International education leadership is still very much an emerging professional domain at most colleges and universities around the world. This is true despite the significant progress made over the past few decades by professional associations and graduate preparation programs in developing formal education and training programs designed to improve the specialized knowledge and skills of international education leaders. Thus, while the position of senior international officer (SIO) is far more common and prominent at colleges and universities today than in prior years (Helms and Brajkovic 2017), it is still more loosely defined than other senior administrative posts, such as chief financial officer and chief student affairs officer.

This book serves to advance the field of international education leadership by offering a broad overview of functional areas of responsibility for which SIOs are often directly or indirectly accountable. The chapters contained within this volume are written by a diverse array of experienced international education leaders mostly based within the SIO community. As such, this book is the most comprehensive and inclusive publication to date in terms of topics and perspectives. It serves a very broad audience that includes graduate students, faculty, aspiring international education leaders, experienced SIOs, search consultants, and senior administrators who are seeking qualified candidates to lead their institution’s internationalization efforts.
Administration of Internationalization Programs and Activities

While the roles and responsibilities of SIOs may differ significantly from one institution to another, what all these positions tend to have in common is oversight of more than one program or activity designed to advance internationalization (Helms and Brajkovic 2017) in support of the mission, vision, values, and strategic direction of a given college or university.

According to Jane Knight (2015, 2), “internationalization at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education.” Thus, internationalization represents transformative organizational change that requires genuine institutional commitment and prioritization if it is to be both effective and lasting. As presented in the framework of figure 1, the ability of SIOs to lead successful internationalization efforts may be conceptualized from two dimensions: strategy for internationalization and resources for internationalization.

- **Strategy for internationalization.** At some institutions, internationalization is a hobby enjoyed by a self-selected few. As a result, at these institutions, internationalization programs and activities are mostly restricted to one or more academic or administrative units where initiatives serve as a positive supplement to, but not an essential component of, the institution’s overall mission. At other institutions, internationalization serves unique departmental interests and advances higher-level institutional goals and objectives under the leadership of a qualified SIO. Thus, in those instances, internationalization is an institutional imperative.

- **Resources for internationalization.** Some institutional leaders view international activities and programs as expensive accessories to be funded only after more essential needs are met. In this situation, internationalization initiatives often stall out as need outstrips resources, limiting the SIO’s ability to implement effective internationalization initiatives. At other institutions, internationalization is understood to be a sound business plan
requiring strategic investments of time, effort, and financial resources. In this instance, internationalization programs and activities are appropriately resourced for sustainable growth, and the SIO can promote an entrepreneurial culture that keeps the institution relevant in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive global environment.

Figure 1. Framework for Administering Institutional Internationalization Activities

It is possible for various aspects of internationalization to place within different quadrants of the framework (figure 1). For instance, an institutional emphasis on applied learning may prioritize education abroad as an institutional investment, while a rudimentary understanding of international enrollment management may result in the treatment of international student recruitment as a departmental expense.

Five Factors Affecting Placement Within the Framework

A general assessment of approaches to administering internationalization programs and activities (see figure 1) can be achieved both in whole and in part by considering five basic factors that maintain importance across all institutional types. These factors are budget, SIO position, space, staffing, and work environment.
BUDGET
Regardless of rhetoric, institutional priorities are clearly represented by the allocation of funds. At institutions where internationalization is something other than institutional strategy, the SIO’s budget may be heavily dependent on self-support activities, such as student fees. At institutions where the costs of internationalization are viewed as elective expenses as opposed to institutional investments, the SIO is likely to find himself or herself placed in a very difficult situation. A vision for internationalization devoid of adequate financial investment amounts to little more than fanciful thinking, which ultimately results in disappointment.

Considerations:

• What type of budget model does the institution employ?

• Is the SIO’s budget scalable, or does funding remain flat despite program growth?

• What revenue streams contribute to the SIO’s financial portfolio?

• What percentage of the operating budget is funded by the central administration?

• What level of discretionary authority does the SIO have in determining how to manage the financial resources?

• Is the SIO supported by internal accounting staff or a shared services accounting team?

• Does the SIO have access to reporting tools to assist with financial management and projections?

• Do other administrators view internationalization as a competing or complementary fiscal priority?

• Does the development office support the SIO in fundraising for internationalization?

• Is the SIO empowered to engage in entrepreneurial and grant-funded activities?
SIO POSITION

The most recent survey data collected by the Association of International Education Administrators indicate that 71 percent of SIOs report to a vice president/chancellor/provost of academic affairs, while another 11 percent report to a president/chancellor or chief executive officer (Kwai 2017). A 2017 report by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) cautions that progress toward internationalization is impeded when authority lines and reporting structures do not reflect a high prioritization of internationalization. Specifically, the report questions how “institutions plan to meet the global goals embedded in strategic plans if the SIO does not have a reporting line into the provost’s or the president’s office” (APLU 2017, 25).

Considerations:

• How does the SIO position fit within the institution’s leadership structure?

• To whom does the SIO report?

• Who are the SIO’s peers?

• For which programs, policies, and units does the SIO have administrative or academic oversight?

• Does the SIO have both the title and authority to represent the institution in international dealings?

• Does the campus community have a shared understanding and appreciation of the SIO position?

• Is the SIO supported by an appropriate advisory board?

• Is the SIO a full member of relevant committees and governance councils?

• Does the SIO have an appointment in one or more academic units?

• Is the SIO included in relevant meetings, events, and other functions?
SPACE
Facilities are physical manifestations of institutional vision and represent some of the most contested resources on any college campus. Just as effective internationalization programs and activities require sound strategy, so too do international offices require intentional placement and design.

Considerations:

- Does the space meet the basic legal, programmatic, and service needs (e.g., confidentiality)?
- Is the international office located in a high-traffic area, or is it hidden away in an odd or difficult to find location?
- Is the space located near complementary units?
- How is the space viewed by students, faculty, and other stakeholder groups?
- What cultural, political, and other messages does the space convey?
- How does the space reflect the institution’s understanding and prioritization of international engagement?
- Does the space support campus and community programming, or is it purely utilitarian?
- Is the space an appropriate location for hosting international partners and foreign dignitaries, or must the SIO borrow more presentable space elsewhere on the campus?
- How does the space impact employee morale and productivity?
- What restrictions (e.g., catering or hours of operation) impact use of the space?

STAFFING
Regardless of the size or type of institution, the SIO requires adequate staffing support to manage core functions and achieve strategic goals related to
internationalization. As more institutions create SIO positions (Helms and Brajkovic 2017), it is imperative not to overlook investment in the SIO’s leadership and support team. After all, a leader is only as good as his or her followers, and an SIO who lacks adequate staffing to manage day-to-day operations is severely limited in his or her ability to move the institution’s internationalization strategy forward. In environments where internationalization is highly centralized, adequate staffing may be achieved through additional funding for new positions. In more decentralized environments, this may simply require consolidation of existing positions scattered across various administrative units.

Considerations:

- How does staffing within the international office compare with that of peer institutions?
- Are position descriptions clearly written, and do they reflect current responsibilities?
- Are salary levels adequate to attract and retain qualified employees?
- How much bandwidth do the staff members have to support current and future initiatives?
- Do staff members have access to the basic tools (e.g., NAFSA’s Adviser’s Manual) to do their job effectively?
- What opportunities are available for professional development?
- Are staff members represented by unions?
- How are the staff members regarded by students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders?
- Is the SIO expected to build, change, or maintain the current office culture?
- Is the employer supportive of work-life balance and personal well-being?
WORK ENVIRONMENT

According to Gallup (2018), 51 percent of employees are actively searching for new jobs or on the lookout for openings. Factors such as job fit, organizational culture, and relationship with one’s supervisor are among the most common reasons given for leaving. Frequent turnover is not just a problem for entry-level and middle-management positions, but also for senior leaders, especially considering that nearly half of SIOs have served in their current position for less than 5 years (Kwai 2017) and the average tenure of a college president is just 6.5 years (Seltzer 2017). The SIO’s work environment is a key factor in determining whether internationalization efforts will succeed. This is further complicated by the fact that while nearly all colleges and universities publicly commit to maintaining an equal opportunity work environment, SIOs can sometimes be targets for discrimination due to the specific nature of the institutional internationalization priorities. For instance, an institution focused on partnerships in the Middle East may prefer to employ a male SIO due to cultural customs surrounding gender roles, while an institution prioritizing connections in Asia may overlook younger SIO candidates based on the societal emphasis on age hierarchies. Finally, because many search committees for SIO positions include strong representation by members of the faculty, they may prefer a candidate with a strong background in teaching and research, even if the individual has never worked in an international office. Since the work of the SIO touches all aspects of the institution, this position is open to greater scrutiny than many other senior administrative posts.

Considerations:

- How do international and global themes fit within the institution’s understanding and practice of diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- Do institutional policies, procedures, and systems help or hinder global engagement?
- What is the international profile of the institution and local community?
• What is the relationship between the administration, faculty, students, and local community leaders?

• How invested is senior leadership in the growth and success of the SIO and internationalization efforts in general?

• Is there an institutional bias (positive or negative) based on the SIO’s academic background, age, ethnicity, race, national origin, gender, disability, political views, religion, veteran status, or other characteristics?

• Does the SIO have a clear understanding of performance goals?

• Does the employer hold the SIO harmless for critical events beyond the control of the SIO (e.g., economic recession and strained diplomatic relations)?

• Is the SIO granted flextime to recover from jet lag, account for missed holidays, etc.?

• Are members of the SIO’s team supportive of each other and of the SIO?

While these are not the only factors that influence the administration of internationalization programs and activities, they tend to be common across most institutions and affect each role and responsibility covered by the chapters of this book.

**Overview of Chapters**

This book includes 20 chapters and two appendixes written by 26 experienced international education administrators representing institutions based in the United States and abroad. As such, it is arguably the most extensive contribution made to the professional literature to date. The chapters are organized into four sections: strategy, administration, faculty and academics, and partnerships and outreach. The authors represent different types of institutions, ranging from public to private, large to small, and community college to research intensive.
Chapter 1 presents a three-dimensional framework for understanding the roles of SIOs. The chapter describes functional areas of responsibility and provides an overview of the types of SIO positions found throughout the field. The author also examines current trends shaping the next generation of SIOs. The chapter is particularly useful for readers aspiring to SIO positions and for current SIOs considering a position at another institution.

Chapter 2 centers on the various types of stakeholders with whom SIOs interact. The author provides insights regarding stakeholder identification, analysis, and engagement. With broad application beyond the SIO position, the chapter is an excellent resource to supplement staff development and strategic planning initiatives.

In chapter 3, the author takes a critical look at SIOs’ roles in risk management, crisis communications, and media relations. The chapter can be used as a reference in ongoing training and shared with other members on campus with whom SIOs collaborate in times of crisis. The content is highly relevant given the current geopolitical environment.

Chapter 4 focuses on key considerations for developing and executing an internationalization strategy. The author reviews the strategic planning process undertaken by the University of Calgary, an institution that has received both national and international awards for its integrated international programs and activities. The chapter is a useful resource for SIOs and other senior administrators wishing to move internationalization strategy from the departmental to the institutional level. Internationalization consultants as well as scholars of international higher education will find value in the chapter’s detailed approach.

Chapter 5 is an essential resource written for aspiring, new, and experienced SIOs. The author covers the core aspects of applying, interviewing, and negotiating for employment contracts for SIO positions. The chapter also includes advice for newly hired SIOs with a focus on building cooperative networks to advance internationalization. The chapter concludes with a discussion of career progression for current and former SIOs.

Chapter 6 offers a high-level picture of the roles that SIOs play in managing budgets and finances. The author explains traditional sources of funding,
analyzes key considerations for budget development, and shares innovative techniques for establishing new sources of revenue to support internationalization initiatives. The chapter is relevant for all SIOs, whether they are responsible for a modest operating budget or a vast financial portfolio.

In chapter 7, the author provides an overview of the field of education abroad. The chapter explores the historical development of education abroad programs, important business considerations, and essential findings from the research literature. This look into the policies and practices of learning abroad can be beneficial to SIOs who are tasked with expanding the business of education abroad.

Chapter 8 studies issues and trends related to the administration of intensive English programs (IEPs). The author touches on common administrative structures, challenges, and opportunities that SIOs today may face in working with IEPs. The chapter concludes with a proposed model to help improve the efficacy of IEPs.

Chapter 9 covers some of the central concepts that all SIOs should be aware of pertaining to the field of international enrollment management (IEM). The chapter is essential reading for SIOs who do not have prior professional experience in this area. While IEM may or may not be a primary responsibility of the position, all SIOs should understand this important field because healthy enrollment determines the overall success of other areas.

Chapter 10 describes the roles of SIOs in terms of immigration services and institutional compliance. The chapter imparts key administrative considerations, such as the need for appropriate adviser caseloads and the advantages of technology, as well as recommendations of fundamental immigration resources for SIOs.

In chapter 11, the author explores SIOs’ coordinated efforts with other stakeholders, including academic deans, department chairs, and program directors, to ensure that internationalization is embedded into the academic offerings of the institution. The chapter contains an inspiring discussion of the ways by which the SIO at Kennesaw State University has advanced internationalization within academic affairs.
Chapter 12 dives further into the dynamic relationship between global learning and academic programs, with an emphasis on internationalization of the curriculum. The chapter includes a case study on Emerson College’s highly innovative and effective Curriculum Internationalization Studio.

Chapter 13 reviews ways that entrepreneurial SIOs can strategically collaborate with continuing professional education units to advance internationalization. The authors describe the financial benefits resulting from these partnerships using a few case studies. The chapter is a useful read for SIOs seeking to expand revenue streams or those looking to support IEPs where the traditional student population is in decline.

Chapter 14 delves into the internationalization of research, a topic that receives too little attention within the field, particularly considering that the SIO position is most common at U.S. doctoral and master’s institutions, where nearly 80 percent now have such an administrator on staff (Helms and Brajkovic 2017). The authors deliver strategies for success using the University of South Florida as a case study. The chapter is a handy resource for SIOs to share with their colleagues in divisions and departments that support faculty research, graduate education, and institutional effectiveness.

Chapter 15 continues the discussion on SIOs’ roles in advancing the internationalization of research by highlighting a successful program for supporting faculty at Michigan State University. While this case study features the success made by one institution, it is easy to see how the program can be adapted elsewhere.

In chapter 16, the author outlines a strategic approach to managing international partnerships, contracts, and agreements. The chapter includes an overview of reasons for establishing international partnerships, as well as considerations for diplomacy, protocol, benchmarking, and assessment. A recent survey conducted by the Association of International Education Administrators found that 92 percent of SIOs consider international partnerships to be among their top three primary responsibilities (Kwai 2017).

Chapter 17 is a study of global operations—a term used to describe the business aspects of international engagement—a subfield that has received less attention than others. Some considerations for SIOs include the policies,
Introduction

Senior International Officers: Essential Roles and Responsibilities is intended to serve as a practical resource for a broad audience, including graduate students and scholars of international higher education, aspiring and current SIOs, and executive officers seeking to hire an SIO to lead internationalization efforts at their college or university. The book provides insights and practical takeaways for SIOs of all types and backgrounds, ranging from a director leading a one-person office of international education to a vice president leading a global procedures, and administrative support for hiring employees abroad; the registration of international programs and activities with legal presence; foreign taxation; property management; and much more. The chapter concludes with an overview of various models and methods for managing global operations, using the University of California Office of the President as a case study.

In chapter 18, the author uses a case study of Salisbury University to demonstrate the potential outcomes of relationships between SIOs and local government officials. Specifically, the author looks into the impact of aligning internationalization strategy with existing sister city and sister state initiatives.

Chapter 19 focuses on supporting international students’ success through campus and community programming. The author shares novel initiatives undertaken at St. Cloud State University, where international students receive generous financial awards for demonstrating positive study habits and engagement with the local community.

Chapter 20 brings attention to SIOs’ roles in engaging international alumni in institutional internationalization activities, such as student recruitment, networking, and fundraising. The author examines some common challenges and poses strategies for addressing them.

Appendix A provides a useful checklist for mapping immigration services at an institution to assist SIOs in supporting immigration-related matters.

Appendix B offers a list of resources that may be of value to SIOs and other international education leaders in their ongoing work. While the scope is not exhaustive, the list includes synopses of some of the most relevant professional associations, meetings, and tools used by a wide range of SIOs.

Conclusion

Senior International Officers: Essential Roles and Responsibilities is intended to serve as a practical resource for a broad audience, including graduate students and scholars of international higher education, aspiring and current SIOs, and executive officers seeking to hire an SIO to lead internationalization efforts at their college or university. The book provides insights and practical takeaways for SIOs of all types and backgrounds, ranging from a director leading a one-person office of international education to a vice president leading a global
affairs division similar in scale to a multinational corporation with hundreds of employees spread across programs and facilities operating on every continent.

The chapters are written by a diverse and experienced group of international education leaders representing a wide range of positions, institutions, and countries. Each author provides a unique perspective based upon his or her personal experiences in the field of international education administration. Some of the chapters serve to highlight basic issues in more developed subfields, such as education abroad and international enrollment management, while other chapters focus on areas that have mostly been ignored, such as global operations and internationalization of research.

The content balances leadership considerations with managerial concerns and presents insights relevant to current trends, opportunities, and resources. The book offers a comprehensive look at SIOs’ various charges, challenges, and strategic tools to ensure that all readers leave with new knowledge and ideas for their own career development as well as the advancement of the overall profession. With this guidance in hand, SIOs can continue to extend the reach of their efforts across their institution and beyond with strategic intention.

References