

Defining International Education

International education or international studies refer to the intentional preparation of American students to be contributing citizens, productive workers, and competent leaders in the interconnected world of the 21st century. While definitions vary in the precise language used, international education is generally taken to include:

- knowledge of other world regions, cultures, and global/international issues;
- skills in communicating in languages other than English, working in global or cross-cultural environments, and using information from different sources around the world; and
- values of respect and concern for other cultures and peoples.

Addressing International Education. Through the articles on this website, we bring to the attention of readers critical issues in international education. We and the other contributors will analyze why international knowledge and skills are critical for our nation in the current century.

As we grapple with ways to promote international education, many questions remain unanswered. In the third part of this special section, we guest editors step back and offer our reflections on how this critically important field — one that lacks textbooks, a codified research base, dependable funding streams, and major professional capacity — can move forward. We suggest that in order for IE to assume its justified role in education, a rethinking of the intent of education in the 21st century is in order. The special section concludes with a guide to organizations and resources that support international education.