

RIT Global Engagement Value Statement

The Global Education Task Force believes that, in line with RIT's values of Respect, Diversity and Pluralism, it is our responsibility as educators to foster inclusiveness by incorporating diverse perspectives as we plan, conduct, and/or evaluate the work of individuals, departments, colleges and divisions within RIT. We believe that such inclusiveness should apply to all educational programs led by faculty on and outside the Henrietta campus. We strongly believe that fundamental to inclusiveness is an understanding of cultural, social, economic and political differences, and this understanding should be pursued through a historical lens and in the regional and global context. While not compromising RIT values, we urge everyone to be respectful of other cultures and be cautious of imposing our own values on other regions and cultures. We also recommend that all members of the RIT community familiarize themselves with the diverse habits, customs and laws of different cultures they may engage with so as to be able to relate to such cultures in a meaningful way and avoid potential conflicts arising from cultural differences that may be present. Finally, we believe that the proper demonstration of our strong belief in our value system is to convey it to our global counterparts through continuous communication, interaction and engagement, understanding the root causes of our differences and striving to achieve common goals.

Five Guiding Principles (for international education)

1. **Comprehensiveness:** RIT is committed to pursuing comprehensive internationalization. This approach to internationalization is integrated and strategic in nature and involves clearly defined curricular and co-curricular international learning outcomes. Comprehensive internationalization reflects a commitment to developing policies, governance structures, partnerships, and programs that foster global and cultural knowledge and enable multi-lateral global engagement of students, faculty, staff and administration. Shared governance and transparency are implicit in the pursuit of comprehensive internationalization and should be reflected in the formal governance structures and procedures associated with RIT's internationalization efforts. Given the comprehensive commitment we are making, and the centrality of international education in the mission of the university, the associated priorities and goals should be specifically reflected in RIT's strategic plan and in the key results areas (KRA's).
2. **Faculty leadership:** RIT is committed to a model of internationalization achieved through faculty leadership and engagement. Faculty must be empowered to lead RIT's internationalization effort and be given the resources necessary to support international course and program development. Working in collaboration with the administration, the faculty has the responsibility and authority to develop courses and curricula that address our global and international learning outcomes. The faculty is also responsible to act in the best interest of the university and to recognize the unique context in which international education and research often occurs-- a context requiring specialized skills and knowledge of the faculty and support staff. Fostering and developing this body of knowledge across the faculty requires a commitment to actively supporting and encouraging faculty participation in international education and research. Thus, faculty development plans, and promotion and tenure evaluations, should explicitly recognize the

value of faculty contributions to international teaching, research, and program development.

3. **Academic excellence:** RIT is committed to attaining high standards of ethical academic performance in international education. These standards are rooted in the broad range of scholarship and research that informs and advances international education and global engagement. Academic excellence is evidence based and demonstrated through best practices in pedagogy, scholarship, outcomes assessment, and program administration. At RIT, academic excellence implies an understanding of both the theoretical and applied dimensions of international education; and, will often include a strong career orientation. To meet RIT's mission and vision, academic excellence in international education requires experiences that may be beyond those traditionally associated with the university's career orientation. For example, an excellent international education requires an understanding of inclusiveness, diversity, multiculturalism and how these ideals enrich the academic and career goals of our students. Further, academic excellence requires state-of-the-art infrastructure, administrative support structures, and the development of talented and highly motivated faculty and staff.
4. **Engagement:** RIT is committed to a model of international education that requires and supports active engagement with people from different cultures, races, and ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Through engagement, students develop intercultural intelligence and knowledge and create new friendships with colleagues from around the globe. Through engagement, students become aware of how their actions can impact the lives of others and it grounds their ethical and critical thinking in actual experiences of global interconnectedness. In the 21st Century, most disciplines and careers are globally networked and most problems have inherently global dimensions that can only be understood through active participation and observation enabled through physical presence. In many disciplines, international engagement is the means to access unique resources that are not available at the RIT campus or in the United States. For example, global engagement is a practical necessity for many in the arts and sciences who study unique natural phenomena; who engage with specialized international communities of scholars; or who must access specialized international research facilities. RIT's commitment to engagement recognizes and values the reciprocal nature of international education and cultural exchange; implying that RIT has a responsibility to foster a spirit of reciprocity in all of its international programs and agreements. Our commitment to engagement is consistent with our goals for inclusion which has been described as, "the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity – in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect – in ways that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and emphatic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions" (downloaded 4/12/2013 from <http://www.rit.edu/diversity/inclusive-excellence-framework>).
5. **Student Centered Inclusiveness:** RIT is committed to developing international learning experiences and academic programs that are student centered, inclusive, and accessible to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion or socioeconomic status.

This principle reaffirms RIT's commitment, as expressed in the 2005-2015 strategic plan to: "engage all members of the campus community in the shared responsibility for an enriching and inclusive experience for all...; [to] have an enriched academic curriculum with courses and programs addressing a broad understanding of global issues and featuring enhanced opportunities for acquiring language skills...; [and to fostering] a learning, living and working campus community environment that supports and encourages cross-cultural understanding and global awareness." A commitment to student centered inclusiveness is a commitment to developing educational opportunities corresponding to the demographic and cultural realities of RIT students. Our goals for international education must be informed by the values, challenges, barriers, and aspirations of RIT students in order for the faculty to support and influence their development as global citizens.