are prepared for majors such as foreign language or international business (Barnish, 2002). Even if students do not take on a major like foreign language or international business, it is important to realize that a student should continue with foreign language studies because those skills will be very important in the near future.
We also need to note that this change cannot just happen at the secondary level, it also needs to happen at the post-secondary, graduate, and even elementary level. Therefore, with an emergence of an international based liberal education, it will be able to offer an opportunity for education facilities to enter into partnerships that will not only enrich and inspire those who are present for learning, but also assist those colleagues abroad (Gillespie, 2003). Colleges should began to re-structure their curriculum to incorporate some international abroad learning, even though it might not seem important to many majors (such as psychology or biology) the ability to understand another culture, will be beneficial in the work place.

If we change our classrooms to be learning communities, we will be able to provide society with future generations of individuals who are ready to compete in the global society. Therefore, we must take learning of an international society and broaden it to the student’s perspective (Bacon and Kischner, 2002). With these changes, we are able to move from the understanding of our culture and incorporate the understanding of diverse cultures. If we provide help for students to develop a knowledge and skill base that has relevance to understanding and engaging in a world, which requires three essential understandings: content knowledge, exposure to diverse cultures and experience, and authentic application (Bacon and Kischner, 2002). The global classroom, as I said before cannot happen overnight, the benefits and the success of this classroom will have implications. Although one key element important for students is that, learning in a global classroom, students will be able to transcend knowledge and focus on themes such as globalization, imperialism, nationalism, human rights, and democracy (Bacon and Kischner, 2002).

Another issue experience, we have sat in the industrial age a learned, we need to move on into a modern age, so by taking information out of the textbook and applying it to real life world
situations, we will help to develop a global perspective. Classrooms will be more effective if they go beyond the four walls and draw on resources that encourage an understanding of the greater world. (Bacon and Kischner, 2002). Although, we cannot create a global curriculum with just a classroom, it will take much more.

Another important aspect to implementing a program that emphasizes the importance of international learning will be the use of individuals (especially teachers) that are well versed in the global society. Colleges today such as Minnesota State University, Mankato has a variety of requirements that each student must complete before graduating, one requirement often overlooked by students, include obtaining six-semester credits to fulfill a cultural diversity requirement. Students must apply a little bit of research into their schedule planning to ensure that they fulfill this requirement. Teacher education programs also have requirements to fulfill the need to address cultural sensitivity.

During my research, I found out about a university that had students in the education program do one semester of learning and teaching abroad. An important point that this paper made was that, research shows that little is ever mentioned about the relationship between a global/international education experience and meeting the education needs of students in today’s pluralistic society (Roose, 2001). Maybe with the information presented, we can understand the importance of creating a society that is prepared to handle challenges and diversity. By increasing program requirements, one requirement of this program is that all students must a cross-cultural education internship (Roose, 2001), in some areas like international experience and decrease the amount of theory, we will have students that are prepared to handle the present day changes of American society.
When students go abroad, students experience what it is like to be the other and experience the school organization in a different way (Roose, 2001), as Americans we must realize that our way is not always right and good for our students. Each country provides a system that they feel is benefiting all students. By observing another nations’ education system, students are able to learn about governments and their influences in schooling, how they are central to preserving society, and how diversity in schools is a varied and complex idea (Roose, 2001). Students who complete this program have felt, by being able to view culture outside of schools and being able to understand culture, we will be better able to relate to students and parents (Roose, 2001). This point and the previous point cannot be taken lightly, it is the responsibility of the pre service teacher to learn about a new culture rather than comparing or judging it against what is previously experienced, by doing this, students are able to see the positive aspects of possibilities with students, staff, and the school (Roose, 2001). If we are able to create teachers who understand what is like to be the “other” they will be more understanding to the fact, being “different” is not necessarily bad, but a potentially a positive learning experience (Roose, 2001).

Learning is also effected, not just the learning on the part of the pre-service teacher but also the learning for the students. Schools sometimes do not have the necessary tools that we have; we take for granted that we have enough paper and pencils for our students, although this is not the case in most of the world. If as a pre-service teacher would go into situation are realize that there is not enough supplies they will be able to understand that with little materials, they have to be able to think flexibly and apply knowledge in diverse ways, and learning would be able to still occur (Roose, 2001). Thinking flexibly is a tool that unfortunately is not addressed enough in pre-service teaching programs, the government has stipulated so many other
requirements, that we sometimes forget to learn about the basic essentials of standing in front of a classroom and be able to teach as effectively as possible. By spending so much time on theories, we are forgetting to apply essential knowledge of background. If we change the curriculum and place importance in cultural understanding we will be able to give teachers the opportunity to understand not only diversity but also the understanding of schools and learning (Roose, 2001). In being able to learn, students in this program are able to “understand schools as cultures and school’s relationships to the broader culture, understanding students, learning, and curriculum, and understanding themselves as learners and risk-takers” (Roose 2001, p. 46).

Personally, I just do not get it, at Hamline we are given the opportunity to student teach abroad, we have the opportunity to get into the most urban settings, but we lack in the requirement of realizing what it feels like to be out of place. Students who go to college and study International Studies or Relations have to learn in another country and feel what it is like to be out of place. Even if they blend in with the best, their experiences will help students see themselves and understand stereotypes about other countries and the United States, and they are able to see where these ideas originated (Roose, 2001). The way we promote American cultures and the superiority of our cultures, pre-service teachers sometimes are able to only respond to their own culture and communicate in that culture, by using cross-cultural experiences students are able to challenge and change the conceptual framework so they can work effectively with all children (Roose, 2001). With an approach that is deep in the state of disequilibrium, students are able to develop a flexible and creative way to approach learning and teaching (Roose, 2001). We need to move beyond the current system of educating pre-service teachers and look at how changes in our program can speak to the masses, instead of the select few of individuals. We should create system that teaches us how to teach in the ever-changing society. Politics and
policies have gone too far, education systems are often entrenched in policies of how teachers are to teach; instead, we should use cross-cultural experiences to teach other educators to apply to their own practice (Roose, 2001). If we do these things, we can realize what it really means, “to walk in someone else’s shoes”.

There is so much to this issue that some professors actually ask students to pretend they are in a society that is much different from the United States. We need to ask ourselves, this morning we woke up in Ukraine, how is my life different because of this. Teachers, including pre-service teachers, need to be able to learn more about the society beyond their national and continental borders (Commeyras and Mazile, 2001). If we do not we will begin to fail not only ourselves but also the students we teach. If we continue to teach, the American way and forget that we are part of a huge world, we will continue to lack understanding about other cultures and their importance in the world. By placing importance for the globalization in education, we will help to change the ways which we can meet responsibility in thinking about world citizenship (Commeyras and Mazile, 2001). We need to realize that we are nothing more than a little part within the great world and teachers need to think like members of a global society to prepare students for world citizenship (Commeyras and Mazile, 2001). If we do not, we seem to miss on points that are important and effective, we need to realize that with a changing society we are suppose to be global educators.

So, what is a global educator? Global educators share a certain characteristic, they confront stereotypes and exotica and resist simplification of other cultures and global issues, by fostering the habit of examining multiple perspective, we are able to teach about power, discrimination, and injustice, while providing a cross-cultural experience in learning (Merryfield, 2002). Most importantly, they are the teachers that understand, how to address cultural
sensitivities and take those sensitivities and create a learning experience that benefits all students. Global educators also address these stereotypes and develop lessons to replace the misinformation with knowledge of the cultures, cultural conflicts, and global issues (Merryfield, 2002). Stereotypes are all around us; we engage in so much character assassination that we seem to forget that we should be using these situations as a teachable moment. An example, ask students to write down common misconceptions about a culture, this is an effective way to approach the situation. When you ask students to brainstorm what they know about a certain culture, state their understanding, you as the teacher will address those understandings (Merryfield, 2002). Learning and how knowledge is obtained will vary, what some students perceive about a situation might differ from another student's perspective and according to Merryfield (2002), students will be able to learn about events through multiple, but usually conflicting perspectives. Once you have used that moment to teach, a good global educator would take the information presented and have students construct a paper from that. With those attempts, we are able to have students take the information and understand it more effectively. Students will learn more when they are able to write about and understand a new, more comprehensive history that is diverse in perspective, while understanding about cultures and the discriminations and injustice to those individuals (Merryfield, 2002).

Finally, a global educator, does not look at the popular media for answers, in fact many times this form of communication is incorrect. Students will learn with a global educators’ help that the information presented from popular media and use of popular language, is not always correct and that as students they should critically examine all perspectives (Merryfield, 2002). If we can decrease the amount of stereotypes, character assassinations caused by the media, students will be able to get a more truthful understanding of what is right and what is wrong.
Today educators have no idea what is important in education, especially if our only frame of reference is our own schooling. Unfortunately, parents who have endured thirteen years of education believe that they are the education experts (Nordgren, 2003) sadly they are not. The industrial age of education is over! We need to move to an age that is modern and ready to address the global society that we are now all apart of. Still teachers are failures in this department, despite the education reform teachers still revert to the way that they were taught many years ago (Nordgren, 2003). In America, we believe all the lies that we were told and we continue to teach these lies. We believe that there is no wrong in our history, when living in England I was laughed at for being an American, when I asked why, because I believed the Columbus discovered the world to be round. In fact, I know that is false.

As American we also have a sheep like adherence to rules and regulations, which are set by politicians and administrators at state and local levels (Nordgren, 2003). Nevertheless, we are taught that what is right is right, and what is wrong cannot be changed.

As Americans we are also criticized for our beliefs about the inequalities, situations such as standardized testing no matter how much criticism it takes, that the SAT is a test created for white middle-class boys, there are politicians who believe that the SAT is fault-free. We place so much emphasis on the standardized testing model that we forget to look at other systems that individuals will deal with later in life. When we look at the business world, the vast majority of business organizations are not bureaucratic; instead, they rely on work-teams, shared decision-making, and risk-taking in an effort to compete with the global society (Nordgren, 2003), I don’t see any standardized tests there. This point is coming way to late in this paper, but I had found it so late in my research, that trying to incorporate it into the earlier section was difficult:
The most important things that we need for creating a global society according to (Nordgren 2003, p. 15), is “(1) the ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively within teams and across cultures; (2) the ability to solve problems, including resolving conflicts within teams; (3) acquisition of technological literacy, as well as possession of a marketable technological skill and some understanding of how technology can be used to enhance one’s personal life as well as one’s organizations; and (4) willingness to take risks by being an entrepreneur willing to initiate change and think creatively.”

One of the best systems I was able to read about was the Swedish educational system; they spend the first three years of education to ensure that students are socially adjusted. Nordgren (2003) says, who cares if they can read or write, if they are going to just end up in prison? Maybe if we deemphasize things like learning how to read by third grade, we might create students who are able to look at conflict resolution more effectively and learn how to get along with their classmates, and this might surprisingly actually be beneficial. The concerns of politicians; would not this cause academic problems later on? Actually, no, the Swedes gave the American students a real beating at the Third International mathematics and Science Study (Nordgren, 2003). This might offend some people but things need to be changed, if we want American students to be able to compete with their world-counterparts, we should also look at are the organizational structure of our school systems. We should ‘flatten’ the organizational structure of schools and school districts, by allowing real decisions to be made at the schools, not by district-level bureaucrats (Nordgren, 2003). These changes to create an International intense curriculum, needs to come from each direction.
According to Ramler (2002), we should create a few structures in our school that will help define a global society in our educational system. First, we should establish in students to understand the morals and ethics of their behavior, by making students realize that they are socially responsible for their decisions that they make. The teacher is also an important individual, as teachers we should instill an understanding and acceptance of human diversity and the need for harmony, not only in our classrooms but also in the society, which we live.

Another important point, quite often overlooked, is the idea of an environmental ethic; Bemidji State University (when I went there) was one of two schools that had people and the environment requirement. Here students were required to learn about the ethics surrounding the environment and how their action, could affect not only the physical environment of the world, but also the environment we were creating in regards to health and human behavior.

As students and teachers, we need to understand and apply scientific and technological advances (Ramler, 2002) and how they apply to our everyday education. Finally, by increasing the global education we will be able to take the curriculum and methodology of not only the United States but also Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the Czech Republic and be able to improve the content and process of teaching.

With these changes, students will begin to show interest in learning about other cultures. This interest for the learning of other cultures and society will require administrators and politicians to look at these interests more intensely and begin to create curriculum framework that is effective in teaching International Studies. Even without, an increase of student interest information and learning will have to be looked at more intensely in the coming years. If there is an interest again in International Studies and Relations will be begin to have to think about
implementing programs that focuses on the importance of the global curriculum and the need to learn about cultures and diversity.

With the changes in education and the beginning of the charter school movement, many new types of schools are being formed. One school that will open in Kansas City this fall, core curriculum focuses on International Studies. During the feasibility study stage, researchers found out that, in the Kansas City area 60% of all businesses have an international business component (Colgan, 2003). They began to also look at reports that students did not have an understanding about many key fundamentals necessary to even be able to compete in a society that is increasingly turning more global.

Recent reports have revealed how little American students are learning about the world that exists outside their own countries borders; young Americans have problems in identifying places on the map such as France, United Kingdom, and Japan; they were also unable to identify which countries have nuclear capabilities and where the Taliban is located (Colgan, 2003). In the end, the Kansas City school district determined that, by incorporating an international studies program into their academic structure, it would lead to academic improvement in all areas (Colgan, 2003). Many other schools districts and politicians should take note for these changes in curriculum structures will benefit the students. So therefore, by internationalizing the curriculum, we should not view it as one more thing we have to do, but instead what can make our learning experiences richer (Colgan, 2003). We will create students that are able to compete in the 21st century global society. There are so many tools all ready available for our use that even today, we could be able to slowly incorporate the international understanding into our classroom.

Some organizations such as the Peace Corps put together information that will help students understand what is outside of their borders. The purpose of Voices, put together by the
Peace Corps is to broaden students’ perspectives on life in other culture by exposing them to firsthand accounts written by returned Peace Core volunteers (Moffet, 2002). Educators can incorporate these techniques in their own classrooms; these first hand accounts are learning tools.

There has been little talk about a pre-September 11\textsuperscript{th} international education problem, although according to Skelton et al. (2002), during the past 20 years we have been forced to look at the international understanding in young people. Although, post-September 11\textsuperscript{th} we have began to look at this problem more intensely our goal as educators is to create a society ready to take on the challenges that are presented. We need to ensure that students are able to identify that the economic and social world is changing (Skelton et. al., 2002) and that we still are a vital part of this society. Therefore, Skelton et. al. (2002) believe that with students being able to identify the international perspective in world affairs, they are hopefully able to eradicate fear and suspicion, and move towards achieving peace, tolerance and global cooperation. We need to move beyond teaching international education as taking students down to the River Center (St. Paul) in April for the Festival of Nations, we need to incorporate this in our classrooms everyday and create students that have international mindedness. What is the definition of International mindedness?

- “Knowledge and understanding beyond one’s own nationality.
- Awareness and understanding of the interdependence among peoples.
- Awareness and understanding of the interdependence among countries.
- Awareness and understating of the independence of people and countries.
- Awareness and understanding of the similarities and indifferences among peoples” (Skelton et. al., 2002, pg. 53).
If we incorporate this model into our classroom, we will be able to take a look at more learning tools that have previously been available to us and take this information, by learning this essential information we will create students that are able to find their place in the global society.

We cannot leave international mindedness to the wayside, instead we must be able to look it as closely as we look at subjects such as language arts and mathematics (Skelton et. al., 2002) surprisingly this is just not a social studies issue, this is a cross-curriculum problem.

The central idea in creating a program that encourages the increase of international curriculum is that we will now allow students to extend their prior knowledge from textbooks and popular media, and ultimately provoke genuine inquiry (Singh, 2002). By having, schools create a curriculum that not only addresses the concerns of the world, but the genuine inquiry required to succeed. Teachers should present topics that ask why, topics that helps others know things like, “Why do people who live in poor countries stay there?” and “How do we express ourselves?” (Singh, 2002 p. 58-59), these topics typically are put by the wayside, because there is no definite answer. American education must change, to look at the unknown and the continual asking of “why?”

With the basis of framework and the understanding that we as educators need to realize that, the importance of implementing global education is evident. That we need to assess things like, Where is the ‘world’ in “World History”? How much global education is in our schools curriculum today? How much should really be in there? Questions like these are important because they provide a framework and a reference to start looking at the programs more intensely.

During the mid-1970s educators became concerned and begun to look more at how would American students be able to compete in the global society, the results, American students
weren’t fairing very well in many subjects. We were great at competition with our classmates and ourselves, but we did not fair well in a lot of the core-subject matter, thus global education began to take shape (Smith, 2002). The first stop on the global education was foreign language; educators still believe that this is a main way, to mainstream our students into a global education. Although, the increase of foreign language from only eight percent of all students in 1979, to over fifty percent of students today (Smith, 2002) is surprising, although it is not enough. Foreign language should become as important as English or Mathematics, students should be well versed and know how to speak well. Actually, students who have two or more foreign languages under their belt (including English) are able to understand the more complex and formal words that are part of the English language, because many of these words are Latin based.

Another source of concern, the lack of geography, actually in 1979 geography, was all but eliminated from the curriculum, but in 1988, the National Geographic Society established a foundation to promote the teaching of geography (Smith, 2002). Although, we do not teach geography as well as we could, we should really be emphasizing things like, “How does the geography of Belgium affect the economic structure of France?” Using those topics are essential in increasing a cross-cultural education design. Although, we need to take this curriculum through all the schools, in retrospect changes are made in other ways.

Today we are able to create charter schools and magnet schools with an international focus (Smith, 2002). In the event that there is no ability to create a charter school or magnet school with those focuses, we can incorporate a strong extra-curricular program for students. Today students have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular programs such as Foreign Policy Association, the Capitol Forum, Great Decisions, and the Model U.N. (Smith, 2002),
many of these programs actually extend all the way into the undergraduate level and in some schools at the graduate level also.

Unfortunately, extra-curricular programs and curriculum changes are not the more serious problem; the lack of adequate teaching knowledge in the subjects such as foreign language, geography, and world history (Smith, 2002), is a huge problem. In fact, in personal situation, I have a minor in International Studies emphasis European and foreign policy, when having my initial assessment at Hamline many of my course did not transfer in, nor count for concentration courses. I had spent four years studying world history, geography, and foreign language and for a secondary social studies license a very select number of those courses actually counted. Now, I need to fulfill many of those requirements, which will make me more educated in other subject areas, but the credit of an International Studies minor does not count as much as it probably should. This is also true for hiring of teachers.

Another downfall, there is a lack of research for the importance of global education and the effectiveness of certain methodologies (Smith, 2002). State and local boards of education should take notes and make the teaching of global content and skill an important component of education for all students, even if the research to support the idea is not there now it is important to realize that there is a need and we should look at it more intensely. As educators, we have the responsibility to prepare our students to meet the challenges of society, unfortunately today we are exerting global leadership that is globally deaf, dumb, and blind (Smith, 2002). We need to create intelligent students who are prepared for a post 9/11 society.

Following September 11th, individuals began to make comments about the need for a stronger international and multicultural curriculum. (Dunn, 2002). Students would have been able to respond to the attacks with a better understanding, instead of an immediate hatred to all Arabs and Arab-Americans. This could have been done if there was a broader perspective of geography, history, and political contexts. Although, our education system promote to much
American power, that we are all superior, although, because we are succeeding in patriotism we are failing in global citizenship, we need to focus on patriotic citizenship. Patriotic citizenship demands a social studies curriculum that gives weight equally to World History and International Studies (Dunn, 2002). Furthermore, curriculum development should focus on questions that help students answer and understand how the world came to be today (Dunn, 2002). Therefore, with these changes we will be able to better address the need for an international and multicultural curriculum.

Multicultural diversity needs to be accepted (Perkins-Gough et al., 2002). The United States has already gone to the extreme in pressing national identity. We need to go beyond that instead of presenting our own knowledge to the rest of the world, we need to present our knowledge of the world. Rebalancing these statements would be a good thing (Perkins-Gough et al., 2002). Moving beyond this we need to look at culture and sciences instead of the military powers (Perkins-Gough et al., 2002) and realize that we might be better in some areas, but severely failing in others.

The importance of subject matter and how it can be tied as an international curriculum is a debate that seems not to have a lot of background on. One must look at the basic subject matters (not just social studies): reading, writing, foreign language, art, mathematics, and technology, and determine how these subjects can be tied to the international classroom.

The basic principles can easily be applied, in the art classroom. First, there should be a place for students to reflect on their ability, understand, and empathize with difference in world art. Most importantly, they should feel responsible to create art that will help us experience what it means to be a part of the global society (Nathan, 2002). This, I feel surprisingly, could be the first subject that could change to an international perspective.
A lot of debate is usually associated with the subject of religion, although I do not feel it to be a sole responsibility of the social studies curriculum. This should not be only a topic for social studies, but should be shared out to subjects like, language arts, literatures, and fine arts (Douglass, 2002). By allowing students to learn about things such as cultural preference, habits and taboos of diverse groups, they will be able to more effectively approach members of diverse cultures, while being important that students also know about the religion of individuals and understand the beliefs and practices (Douglass, 2002). Although, these changes have to be made with great caution and care and if we do not make these changes with caution and care we will continue to have problems with the separation of church and state. In the end, students should be able to describe the different world religions and with respect, how each relates to society (Douglass, 2002). The curriculum will need to approach carefully, such as how a religion arose, spread, and flourished to today how the religion is a part of the world society, we need to move away from the thumbnail sketch of each religion, which only causes stereotypes and talk more intensely about their importance. We must remember, most importantly, that when one teaches about religion, they should not promote or demote any faith; instead, they should provide a context for understanding (Douglass, 2002). The results for the study of religion will help us understand more about why things are done and the belief practices. By having the English teacher talk about religion in literature, the art teacher showing religious art, and the social studies teacher talking about the evolution of religion, we will be able to understand more effectively how we can meet and resolve conflicts (Douglass, 2002). With this change in curriculum design approached we will be able continue to make strides to create an International curriculum.
There is so much that you could do with language arts, but by recognizing the differences in languages you will be able to change the style and move away from modern American literature and look at the great world classics. In addition, according to Howard (2002), we should place a two-way immersion into education that will not only foster global awareness by deeply immersing them in new languages but also by allow them to experience multilingualism and multiculturalism on a personal level. Two-way immersion education gives students the opportunity to get a glimpses of the richness and breadth of the world’s cultures, ultimately giving a first hand approach to cultural diversity.

Ethnomathematics a term to express the relationship between mathematics and culture (Zaslavasky, 2002), it is hard to imagine creating a math program that is immersed in international curriculum. Although changes, should provide literature that would give guidance to teacher on how to induce cultural perspective into the math curriculum (Zaslavasky, 2002). Student who participate in a well designed cross cultural math class, are better prepared to think critically, by applying their skills and knowledge, and using those reasons to come up with conclusions in an international perspective.

Using the idea of mass media, we should incorporate into a technology program a framework that will assist students, learning about the world around them. Students should be aware of how their lives are tied to what is happening throughout the world, including the United States (McGoogan, 2002). By taking this framework, students will be able to discuss these issues. Students will be able to apply this knowledge of real world situation and apply them to their life. Surprisingly according to McGoogan (2002), students want to learn what things affect other parts of the world and what they are doing to address those issues. So as a teacher one
should try to discuss these issues with an open-mind, using such tools as constructive
controversies will help students better understand the importance of controversial issues.

Once students complete their secondary education, many move on to the higher education
system and few move past that and go on to graduate, medical, law, or doctoral school. The *La
Pietra Report* is an important step in changing the curriculum at the higher education level. Since
the 1960s, American historians have begun to see the limitations that this national-bounded
approach has imposed on the field of history (Osborne, 2003). The belief that educators need to
take an approach away from the standard curriculum design put forth by administrators and
politicians. By noticing that there was a lack in the model of history:

The 1998, La Pietra conference centered on than exploration of theoretical matters
integral to an internationalize approach. In 1999, the conference discussed essays
to reframe the approach to American History. Finally, in 2000, American
historians looked at practical ways to implement the teaching methods in the
United States (Osborne, 2003).

By internationalizing our United State history courses, causes concern, such as what is left out to
make room for the new subject matter. Currently it is up to the teachers to determine how fast
they would like to internationalize their courses (Osborne, 2003); there is no set limit in the
framework. Although, today we are in good position to create a history program that has an
emphasis on internationalization studies. We should ensure that these courses are rescaled and
more inclusive to stimulate thinking and learning about our nation’s journey throughout time
(Osborne, 2003). These changes are important and well argued through the La Pietra report.

Le Pietra report also stresses the need to test traditional ideas of American uniqueness
and isolation by examining the cross-national comparisons and connections (Guarneri, 2002). If
we change the curriculum by emphasizing a wider geographic and temporal context, requiring teachers to examine the roots of globalization and understanding of where the United States will be heading in the next 50 years. An internationalized survey course will find ways to link microhistory and macrohistory, process larger than the nation and those smaller (Guarneri, 2002). These changes are not going to be taken lightly; we need to realize that his is an important step in our society and that we must address these needs with an open mind and heart-felt understanding. By changing the course, does not de-emphasize America, but rather places the United States in the world (Guarneri, 2002). We need to teach students that America is not all-powerful and that we are not superior, we need to let students know of our shortcomings.

Teachers could approach an international perspective in two different ways, inside to the outside or the outside looking in (Guarneri, 2002). How are we viewed as a society? On the other hand, how do others view us? We need to look at these situations and understand that it is important that we address these issues with a clear idea of our place. Unfortunately, Guarneri (2002) points this out also; a common problem with history teachers is their lack of the specialized training or the unfamiliarity about cultures outside of the American boarders. Although the La Pietra report did not address this, we have to change the educational perspective of history from both directions from the elementary school to the institutions of higher learning and from the institutions of higher learning to the elementary school.

Looking at the information presented in this text it is important to realize how one can incorporate this into their classrooms. The longer American politicians and school administrators delay in providing an education that emphasizes the importance of the other cultures and the idea of an international society. We will continue to provide an education to our students that are inferior and lacking in the important fundamentals. We will continue to hinder American
students and thus, making them unable to rise up in a society that is able to understand the
importance of our global neighbors. Unfortunately, the implications of the American education
society and politicians their actions have been addressed in many other subject areas, but not in
other essential areas. If we continue to believe that our pre-September 11th educational system
was correct, we will continue to give students an education that inferior, We will send them out
in to the world unprepared to understand how to work with our global neighbors.
References


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