

AAAL Panel
Modeling Representation of Foreign Language Education
at the Federal/National Level in the United States

Monday, March 31, 2008: 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC
Empire Room

Panelists

Mary Ellen O’Connell, Senior Program Officer, The National Academies,
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Ambassador Michael Lemmon, National Defense University, lemmonm@ndu.edu

Lyle F. Bachman, Professor and Chair, Applied Linguistics, UCLA,
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Representative Rush Holt (D-New Jersey). Mail: Christopher.Hartmann@mail.house.gov

Diane Auer Jones, Asst. Secretary for Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of
Education, Diane.Jones@ed.gov

Moderator

Heidi Byrnes, Georgetown University. byrnes@georgetown.edu

Session Schedule

2:00 – 2:15 Introduction of series of events and panelists

2:15 – 3:30 Presentation time for each panelist (15 minutes each)

3:30 – 4:15 Moderated discussion

4:15 – 5:00 Open forum

Outline of Proposals

❖ **MARY ELLEN O’CONNELL**

Committee to Review the Title VI and FH International Education Programs

NRC committee charged with reviewing Title VI and FH programs at ED

Who committee was/why requested

Programs created almost 50 years ago, but mission expanded significantly over time

Prompted committee to look at context beyond Title VI/FH

National security, language capacity across a range of languages potentially competing
issues; need to do both; not clear to universities what national security needs are

Language fluency one of controversial issues; Fluency requires early study which again
directed beyond Title VI/FH

Other programs – federal, state, and local – need to be in mix with federal
leadership/strategic guidance

Several recommendations focused specifically on Title VI/FH. Broad based
recommendations include:

- ◆ The Department of Education should consolidate oversight of its international education and foreign language programs under an executive-level person who would also provide strategic direction, and consult and coordinate with other federal agencies. The position should be one that requires presidential appointment and Senate confirmation.
- ◆ Congress should require the secretary of education, in consultation and coordination with the departments of State and Defense, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and other relevant agencies to submit a biennial report outlining national needs identified in foreign language, area, and international studies, plans for addressing these needs, and progress made. This report should be made available to the public.
- ◆ The Department of Education needs to develop and implement an integrated strategy for foreign language and international education involving both K-12 and higher education, and ideally additional resources. In carrying out this strategy, the department should work closely with its federal partners, state and local education officials, higher education, and national experts, and engage all of its relevant programs, including the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs. Such an integrated strategy is needed to enhance national security, help U.S. businesses compete in an increasingly global economy, and broadly educate and inform the nation's citizens.

❖ **AMB MICHAEL LEMMON**

Committee to Review the Title VI and FH International Education Programs

Widespread concern among USG departments and agencies about insufficient foreign language, culture and regional expertise needed to do the job among employees
 In-house training capabilities limited and more efficiently used to “top off” incoming employees with solid language/culture and areas skills and hone those skills in ways appropriate to the needs of the organization and range of missions
 Some collaboration among “national security” agencies underway to share information, programs and materials, but needs vary according to mission
 Need for expanded discussion with Dept of ED and broader education and academic communities as to what are the national needs and requirements for which foreign language, culture and regional skills and expertise and to what level

Establishment of an Assistant Secretary for International Education and Foreign Language provides a needed central and authoritative POC for State, Defense, IC and other USG agencies and the Hill and to oversee compilation of biennial report to Congress outlining national needs, plans for addressing those needs and progress made
 Could provide long-term strategic focus and facilitate contact with broader education and academic communities to provide informed strategic guidance (not necessarily direction)
 Particularly important to marry efforts at K-12 levels to those in higher education in a strategic, integrated and articulated programmatic approach to foreign language and international education

Also important to note that the nation's needs go beyond specific "national security" requirements and encompass a broad demand for "global professionals" to ensure US global competitiveness not only economically, but across the board

Critical challenge is how to integrate regional, cultural and language competencies amid all the other competencies needed by the 21st Century workforce.

Need to find additional ways to broaden partnerships among federal government, foundations, professional organizations and the education and business communities while simultaneously enhancing collaboration at the federal, state and local levels.

Key questions are what modes such an approach might take and whether it might be assisted by building public-private partnerships encompassing a wide array of those stakeholders

Another recommendation in the NRC Committee Report is that the USG contract for a new National Foreign Language Assessment and Technology Project initially to focus on R&D to design and implement technology-based methods to assess language proficiency and support language instruction via common platforms NRC/LRCs (and CIBERs) could infuse language/culture/area expertise across academic departments and professional schools and expand collaboration with schools/colleges of education in curriculum development, design of instructional materials and teacher education

Public-private partnerships again could play a critical role in fostering collaboration and diffusion of information and innovation and finding partners among a broad array of interested stakeholders among governmental and non-governmental entities at the local, state and federal levels and among business and non-profit communities

Whether a more senior or separate USG "coordinating mechanism" or "national language advisor" is required or desired to effect Coordination/ Collaboration/ Communication is a political question requiring Executive and Legislative Branch agreement and action

Another possibility might be an NSF-type arrangement or a standing NAS "roundtable" that includes academics, government, education community, professional and business groups to monitor, assess, evaluate and discuss

❖ **LYLE F. BACHMAN**

Foreign Language and International Education in America: Quo vademus?

I. Some background (“déjà vu all over again”)

- A. 1950’s (Parker, Sputnik, NDEA)
- B. 1980’s (Lambert, NFLRC)
- C. 2000’s (Flagships, NSLI, numerous reports)
- D. What, if anything, have we learned?

Democratization of resources does not work. In other words, Lots of cooks and rich ingredients don’t guarantee a satisfying and nutritious meal.

II. Need to think broadly and outside of the current FL&IE establishment/structure

- A. more broadly than federally supported programs (e.g., DOE -T6, State - F-H, DOD - Flagships, Pipelines): → need to include state depts. of education, teacher education programs, business
- B. more broadly than FLE. → need to include IS
- C. more broadly than university and Fed language programs: → need to include preK-12

III. Need to think about structures that are independent of any special interests, sources of funding, or government agencies, but which would work with all the major stakeholders

IV. New structures that would provide both research and implementation:

- A. A policy and research “think tank”: Ideally, a standing committee at the National Academies.
- B. A development and implementation center: (T6 F-H Committee Report: need for “continuous improvement”, Recommendation 12.3)