

Matching International and Foreign Language Education Graduates with Government and Private Sector Resources and Employment Needs

Panel Summary Report and Recommendations

Co-presenters: Dan Davidson (in absentia), President, American Councils for International Education, and Richard D. Brecht, American Councils Education Research Center/Director, Language Policy Initiatives, University of Maryland.

Panelists for this session included a senior analyst for the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the Department of State, the director of the Foreign Area Officer program in the Department of Defense, and a CEO for a company specializing in the production and distribution of alternative fuels. The following themes and recommendations are based on the panel discussion, audience comments, and further suggestions by the co-presenters.

- Higher Ed needs to focus on the following four areas in order to produce qualified candidates for the working world: (1) cultural immersion programs; (2) language proficiency; (3) developing disciplinary and vocational expertise across a broad spectrum of academic disciplines and professional fields; and, (4) internships in a variety of vocational/professional settings.
- Simultaneously, students in higher educational programs must recognize the critical need to develop not just language proficiency, but also cultural proficiency and vocational/professional expertise
- Both the government and private sector must better identify candidate skills and match them with an appropriate position, as a result being able to employ and utilize them properly, leading to a successful career path
- There is a need for developing a networking strategy for bringing IFLE graduates who are active in international occupations back to universities to discuss their career paths and the value of the international training that they are getting.

Scott McGinnis, Rapporteur