



Report of the 2013 Title VI NRC Conference: “Demonstrating the Impact of National Resource Centers”

The Ohio State University, March 2013

<http://easc.osu.edu/events/2013-nrc-conference>

Four Title VI centers at The Ohio State University collectively proposed a national conference in their 2010-2014 grant proposals to address the need for information sharing and collaboration to promote effective evaluation practices. The conference, “Demonstrating the Impact of National Resource Centers (NRCs),” was held at The Ohio State University on February 27-28, 2013. The conference was the first collective effort among NRCs to identify and promote effective evaluation practices. The main goals of the conference were twofold: a) to bring together Title VI NRCs, administrators and researchers to share promising practices and strategies in evaluation and assessment of foreign language and area studies programs; and b) to facilitate national discourse on defining and measuring NRC outcomes and thus help shape future directions for area studies.

Over 150 faculty directors, assistant directors, and administrators from 46 institutions of higher education, representing 86 (out of 125) National Resource Centers were present at the conference. More than 50 NRC administrators and researchers presented on various evaluation initiatives for NRC core programs including Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (FLAS), K-16 outreach, less-commonly-taught languages, and undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Based on these presentations and subsequent group discussions, the program committee chairs summarize the impact of the NRCs and make recommendations below.

SECURING AMERICA’S FUTURE: THE EFFECTS OF NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

The Infrastructure Effect

Title VI NRC/FLAS funding, universities, libraries and area studies centers together have co-created an unrivalled technical training system that significantly contributes to enhancing national security and U.S. global competitiveness.

- **CASE 1:** 54% of the University of Michigan’s NRC & FLAS graduates work in higher education, and nearly 10% in government/military. 44% of Indiana NRC alumni survey respondents use area studies skills daily at work.
- **CASE 2:** Less-commonly-taught language (LCTL) library holdings are supported by NRCs and nearly 15% of LCTL library borrowing in the US goes to state/municipal governments.

The Seeding Effect

Title VI NRC/FLAS seed funding has been amplified through programs and faculty and staff hiring sustained by universities to prepare the next generation of experts with applied and technical knowledge of world languages and regions.

- **CASE 3:** The Ohio State University Graduate School matches FLAS funding with an additional 50% in fellowship tuition support.

The Multiplier Effect

Title VI NRC/FLAS funding trains linguistically proficient, area-savvy MA and PhD graduates who educate thousands of students, other faculty, teachers, policy makers, and the general public over the course of their long careers (30-40 years).

- **CASE 4:** Cornell University produced 250 PhDs in Southeast Asian Studies between 1951-1988, the majority of whom remain in institutions of higher education as faculty and/or area studies experts.

The Global Diversity Effect

Title VI funding facilitates educational diplomacy by educating young generations, teachers, and the general public about world languages, cultures and regions and enables them to interact more meaningfully with local heritage communities and international communities; these interactions in turn become catalysts for global learning for all students in a classroom.

The Evaluation Effect

Title VI funding can spur universities to evaluate the benefits of international education for improved access, preparation, and degree completion of all student populations.

- **CASE 5:** The GLOSSARI study conducted by the University of Georgia System showed that education abroad improved college completion rates for all students and hence makes a strong case for education abroad.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TITLE VI NRC/FLAS COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS

The Ohio State University

We propose that The Ohio State University serve as an information hub for the NRC community and:

- Continue to organize events related to NRC performance measures and evaluation.
- Develop a resource library that contains bibliographies and abstracts of research related to NRC/FLAS.
- Create a collection of evaluation instruments used by NRCs for measuring outcomes.

National Resource Centers

We recommend that NRCs:

- Expand on current evaluation efforts in order to benefit NRC planning and delivery, university initiatives, and state-wide programs through systematic, longitudinal data collection, analysis, and dissemination of results.
- Set specific, measurable goals for programs and incorporate evaluation results to improve and validate programs and demonstrate impact.
- Collaborate on measuring outcomes of common programs such as FLAS, degree programs, and placement to demonstrate collective impact to stakeholders.
- Conduct “fit” test with the strategic priorities and outcomes of their institutions to gauge how NRCs map into the effect of college learning on students, and work with institutional researchers, faculty and administration to tap into the potential impact of NRCs on student learning outcomes.
- Communicate frequently with their Government Relations and Congressional representatives regarding their program goals and outcomes.

Universities

We recommend that universities:

- Incorporate NRC/FLAS assessment into institution’s overall assessment plan to show cross-effects of international education on broader set of institutional learning outcomes.
- Invest in resources to build assessment capacity for NRCs.
- Align students/alumni tracking across multiple interest groups and centralize data collection and analysis on international programs.

US Department of Education/International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE)

We recommend that USDE/IFLE:

- Collaborate with NRCs (through conferences/workshops) to develop performance measures that are broad enough to accommodate the discretionary (non-contract) nature of the NRC program.
- Organize training and other events to promote high impact practices and build grantee capacity in evaluation.
- Leverage USDE resources to incentivize research on NRC/FLAS (IRS programs).
- Tap into national resources on educational statistics (at NCES) and prioritize assessment of international education as an integral part of the broader assessment of the nation’s higher education system.

US Congress

We urge Congress to:

- Continue FLAS funding to secure the training of the next generation of higher education and government experts (over 60% of FLAS recipients work in these two sectors).
- Not only restore NRC funds to FY2010-11 levels, but to appropriate more NRC funds in order to scale up “access, preparation, and achievement” for global competitiveness for “all U.S. students” (currently, 95% of OSU East Asia NRC budget goes toward undergraduate and graduate student support; that still only translates into \$2.09 annually per OSU student; 5% of OSU East Asia NRC budget goes toward K-12 outreach; that only translates into \$0.01 annually per Ohio K-12 student).