


# 2010 Benchmarking Study on International Business Education at Community Colleges: International Business Knowledge

By Sarah Singer, Tomas Hult, & Bill Motz

**Executive Briefing:** In this series of benchmarking studies, institutional-level data from 2008 (n=428), 2009 (n=336), and 2010 (n=309) – from a sampling frame consisting of the roughly 1,200 community colleges in the U.S. – provide answers to a multitude of questions regarding international business education. About two faculty and/or administrators participated per institution each year and were asked about five constituency groups (administrators, faculty, students, local community, and the country). This article looks at international business knowledge within the context of community colleges as we believe an increase in international business knowledge among all the five constituency groups is a minimum requirement for U.S. firms to achieve international competitiveness.

 Community colleges have a rich history of providing educational opportunities to a diverse population in the U.S. Based on information from the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the first community college opened in 1901 (Joliet Junior College in Illinois). Now there are 1,195 community colleges in the U.S., and each is unique<sup>1</sup>. However, the majority of community colleges share the common mission of open access and equity, comprehensive program offerings, a community-based philosophy, a commitment to teaching, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Today, community colleges educate almost half of the nation's undergraduates; some 12 million people take credit and non-credit courses at community colleges annually. Four in ten of these students work full-time while going to school, and six in ten attend school part-time. No other segment of higher education is more responsive to its community and workforce needs than community colleges. But how responsive are community colleges to the international business needs of firms and the community? Are community colleges helping to make the U.S. more competitive globally? In this Benchmark Study, we assess issues related to international business education at community colleges in an environment where the global marketplace is becoming increasingly important to communities in the U.S. Data from 2008, 2009, and 2010 provide a unique three-year window for better understanding of international business education at community colleges and the short-term trends.

## International Business Knowledge

<sup>1</sup> American Association of Community Colleges (2008), <http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/index.htm>.

International business knowledge is defined as international business expertise and skills acquired by a person via experience and education. This knowledge resides in individuals in society (and in many other so-called “storage bins”). Within the context of community colleges, the overarching goal is to educate students to become competent global workers who can enhance the country's international competitiveness.

In community colleges, the education is designed and provided by community college administrators and faculty. The notion is that an increase in international business education (e.g., increase in the number of courses and programs) leads to a more globally-competent workforce over time. The result is that the local community in which the community college is located, and by extension the country, becomes more knowledgeable about the global marketplace. Over time, an increase in international business knowledge among all these five constituency groups (i.e., administrators, faculty, students, local community, and the country), we believe, is a minimum requirement for U.S. firms to achieve international competitiveness.

To address the general level of international business knowledge residing in various individuals that are directly or indirectly connected to the nation's community colleges, our survey included five questions pertaining to “international business knowledge” of students, faculty, administrators, local community, and the country – as perceived by the responding faculty/administrator at the community colleges. The scores were assessed in 2008, 2009, and 2010.

- On a scale from 1 (no awareness) to 10 (great expertise), rate the international business

knowledge of the students that graduate from the business program at your institution as it applies broadly to all world markets.

- On a scale from 1 (no awareness) to 10 (great expertise), how would you rate your own [faculty member] international business knowledge as it applies broadly to all world markets.
- On a scale from 1 (no awareness) to 10 (great expertise), rate the international business knowledge of the administrator(s) of the business program at your institution as it applies broadly to all world markets.

- On a scale from 1 (no awareness) to 10 (great expertise), rate the international business knowledge of people in your local community as it applies broadly to all world markets.
- On a scale from 1 (no awareness) to 10 (great expertise), rate the overall international business knowledge of people in the U.S. as it applies broadly to all world markets.

The full 2010 Benchmarking Study on International Business Education at Community Colleges is available online at

<http://global.broad.msu.edu/ibc/publications/research/>. ♦ gBR Article 04-05, Copyright © 2010.

TABLE 1: International Business Knowledge in <b>2008</b>					
International business knowledge among:	Geographic Region in the U.S.				Overall
	Midwest	Northeast	South	West	
Students	3.12	4.03	3.39	3.69	3.46
Faculty	5.12	6.38	5.62	5.60	5.59
Administrators	4.36	4.89	4.30	4.23	4.37
Local community	3.82	4.28	4.23	4.53	4.20
People in the country	3.76	4.32	4.08	3.53	3.93

TABLE 2: International Business Knowledge in <b>2009</b>					
International business knowledge among:	Geographic Region in the U.S.				Overall
	Midwest	Northeast	South	West	
Students	4.11	3.73	3.78	3.64	3.82
Faculty	5.79	6.11	5.92	6.06	5.95
Administrators	4.27	4.61	4.74	4.91	4.65
Local community	4.40	4.30	4.25	4.41	4.33
People in the country	3.62	3.95	3.58	3.85	3.70

TABLE 3: International Business Knowledge in <b>2010</b>					
International business knowledge among:	Geographic Region in the U.S.				Overall
	Midwest	Northeast	South	West	
Students	3.57	3.15	3.57	3.97	3.63
Faculty	5.08	4.94	5.08	5.64	5.20
Administrators	4.04	3.88	4.31	4.14	4.12
Local community	3.92	4.17	4.48	4.61	4.30
People in the country	4.14	3.88	3.98	3.89	3.96

## About the Authors

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