

BRAZIL CONCEPT PAPER*

*The following text is based in significant part on *MSU China: A Template for International Engagement by Michigan State University in the 21st Century*, which was authored by the MSU China Working Group (Jeffrey Riedinger, convener; Thomas Coon, Christine Geith, Hairong Li, Marilyn McCullough, Gerald Rhead, William Schmidt, Weijun Zhao, and Yong Zhao) on 3 June 2005.

SUMMARY

To be a great international university in the 21st Century, Michigan State University must be engaged across the missions of research, teaching, and outreach in strategic countries around the globe. This engagement will complement the internationalization of our on-campus curriculum, our students and our faculty. MSU will embark upon a proactive, strategic approach to expanding this engagement, accelerating the expansion of our already considerable international presence. This initiative will be grounded in the thematic and world area expertise of MSU faculty and their commitment to collaboration and capacity building with colleagues abroad. Over the course of the next three years, in concert with host-country partner institutions, MSU will “roll out” three to four new programs of research, teaching and outreach in fields where we can make a difference (such as education, food safety, and ecosystems services) in three to four key countries (such as China, India and Brazil). Over the following five years, MSU and its partner institutions will roll out another four or five new programs of research, teaching and outreach in three or four more countries of strategic importance. By December 2012, MSU will be nationally and internationally recognized as *the* U.S. university partner in at least a half dozen world signature programs in countries of strategic importance to Michigan, the United States and the world.

MSU will better serve the students and citizens of Michigan if it embraces this strategic approach to international engagement. In the knowledge- and information- based economy of the 21st Century, economic development in Michigan will increasingly require better articulation with the world. MSU can facilitate these connections through academic programming, targeted research, and outreach. MSU's international involvement will help it maintain its top flight reputation and its market share in international higher education. In an era of declining state resources for higher education, this strategic approach will enable MSU to tap new external sources of funding to build research, teaching, and outreach programming and to do so in a manner consistent with MSU's land-grant commitment to access and engagement. Expanded, strategic international engagement will enable MSU and its clientele to: better understand the dynamics of and opportunities attendant to international economic competition; improve our educational and business practices based on lessons from overseas; and market our educational and economic services to a broader audience.¹

¹ MSU experience, and that of other leading U.S. universities, suggests that MSU will not generate significant surplus revenues from research and degree programs offered internationally; some positive returns may be generated by consulting activities. The initiative described here is intended to maintain and enhance MSU's international reputation for excellence, to

MSU also will better serve the students and higher education institutions of other countries if it embraces this strategic approach to international engagement. MSU's longstanding commitment to international capacity building will be enhanced through these strategic partnerships with host-country institutions to advance collaborative research, teaching, and outreach programming.

The MSU Brazil initiative, and parallel initiatives in other countries or world regions, is informed first and foremost by the expertise and interests of MSU faculty. MSU's fundamental missions of research, teaching, and engagement are similarly central to this initiative. This initiative also is informed by economic imperatives. In this resource-constrained environment, MSU must be strategic in its investments in international programming. Of necessity, it must prioritize programming in certain countries or world regions and on certain themes, at the expense of other meritorious, but less compelling, opportunities. This paper outlines a series of criteria by which such prioritizing will be conducted, with a necessary emphasis on "return" – in scholarly and societal impact, students reached, and external resources mobilized – on investment.

BACKGROUND

For more than fifty years, Michigan State University has been identified with international engagement across the missions of research, teaching, and outreach. This international identity is one of a half dozen signature elements of MSU's reputation. It represents a significant comparative advantage in the global higher education market. The increasing pace of globalization and international interdependence make it imperative that MSU maintain and strengthen its international programming in the 21st Century. Increasingly, this will involve extending select MSU course and degree offerings to strategic countries, in the form of online and face-to-face in-country instruction.

Expanding into the global marketplace and developing joint degrees with select overseas universities is consistent with the mission, vision and values of Michigan State University. Furthermore, globalization, brand enhancement and the expansion of Michigan State University's reach through technology mediated initiatives is a key strategic initiative of President Lou Anna K. Simon. In the dynamic global economic and political situation, MSU is well advised not to launch a campaign of expensive investment in brick and mortar infrastructure at this time. Instead, MSU should expand its presence in the global education market through partnerships and alliances with select overseas universities, to offer classroom, online, and hybrid courses and innovative degree programs.

In the 20th Century, MSU built its international reputation in part through its involvement in the creation of new universities and colleges around the globe, including bricks and mortar construction. In the 21st Century, a new model is needed and is made possible by information technology, the growing higher education infrastructure in developing countries, and the increasing number of faculty with advanced degrees at partner institutions abroad. MSU's international engagement in the 21st Century will be based on equal, transparent and reciprocal partnerships with host-country institutions. MSU is less likely to be involved in

further the internationalization of MSU on-campus programming, and to maintain market share in international higher education.

physical construction of branch MSU campuses and more likely to be engaged in blending virtual campuses with facilities on the campuses of partner institutions abroad, both public and private.

MSU Brazil: Developing a Strategic Agenda

Brazil is central to MSU's plans for international engagement. We propose to develop in Brazil a new strategic approach to international engagement and academic partnership, based on the thematic and country expertise of MSU faculty, existing MSU partnerships and programs, and emerging opportunities. As MSU develops and rolls out its portfolio of world signature programs in Brazil, we will be developing and rolling out similar programs in China, India, and two or three other strategic countries and/or regions in the coming years and researching the needs and opportunities for additional programs in another four or five countries and/or regions in the succeeding five years. A key deliverable by the end of the first three years will be to launch programming for capacity building and problem solving in a strategic thematic area through products that will drive funding for consulting, services, training, research, and degree programs. After the two to three year development and roll out phase, MSU will substantially scale up each program of research, teaching, and outreach. MSU and its international partners aim to be recognized as *the* leaders in a particular thematic area, marketing multiple lines of research, degree, and consulting products.

Why Brazil? Brazil has been and will be central to MSU's future plans for international engagement. Many MSU faculty members worked to establish and improve programs of higher learning in Brazil during the 1960s and 1970s, and there remains a highly positive image of MSU among Brazilian academicians, administrators, students, and MSU alumni resident in Brazil. Currently, our faculty includes one of the largest concentrations of expertise on Brazil among U.S. and European universities with considerable existing programming in the form of faculty research collaborations and to a lesser extent study abroad programs and internships. MSU's expertise on Brazil is a significant edge because of all the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China), Brazil is the most underserved in U.S. academia. Only Vanderbilt University has a Brazilian Studies Center and Brown University boasts a Luso-(Portuguese) Brazilian Studies Center, but neither of these programs has the breadth and depth of our faculty, especially in fields outside the humanities and social sciences.

Some brief facts outline Brazil's global significance. In 2004, Brazil's GDP of 1.5 trillion dollars made it the ninth largest economy in the world, and currently, both its 187 million inhabitants and 8,514,877 square kilometers of territory rank fifth in the world. Brazil's per capita income \$8,400 ranks higher than China at \$6,800 and India at \$3,300. Brazil's federal and state university systems include some of the best in the region and the world, and they are complemented by a growing number of high quality private universities. Brazil has a stable and open democratic government that has recently made important strides to address historic inequities of income, race, ethnicity, and gender. Despite its relative prosperity and new government efforts, wealth distribution in Brazil remains among the most unequal in the world (United Nations

data). So, even though many citizens of this South American giant have accrued great wealth and developed top research institutions, too many of its citizens continue to face problems related to MSU's traditional international engagement in research questions and outreach oriented toward sustainable development, public health, and poverty eradication. For these and many other reasons, we submit that Brazil offers unique opportunities to advance MSU's international missions and to develop a singular constellation of programs that will make us stand out from our peer institutions.

ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH

1. MSU must move from its current "laissez faire" approach to research collaborations to a strategic approach to partnerships for research, degree programs, and engagement. MSU's focus in Brazil must be on courses and degree programs where MSU has recognized strengths and comparative advantages as well as capacity and willingness to expand international programming (e.g., Environment, Technology, and People--land use, urbanization, and agriculture; Political Economy, Commerce, and Global Relations; Cultural Hybridizations: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Ethnicity, Race, Class, Gender, Age, and Nation in Brazil; Bio-economy and Development -- renewable resources, bio-engineering, and agriculture; and Health and Educational Disparities) .
 - a. MSU should lead with top nationally (U.S.) ranked degree programs.
 - b. In other fields MSU should first build a reputation based on research or consulting collaborations before moving to degree programs.

2. MSU should adopt a strategic analog to the "Star Alliance,"² partnering with select universities and institutions in Brazil.
 - a. Wherever possible, MSU should focus on "full service" partners, without ruling out single-program affiliations where a full service option does not exist.
 - b. MSU should explore possible three-way partnerships involving MSU, a Brazilian university, and a university in another country or a Brazilian or U.S. foundation or corporation.
 - c. MSU must identify partners which are capable of advancing MSU priorities for the next 10- 20 years.
 - d. MSU must identify partners which are geographically dispersed in Brazil.
 - e. MSU's "Star Alliance" must be flexible enough for individual units to join or withdraw and seek individual partnerships so long as they do not conflict with the alliance partnerships.
 - f. All MSU degree programs must be under MSU control.

² Star Alliance is the trade name of a global alliance of airlines. See: http://www.star-alliance.com/star_alliance/star/frame/main_10.html

3. MSU Brazil should plan to accomplish its research, teaching, and engagement missions in the aggregate.
 - a. MSU missions of research, teaching and engagement might be pursued with different alliance partners and/or under different models.
 - b. Not all alliance partnerships/models need address all three missions.
4. MSU should establish an MSU Brazil Liaison Office to provide leadership and coordination, but operate multiple subsidiaries on separate campuses or in separate locations.
 - a. At some locations, MSU Brazil will offer multiple programs (a “mini campus”); in other locations, MSU Brazil will operate a single subsidiary program.
 - b. For the near and medium term, MSU should limit its investment in new bricks and mortar. Where physical structures are needed, MSU should consider investing in or leasing real estate or portions of buildings constructed by/for others.
 - c. MSU Brazil should be legally empowered to contract with alliance partners for specific programs, on an “expenses plus” basis in which the partner is compensated for actual costs of recruiting students, instructional costs incurred by the partner, plus a reasonable return to the partner.
5. In the event major start-up capital is required for one or more of the MSU Brazil initiatives, possible sources for such investment capital include a loan from the MSU Foundation and investment by Brazilian partner institutions, corporations or foundations.
 - a. In all cases, such investment decisions will hinge on the development of sound and compelling business plans.
 - b. Any net proceeds would be shared between MSU (which assumes the risk of loan repayment) and MSU Brazil.
6. MSU should maintain the integrity of its tuition structure for MSU Brazil degree programs.
 - a. Students in MSU Brazil programs should be billed per the existing MSU tuition structure. That said, MSU must make a strategic decision—based on cost and revenue as well as affordability and access considerations—as to whether or not international students enrolled in MSU courses and degree programs in Brazil should be billed at the prevailing in-state or out-of-state tuition rate.
 - b. Where appropriate, MSU should provide scholarships back to select or all students (representing, in effect, an MSU Brazil partnership discount).
7. MSU should explore whether or not MSU Brazil can effectively extend programs to Spanish America and Lusophone regions as well as nations in Europe, Africa, and Asia to extend the impact of its investments in innovative degree programs.
 - a. Such an exploration is consistent with Brazil's central role in the integration of South American markets via Mercosur (Mercosul—which

- includes economic free trade partnerships of varying magnitudes between Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, and Venezuela).
- b. Brazil's strengthening relations with Lusophone nations and China also draw attention to the need to explore other connections in a changing global environment. Triangulation and synergies between degree programs being developed in conjunction with MSU China, MSU India, MSU Brazil, and future partnerships should be considered as new global configurations favor taking a broader global perspective. The 2nd Ministerial Conference of the Forum on Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries held in Macau in September 2006 brought together ministerial-level officials and businesspeople from China, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, East Timor and Brazil. The meeting resulted in the signing of an action plan for extending economic cooperation in a wide range of areas between China and these countries.
8. To extend course and degree offerings in Brazil, MSU must utilize alternative faculty and instruction models.
 - a. MSU should explore the feasibility of "hybrid" or "sandwich" approaches to degree programs to address cost considerations. In such models, students begin their course work at a Brazilian partner institution, move to the MSU East Lansing campus for a semester or year of study and/or experiential learning, and then return to Brazil to complete their senior research project, Master's degree thesis or Ph.D. dissertation.
 - b. To complement in-country and online course offerings, select MSU East Lansing faculty will travel to Brazil to offer short (two- to three-week), intensive semester-equivalent courses.
 - c. To supplement MSU East Lansing faculty, MSU Brazil will need to hire MSU-equivalent adjunct faculty or post-doctoral fellows to serve as instructors for some course offerings in Brazil.
 - d. MSU Global must support the development of appropriate online MSU courses to supplement course offerings by Brazilian partner institutions, MSU, and MSU adjunct faculty.
 9. MSU must refine the process of course content and credit evaluation to facilitate transfer credits from Brazilian partner universities.
 10. MSU must expand its offerings and programs in Portuguese language instruction to support MSU Brazil programs. A focus of *Global Encounter: Brazil* will include a discussion of steps which need to be taken in the short term to do this.
 11. To build capacity and long-term partnerships, MSU should offer (or require) continuing certification of MSU adjunct faculty and post-doctoral fellows.
 - a. MSU should consider requiring MSU-funded MSU Ph.D. students from

- Brazil to stay on campus for one additional year as post-doctoral fellows. Such students can then return to Brazil for appointment at a Brazilian university or elect to be hired for a five year term with MSU Brazil.
- b. Other Ph.D. students employed as MSU adjunct faculty by MSU Brazil should be required to complete a one-year post-doctoral fellowship and participate in periodic (every two years) re-certification by MSU or be actively engaged with MSU faculty in research related to their teaching assignment.
12. To facilitate expansion of MSU's course and degree offerings overseas, MSU must work to improve on-campus institutional structures and practices.
 - a. Streamline transfer credit and course evaluation and approval processes for course offerings at partner institutions
 - b. Adopt strategic and responsive approach to international student recruitment

ACTION AGENDA

1. NEAR TERM (years one to three)
 - a. Form a university-level steering committee with representatives from key academic colleges, appointed by the President or Provost; establish an on-campus MSU Brazil project office.
 - b. Establish an external advisory board for MSU Brazil including representatives from business, government, and donor communities.
 - c. Conduct in-country feasibility studies, identify appropriate partner institutions, and identify potential sources of funding for a limited number of academic programs, strategic consulting and research activities for which MSU has a comparative advantage.
 - d. Negotiate and sign partnership agreements and arrange financing.
 - e. Develop the business plan to roll out in year two a program for capacity building and problem solving in a strategic theme area through products that will drive funding for consulting, services, training, research and degree programs.
 - f. Establish MSU Brazil Liaison Office with local hire staff (preferably a Brazilian MSU alumni for Director), provide logistical support for ongoing and developing MSU research, teaching, and outreach activities; begin strategic promotion of MSU brand through Brazilian media, joint conferences, and international student recruitment.
 - g. Begin theme area -specific marketing and recruitment.
 - h. Enroll students in one or more new strategic MSU Brazil thematic-area degree programs; expand market share for associated consulting, services, training, and research products.
 - i. Develop the business plan to roll out in year three a program for capacity building and problem solving in a strategic theme area through products

that will drive funding for consulting, services, training, research and degree programs.

- j. Begin theme area-specific marketing and recruitment.
 - k. Enroll students in one or more additional new strategic MSU Brazil thematic-area degree programs; expand market share for associated consulting, services, training, and research products.
2. MEDIUM TERM (years four to eight)
- a. Roll out four or five additional academic programs for which MSU has a comparative advantage based on consulting and/or research partnerships in Brazil.
 - b. Continue strategic investment in a limited number of consulting and/or research activities with a view to building longer term course and degree offerings.
 - c. Recruit and hire in-country MSU-caliber faculty to staff MSU course and degree program offerings

This material was generated from Global Encounter-Brazil, <<http://www.isp.msu.edu/globalencounter/brazil>>, held at Michigan State University on November 7, 2006. This interactive and participatory event was designed to obtain input and to elaborate in a country-specific forum on relevant themes, opportunities, issues, and opportunities affecting MSU's current and future engagement in Brazil (and to some degree Lusophone countries).