

Middle States Commission on Higher Education Review Team Evaluation Report

Review of Columbia University's Special Topics Report on

"The Globalization of a Columbia Education"

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Preliminary Comments

Columbia University is one of the world's great institutions of higher education. Founded in 1754, it currently comprises 16 schools and colleges, employs about 5,000 faculty members, and enrolls nearly 30,000 students. The University operates highly regarded programs across a wide variety of fields and disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Compliance with Accreditation Standards

With the intention of allowing the March Evaluation Team visit to focus entirely on the selected topic of globalization, Columbia fully addressed all 14 standards during the October document review conducted by the generalist evaluators. The report of the generalist evaluators found Columbia in compliance with all of the standards. That report has been filed with the Commission, and the site review team does not have any additional recommendations or comments for the Commission.

Third-Party Comment

A third-party comment was forwarded to the review team by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Columbia University filed a response. The review team concluded that the comment provided no basis for determining that the institution failed to meet any of the accreditation standards.

Selected Topics Report on Globalization

Working through faculty and staff committees, Columbia prepared a thorough self-study that provided illuminating analysis of its existing efforts at globalization along with thoughtful recommendations for the future. The review team examined the self-study in detail. The self-study included chapters on “The Mission and Organization of the University,” “Undergraduate Education,” “Graduate and Professional Education at Columbia,” “The Role of Columbia Global Centers,” and “Cross-Cutting Themes and Recommendations.”

The review team’s site visit began on Sunday, March 6, 2016, and concluded on Wednesday, March 9, 2016. During that period, team members met intensively with members of the Columbia community. These meetings included sessions with the committees that prepared Columbia’s self-study; deans and administrators connected to Columbia’s globalization efforts; undergraduate and graduate students; and faculty with international interests. A copy of the review team’s full schedule is attached to this memorandum.

The review team emerged from its visit deeply impressed by the quality of Columbia’s programs and by its strategy for globalizing the University. While the team identified some important questions that it hopes will assist Columbia in its planning, we have no doubt that Columbia’s globalization efforts are distinctive in character, coherently organized, and reflective of the high standards for which the university has long been known.

General Observations about Globalization at Columbia

Columbia’s self-study distinguishes “globalization” from “internationalization” (see, e.g., p. 32: “a global presence should not be seen simply as international taken to a new level”). As the report itself notes, however, “[a] central and persisting challenge has been to define the terms ‘global,’ ‘globalization,’ and ‘globality’” (p. 54). The self-study never stipulates a definition of these terms, offering slightly different formulae in various settings:

“The term global, then, names something new—interconnectedness that strengthens mutual and reinforcing dependencies but also, yielding the potential for addressing societal fissures and inequalities with a more global mindset.” (p. 32)

“Global education is an effort to understand ways in which local events or decisions can result in regional or worldwide consequences, a connect-the-dot process born of comparative thought and synthesis made possible by the wide availability of information.” (p. 55)

“[The global] is not merely ‘study abroad’ in its multiple incarnations. It is, rather, a multi-center knowledge space that needs points of gravity across the globe whether the student or researcher travels there, or inserts those other points of gravity into Columbia-based knowledge creation.” (p. 58)

“Global education is characterized by the expanded potential for acquiring a broad perspective with nuance and depth of insight that derives from working collaboratively with individuals from other disciplines or professions, of different ages, cultures, religions, or beliefs and values.” (p. 59)

“[Columbia’s Global Centers] aim for a global rather than international experience for both students and faculty” because they “function as a network,” “often support work in one or several regions,” and “are active on multiple levels, building ties to academia, governments, NGOs, and beyond” to “help address problems throughout the world.” (p. 72)

These definitions bear some common features, but it is not clear that they are identical. At times, they become very abstract in a way that arguably departs from ordinary understandings of what is usefully called “global.” At one point, for example, the self-study asserts that the “knowledge spaces relevant to globalizing education for all disciplines” include the “ability to deal with contradictions” (some readers interpreted the phrase “knowledge spaces” as referring to conceptual frameworks, whereas others thought that it signified physical locations).

There was occasional slippage between “global” and “international” in the self-study (for example: “The Faculty Subcommittee on *globalizing* the undergraduate education conducted a more detailed evaluation of how the University *can strengthen the international dimensions* of the education it offers to its bachelor’s degree students” (emphasis added) (p. 41)). Moreover, most of the recommendations ultimately presented in Chapter 6 (“Cross-Cutting Themes and Recommendations”) focused on activities and efforts that were conventionally “international” in character (that is, related to foreign travel, teaching, and research) rather than “global” in the broader and somewhat more abstract way reflected in the quotations above.

As several Columbia faculty pointed out to us during our site visit, some amount of definitional imprecision is almost certainly inevitable and perhaps even desirable in a university setting, where the concept of what counts as “global” (like what counts as, for example, “the liberal arts”) is itself a legitimate question for intellectual contestation. Ambiguity nevertheless presents challenges. One of them pertains to communication. Precisely because universities nurture free thought and disagreement, it is always difficult to mobilize academic institutions around a vision. That is especially so at vast, decentralized institutions such as Columbia University. Clear messaging is essential, and if a key term—“globalization”—is vague or poorly understood, communications challenges increase. At times, we heard administrators and others suggest that their “globalization” initiatives should have a pervasive and substantial effect throughout the university; if so, clear communication will be essential.

The review team identified several questions that relate to the definition of “globalization” and that Columbia might wish to keep in mind as it refines its objectives and its metrics for success:

- *To what extent is Columbia’s vision of “globalization” intended to be distinctive to one particular university, and to what extent is it a description of imperatives facing all universities?* Columbia’s mission statement specifically

calls out the University's global and international aspirations, saying that Columbia "... seeks to attract a diverse and international faculty and student body, to support research and teaching on global issues, and to create academic relationships with many countries and regions." (Interestingly, the mission statement also emphasizes the local, mentioning the University's location in New York City). One might regard its globalization strategy as an effort to pursue a distinctive mission or to carve out a special role for the university, or as a response to forces that Columbia believes will reshape all universities in coming years. The self-study describes Columbia's "emerging collective definition of 'global'" as "unique" (p. 40), but elsewhere refers to a "global era" (p. 34) and describes the impact of globalization as though it were undeniable, irresistible, and pervasive.

- *Is "globalization" equally relevant to all fields and disciplines?* The self-study often seems to assume that "globalization" is relevant to all disciplines; for example, on p. 58 it specifically identifies "knowledge spaces relevant to globalizing education for all disciplines, from mathematics to natural sciences to social sciences to humanities to the health professions." Mathematics is a very international field, in which leading scholars collaborate across borders, but it is not clear that it is affected in any substantial way by, for example, "interconnectedness that strengthens mutual and reinforcing dependencies but also, yielding the potential for addressing societal fissures and inequalities with a more global mindset." This definition and others seem more relevant to social science fields and professional schools than to, for example, some of the natural sciences or humanities.
- *To what extent are disciplines and schools likely to embrace "globalization" as a result of their ordinary evolutionary processes, and to what extent is it a disruptive threat to them?* One might suppose that if "globalization" is indeed as important and pervasive as the self-study argues, then disciplines would evolve in response to it. On p. 58, the self-study says something along these lines: "many disciplines are already exploring the *de facto* global conditions without necessarily positioning them as 'global.'" Certainly most, if not all, disciplinary communities are becoming more "international." At other points, however, the self-study seems to hint that the changes may be unwelcome to academic disciplines and perhaps dependent on top-down reforms of some kind. For example, on page 53 it asserts that "our educational systems need to evolve to catch up with [global] realities" and on pp. 33-34 the self-study introduces, but eventually distances itself from, the idea that globalization might require changes as radical as the reforms that privileged academic research in the late 19th century.

The ambiguities in the definition of "globalization" affect how various divisions of the university react to Columbia's strategy. For example, as we have already noted, the self-study's definitions of globalization seem especially relevant to the university's professional schools, many of which already have extensive international activities. That fact generates some

skepticism about “globalization” in Columbia’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences. As the self-study notes on page 34, “engaging globally only from the perspective of ‘problem solving’ puts at risk the healthy balance and desired interaction between professional schools and the arts and sciences.” The university is clearly aware of this issue and rightly regards it as worth addressing: the arts and sciences have multiple reasons to welcome internationalization and globalization, if they are defined and implemented with appropriate regard for disciplinary standards.

The ambiguities in the university’s definition of “globalization” also affect implementation of the new “global core” requirement that Columbia has added to its undergraduate curriculum. Both faculty and students raised questions about the configuration of the requirement, and not all of the courses offered bearing the “global” label were “global” in the sense of “interconnectedness” emphasized in the self-study.

More generally, while we appreciate that ambiguity sometimes has strategic advantages, Columbia might benefit from clarifying its definition of “globalization.” The university could do that by adopting a pluralistic and explicitly expansive definition to provide a “big tent” for various views, or by developing a more precise and widely shared definition tailored to the institution’s distinctive characteristics and approach. Either approach would provide administrators and faculty members with clearer guidance as they make trade-offs about how to use resources and seek to evaluate the success of initiatives.

Having made these observations, we hasten to reiterate our enthusiasm for Columbia’s efforts at internationalization and globalization. Every university is struggling with how best to define its goals in these domains. While we expect that Columbia may benefit from addressing some or all of the issues that we have mentioned, there is no gainsaying the impressive progress the university has already achieved. We now turn to specific topics addressed in the report.

Mission and Organization of the University

As already mentioned, Columbia’s mission statement features its global aspirations prominently. The statement is four sentences long, and it devotes much of the final two sentences to the global and international:

“[Columbia] seeks to attract a diverse and international faculty and student body, to support research and teaching on global issues, and to create academic relationships with many countries and regions. It expects all areas of the university to advance knowledge and learning at the highest level and to convey the products of its efforts to the world.”

The university’s demographics are consistent with its goal of attracting an international faculty and student body. According to the self-study, Columbia’s International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) “serves more than 13,000 international students, interns, research scholars, faculty members, and accompanying family members from over 150 countries” (p. 30). “More than 25 percent of Columbia’s faculty and research staff were born outside the U.S., and one-quarter or more of University enrollments [more than 8,000 students] are international students” (p. 20).

An impressive website, <http://beta.global.columbia.edu/>, collects and disseminates information about the university's global initiatives. It organizes Columbia's global initiatives both by region and by subject matter. The website provides many links, including ones to websites for Columbia's Global Centers, its Committee on Global Thought, the World Leaders Forum, and an archive of university reports related to globalization.

From summer 2014 to spring 2015, a specially selected group—the University Forum on Global Columbia (UFGC)—was convened to facilitate discussion about Columbia's global strategy. The UFGC identified robust levels of international cooperation and international activity at Columbia. It regarded Columbia's international character as an institutional strength, but it also insisted that “global presence should not be seen simply as international taken to a new level” (p. 32). The UFGC is the source of one of the definitions of globalization quoted above:

“The term, global, then names something new—interconnectedness that strengthens mutual and reinforcing dependencies but also, yielding the potential for addressing societal fissures and inequalities with a more global mindset.”
(p. 32)

The UFGC enumerated implications of heightened engagement with “globality,” including: what it means to think globally; how best to create a structure that supports the new way of thinking globally; how best to ensure balance between problem solving and critical thinking; and how to establish and uphold robust protections to ensure fundamental ethical principles upon which the university is based, such as academic freedom.

The UFGC listed six strengths that it believed positioned Columbia well for the challenges of globalization: its international character; its location in New York City; disciplinary expertise in the faculty; commitment from the administration and trustees; a university-wide decision to focus on globalization; and a set of university-wide initiatives including the Global Centers and others mentioned above in connection with the Global Columbia website.

The UFGC also elicited from faculty, administrators, and students a list of barriers to globalization that Columbia should eliminate. Some of these were prosaic (such as better online infrastructure); many pertained in one way or another to facilitating interdisciplinary teaching and research about “global issues.” The review team regarded the UFGC's efforts as a useful way to address some of the definitional and communications challenges mentioned above, and it might provide a model or a foundation for other communications initiatives in the future.

Undergraduate Education at Columbia

The undergraduate programs at Columbia University are justly famous for their coherent curricular structures and their academic rigor. Columbia is especially proud of its traditions of general education for first- and second-year college students, comprising a series of required Core courses in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. As previously noted,

Columbia has recently added a two-course “global core” requirement to its menu of prescribed general education courses, consisting of a variety of options drawn from many departmental courses in the humanities and social sciences relating to Africa, Asia, the Americas, or the Middle East.

The specific theme of the decennial accreditation report, as it relates to undergraduate education, focuses on the issue of global education and international learning. The document mentions study-abroad programs, international research fellowships and mentorships, international internships, and special summer learning and research opportunities (some connected to one or more of the Global Centers) as possible routes to achieving greater international experiences for Columbia students, not only those majoring in the humanities and social sciences, but also in the natural sciences and in engineering. These themes are then reprised on pp. 83-84 of the general recommendations, which focus especially on the need to improve and strengthen study-abroad resources and other cross-cultural experiential opportunities.

For the most part, the document does not propose dramatic innovations, but it does seem to suggest that more might be done in creating a denser network of participation in study-abroad programs and other off-campus, cross-cultural experiential opportunities. Some mention is made of the role that the Global Centers might play, and the self-study cites examples of new fellowships and research programs available to college students in those venues, all of which sound attractive and intellectually justifiable. Right now, Columbia’s model for foreign programs seems somewhat hybrid, with some undergraduates studying in the university’s own programs, but a rather large number studying in over 150 programs run by other universities or providers, including at a diverse set of French universities in Paris. The university might consider if it would be operationally possible to create more international courses of study taught by its own faculty, either in their Global Centers, or in other facilities in Europe and Asia. Such programs would not only afford more certainty in academic quality control and a tighter integration of such work with the home curriculum in New York, but also encourage closer personal bonds between students and faculty in the shared excitement that (almost) always accompanies encounters of creative undergraduates with new cultural patterns and milieus.

The university has made some progress in this direction by offering sections of Core courses, Art Humanities and Music Humanities, as part of the program of study available to students who qualify to study at its center in Paris.

With its admirable Core and its foreign language requirement, Columbia is well positioned to develop creative new foreign-study and other cross-cultural learning and research programs that would provide such experiences for many more of its undergraduates, not merely as decorative enhancements but as central elements of Columbia’s tradition of general education.

We encountered a broad consensus that Columbia should do more to enable more undergraduates to have significant international experiences. However, our Columbia colleagues indicated that they faced significant hurdles in encouraging more student participation in summer research and summer academic programs as well as significant logistical and organizational barriers to expand the number of term-time academic programs abroad.

During the summer, many low-income students are beyond the coverage of need-based financial aid, and their families thus lack the financial resources to be able to pay for them to attend programs abroad. In contrast, during the academic year, Columbia faces serious faculty-resource constraints, in that each faculty member who might teach abroad is a faculty member lost to her or his department for on-campus teaching in New York during the fall or spring semesters.

We urge that the financing of summer study and research programs deserves another look, to see if some accommodations might be made to enable more low-income students to undertake an international opportunity during the summer. Some faculty members reported to us that Columbia imposes higher fees than do its peers in connection with international summer programs. Such fees can discourage financial aid students from studying abroad, and other universities have significantly increased rates of overseas study by lowering such fees or providing aid to students who cannot afford them. If Columbia wished instead to increase the number of students studying in the College's own programs during the academic year, the College would not only need to find ways to deploy more faculty abroad, but also to rethink the curricular framework of the liberal arts curriculum in order to license more courses that might legitimately be taught abroad, either at one of the university's Global Centers or in other appropriate venues.

Granted that these are serious and weighty issues, if the university wishes to increase substantially the numbers of students having a significant overseas educational or research experience, some significant interventions will have to be made to free up more faculty for cross-cultural instructional programs, to create more flexibility in the types of courses that may be offered by Columbia faculty abroad, and to address the issue of financial aid for students who wish to engage in international experiences during the summer.

Finally, we offer some thoughts about the global goal itself as it pertains to the intellectual and personal development of college students. "Global" is an attractive concept and an easily deployable adjective (global learning, global perspective, global content, global thinking, etc.), but it can remain either highly abstract or outright abstruse in the educational lives of individual students (and many faculty) if it is not undergirded with a significant personal investment in learning about and understanding another culture and another set of civilizational practices. At least from the perspective of college students, the first-order goal may not be so much to produce global citizens as to create cosmopolitan students, students who understand at first hand the profound differences in cultural practices, social values, aesthetic norms, and contexts of judgment that define different national traditions and ethnic groups, but also, in a loop-back process, to help students gain a sharper and more self-conscious sense of what it means to be an American. Granted that a significant minority of Columbia students come from abroad, the great majority will still be Americans, many of whom may have little or no palpable international experience. Coming to New York City is perhaps, in and of itself, a dramatic intercultural threshold for many students. To encounter another culture beyond the borders of North America in a deep and thoughtful way would be to gain a still clearer and more certain understanding of our own culture. Hopefully, such encounters, especially if organized by the faculty themselves and integrated directly into the Columbia curriculum, might lead to new

levels of cosmopolitan understanding and tolerance in the student culture that would be worthy of the community of a great university.

Graduate and Professional Education at Columbia

Columbia University has 14 graduate and professional schools offering degrees in architecture, the creative arts, the arts and sciences, business, dentistry, engineering and applied sciences, international and public affairs, journalism, law, medicine, nursing, public health, and social work. The University enrolls about 21,000 graduate and professional students each year and offers nearly 300 degree programs. The self-study calls on each of its schools and programs to consider its curriculum through a global lens and it appears that, to a varying degree, offerings are developing to meet the challenge of a global curriculum. Columbia has demonstrated its move toward offering its students more opportunities for global engagement through curricular and extra-curricular programs as well as the substantial amount of faculty research on both international and global topics. The self-study and many of the people who spoke to us during the site visit also pointed out that, because an internationally diverse population inhabits the neighborhoods around Columbia, students do not have to travel far from the campus to have experiences that will supplement global thinking and educational experiences. From our conversations, it appears that this is a benefit already in play for many students in the varied health sciences programs. Additionally, the student community at Columbia has a large and increasing number of international students who bring their own global perspective to the campus.

Professional schools at leading universities are often energetically international, and that seems to be true at Columbia. Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons (P&S), for example, has formal affiliations with 29 international medical schools. P&S and Columbia's other health sciences schools have well-developed curricula in global health as well as opportunities for global educational experiences. Similarly, the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) sends about half of its students abroad for field placements. The School of Architecture is making use of the Global Centers for its Studio-X global network.

Given the international strength of professional education at most universities, the self-study said relatively little about the programs at most of the professional schools. The report noted that the Law School has multiple internationally oriented programs including student-run journals, international moot court teams, and a long list of other activities and programs, however it does not yet have a global curriculum. At most universities, business schools have large international footprints, but the self-study barely mentions Columbia's. It appears, based on what we heard during the site visit, that this omission has more to do with editorial choice than with programmatic features of Columbia's educational offerings. The subcommittee on graduate education focused more on the distinction between globalization and internationalization, and it devoted less attention to the current international activities of Columbia's professional schools. We learned during our visit that the Business School, whose MBA population is 40 percent international, has programs that take nearly two-thirds of its students abroad during the MBA years. The Chazen Institute of International Business serves as the locus for international activity at Columbia's Business School.

The authors of the self-study and the deans and faculty with whom we spoke seem intrigued by, but mildly uncertain about the operation of, Columbia's Global Centers. The connection between graduate schools and the Centers seems a natural one, presenting low-hanging fruit in Columbia's globalization efforts. At some other leading universities, professional schools operate their own international facilities, and we would expect that Columbia's schools might become "early adopters" of the university's Global Centers. The university's conception of "globalization," which emphasizes interconnectedness and its practical implications, also seems a good fit with the research and teaching agendas of its professional schools. The university may wish to consider creating structures to ensure that the graduate schools have the information and access needed to take advantage of the Global Centers.

The self-study recommends that centers for global thought, or new "knowledge spaces," can be created at Columbia to focus on interdisciplinary scholarship and problem-solving rather than imposing the global mission on each discipline. This incentive approach has been successful at other universities, but it requires a commitment of resources and strong support from the administration. We heard from faculty, students, and administrators alike that increased communication and flow of information from one school to another would help to inform colleagues across Columbia about global activities, and that it might also enable or encourage collaboration and spread word of successful approaches to global activity.

Finally, Columbia is to be applauded in recognizing that sending its students around the world requires pre-departure preparation as well as new and increased support services for its students abroad. The team heard from faculty who may need increased assistance with legal and other compliance activities as they begin to engage in research activities across the globe. The administrators with whom we spoke are committed to providing support to make these transitions and activities as seamless and safe as possible and they voiced strong support for the first set of recommendations in the self-study. As Columbia has noted, and as we heard over and over during the visit with regard to graduate students as well as undergraduates, the global curriculum should be an equal opportunity for all students, not just an opportunity for those students who have no financial need.

The Role of the Columbia Global Centers

Columbia's Global Centers are a significant element of the university's globalization strategy, designed to engage all or many of the university's many schools and programs. The Centers are currently located in Santiago, Chile; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Amman, Jordan; Paris, France; Nairobi, Kenya; Istanbul, Turkey; Mumbai, India; and Beijing, China. They are networked with one another, connected to local institutions, and focused on addressing global or regional themes and problems.

The review team learned during the site visit that Columbia considered three models of overseas engagement before settling on Global Centers: branch campuses; centers; and formal affiliations with foreign universities. The self-study identified four core characteristics of the Global Centers: (1) they are "centers, not campuses"; (2) they are experimental in nature, and may become less (or presumably more) relevant as time passes; (3) they reflect Columbia's

commitment to be global *as distinct from* international; (4) they are one of several dimensions of global engagement (opened both to facilitate and constitute what it means to globalize). The review team heard these themes repeated during meetings with faculty and staff during the site visit. In principle, at least, they could provide criteria for evaluating the success of the model.

The eight Global Centers are all very new; the first of them opened in 2009, and the most recent (Rio de Janeiro) opened in 2013. Staffing levels vary considerably, from 31 full-time employees in Amman to two full-time and two part-time employees in Santiago, Chile. We learned that decisions about locations for centers are partly strategic and partly opportunistic: they are selected on the basis of the university's strengths and needs as well as in response to local financial support.

Columbia's self-study "identified four main challenges for the utilization of Global Centers, relating to the following topics: (1) communicating the nature of the GCs within Columbia and beyond; (2) data collection and measurement of the GCs' contributions to education; (3) preserving the diversity of Columbia's student population in global education; and (4) enhancing the academic resources of the GCs." The review team agrees with this assessment and believes that it would be sensible for Columbia to focus on these challenges as it plans for the Centers' future.

Columbia recognizes that the future of the Centers will depend on how well they can adapt to the research and educational needs of Columbia's faculty and students. The Centers have clearly developed a constituency among the faculty already, but questions remain. For example, the very flexibility of the Centers presents its own problem: they are designed to accommodate the activity of many different Columbia schools and programs, which means that they are not tailored to meet the specific needs of any program. We heard that some Columbia faculty members prefer to take advantage of their own connections and academic partnerships rather than using Columbia's overseas space, unless that space happens to be very proximate to the partners' institutions. The converse is also a concern. Because Columbia provides faculty members with financial incentives to develop research projects that involve the Centers, the university's reliance upon them might limit the frequency and breadth of faculty activity in other locations. This risk is of particular concern insofar as Center locations are selected for opportunistic rather than strategic reasons.

The review team concluded that the Global Centers provide an innovative and valuable addition to the globalization vehicles in use at other universities. They have significant potential to leverage the strengths of Columbia's home campus. The review team nevertheless came away from its visit unsure about how important the Centers will ultimately be to Columbia's globalization efforts. On the one hand, the Centers are the focus of nearly 25 percent of the self-study (one of four major chapters) and 50 percent of its recommendations (six of 12). The review team met several faculty members who had benefited from the Centers and expressed excitement about them. On the other hand, Columbia has a great deal of international activity apart from the Centers, and it is not clear how much power these eight units (some of which are quite small) have to achieve or facilitate Columbia's aspiration to be a fully global university. Some administrators speculated openly about whether the Centers might give way to another, different form of international initiative in a decade or so. This ambivalence about the Centers

seems entirely understandable given their novelty, and the review team believes that Columbia's administration and faculty are raising and investigating the appropriate questions.

Cross-Cutting Themes and Recommendations

The self-study concludes with a set of cross-cutting recommendations reflecting the work of all four subcommittees (that is, those on Mission, Undergraduate Education, Graduate and Professional Education, and the Global Centers). The self-study groups the recommendations into four categories: administration and infrastructure; curriculum development and improving the student experience; enhancing the culture and faculty opportunities for global collaboration; and measurement and data collection for informing decisions.

As we noted in our "general observations" at the beginning of this report, most of the recommendations are conventionally "international" rather than "global" in the sense emphasized elsewhere in the report. They focus on, for example, supporting international students at Columbia, increasing study abroad opportunities and participation levels, facilitating faculty collaboration with foreign partners, and measuring levels of international activity. Perhaps the idea is that the international is an indispensable foundation for the global, or that the home-campus curricular issues will take care of themselves through different channels. In any event, the review team regards all of the recommendations as consistent with the findings and analysis of the self-study, and with the team's own observations. The team agrees that pursuing the recommendations will permit Columbia to advance its aspirations to become a more international and global university.

The review team learned over the course of its visit that the administration attaches great importance to the first recommendation in the chapter: namely, *"to designate a physical presence on campus for all major 'global activities' that extend beyond mandates of individual schools."* The self-study's description of this "physical presence" is limited; it gets only two sentences, which indicate that there "could be tremendous benefit" from "housing all major global activities in one place/location on the New York campus." The review team recognizes both the many advantages that come with devoting physical space to a major initiative and, conversely, the barriers that stand in the way of virtual initiatives that are at once "everywhere and nowhere." Not surprisingly, those with whom we spoke during our site visit expressed substantial interest in the possible building and the unspecified program that might go into it. Students hoped that the building would provide the equivalent of "one-stop shopping" for international opportunities. The self-study, however, treats globalization as a pervasive feature of what Columbia should become. If Columbia's "major global activities" are all to be housed in a single place on its campus, the university will need to give careful thought to figuring out how to ensure the programs in the building have the broad impact Columbia desires.

Several recommendations pertain to data for measuring Columbia's progress toward globalization. Indeed, the self-study notes that all of the subcommittees felt that the data they needed for thoughtful deliberations was not available or accessible. Recommendations 4.1 and 4.2 call for new metrics and measurement strategies for students and faculty. Recommendation 4.3 asks for a formal periodic review to ensure that future decisions are informed by the data collection and measurement processes called for in the preceding

recommendations. Many of the concrete recommendations throughout this section call for new surveys of key constituencies, partly to help monitor the impact of “Columbia’s success in becoming a global University for the 21st century.” During our site visit, interviewees regularly referenced their desire for data, though they often prefaced their remarks by mentioning paired quotes in the report (p. 86), one of which declares that improvement is impossible without measurement and the other of which asserts that the most important things cannot be measured.

The site team believes that Columbia’s emphasis on data is appropriate and beneficial, and that Columbia has significant opportunities to leverage existing mechanisms and data sources while also adding new instruments or methods of data collection over time. For example, we learned that Columbia has recently made it mandatory for all affiliates to register when going abroad. Columbia might be able to add to the registration process one or two questions about the purpose of the trip (for example, to conduct a research project, to teach or take a class, to attend a conference, or other options). Likewise, the self-study mentions that this year a faculty climate survey will be administered. Adding one or two simple questions about global attitudes would avoid the need to design and administer a separate survey and would likely garner responses from a diverse group of faculty members.

The review team also noted that, as at many other institutions of higher education, relevant data is housed in many different places. The university may wish to consider a project to connect relevant data sources. Such a project would enable Columbia to identify and examine trends that could inform subsequent data collection and lay the groundwork for more systematic integration of now discrete data fields. While Columbia undoubtedly will wish to use many different mechanisms and methods to assess the success of its efforts to become a global university, its existing data collection mechanisms can, with modest augmentations, be immensely helpful for baseline benchmarking for subsequent review as well as for near-to-medium term decision-making.

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We conclude as we began, with praise for Columbia’s efforts in the domain of globalization. Columbia is surely correct to regard questions about globalization and internationalization as critical to the future of higher education. The university is approaching those questions creatively, thoughtfully, and in a way consistent with the high standards for which it is justly famous. We hope that our comments are useful to the faculty and administration at Columbia, and we look forward to watching future developments as their initiatives evolve.