CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Description of the Field
International education encompasses a wide range of careers including teaching, curriculum development, technical assistance, exchange, capacity building, training and the promotion of international understanding. International education professionals work in colleges, universities, governmental agencies, non-governmental/nonprofit organizations, foundations, and private firms.

Career Paths and Entry-level Salaries
Career paths in the field of international education are varied. In order to advance, one might work in a progression of positions within a particular organization or switch to similar work in another organization.   One might also broaden experience by working in several functional areas within international education. People benefit from developing a diversity of experience, permitting not only flexibility in job possibilities, but also qualifying themselves for management positions involving a variety of functional areas. For example, one might work within an international exchange organization assisting with the coordination of high school exchanges, and then work at a college study abroad office and/or international student office, which could lead to the position of overseeing an International Center or Education Abroad Program. Alternately, one might start with a Peace Corps or ESL teaching experience abroad and segue into working on education capacity building programs.

Entry level positions for those graduating with a master's degree typically involve administrative and programming responsibilities. Job titles might include: program coordinator, educational assistant, foreign student advisor, study abroad advisor, international admissions officer, or international program exchange officer.

Depending upon education and experience, salaries range from the low $30's to the mid $40's. Salaries tend to be higher in governmental agencies and private firms.

Demand
International exchange in education and capacity building programs in development and human rights have experienced dramatic increases in recent years. There are numerous organizations dealing with various aspects of international exchange, and almost every college now has offices that assist international students and offer study-abroad programs. In addition, efforts to increase educational and training programs in the areas of health, human rights and other development fields (including democracy building) have been enhanced. Consequently, the demand for international education professionals has increased as well. On the other hand, due to the popularity of international careers as a whole, and the appeal of working in international education (intercultural environment, diverse and interesting responsibilities, occasional overseas travel), the competition remains intense. Those with international education experience as a student or adult or international work experience, in addition to foreign language skills, are usually most in demand.

Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field
Required qualifications vary depending on the particular position, but most may be expected to include some or all of the following:

- ✓ masters degree preferred in most cases, sometimes required
- ✓ international study and/or work experience preferred (not just travel)
- ✓ experience with ethnically and culturally diverse populations
- ✓ proficiency in a foreign language is helpful (often required)
- ✓ knowledge of foreign educational systems, or US immigration rules and regulations
- ✓ work experience in some aspect of international education/exchange often preferred
- ✓ program or project management experience
- ✓ strong oral/written communication skills, interpersonal skills.

Sample Groups of Employers

Associations/Foundations/Government Agencies/Private Business
- ➢ American Council on International Intercultural Education http://www.aciie.org/
- ➢ American Studies Association http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/asainfo.html
- ➢ Business Council for International Understanding http://www.bciu.org/
- ➢ Creative Associates International http://www.caii-dc.com/
- ➢ Ford Foundation http://www.fordfound.org/
- ➢ International Foundation for Education and Self Help http://www.ifesh.org/
- ➢ The Asia Society http://www.asiasociety.org/
- ➢ US Department of Education http://www.ed.gov/
- ➢ US Department of State http://www.state.gov/
- ➢ US Information Agency http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/
- ➢ US Agency for International Development http://www.usaid.gov/

Universities and Colleges/ International Exchange Organizations/Nonprofits
- ➢ Academy for Educational Development http://www.aed.org/
- ➢ American Field Service http://www.afs.org/AFSI/
- ➢ American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) http://www.aifs.com/
- ➢ Council for International Exchange of Scholars http://www.cies.org/
- ➢ Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) http://www.ciee.org/
- ➢ Institute of International Education (IIE) http://www.iie.org/
- ➢ International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) http://www.irex.org/
- ➢ Rotary International http://www.rotary.org/
- ➢ World Learning http://www.worldlearning.org/
- ➢ Youth for Understanding http://www.yfu.org/

Future Challenges of the Profession
Particularly among universities and colleges, while voice is given to the importance of international education, the dollars to expand and enhance programs are often not forthcoming. The case for ranking international education/exchange high on the list of institutional and national priorities must be made through continuous advocacy for internationalization.

In addition, challenges constantly arise from various developments in regions throughout the world. For example, the current concern regarding acts of terrorism directed towards Americans might impact both student interest and parents' willingness to send their children abroad. Instability in a country or region might disrupt programs or cause participants to be recalled, as well as impact the feasibility of educational capacity building programs in post-conflict areas or developing countries. Also, international student visa regulations and processes could also create challenges for international exchange programs.

Resources for Additional Information

Associations
 ➢ Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
    http://www.alliance-exchange.org/index.html
 ➢ NAFSA: Association of International Educators www.nafsa.org
 ➢ SIETAR: Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research
    http://www.sietar.org/

Internet Resources
 ➢ Chronicle of Higher Education http://chronicle.com/
 ➢ International Career Employment Weekly http://www.internationaljobs.org/
 ➢ International Educator http://www.tieonline.com/
 ➢ Monday Developments http://www.interaction.org/jobs/index.html
 ➢ NAFSA Job Registry http://www.nafsa.org/job_registry_3
 ➢ Transitions Abroad http://www.transitionsabroad.com/

Publications
 ➢ *International Exchange Locator: A Resource Directory for Educational and Cultural Exchange.* Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange. 2005.