

## **Internationalise the curriculum, just not in my unit!**

Sarah Etherington  
Murdoch University

Internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) has widespread benefits for student learning and engagement and student preparedness for a globalised work environment (Arkoudis *et al.*, 2010).

The attitudes of 20 tertiary physiology educators toward IoC were gauged in a semi-structured online survey during S2, 2018 (Murdoch University Ethics Permit 2018/049). Most respondents (73%) saw instruction around internationalisation as a responsibility of universities and supported its incorporation into degree programs. Respondents described modest internationalisation of their physiology teaching. Three of the seven examples of internationalisation provided were engaged in by more than half of respondents to a moderate extent or more (students working in diverse groups, supporting effective group functioning and class materials with international examples). Barriers to internationalisation identified were a lack of class time (73%) and confidence about, or education related to, IoC (67%).

Respondents' suggested that IoC should be positioned 'across most units' and 'in dedicated skills units' within a course (both 53% of respondents). Interestingly only 1 of 20 respondents agreed that internationalisation should be developed in physiology units. The majority view was to internationalise most units in a degree, but not the physiology units. This model does not seem a feasible approach to internationalisation in science degrees because other common units (e.g. biochemistry) might be expected to face the similar challenges (content-heavy, time poor, taught by discipline experts).

It is proposed that physiology educators share the institutional responsibility towards IoC. Expanding internationalisation of physiology education will likely depend on (i) internationalisation strategies that are sensitive to the time-constraints in content-driven units and (ii) the ability of physiology educators to access support from internationalisation experts around internationalisation of their teaching. A model for IoC involving instigating small changes toward IoC across most units (including physiology units) in a degree program will be proposed for feedback.