

# **Global Encounter-Brazil: Moving Toward Action**

## **Cultural Hybridizations**

### **Individual Written Responses to Questions Related to the Topic**

Procedure used to generate this document:

This document represents the summary of responses individuals wrote to questions related to their self-selected area of interest/expertise within six topic areas (Bio-economy and Development; Cultural Hybridizations; Environment, Technology, and People; Global Relations; Health, Education, and Social Disparities; Institutional Planning and Support and Political Economy, Commerce). All responses received are included and are typed verbatim with some explanation of acronyms. There is no significance in the ordering of the topics or comments as presented in this report.

#### **A. What *factors* can help explain the gap between where we are today and where we want to be on the items discussed earlier within this theme area?**

1.
  - Lack of knowledge/familiarization with the opportunities available
  - Lack of programs/classes/faculty and needed support!
  - Lack of strong relations formed between MSU and Brazil
2.
  - Personalities and lack of communication between departments and administration
3.
  - Lack of knowledge about relevant issues
  - What is the best way to make the theme area relevant to people of many backgrounds?
  - Denial of need for change in thinking and in actions
4. **\*\*No Response\*\***
5. Re: Undergraduates
  - Only an exchange program would work
  - With a few exceptions undergraduate degrees (in good universities) in Brazil are much better than undergraduate degrees at MSU.
  - Unless MSU has something really special it will not attract good undergraduates from BrazilRe: Graduates
  - Little recruitment money to attract graduate students

6.
  - Funding
  - International Politics
  - Publicity about Brazil
  - Lack of support for languages-Portuguese
  - Expanding (the number of) students from Brazil studying at MSU
  - Personalities
  
7. ●I am not sure but it seems that the previous professor of Portuguese had a difficult relationship with the administration. I'm not blaming him exclusively but I think that the Portuguese program could have developed more in the last 20 years.
  
8.
  - Funding
  - (Lack of) consistency with Portuguese (in terms of faculty availability and offerings)
  - PR- more advertising of Brazil on campus
    - finding ways to reach out to the students
  - Continual attempts with initial funding to get things started with outreach to Brazilian institutions
  
9.
  - Incentives for people that want to study Portuguese (increase the "demand")
  - Talk about "Brazil Initiative" (Help to Notice)
  - Help in the cooperation with the Department of Political Science at Michigan State and the Dept. of Political Science and International Relations Institute at the University of San Paulo where I used to work
  
10.
  - Lack of coordination among researchers, students, alumni, and other stake holders
  - Investments to seed research and curricular linkages
  - Lack of marketing MSU's best programs
  - Lack of marketing our expertise on Brazil to our students, faculty, and other constituents
  - MSU academic long term collaborations=>building where commitment exists

**B. What *barriers/challenges* exist for MSU in acting on the opportunities in this theme area?**

1.
  - FUNDING
  - BUREAUCRACY (administration approval)
  - Expensive nature of exchange/travel programs
  - Gaining campus-wide interest/support

2. ●Knowledge about the history of the people or areas studied
3. ●Difficult to focus on one agenda as so many demands on time and energy  
●Many do not believe our agenda is necessary.  
●Thus must continually spend much time on educating the basics!
4. ●Language barriers- emphasis on Spanish rather than Portuguese language  
●Lack of knowledge of Brazil in undergraduate and graduate studies  
●Lack of understanding of Portuguese colonialism as well
5. ●Figuring out how to attract Brazilian students  
●Figuring out how to foster long-term collaborations that are for the common good and not just outsourcing
6. ●Funding  
●Student interest/language  
●Overcoming U.S. images abroad/domestic  
●Adequate staffing  
●Institutional commitment
7. ●The challenge of developing a solid Portuguese program is considerable. Enrollment is good in the 1<sup>st</sup> year, but it is hard to hold students in the higher levels of the program. This is not a problem affecting MSU exclusively.
8. ●Money
9. ●Language (Portuguese for American students)  
●Knowledge about "Brazil Initiative" (Spread information, activities, etc.)  
●Money (tuition, professors, Portuguese)
10. ●Language capabilities on both sides of the equator  
●Funds to facilitate student and faculty exchanges  
●Facilitating writing external grants to fund this initiative  
●Tuition => Need to think creatively.  
●Goals are too dispersed.

**C. What *advice* do you have for MSU concerning addressing the challenges and barriers to success as we move forward on the Brazil initiative (related to this theme area, as well as in general)?**

1. ●PROMOTION, PROMOTION, PROMOTION of courses, activities, CLACS center, initiatives, study abroad

- Be more visible (visibility=>numbers=>support).
2. ●Provide enough background information and make it available online in order that people can access it from home or wherever they are.  
●Speculate what the benefits will be and clearly state them.
3. ●Keep those we know are committed involved, informed and in the public eye.
4. ●Further development of the Portuguese language department and minor areas for undergraduate and graduate students  
●Areas could be advertised as well.  
●Brazil and African studies strength could be linked.
5. ●Do not use the same method as in China and India.  
●Brazil is a western society and MSU needs to offer more than a western experience.  
●Partnerships have to be fair or you will partner with people who are not interested in long term collaborations.
6. ●A way will open up with funding.  
●Make business links- MSU & Corporations.  
●Bio-agriculture and Brazil- Linkages  
●Coffee/MSU/Agriculture links
7. ●MSU Administration needs to invest in the Portuguese program even when enrollments are weak. We need to give it a chance to pick up.  
●No language program is built overnight. We could offer more courses at the entrance level to see if that would result in better enrollments in the 300 and 400 levels.
8. ●Work from strengths- areas where we have faculty interested in Brazil.  
●Building programs can really only work if we have people who see it as tied to their research agenda.
9. \*\*No Response\*\*
10. ●Flexibility in developing programs for dual degrees  
●Research needs and access demand and willingness to pay for quality MSU programs  
●Scholarships to fund disadvantaged students moving in either direction

**D. Do you want to be contacted for meetings/work on this theme and Brazil in the future (and for other themes or in other Lusophone countries)?**

1. ●In terms of promoting programs at MSU, I would be willing to talk to undergraduate classes about taking Portuguese classes (for Brazilian studies or related courses) ...or anything else really.
2. ●Mexico, general Latin America
3. ●Brazil and West Africa – both have relevance to all and can move several agendas forward.
4. \*\*No Response\*\*
5. ●Brazil and African countries where language is Portuguese or a Portuguese Creole
  - Machine translation
  - Linguistics
  - Education
6. ●Study abroad for underrepresented students
  - Language/cultural activity
7. ●Brazil, culture, study abroad, and partnerships
8. ●Brazil and anything
  - Women's studies/gender studies
9. All countries:
  - Women
  - Humanities
  - Culture
10. ●Brazil - all themes

**E. Additional comments:**

1. ●What a great day!
2. \*\*No Response\*\*

3. \*\*No Response\*\*
4. \*\*No Response\*\*
5. \*\*No Response\*\*
6. \*\*No Response\*\*
7. ●I am willing to talk to anyone who might have suggestions or the means to help Portuguese here.
8. \*\*No Response\*\*
9. \*\*No Response\*\*
10. \*\*No Response\*\*

**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).