

## AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Lillian S. Read for the degree of Master of Science in College Student Services Administration presented on April 14, 2009.

Title: Challenges of Creating and Maintaining International Alumni Relations Programs.

Abstract approved:

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Dave C. Kovac

During the 2006/07 academic year, 582,984 international students studied in the United States (Open Doors Study, 2007). Roughly 430,000 of these international students were pursuing Bachelors or Graduate level degrees. Of the international students that complete degrees, most will return to their home country and will be unable to attend alumni events at their alma mater due to their distance from the institution. Some institutions attempt to maintain a strong relationship between alumni and the institution through the work of their international alumni relations office. This study explores the challenges faced by four year American institutions in their attempts to create and maintain international alumni relations programs. A survey instrument was created based on an extensive literature review and informal interviews and dispersed to two groups of alumni professionals at American Institutions. The analysis of the fifty-nine total responses highlights both the challenges and successes associated with international alumni outreach work.

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Challenges of Creating and Maintaining International Alumni Relations Programs

by  
Lillian S. Read

A THESIS

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

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Lillian S. Read, Author

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Roylene Read, the smartest woman I know, and my late father, Rick Read, who taught me the importance of good research when he completed his Master's Degree 25 years ago at OSU!

# Challenges of Creating and Maintaining International Alumni Relations Programs

## Chapter One: Introduction

As colleges and universities internationalize, they face the increasing challenge of maintaining relationships with international students after the students graduate and return to their home country. How does a college or university remain connected with alumni that are thousands of miles away? What can strong international alumni relationships do for an institution? A review of literature relating to international alumni relations provides little insight into this specific topic due to a lack of published studies.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to identify the challenges facing alumni professionals at four year colleges and universities in the United States in their cultivation of successful international alumni relations programs. Two research questions were explored: What are the challenges of developing and maintaining an international alumni connection? What have been the outcomes of these efforts?

Following a review of literature regarding international students, alumni relations and international alumni relations, a nine question survey instrument was created and dispersed to alumni professionals working at four year institutions in the United States. Two groups of alumni professionals were approached for participation in this study. Survey Group A was populated by institutions with the top forty highest populations of international students, and Survey Group B was populated from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Alumni-L listserv.

Analysis of the individual and combined survey results supported and called into question several earlier bodies of work related to the subject of international

alumni relations. The study revealed several key findings related to occurrence of international outreach efforts, severity of challenges faced by alumni offices, the relationship between mission statements and international alumni relations efforts and institutional benefits resulting from international alumni relations work. These findings provide a basis for further research regarding international alumni populations, institutional relationships with these alumni and the changing needs of both parties.

### *Overview of this thesis*

The concluding portion of this chapter features an extensive review of literature related to the topic of international alumni relations. Background information regarding international student populations in the United States and the history and organization of alumni relations programs is provided.

Chapter two reports on the creation of a survey instrument based on the literature review and research questions and the methodology behind the dispersal of the instrument and analysis of the survey data.

The survey results are presented in the third chapter and are discussed in detail in the last chapter. Implications and suggestions for future research are also presented in chapter four.

### *Definitions*

To better assist the reader in understanding this thesis, the definitions of key terms are provided below. The definitions of institutional size and type are based on the classification descriptions used by The Carnegie foundation for the advancement of teaching.

- **International alumni:** alumni who obtained undergraduate or graduate degrees from institutions in the United States and now live outside of the United States.
- **International students:** students that are from countries outside of the United States who come to America with the sole purpose of obtaining a college degree.
- **Alumni relations:** the act of encouraging mutually beneficial involvement between an institution and its alumni.
- **Private institutions:** institutions that are not primarily funded by or controlled by the state or federal government.
- **Public institutions:** institutions that are primarily funded and controlled by the state and federal government.
- **Small institutions:** institutions with less than 3,000 students.
- **Mid-sized institutions:** institutions with between 3,000 and 10,000 students.
- **Large institutions:** institutions more than 10,000 students.
- **Liberal arts institutions:** institutions with a curriculum incorporating history, language arts, literature, the social sciences and hard sciences with the goal of educating students in a variety of knowledge areas and skill sets.
- **Land grant institutions:** institutions which were granted federal land and funds to promote the teaching of agriculture, mechanical sciences, home economics and military tactics with the goal of extending this knowledge out into the local and state community.
- **Category 1 research institution:** The top fifty institutions receiving the highest amount of research funding.
- **Category 2 research institution:** The top fifty-one to one hundred institutions receiving the highest amount of research funding.

### *Background/Literature Review*

International student services and alumni relations are two fields that have been researched in various capacities over the past fifty years. Individually, research

regarding both fields has been published in thousands of articles. However, information that is specific to international alumni relations is minimally described in literature. This literature review contains information regarding the international student population in the United States, alumni relations and international alumni relations.

### *International Students*

*Numbers of international students.* According to the Open Doors Study of 2007, during the 2006/07 academic year, 582,984 international students studied in the United States. This was an increase of 3.2 percent from the 2005/2006 academic year which was the first significant increase in the international student population since the 2001/2002 academic year. Of these international students, 434,483 were pursuing undergraduate and graduate level degrees. The top five countries of origin of these students are India, the Peoples Republic of China, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. The top four countries previously mentioned are the countries of origin of over 40 percent of all international students enrolled at institutions in the United States.

*Where and what do they study?* The top five states of the union hosting the most international students are California, New York, Texas, Massachusetts and Florida as reported in the 2006/2007 Open Door Report. American institutions with the five largest populations of international students are University of Southern California, Columbia University, New York University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Purdue University. International students are studying in all fields of study with the most popular field being business and management with 103,641 of the total international student population enrolled in this academic subject.

The other top fields of study for international students include engineering, physical and life sciences, social sciences and the liberal arts.

*Economic Impact.* International students do not only increase the diversity of institutions and add depth to a campus culture; they add a significant amount of money to the United States economy. It has been estimated that during the 2006-2007 academic year, international students and their dependents added roughly \$14.5 billion dollars to the American economy (NAFSA.org, 2007). The majority of this money comes not from tuition and fees to attend the US institutions; instead, the living expenses incurred by international students and their families extend economic benefit to the broader community. This fact alone shows the benefit of encouraging international students to attend institutions in the United States.

*International Student Post Graduation Plans.* There is no mention in the current literature of the number of international students that graduate and return to the home country or seek employment in the United States. However, international students that are studying in the United States on J-1 and F-1 visas are allowed to secure work in the United States for eighteen months after they graduate in order to continue their academic or practical training in their field of study. The graduates that are successful in securing work in the United States are often eligible for extended work visas through their employers.

### *Alumni Affairs*

*History of alumni affairs.* In 1792 a group of Yale University graduates residing around New Haven, Connecticut founded the Association of Yale Alumni, the first organization for university alumni in the world (AYA History). The members of

the Association of Yale Alumni organized the association based on class year.

According to Webb's 1989 work titled *An Overview of Alumni Administration*, a member of each Yale class was appointed secretary and given the task of collecting information about fellow alumni and publishing it into a series of newsletters. Before long, the graduates of other private institutions in the Eastern United States formed alumni organizations. The cohesion of alumni into organizations resulted in two outcomes: (a) local clubs and chapters in major cities were created across the country, and (b) alumni associations began the practice of soliciting money from members for donations and gifts to the institution. Public universities, which were used to receiving funding from the state, did not adopt the practice of forming alumni organizations until the late 1890s. Webb states that it was the knowledge that alumni organizations provided philanthropic support to the institution that drove the formation of this type of organization at the state institutions. The University of Michigan founded the first alumni organization at a public institution in 1897.

By the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, alumni organizations and associations were seen as vital to institutions in the United States. Dr. J.L. Morrill, the Vice President of Ohio State University from 1932-1941 stated:

It must be recognized that the colleges and universities of this continent have created the concept of alumni organization, loyalty and support—unique in the whole world history of higher education—indigenous to America in the Western World. They have developed that concept into a positive force in the social order—a powerful influence in the whole area of private philanthropy and a phenomenon well recognized in the arena of practical pressure politics. The alumni in America, as in no other land, have helped to build the institutions of higher learning—by their interest, their gifts and their organized sponsorship or state appropriations. (Turner, 1947, p. 16-17)

Morrill's quote touches on the roles which alumni organizations played for the institution. Alumni were avid supporters at sporting events, philanthropists funding the growth of the institution, vocal constituents to elected representatives regarding their alma maters and frequently sat on the board of trustees (Webb, 1989). The influence of alumni was indeed felt in many areas of higher education during the early to mid 1900s and it is still felt today.

*Structures and functions of alumni organizations.* Current university alumni organizations can fall into two categories: independent or dependent. Independent alumni organizations are controlled by an elected board of directors that are alumni of the institution (Webb, 1989). Dependent alumni organizations are controlled by the institution and are generally seen as being a part of an alumni affairs or alumni relations department of the college or university. Alumni affairs and relations departments are staffed by professionals that did not necessarily attend the institution they are serving. These professionals act to support the interests of both the institution and the alumni association. Functions of alumni affairs departments and alumni associations may include creating a publication that is specific to the alumni of the institution, organizing homecoming activities and class reunion celebrations, coordinating the formation of alumni clubs and assisting with the philanthropic growth of the institution. Alumni clubs are especially important to alumni relations because according to Williams (1989), "While reunions brought alumni to the campus, alumni clubs brought the campus to alumni" (p.111). Alumni organizations, associations and clubs all serve to promote socializing and networking amongst graduates and act to encourage positive support of the institution.

*Alumni research.* The investigation of institutional alumni serves to inform the institutions of their adequacy in preparing their graduates to survive and thrive in the world outside of college. Program evaluation can stem from communication with alumni after they begin their careers in the fields they explored at the institution (Ingram, Haynes, Davidson-Shivers and Irvin, 2005; Melchiori, 1988; Weerts & Vidal, 2005). Alumni even have an effect on the granting of faculty awards as they evaluate the usefulness of the training they received in certain departments (Moden & Williford, 1988). Studies exploring the role that involvement in campus activities played on the professional and personal lives of alumni (Bialek & Lloyd, 1998) have been touted as assurances that an institution is creating enough opportunities for student involvement. According to Pettit and Litten (1999), “Unlike faculty and current students, alumni bring the advantage of having tested the outcomes of an educational program in the marketplace” (p.1). Prospective students and parents often want to know the careers alumni pursue after graduation in order to make decisions regarding the institution the prospective student should attend (Cabrera, Weerts & Zulick, 2005). The results of alumni research can have a staggering influence on an institution.

*Institutional Marketing.* A study by McAlexander and Koenig (2001) shows the relationship between student experience and their support of the institution post graduation. It has been stated that alumni are more interested in buying products associated with their alma mater if the experience they had at the institution was positive (McAlexander & Koenig, 2001; McAlexander, Koenig & Schouten, 2004). Just as brand loyalty will encourage customers to shop at the same store or frequent the same businesses and organizations, alumni feel a brand loyalty to the institution.

This loyalty can come in the form of financial support or by wearing or showcasing items that reflect the institution. When alumni wear clothing affiliated with their alma mater, not only are they showing their support of the institution, they are acting as advertising agents out in the larger world. The marketing of these products and overall brand loyalty has become an important aspect of alumni affairs since the late 1990s (Lawlor, 1998).

*Alumni and Online Social Networking.* The emergence of online social networking websites such as MySpace and Facebook has had a tremendous influence on the field of alumni relations (Doty, 2008; Hermes, 2008; Holahan, 2008; Kushner, 2008). According to comScor, a company that tabulates website use, as of August 2008, Facebook had 132 million users, and 63% of those users were outside of the United States (Holahan). The popularity of Facebook and MySpace has resulted in efforts by alumni relations offices to emulate these sites with their own alumni social networking sites. Some institutions have created profiles for alumni associations on Facebook, Myspace and LinkedIn, but these sites do not allow for easy retrieval of contact information, which is of vital importance to the alma mater. In the past five years, two software products have emerged that are targeted for use by alumni relations offices; InCircle and Encompass. With these sites, Alumni are invited to create a profile on a network that is open only to graduates and affiliates of the institution, and is managed by the alumni relations office. Other institutions have created their own online social networks focusing on an ability for alumni profile information to link directly to the alumni database to allow contact and profile information to be easily accessible by the office (Hermes).

While these social networking websites allow alumni to remain connected with friends, colleagues and former professors, it means that returning to the alma mater is becoming less and less necessary. Some alumni feel that attending college reunions is unnecessary, having already found their former friends and fellow alumni online. Given that most institutions use reunions as a basis for fundraising endeavors, this could have an extensive effect on the financial support institutions receive from alumni (Kushner, 2008). College alumni magazines that feature extensive “Class Notes” sections are also affected because alumni are sharing their personal and career news via their online profiles resulting in less of a need for a print magazine feature. Some institutions are attempting to use the online video sharing website, YouTube, to feature small vignettes of the institution that would have once instead been published in the alumni magazine (Doty, 2008).

*Alumni networking in a recession.* The American economic downturn of 2008 and 2009 has led alumni relations offices to coordinate networking events to assist their unemployed alumni. At the University of Southern California, the Career Center is collaborating with the alumni center to reach out to the vast network of Trojan alumni (Cosma, 2009). In fact, many alumni offices are reporting an increase in contact from alumni that are inquiring about career networking opportunities and this contact strengthens alumni loyalty to the institution (Peterson, 2009). As the recession continues, the way that alumni relations offices and associations market themselves could change as the way that alumni use this relationship evolves.

### *International Alumni Relations*

*Purposes and practices.* Numerous articles and presentations over that past ten years have highlighted the importance of international alumni; a group of graduates that in the past were ignored because of distance from the institution (Basinger, 1999; Hummerstone, 1998; Luttrell, 2006; Havilk & Ryan, 2007; Yang & Ryan, 2007). Changes in technology, namely the internet, have made it possible for institutions to reconnect and remain connected with alumni that live around the world, without spending money on postage (Basinger). During the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the number of professional articles written regarding international alumni affairs dramatically increased reflecting the increasing adoption of internet based communication with global alumni.

With the extra effort that it takes to communicate with graduates living around the world, some wonder why international alumni should be courted. In response, Gairing (2001) states:

Sometimes, the emotional ties – core element of all alumni business – towards one's academic institution are much more intensive if the place one studied was abroad. The university abroad then becomes the focus for having discovered and lived in a different country. The wish to maintain these memories, to keep contact with this different culture is centered on the university abroad. The university abroad was the place the foreign student went to on a daily basis. There, he or she met new friends and new colleagues. There, the new culture, the different approaches to handling life became materialized: accommodation, registering, class system, way of teaching, all these aspects provided concrete examples of what this different culture was about. That is why *international* alumni – defined as the former foreign students of a university – play an important role in setting up alumni activities. (p. 25)

Gairing's statement hints at the importance of forging an unbreakable connection between international alumni and the institution. It would seem that the

accomplishments of international alumni, both academically and in their personal survival in a foreign country would result in a fondness for the alma mater and a desire to remain connected. Examples of the use of international alumni relations information includes networking for current students, providing institutions with feedback concerning the appropriateness of their training, promotion of the institution to assist in the recruitment of students, and contacts for students from the institution that are studying abroad (Gairing, 2001; Marti i Ribellas, 2001).

*Alumni relations program models.* The field of international education has been supportive of international alumni relations programs for many years. The professional organization NAFSA: Association for International Educators created an online knowledge community regarding international alumni outreach in the late 1990s. The NAFSA international alumni programs webpage features a list of seven model programs at institutions in the United States. Brief details of international alumni programming such as the structure and administration of the outreach efforts are provided to assist other institutions in their relationships with international alumni.

*Fundraising.* Fundraising is the other main reason that institutions hope to improve their relations with international alumni. In *New Strategies for Educational Fund Raising*, Worth (2002) states,

Institutions require development officers to be more international. For most U.S. Advancement officers, there is no choice. Students are increasingly non-American. Faculty is broader in outlook, background, and geography. Satellite campuses, distance learning, and regional studies pressure development officers to take a worldview. Curricula are more global. At the Harvard Law School, almost one-fifth of the courses is focused on international or comparative studies. The graduates are more mobile and diverse geographically. Alumni activity abroad is now common. The real world of most alumni means more travel, business, and vacation abroad. (p.208)

In their study of the link between successful athletics programs and alumni giving, Baade and Sundberg (1996) state, “It is axiomatic that alumni are more likely to respond to fundraising efforts if they come from a background that makes them more likely to give, and if their collegiate experience has been positive” (p.792). Most importantly, the connection between the institution and alumni should be one of mutual benefit to the parties involved (Visser, 2001).

The challenge that is faced when fundraising with international alumni is that they might not come from a culture where philanthropy is common. Luckily, many international alumni are increasingly aware of these philanthropic ideals as a result of their time spent in the United States and familiarity with the norms of the institution from which they graduated. The emergence of international fundraising events targeting alumni, particularly in Asia, is also increasing the knowledge and awareness of philanthropic practices abroad due to the publicity of those events in the language of the host culture.

*Successful International Alumni Affairs Practices.* As mentioned in a presentation titled Engaging International Alumni (2007) given by Paula Havlik, the Director of Advancement Initiatives at the University of Illinois Alumni Association, and Kate Ryan, the Director of International Alumni Affairs at Harvard University, successful international alumni relations initiatives can be evaluated through a program review. A successful international alumni program will exhibit the following: (a) steady growth of funds from abroad, (b) opportunities realized through developing technology, (c) stronger club/network leadership, (d) sustainable growth and strong

succession, (e) closer ties to the institution through more meaningful activity for alumni, (f) friends and funds, not friends or funds, and (g) closer relationships that transcend distance (Havlik and Ryan).

*A reflection of society.* In 2001, The European Association for International Education (EAIE) published a paper regarding the need for international alumni relations. It was meant to provide notice for the emerging need for alumni attention in European institutions where the idea of alumni relations is somewhat new. However, the timing of the publication happened shortly after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the editor, David Richardson, elaborated on the importance of the subject, stating:

One thing that is certain: there will be need as never before for understanding across national and cultural boundaries. As we mourn the dead and seek to comfort the living, and as we determine that the perpetrator and those who aid them shall be brought to account, let it be our hope that the fostering of relations between universities and their alumni may make some contribution to the growth of that understanding. (2001, p.1)

This statement, perhaps more than any other, expresses the need for a relationship with international alumni. The globalization of the world has created a necessity for multicultural understanding. This understanding is driving the internationalization of college campuses. It would be a shame to lose the connection international students feel to an institution just because they graduate and go thousands of miles from their alma mater.

#### *Background/Literature Review Summary and Conclusion*

The field of alumni relations has been a significant portion of American higher education for over two hundred years. Alumni offices have survived by being incredibly responsive to the changing needs of their alumni. This constant effort to

adopt practices benefitting domestic alumni populations has been rewarded in the form of maintained institutional support. However, the increasing numbers of international alumni do not yet receive this same benefit due to a lack of experience and knowledge regarding trusted methods for working with this emerging group. More information is needed to explore the challenges and benefits of working with international alumni in order to inform the field and further the knowledge base for best practices.

## Chapter Two: Methods

### *Rationale*

As reported in chapter one, hundreds of thousand international students are currently pursuing degrees at institutions in the United States. Once graduated, this student population falls into a new category; International Alumni. Efforts by alumni relations offices to remain connected with International Alumni have become increasingly important as American institutions attempt to internationalize and increase their alumni funding base. However, the fact that this alumni population often resides thousands of miles from the alma mater creates unique challenges for the alumni relations personnel to face. An absence of a tradition of maintaining contact with an alma mater in other cultures can often increase the work for alumni professionals. A review of literature relating to international alumni relations provides little insight into this specific topic due to the lack of published works. The purpose of this study is to identify and quantify the challenges faced by four year colleges and universities in the United States in cultivating successful international alumni relations.

### *Creation of Guiding Questions*

Two guiding questions were developed early on to direct this investigation of the functions and challenges facing alumni affairs offices in their international alumni outreach efforts. These guiding questions were motivated by literature reviews, review of professional organizational materials and informal interviews with alumni professionals affiliated with various public and private institutions in the United

States. The questions were: a) What are the challenges of developing and maintaining an international alumni connection? b) What have been the outcomes of these efforts?

### *The Survey*

The two research questions, coupled with information garnered during the literature review were used to formulate a survey instrument. The purpose of using a survey instrument was to collect easily quantifiable data as an absence of international alumni relations literature based on quantified data was noted during the literature review. Use of a survey instrument to gather quantifiable data was recommended in several guides to research methodology (Bernard, 2002; Cresswell, 2008; Fink 2006; Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005). The survey instrument was reviewed and tested by several colleagues before it realized its final form.

The survey instrument consisted of nine items that investigated institutional type, formation of international alumni organizations and maintenance of relationships with international alumni and was hosted by SurveyMonkey.com (See Appendix A). As dictated by Oregon State University Institutional Review Board protocol, no information was collected that could ruin the anonymity of the individual survey respondents. The opening page of the survey contained the participant consent form which respondents agreed to by clicking into the survey. Given the nature of this survey, the necessity of collecting a copy of the consent form was waived (see Appendix B).

*Identification of Institutions for Study*

Two groups were approached as participants of this study. Group A consisted of alumni relations professionals from four-year colleges and universities in the United States that are listed as being in the top 40 institutions with the highest populations of international students in the 2006/2007 Open Doors Study. This specific population was targeted because institutions with high numbers of international degree seeking students would, logically, have high percentages of international alumni. The names and email addresses of Group A individuals were identified through a search for international alumni coordinators on the alumni relations portions of their institutional websites.

Group B consisted of alumni relations professionals that are members of the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education (CASE) professional organization and subscribe to the Alumni-L listserv, an email listserv open for questions and discussion regarding alumni topics. This population was targeted in order to capture data from institutions that might not have high populations of international students, yet work to maintain contact with their limited number of international alumni. The two groups were targeted separately in order to capture data from a wide variety of institutions and to allow for broader institutional comparisons and a deeper triangulation of data.

*Survey dispersal*

One alumni relations professional from each Group A institution was emailed a letter introducing the project and inviting them to participate in the study by clicking on a link to SurveyMonkey (see Appendix C). Concurrently, the researcher emailed

the CASE Alumni-L listserv with an introduction to the project (see appendix D) and a link to a second survey, referred to as Survey B, that was identical to the survey dispersed to Group A (see appendix A). The emails to Group A and the Alumni-L listserv were resent 15 days later. The Group A survey was limited to receive 40 responses. The Group B survey featured a limit of 100 responses. Each survey was open to collect responses for exactly one month. All potential participants and survey respondents were invited to contact the researcher if they had questions, comments, or wanted to further discuss the topic of international alumni relations after completing the survey.

### *Survey Data*

The preliminary analysis of the survey data involved printing and reviewing all survey responses from Group A and Group B. As the Group B survey respondents were introduced to the survey via an email to a listserv, any response from institutions that did not meet the research parameters (i.e. located outside of the United States) was removed from the data set. During occurrences in which responses were written by the respondents, the responses were typed into a separate document and reviewed for common themes.

### *Coding*

The responses to Survey A and Survey B were coded by SurveyMonkey and imported into an Excel spread sheet. Given the importance of keeping the results divisible by response group, all responses to Survey A were coded as originating from the number one data set and all responses to Survey B were coded as originating from the number two data set.

*Statistical Analysis*

The responses to each question were analyzed and broken down by response rate percentage. The averages of each response were recorded and the most frequent response was noted. Given the responses, it became apparent that the correlation between variables, such as institution type and status of international alumni relations outreach might be significant. The institutional type (Land Grant, Liberal Arts, Category 1 and Category 2 research institutions) was cross tabulated against the other variables to determine if type had any relation to international alumni outreach and challenges. The variable of public vs. private distinction/institutional population was also cross tabulated against the other variables. Finally, the question regarding alumni relations office mission statement was cross tabulated against the other variables to determine if mission statements are a determining factor in the efforts of alumni offices to connect with international alumni.

*Limitations*

The data collection of this thesis had several limitations. Given that the email addresses for the alumni relations professionals in Group A were taken from institutional websites, there was no way to know if they were the correct people to contact. Some people who received email messages responded that they were not the correct people to contact and provided the contact information for the correct person. Also, Group B provided a challenge in that some members of the CASE Alumni-L listserv took the survey even though they were not from institutions in the United States. While this information is useful for a further discussion, the data from

institutions outside of the United States had to be removed from the data sets in which statistical analysis was performed.

### *Chapter summary*

This chapter began by explaining the rationale for this thesis; a study that identifies and quantifies the challenges faced by four year colleges and universities in their international alumni relations efforts. The methodology used in the creation of the survey instrument, which measures the challenges facing alumni relations offices in maintaining contact with international alumni, was then explained. A description of the identification of survey participants and separation of two survey populations was then elaborated. The Methods of survey dispersal were reviewed, followed by the survey analysis techniques including preliminary and statistical analysis and coding methods. The limitations of the survey methods were then discussed. The results of the survey will be presented in the following chapter.

## Chapter Three: Results

### *Rationale*

The nearly half a million international students currently studying toward degrees in the United States will someday have the opportunity to adopt a role as international alumni of their alma mater. As a result of this ever growing alumni population, the work of institutional alumni relations offices is progressively more important as American institutions respond to globalization and look to increase donations from abroad (Basinger, 1999; Havlik & Ryan, 2007; Worth, 2002). Given that international alumni generally live on a different continent than the alma mater, the alumni relations officers face a unique challenge in working with this alumni population. Alumni professionals also face the fact that many cultures do not have a tradition of keeping in touch with the alma mater which can hinder their work with the international alumni population. A literature review of this subject provides little insight into this topic due to a lack of published academic works.

The purpose of this study is to identify and quantify the challenges faced by four year colleges and universities in the United States in cultivating successful international alumni relations. Two research questions were formulated based on informal interviews with alumni professionals and a literature review regarding international students, alumni relations and international alumni relations. The research questions were: What are the challenges of developing and maintaining an international alumni connection? What have been the outcomes of these efforts? These questions motivated the creation of a nine question survey instrument which was

dispersed to two groups of alumni professionals at four year institutions in the United States.

### *Data Collection*

Two groups of alumni professionals in the United States were surveyed via an online survey in order to identify the challenges faced by four year colleges and universities in cultivating successful international alumni relations. The Survey A Group consisted of alumni professionals working in the alumni offices of the U.S. institutions with the top forty highest numbers of international students. Members of this group were emailed an introduction to the project and invited to participate in the survey via a SurveyMonkey link. The Survey Group B consisted of alumni professionals that are members of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Alumni-L listserv. The Alumni-L listserv was emailed an introduction to this project and sent a link to a second identical survey. Both surveys were open to receive responses for exactly one month.

### *Introduction to Results*

#### *Responding Institutional Information*

A total of fifty-nine responses were collected through Survey A and Survey B. The breakdown of institution type is shown in figure 3.1. By far, the highest number of responses (42%) was provided by alumni professionals working at large public colleges or universities with over 10,000 students.

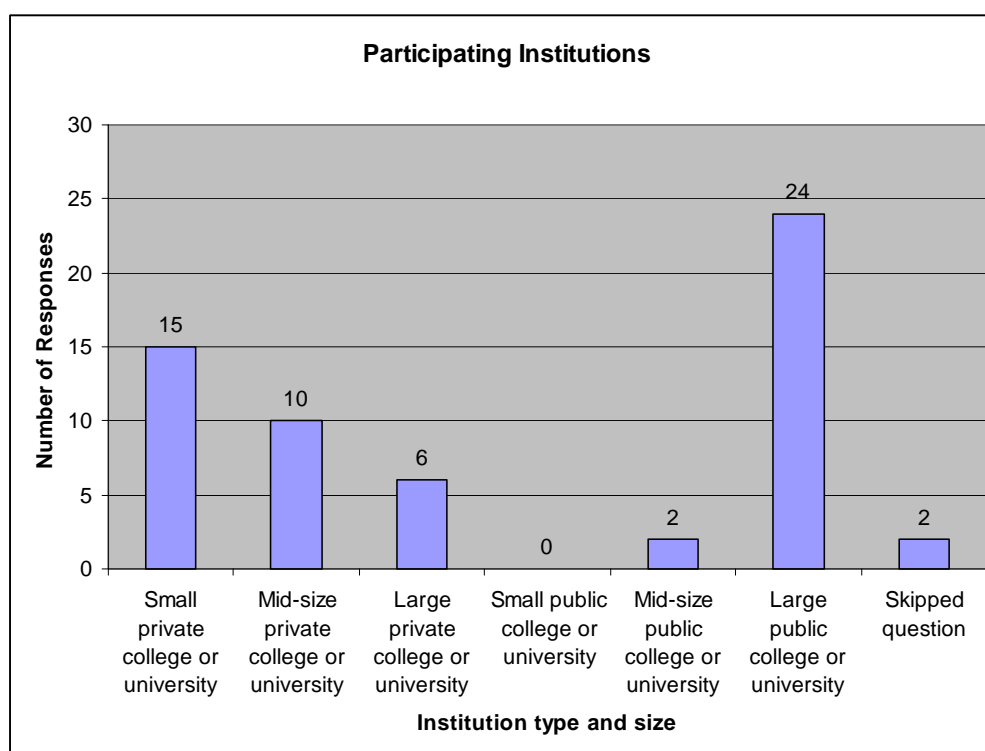


figure 3.1

Of these responding institutions, 14 self identified as land grant institutions, 25 were defined as liberal arts colleges or universities, nine were defined as category 1 research institutions and two were defined as category 2 research institutions. Twelve alumni professionals were unsure of how to categorize their institutions.

#### *International Alumni Relations*

When asked if their institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks, or affinity groups, all participants provided a yes or no response. Almost 73% of survey respondents reported that their institution engages in international alumni outreach activities (see figure 3.2).

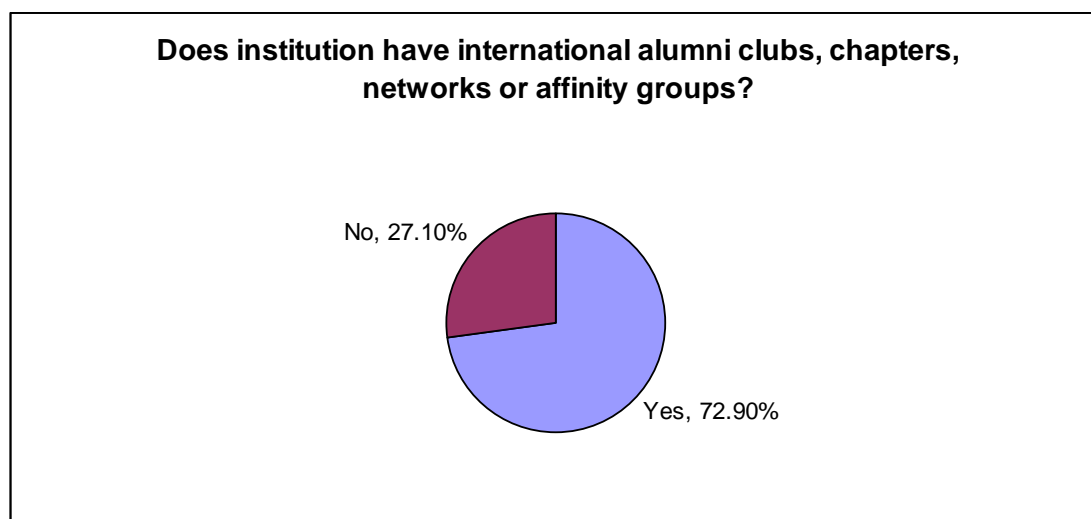


figure 3.2

The respondents who indicated a presence of international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups were then asked to report on the formation of international alumni organizations affiliated with their institution. In the majority of cases, the Alumni Relations Office took the lead in formulating organizations for its international alumni population (see figure 3.3). However, it does appear that international alumni and alumni relations offices often collaborate to begin alumni organizations abroad.

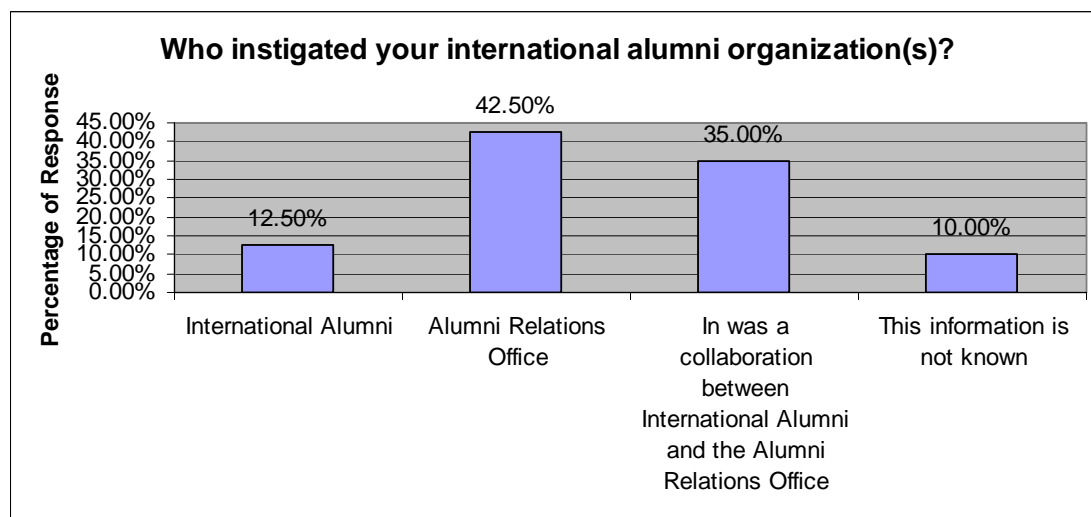


figure 3.3

*Challenges facing international alumni relations offices*

Alumni offices face certain challenges when supporting outreach to international alumni. Survey respondents were asked to review a list of challenges and rank the severity of challenges they face at their institution as being Very Challenging, Somewhat challenging, Not challenging or Not applicable. A breakdown of challenges and percentage of responses is shown in figure four through figure 13 displayed in Appendix E. It is notable that the majority of challenges were ranked as either being Very or Somewhat challenging. Only three categories of challenges received notable numbers of rankings as being Not challenging: Getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts; Motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution; and Focusing on specific regions of the world while knowing you are leaving other regions out (figures 3.5, 3.6, 3.12).

The means for contacting international alumni was then surveyed. Respondents were given a list of contact methods and were asked to select methods that applied to their institution. A breakdown of responses is displayed in figure 3.14.

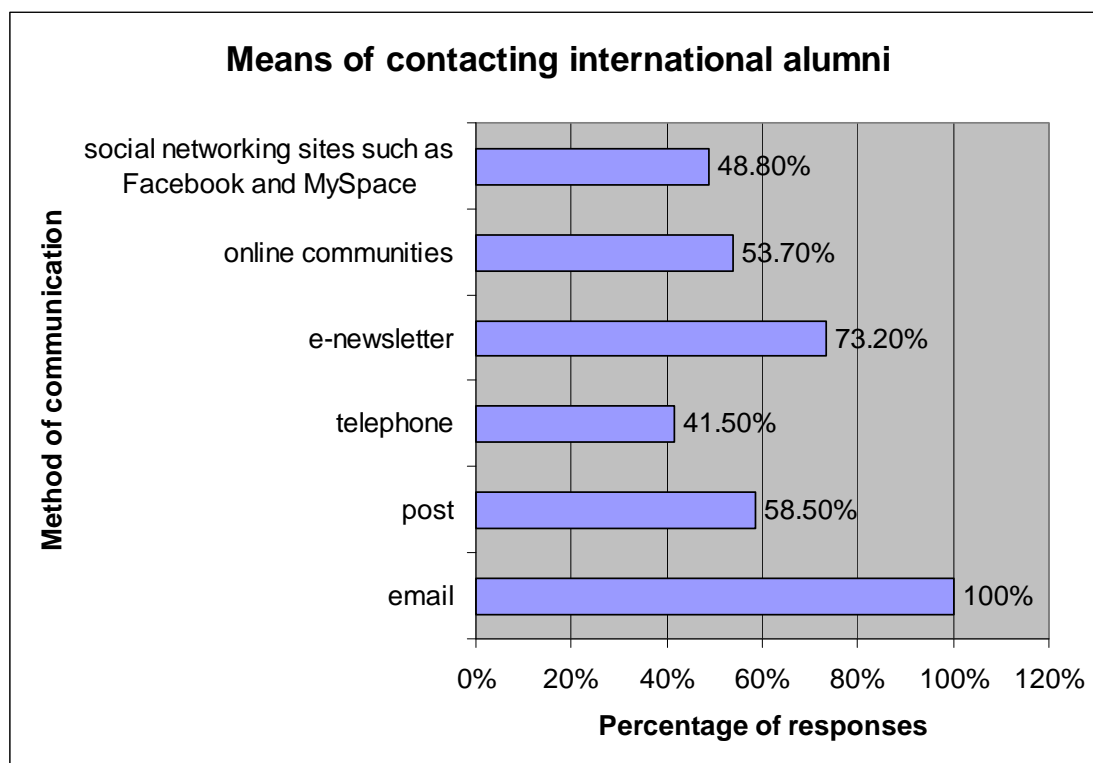


figure 3.14

Survey respondents were then asked to identify their most frequently used method of contacting international alumni out of the same list of methods in the previous question. Around 83% of responding institutions use email as their primary means of communicating with international alumni. E-newsletter was the next most frequently used communication method with 12.2% taking advantage of this method. The telephone and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace were the most common communication method for 2.4 % of the survey respondents.

#### *Mission statement*

In order to understand the rationale for undertaking international alumni outreach efforts, responding institutions were asked if the mission statements of their alumni offices include international alumni relations as a component. Surprisingly,

more than half of the respondents (52.6%) stated that their mission statement does not include international alumni relations as a component. Eighteen respondents reported that their office does include international alumni outreach in its mission. Nine respondents reported that their alumni office does not have a mission statement.

All survey respondents were asked to elaborate on the most favorable outcomes of their international alumni relations work. Their responses are featured in the individual survey results later in this chapter.

### *Cross tabulating results*

*Mission statement in relation to international alumni outreach.* It was deemed necessary to further investigate the relationship between the mission statement of the alumni relations office and whether or not the institution undertakes international alumni outreach efforts. I hypothesized that if the mission statement of the alumni relations office mentioned international alumni outreach then it would be likely that those same institutions would have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. However, this was not necessarily the case. Of the eighteen alumni relations offices with international alumni relations included in their mission statement, seventeen had international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Of the thirty institutions whose alumni offices do not mention international alumni outreach in their mission statements, nineteen have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Nine respondents reported that their alumni office has no mission statement, and despite that, 5 of those offices participate in international alumni outreach.

*Institutional size and type in relation to international alumni outreach.* The relationship between institutional size and public or private distinction, and how it was categorized was explored in relation to international alumni outreach efforts. Of the 15 small private colleges or universities (less than 3,000 students), six had international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Seventy percent of the mid-sized private colleges and universities (3,000 to 10,000 students) were identified as having international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. All (100%) of the large private colleges or universities (over 10,000 students) participating in the study were identified as having international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups.

The responses from alumni professionals at public institutions were then explored. As no alumni professionals affiliated with small public institutions (less than 3,000 students) participated, a representation of the alumni outreach efforts of institutions of this size is unknown. Fifty percent of the participating mid-size public institutions (3,000 to 10,000 students) responded as having international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Of the large public universities or colleges (over 10,000 students) that were represented in the study, almost 90% have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups.

The institutional category (Land grant, Liberal Arts, Category One Research and Category Two Research) was then investigated in relation to international alumni outreach efforts as shown in figure 3.15. Interestingly, one hundred percent of institutions identified as being in the Land Grant category had international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. The one responding alumni professional

from a Category Two Research Institution also provided a one hundred percent yes response to that question. Almost ninety percent of responding Category One Research Institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Sixty percent of alumni professionals from responding Liberal Arts institutions identified as having these forms of international alumni outreach.

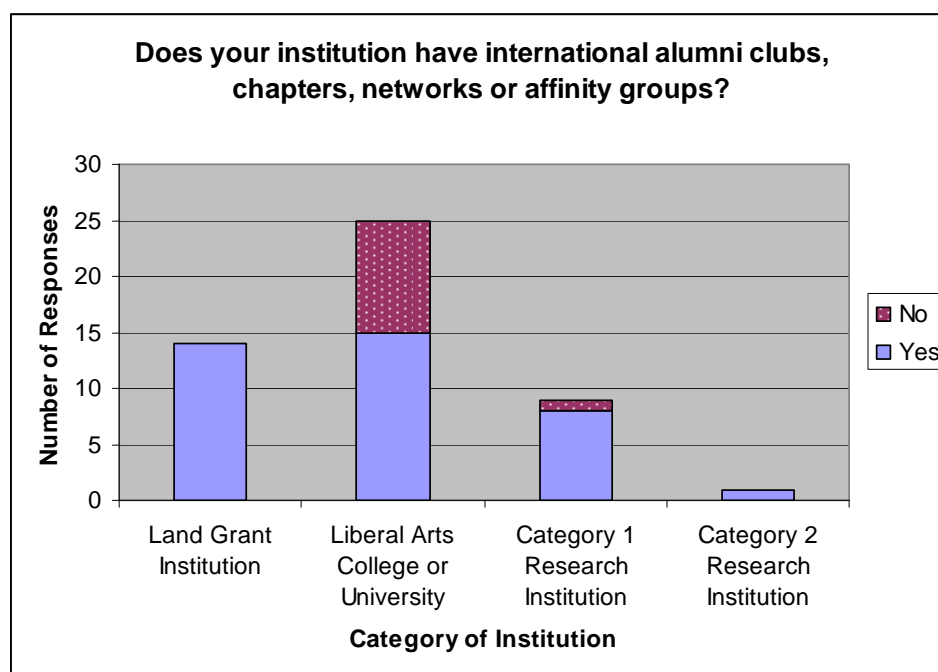


figure 3.15

### *Survey A Group and Survey B Group*

In order to determine if institutions with high populations of international students participate in more international outreach endeavors, the survey responses were then divided into two groups. Survey A Group results were solicited from alumni professionals at the forty four year institutions with the highest populations of international students in the United States. Survey B Group results were solicited from alumni professionals at four year American institutions who are members of the

Council for the Advancement and Support of Higher Education (CASE) via the CASE Alumni-L listserv.

### *Survey A Results*

*Responding Institutional Information.* Survey A garnered 21 responses out of the 40 institutions that were approached, resulting in a response rate of 53%. Eighty-five percent of the responding institutions were large public colleges or universities (over ten thousand students). Ten percent of survey respondents were mid-size private colleges or universities and the remaining five percent were affiliated with large private colleges or universities. One respondent wrote in that they are affiliated with a large institution that is both public and private.

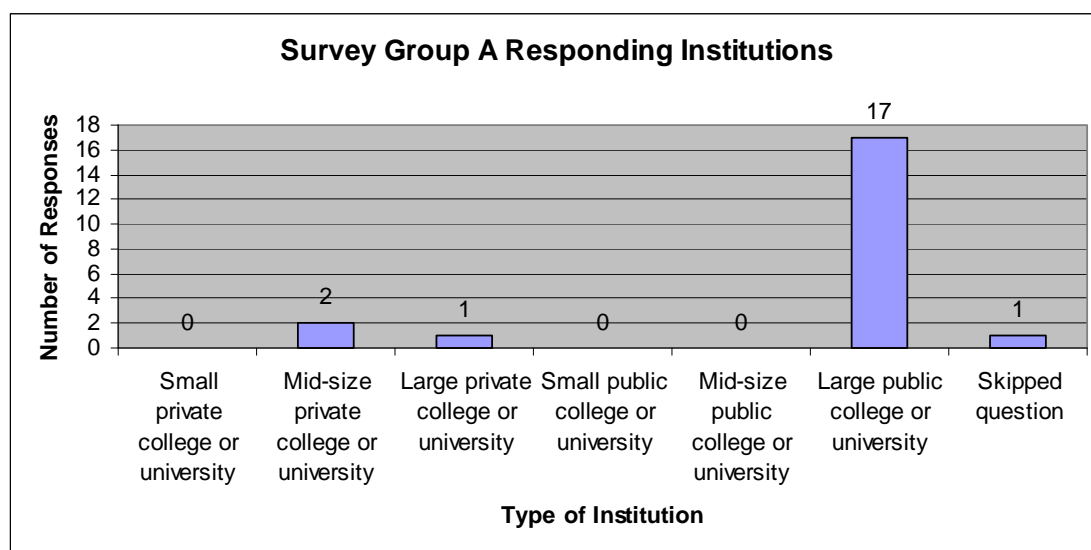


figure 3.16

When asked to categorize their institution, 52% reported that they are Land Grant Institutions. Roughly 24 percent of responding institutions were categorized as Liberal Arts Colleges or Universities. Twenty-four percent were labeled as Category 1

Research Institutions. Three Survey A respondents were unsure of how to categorize their institutions and two wrote in their own categories.

*International Alumni Relations.* The Survey A respondents were then asked if their institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Slightly more than 95% of responding institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Of those institutions with international alumni organizations, 47% of the organizations were instigated through collaboration between international alumni and the international alumni relations office at the institutions (see figure 3.17). Twenty-six percent were created by the alumni relations offices, 16% were created solely by the international alumni and 11% of respondents were unsure of who instigated the creation of their international alumni organizations.

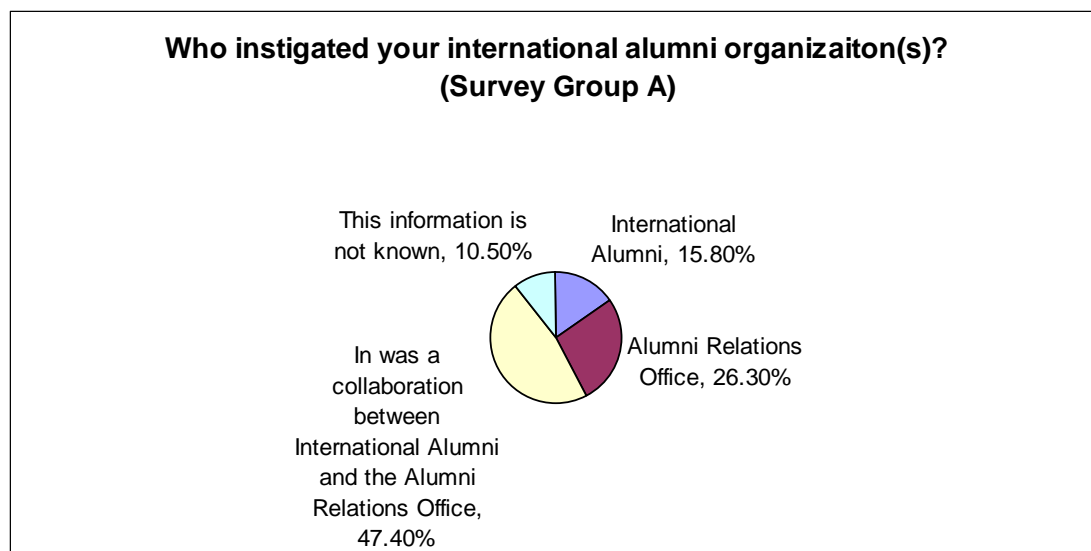


figure 3.17

*Mission statement.* The relationship between mission statement of the alumni relations organization and international alumni outreach efforts was then investigated. Forty-five percent of the alumni relations offices at responding institutions had

mission statements which included international alumni relations as a component, 45% did not include international alumni relations as a component and 10% of responding institutions did not have a mission statement.

Survey A respondents were given the opportunity to explain the international clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups affiliated with their institutions. Three participants responded with statements regarding the purpose of their international alumni outreach and practices to do so. Two of the responses are directly quoted below:

There is currently an emphasis on reconnecting with our international alumni. The alumni association office of outreach & engagement in conjunction with the Office of International Affairs is working together on student and alumni programming. The purpose is to establish a stronger connection with our international students so that they are engaged alumni that will help strengthen our international reach and aide in student recruitment.

We establish or strengthen affinity groups in overseas markets which have a significant population of graduates and high affinity individuals (alumni and student's parents, donors, visiting scholars, friends, etc.). Since we are a public institution with very little funding, we select markets to actively support based on a number of criteria. For other markets we deliver a tool kit and platform for planning and communicating with each other.

#### *Challenges facing international alumni relations offices*

Responding institutions were asked to identify the magnitude of certain challenges facing their international alumni relations efforts by ranking them as being Very Challenging, Somewhat Challenging, Not Challenging or Not Applicable. The challenges and responses are displayed throughout the chapter in figures 3.18 through 3.27. Interestingly, all of the responses to this question leaned toward being Very or Somewhat Challenging.

*Very Challenging Rankings.* Four challenges were most often ranked as being Very Challenging; maintaining current contact information for international alumni (figure 3.18), funding international alumni outreach (such as postage) (figure 3.22), measuring return on investment for outreach to international alumni (figure 3.24) and staffing dedicated to international alumni outreach (figure 3.25).

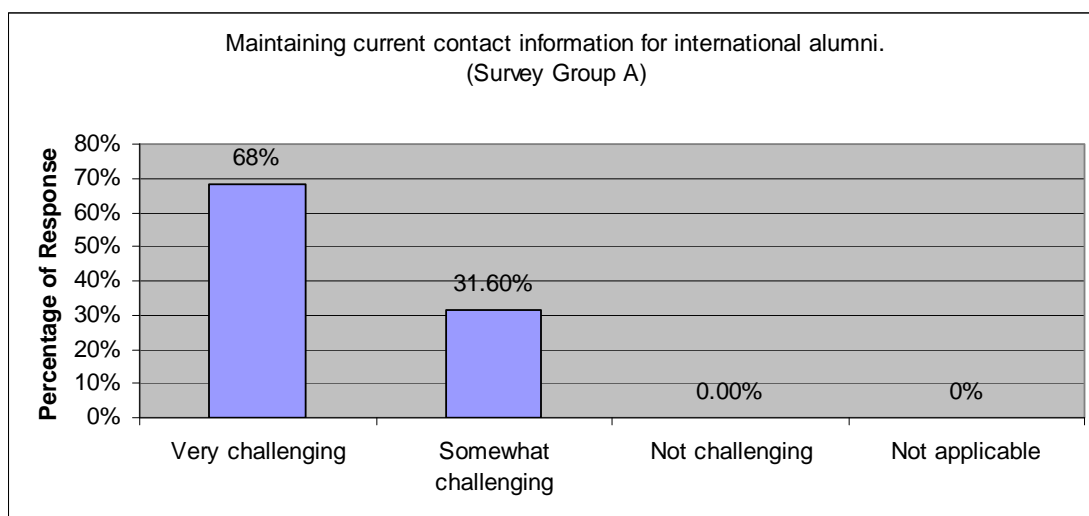


Figure 3.18

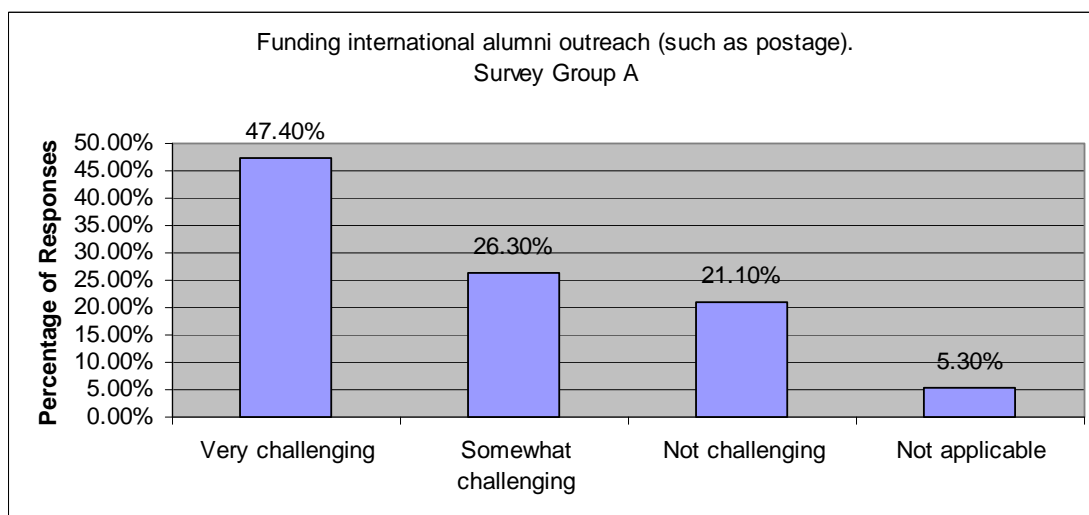


Figure 3.22

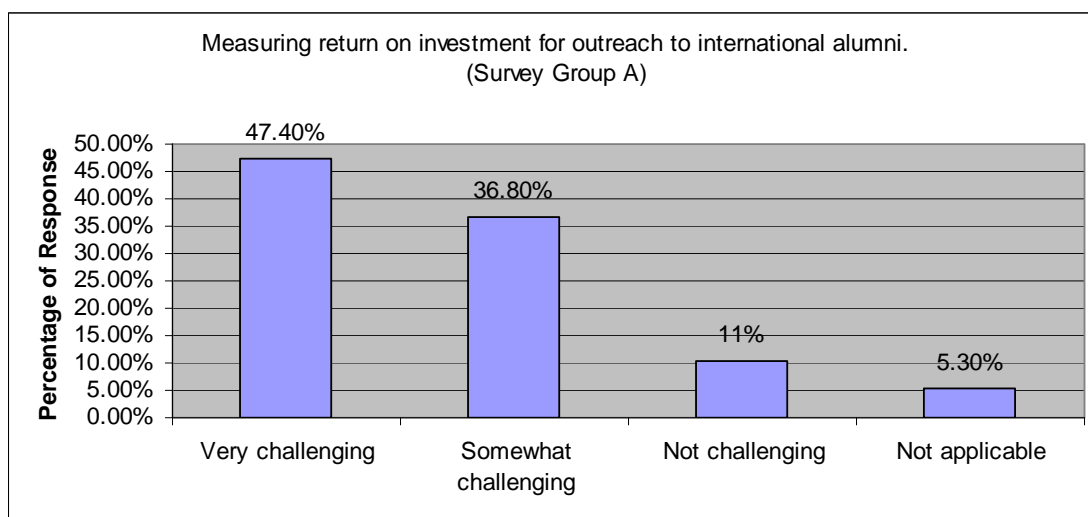


Figure 3.24

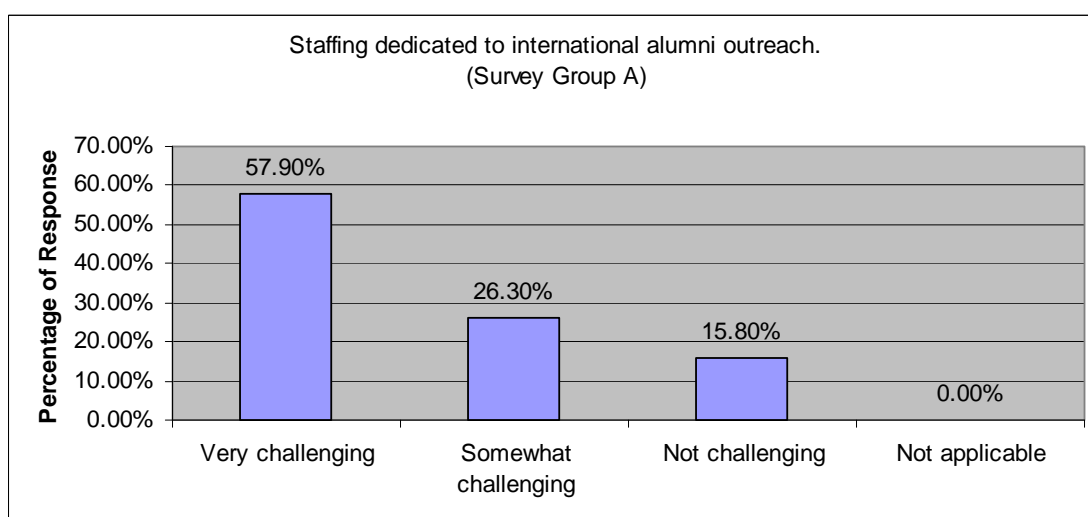


Figure 3.25

*Somewhat challenging rankings.* Five responses were most frequently ranked as being Somewhat Challenging; motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution (figure 3.20), understanding the alumni services desired by the international alumni population (figure 3.21), creating and maintaining international alumni relationships with limited budgets (figure 3.23), focusing on specific regions of the world while knowing you are leaving other regions

out (figure 3.26) and integrating international alumni initiatives with campus-wide strategic plans (figure 3.27).

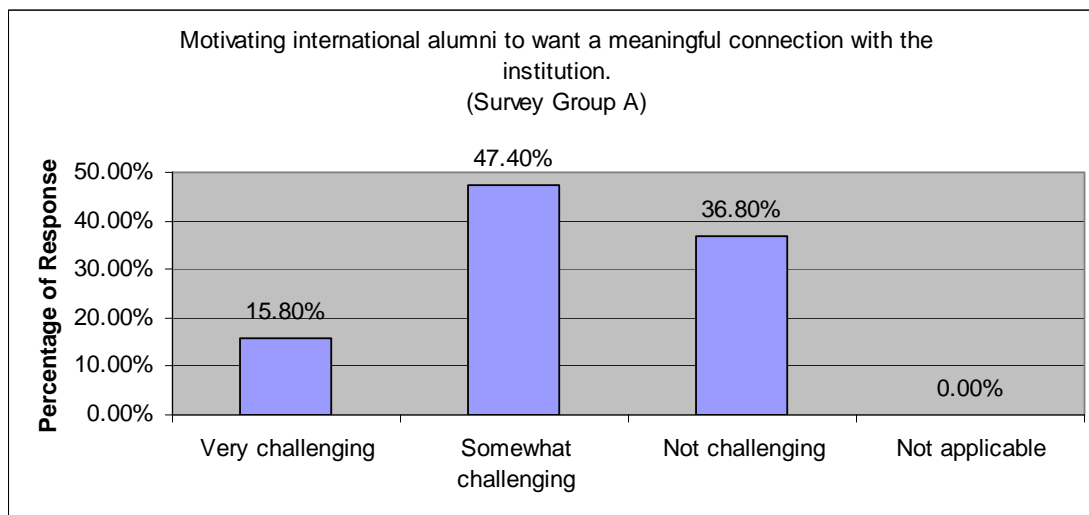


Figure 3.20

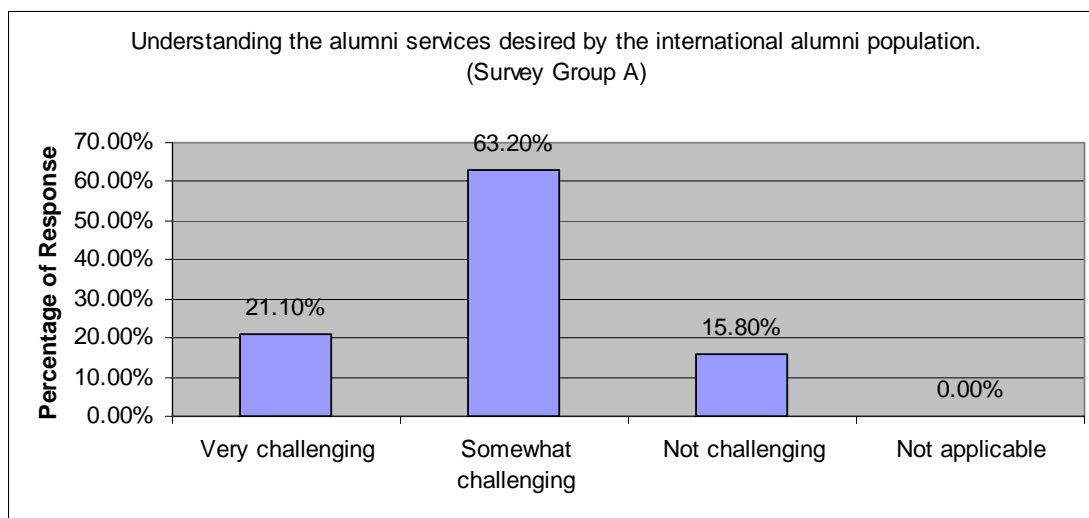


Figure 3.21

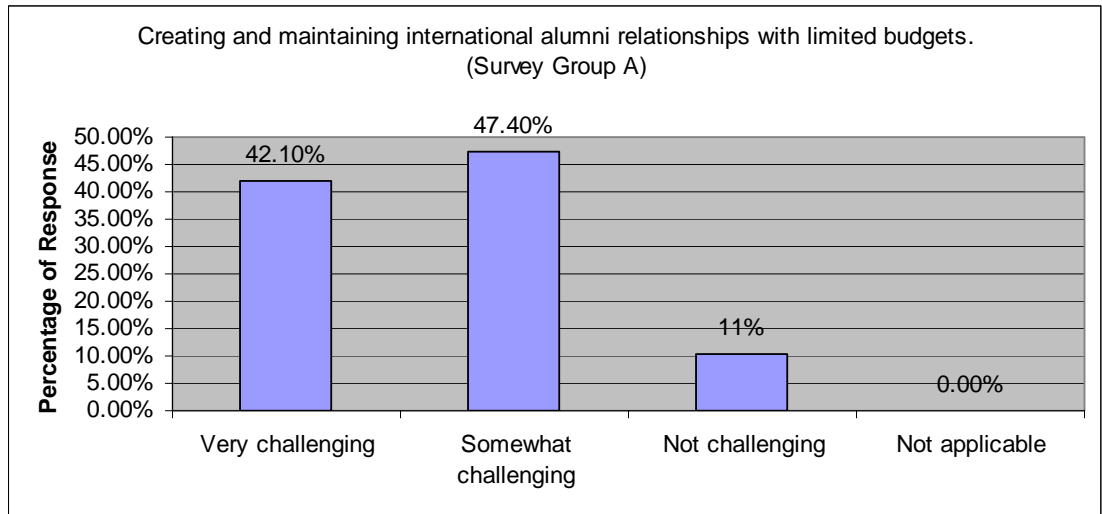


Figure 3.23

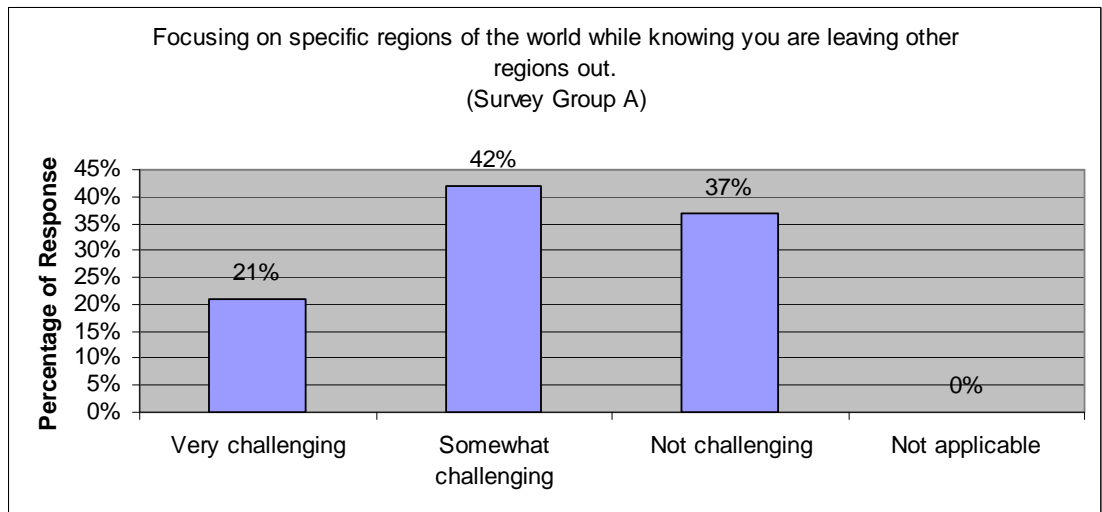


Figure 3.26

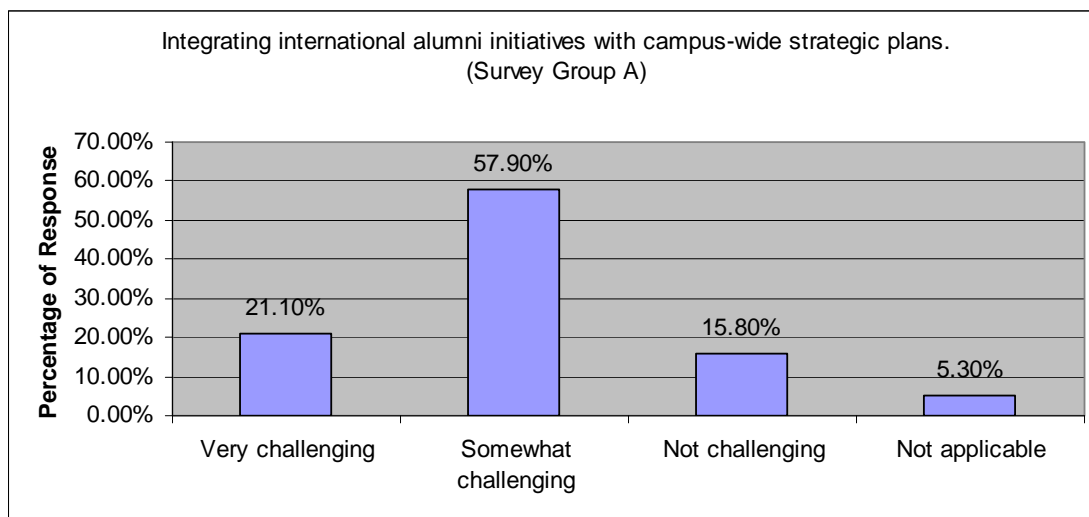


Figure 3.27

*Somewhat challenging and not challenging rankings.* Getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts were equally most often ranked as being both Somewhat Challenging and Not Challenging (figure 3.19).

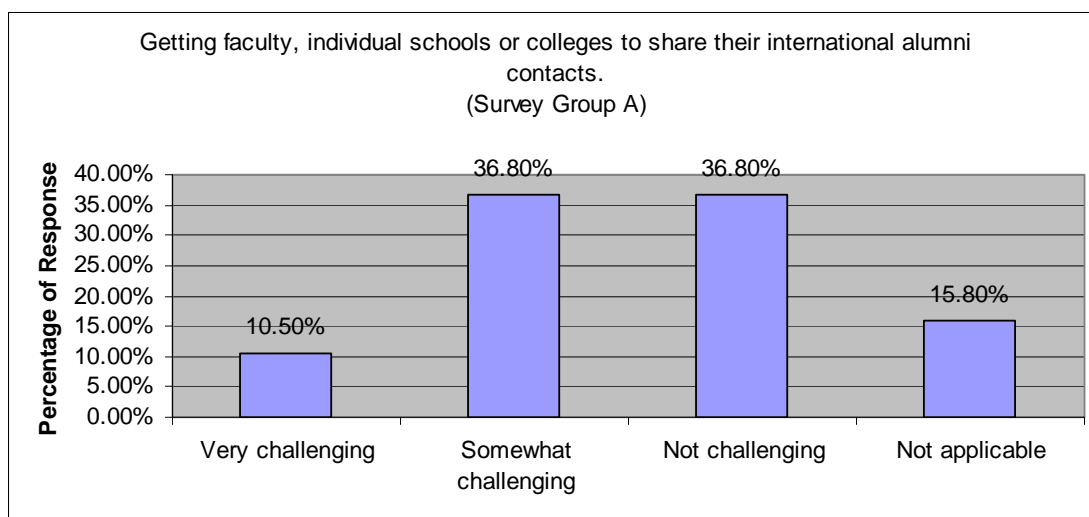


Figure 3.19

*Not challenging rankings.* Slightly over one third of respondents noted that getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts was Not Challenging (figure 3.19). Motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution was also ranked as being Not Challenging by a third of the respondents (figure 3.20). Not challenging was also the ranking chosen by a third of the participants in regards to the challenge of focusing on specific regions of the world while knowing you are leaving other regions out (figure 3.26).

*Not Applicable rankings.* Three respondents selected Not Applicable to the ranking regarding getting faculty individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts. One respondent ranked funding international alumni outreach as being Not Applicable. Not Applicable was also selected as one response regarding measuring return on investment for outreach to international alumni. Integrating international alumni initiatives with campus-wide strategic plans was also found to be Not Applicable by one respondent.

#### *Methods for communicating with international alumni*

Survey A respondents were asked to select their means of communicating with international alumni from a list containing the following options: email, post, telephone, e-newsletter, online communities and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace. One hundred percent of responding institutions use email to communicate with international alumni. Almost 60% contact their international alumni by post. E-newsletters are used to communicate with international alumni by 78.9% of responding institutions. Online communities are used by just over 63%. Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace are used to communicate with

international alumni by almost half of the institutions surveyed. Telephone is used by 36.8% of responding institutions, which means it is the least used option for communication (see figure 3.28).

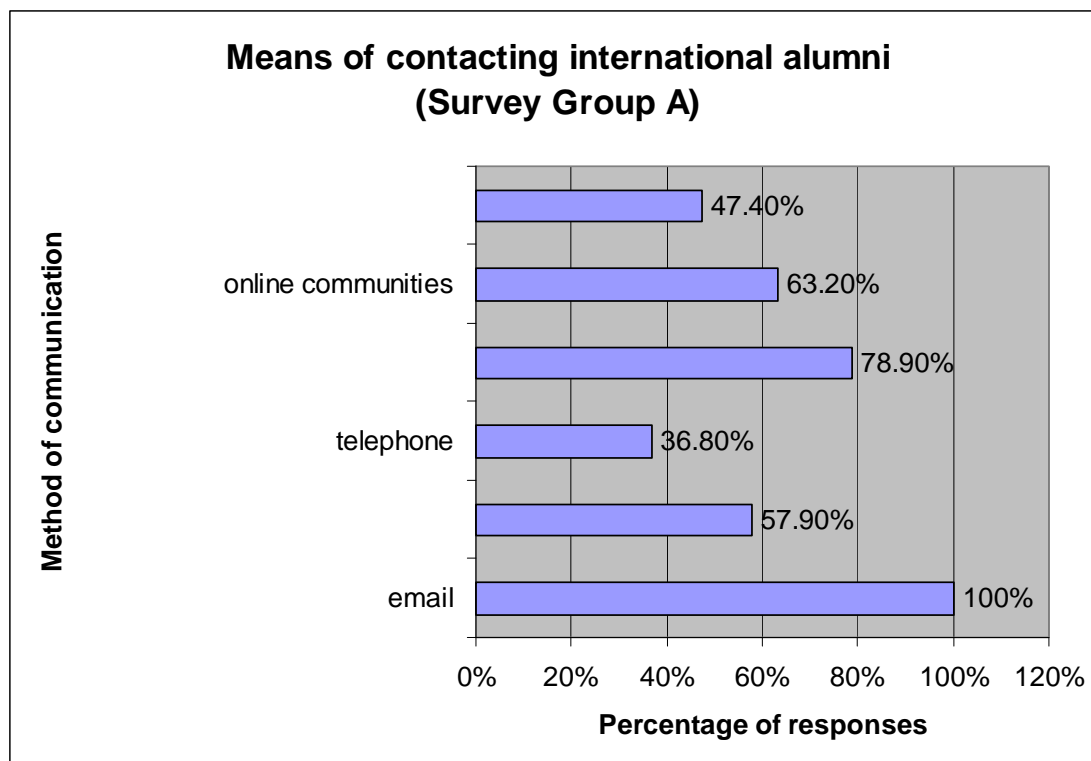


figure 3.28

Responding institutions were then asked to identify their most frequently used method of communication with international alumni from the same list of options. Almost 80% of respondents use email as the most common method of communication. E-newsletters were the next most favored method of communication with 10.5% of respondents identifying it as the primary form of contact with international alumni. The telephone and social networking websites such as MySpace and Facebook both were used as the primary means of communication by 5.3% of the responding

institutions. Neither post nor online communities were identified by any institutions as the most frequently used method of international alumni communication.

### *Favorable Outcomes*

All respondents were asked to identify the favorable outcomes of their international alumni relations work. Ten participants provided written responses to this prompt and the following frequent themes emerged:

- Increased alumni involvement
- Increased engagement of trustees
- Stronger connection in some areas of the world
- Enhanced collaboration between alumni in foreign countries and faculty
- International alumni feel more encouraged and respected by the alma mater
- Increasing number of international students applying to the institution
- Alumni can socialize as a group away from the university
- International alumni events are planned and coordinated by alumni volunteers in country

The following response captures the enthusiasm some alumni professionals feel toward their international alumni outreach: “A favorable outcome of our international alumni relations works is international alumni giving back to the alma mater via gifts, time, mention, enthusiasm, internships, exchange opportunities, promotion and greater integration with alumni base at large.”

### *Survey B Results*

Survey B received 42 responses out of the 100 possible resulting in an initial response rate of forty-two percent. However, three responses came from institutions outside of the United States and one came from a small private American boarding school. The responses from these institutions were removed from the survey data as the survey population was supposed to be limited to alumni professionals working at

four-year colleges or universities in the United States. Because of this, Survey B garnered 38% usable responses from alumni relations professionals.

*Responding Institutional Information.* The majority (37.8%) of alumni professionals who responded to the Survey B prompt stated that they were from small private colleges or universities. The next highest response rate came from alumni professionals associated with mid-size private colleges or universities, with 24.3% of respondents identifying with this institutional type. The third most prevalent institutional type to respond was large public colleges or universities with 18.9%. Large private colleges or universities made up 13.5% of the survey responses. Alumni personnel from mid-size public colleges or universities provided two responses. No responses were provided by alumni professionals from small public colleges or universities. See figure 3.29 for a table responding institution size and affiliation.

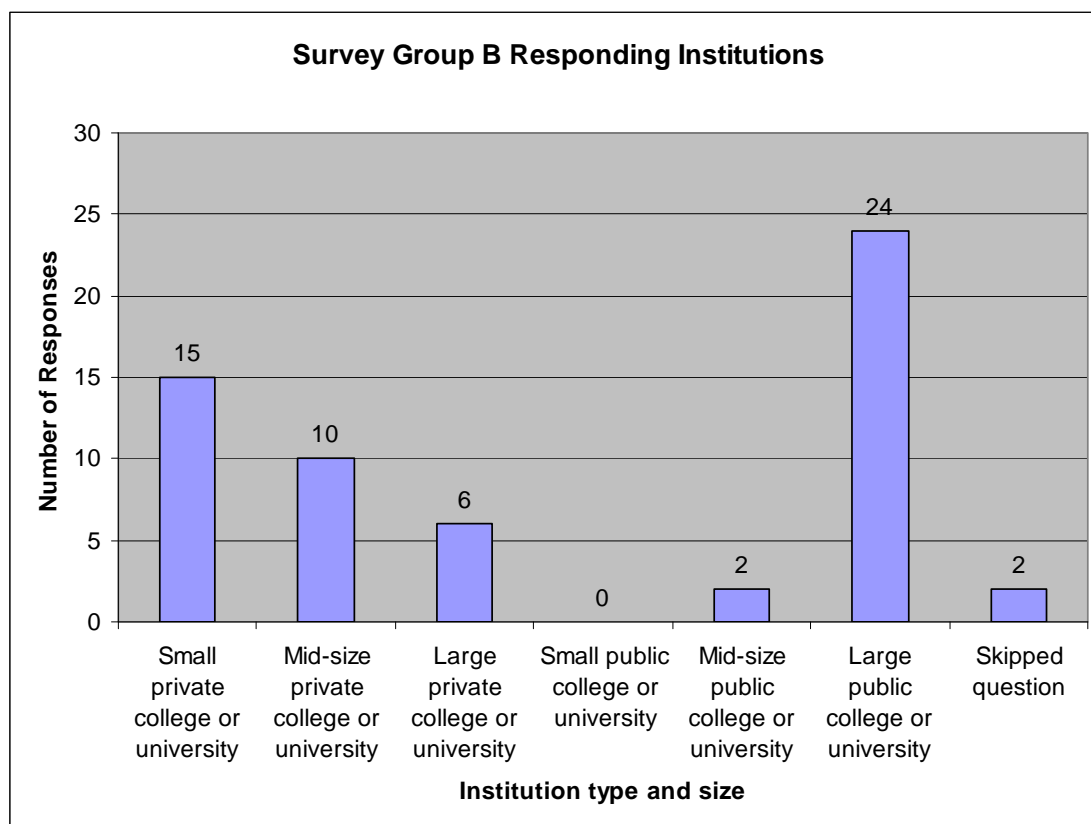


figure 3.29

The Survey B respondents were then asked to categorize their type of institution. Of the responding institutions, a little more than half (52.6%) were categorized as liberal arts colleges or universities. Just over 13% were labeled as category 1 research institution. Five percent of responding alumni professionals represented land grant institutions. One respondent labeled the institution as being a category 2 research institution. Ten respondents were unsure of how to categorize their institutions and five respondents chose “other” as the category of institution.

*International Alumni Relations.* When asked if the institution has international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups, 61% of respondents selected yes and 39% of respondents selected no (see figure 3.30).

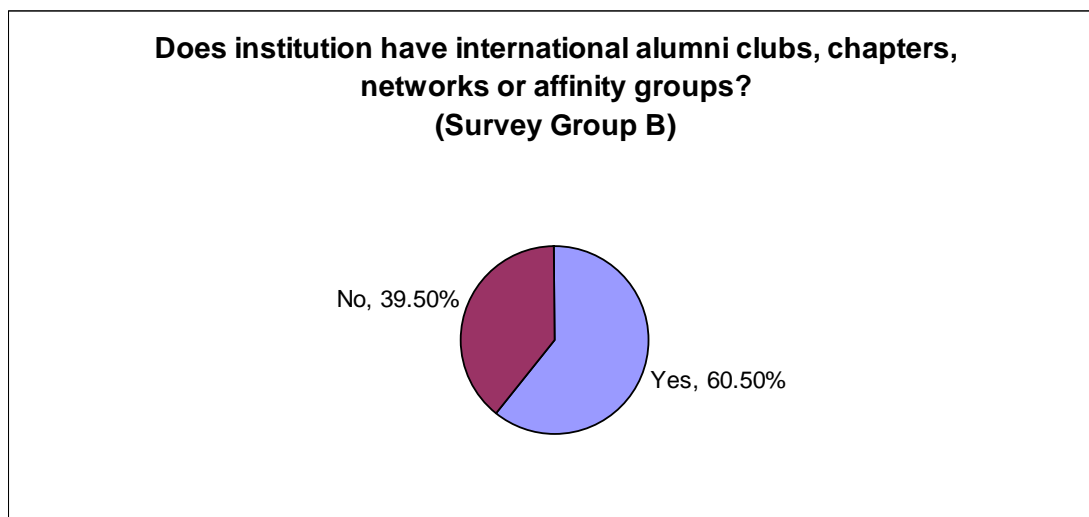


figure 3.30

Alumni professionals responding to Survey B were prompted to explain their international alumni outreach efforts if deemed necessary. Respondents described their international alumni populations and explained attempts to establish overseas groups and many made mention of being in the process of creating or expanding programs.

The following quote provides good example of the responses:

Our school has unofficial alumni associations in Korea and Japan. These groups were started by the alumni without the school's knowledge. We are a new alumni program and are now just starting to work with those groups to reach as many alumni as possible in those countries and to connect those groups with the university. We have traveled to Korea twice so far and are going to Korea and Japan for alumni events and meetings in October 2008.

The Survey B respondents who stated that they have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups question were then asked to explain the founding of their international alumni outreach efforts; specifically if the efforts were instigated by international alumni, the International Alumni Relations office, or if it was a collaboration between the two groups (see figure 3.31).

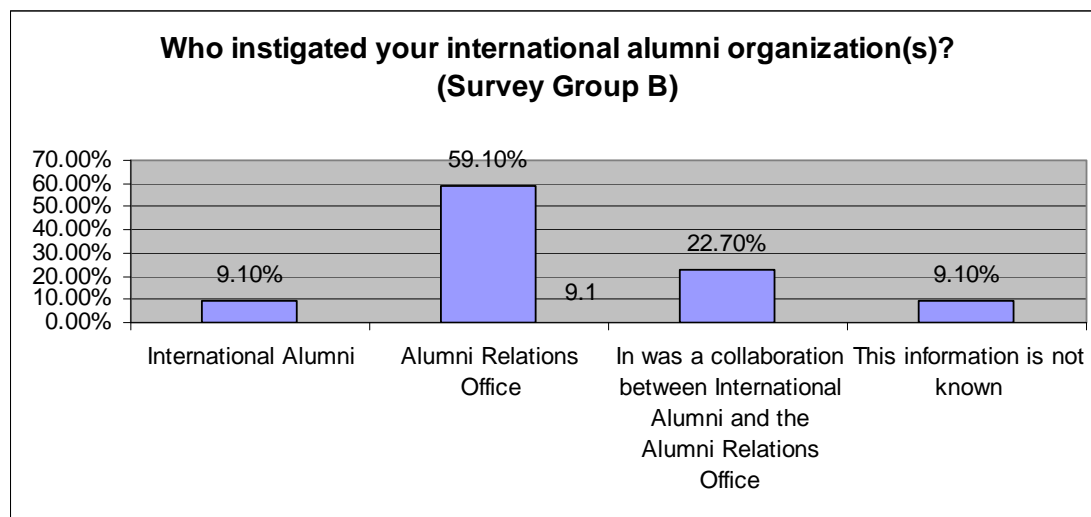


figure 3.31

Of the institutions that have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups, slightly less than 60 percent of them were instigated by the alumni relations office at the college or university. Twenty-two percent of respondents stated that it was a collaborative venture between the alumni relations office and international alumni themselves and nine percent stated that the international alumni instigated the international alumni outreach efforts. Nine percent of the respondents were unsure of who instigated their international alumni outreach efforts.

Regarding the inclusion of international alumni outreach efforts in the mission statements of the alumni offices, 56% of respondents stated that their alumni offices did not include international alumni efforts in their mission statement. Twenty-eight percent of responding alumni offices did include international alumni in the office mission. Slightly fewer than 20% of alumni professionals stated that their offices did not have mission statements.

### *Challenges facing international alumni relations offices*

Exactly like the Survey A respondents, Survey B respondents were asked to identify the magnitude of certain challenges that face their institution during their international alumni relations efforts by ranking them as being Very Challenging, Somewhat Challenging, Not Challenging or Not Applicable. See figure 3.32 through figure 3.41 for challenges and responses. Almost all of the respondents identified the various challenges they face in their international alumni efforts as being Very challenging or Somewhat challenging.

*Very challenging rankings.* Three challenges were most frequently found to be Very Challenging: Maintaining current contact information for international alumni (figure 3.32), Measuring return on investment for outreach to international alumni (figure 3.38), and Staffing dedicated to international alumni outreach (figure 3.39).

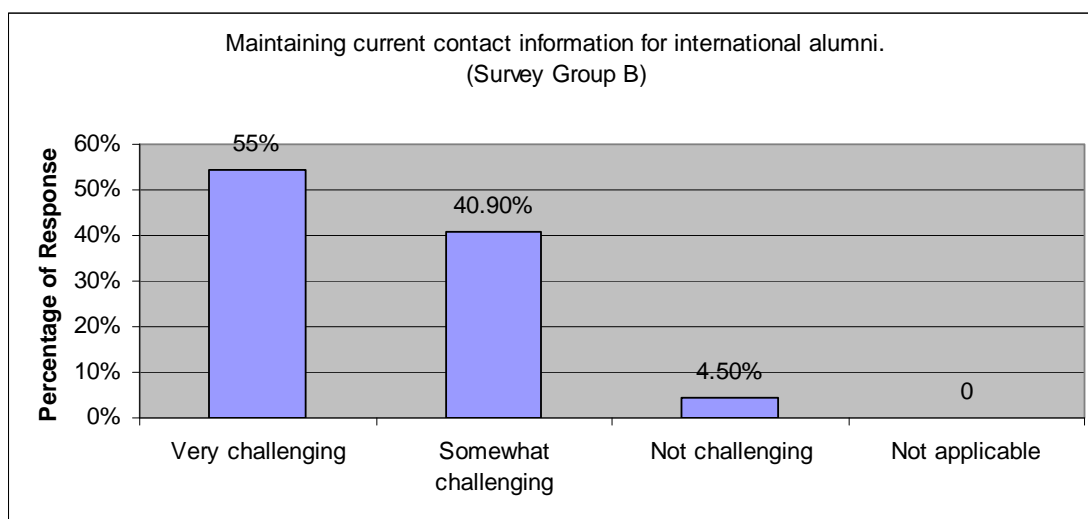


Figure 3.32

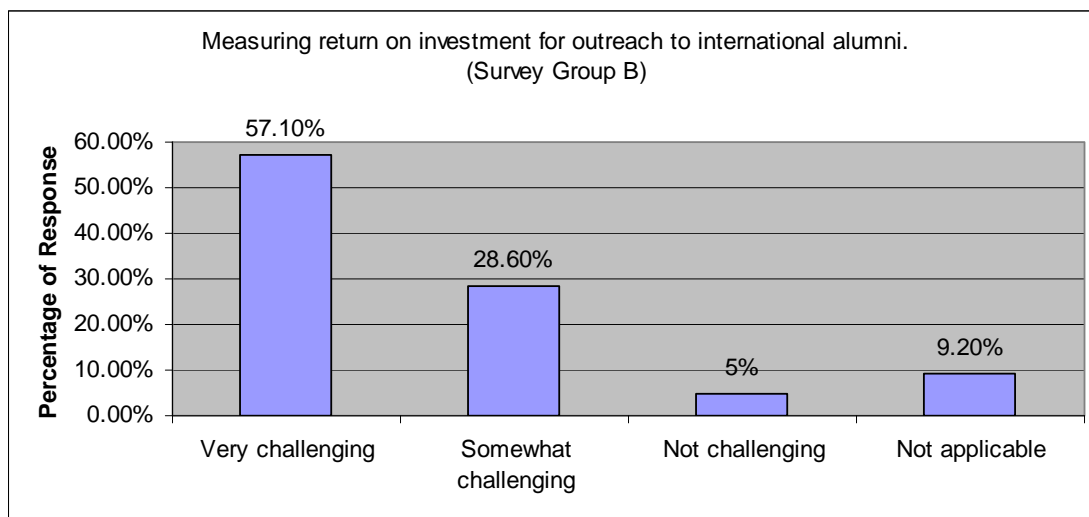


Figure 3.38

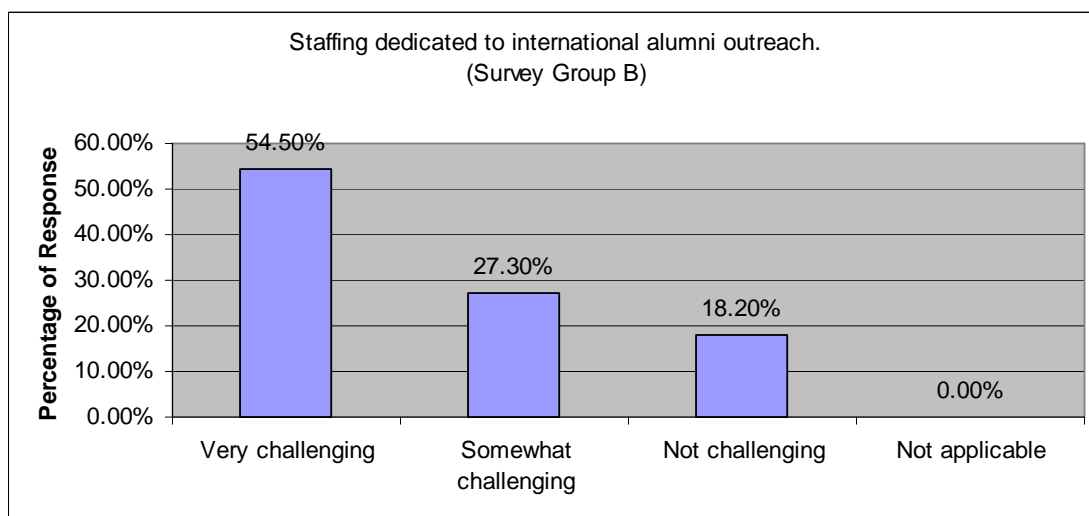


Figure 3.39

*Somewhat challenging rankings.* The majority of respondents found five aspects of international alumni outreach to be Somewhat Challenging. Getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts (figure 3.33), motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution (figure 3.34), and understanding the alumni services desired by the international alumni population (figure 3.35) were found to be somewhat challenging by 50% of the

respondents. The challenges of focusing on specific regions of the world while knowing you are leaving others out (figure 3.40) and integrating international alumni initiatives with campus-wide strategic plans (figure 3.41) were found to be Somewhat challenging by 45% of the responding alumni affair professionals.

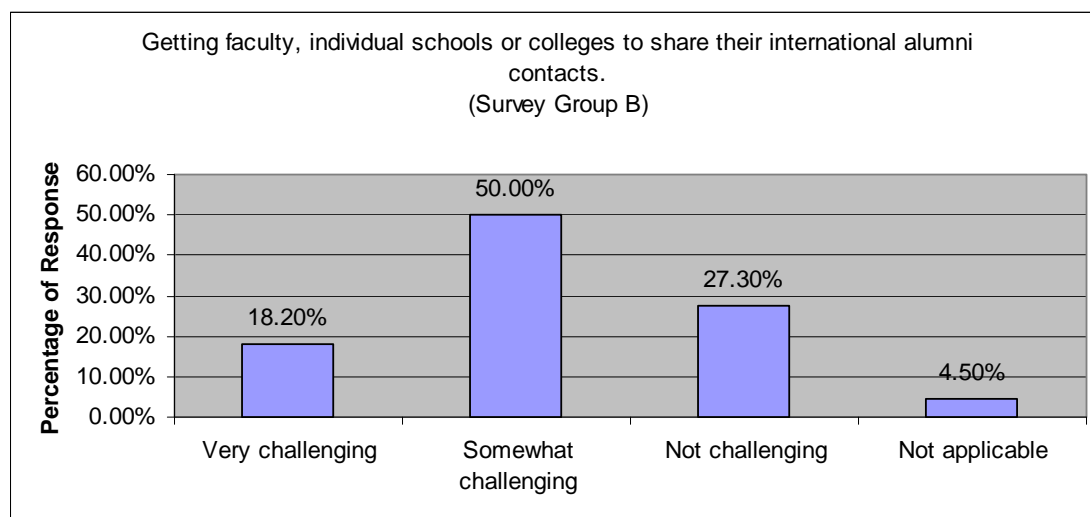


Figure 3.33

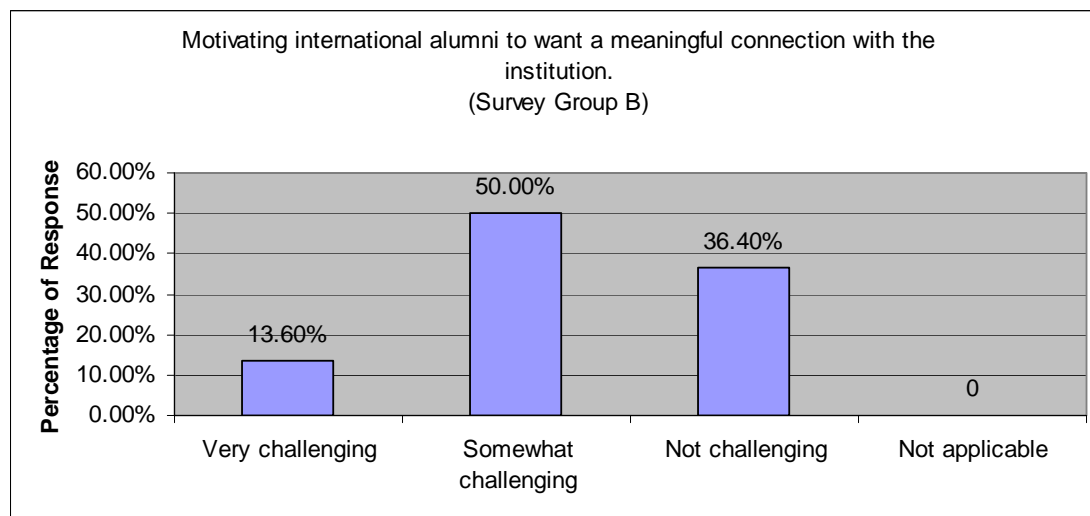


Figure 3.34

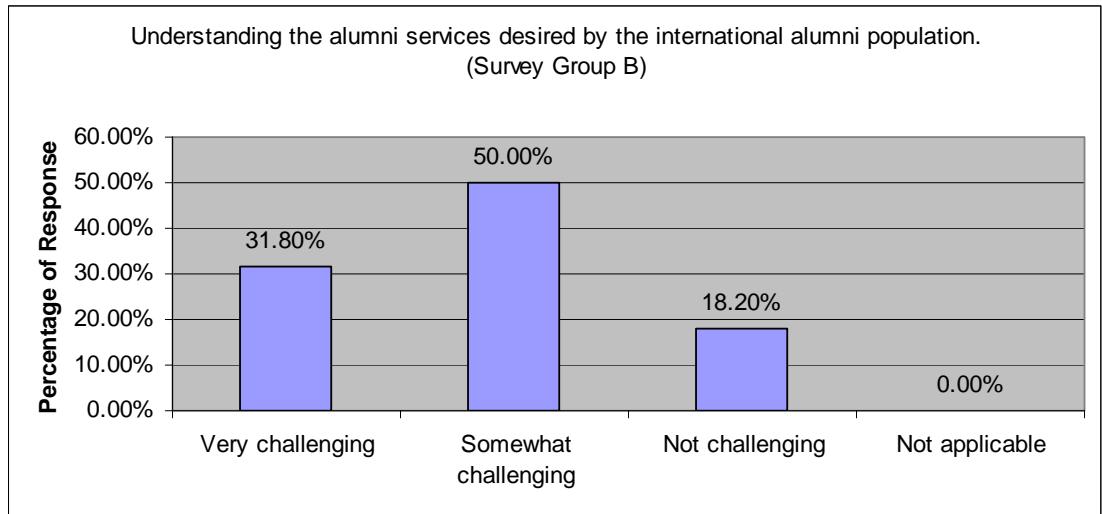


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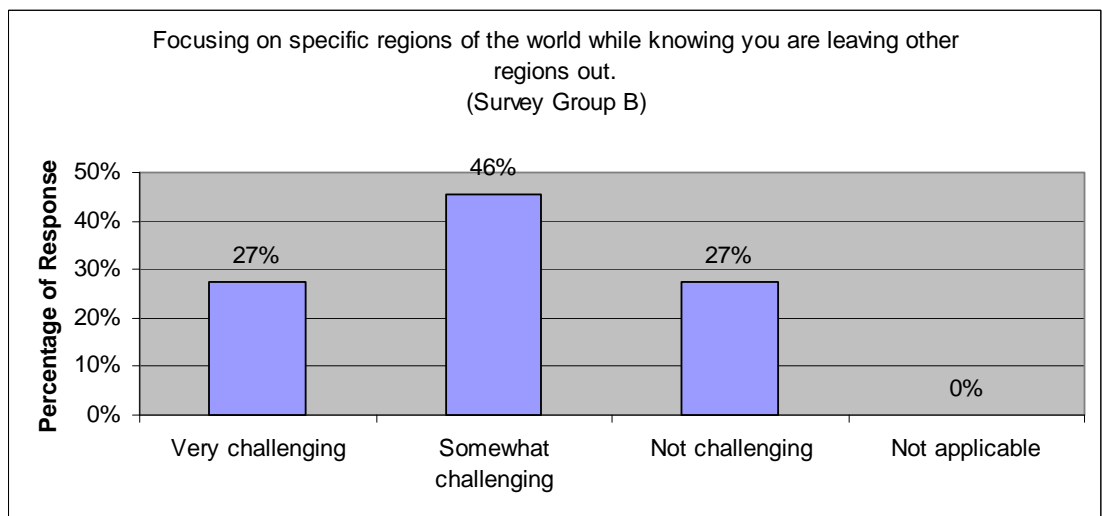


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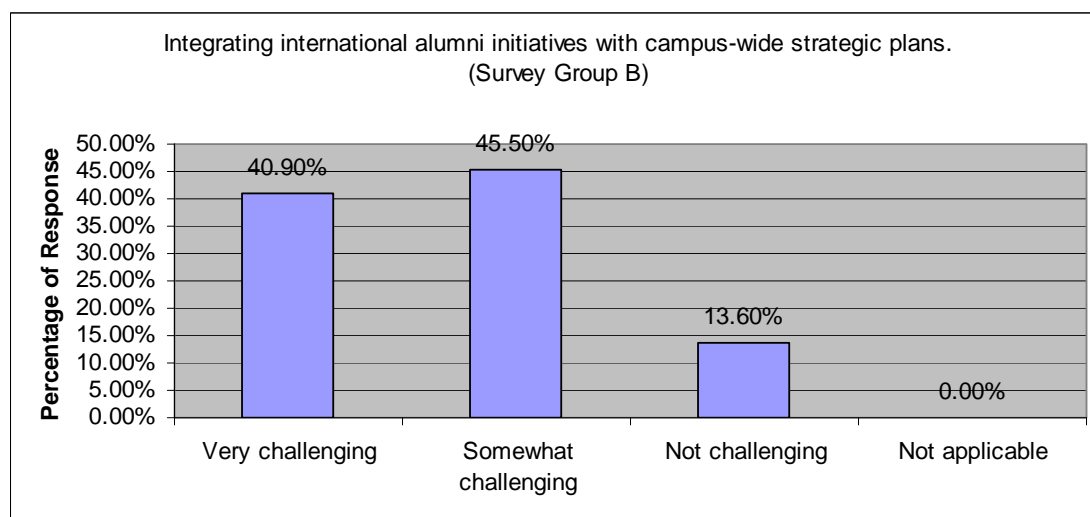


Figure 3.41

*Very and somewhat challenging rankings.* Funding international alumni outreach (figure 3.36) was found to be both Very Challenging and Somewhat Challenging, both having response rates of 40%, as was creating and maintaining international alumni relationships with limited budgets (figure 3.37) at 45% response rate for each.

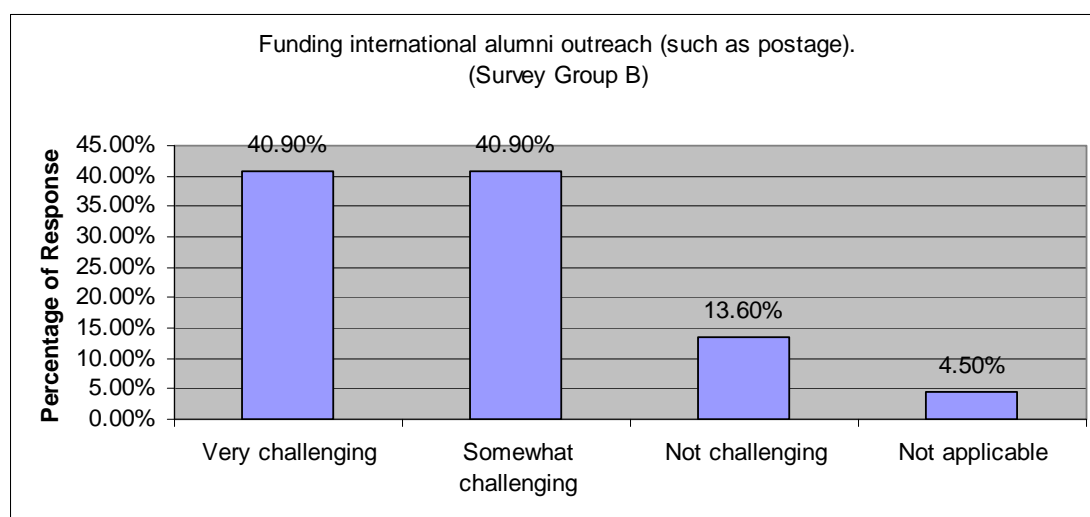


Figure 3.36

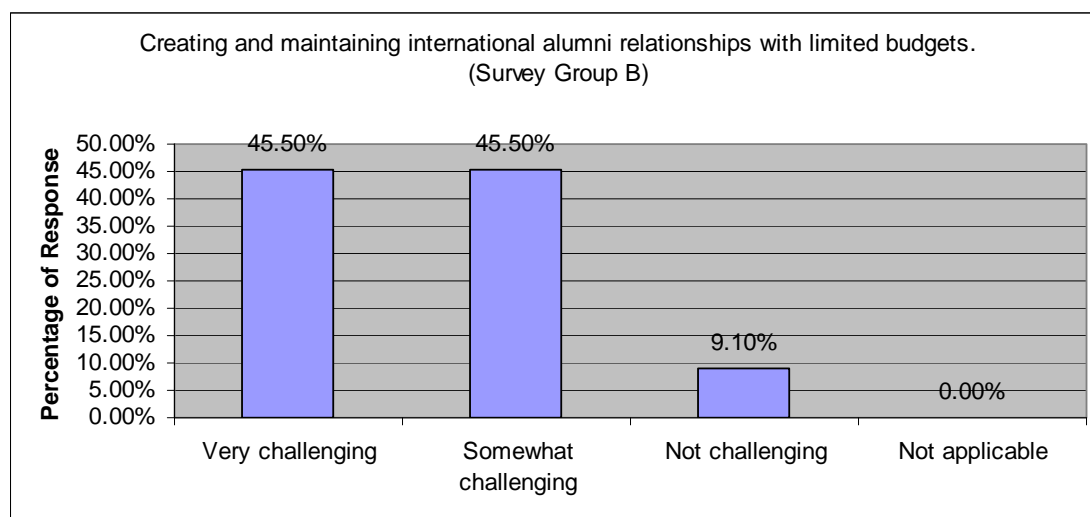


Figure 3.37

*Not challenging ranking.* Two challenges were found to be Not challenging by around 30% of the respondents: Getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts (figure 3.33), and motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution (figure 3.34).

*Not applicable rankings.* One respondent selected Not Applicable when indicating the challenge of getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts. The challenge of funding international alumni outreach (such as postage) was also found to be Not Applicable by one responding alumni professional. Two respondents selected Not Applicable when noting the challenge they face in measuring the return on investment for outreach to international alumni.

#### *Methods for communicating with international alumni*

Survey B institutions were asked to identify their methods of communicating with the international alumni population as taken from a list of five communication methods. As shown in figure 3.42, one hundred percent of responding institutions

selected email as one of their means of communication. The next most commonly selected response was e-newsletter with 68% of respondents using that communication vehicle. Fifty-nine percent of respondents stated that they communicate with alumni via post. Social networking tools such as Facebook and Myspace were used to communicate with international alumni by 54% of Survey B respondents. Online communities were used by half of the responding institutions. The least selected means of communication was the telephone with only 45% of participating institutions identifying it as a contact method.

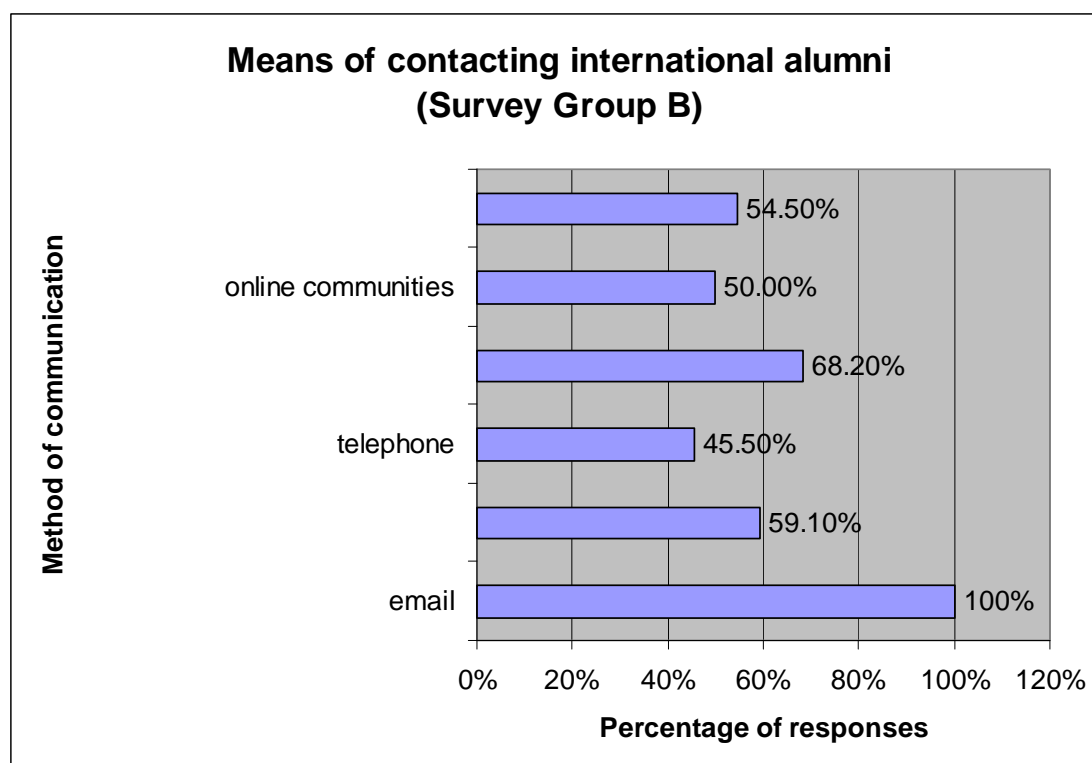


figure 3.42

Institutions were then asked to note their most frequently used method of contacting international alumni. Only two means of communication were selected with

ninety-one percent of respondents selecting email and nine percent selected e-newsletter.

### *Favorable Outcomes*

All Survey B respondents were asked to identify the favorable outcomes of their international alumni relations work. Twenty-two participants provided written responses to this prompt. The following common themes emerged in their responses:

- Increasing number of successful international alumni events
- Solid network assisting with recruitment of future alumni
- Addition of international alumni to alumni organization board
- Scholarship support
- Assistance in international student recruitment
- International alumni assisting in the negotiation of exchange agreements
- Alumni interest in forming new international clubs
- Increased attendance at university sponsored events abroad
- Gifts to the capital campaign
- Increased engagement with the institution

The following responses highlight the favorable outcomes of international alumni outreach efforts:

“Our Norway Chapter has helped negotiate and support exchange agreements, sponsored research projects, corporate-university partnerships, and recruit students.”

“We have just added an international board member to our alumni board.”

“A favorable outcome of our international alumni relations work has been a growing awareness on the campus to highlight the university's global connections and initiatives; the sheer joy of the responses from international alumni who have been "re-connected"; growing awareness of possibilities for international philanthropy that will have a long-term impact on the university's development initiatives; new scholarship opportunities for international students, funding for international-focused programs, etc.”

“Our international alumni relations works has resulted in a greater awareness of the institution among international high schools and an increase in applications from top international students.”

*Conclusion*

The results presented in this chapter show the challenges facing institutions in their attempts to remain connected with their international alumni population. The Survey A group data provides insight into the challenges facing institutions that have high populations of international students and a resulting potential of engaged international alumni. The Survey B group data, in comparison, provides insight into the challenges facing a broad range of institutions which may not have high numbers of international students who in turn are potential international alumni. Combined, the survey data is a rich representation of the current efforts of alumni relations offices at American four-year institutions in their outreach to international alumni. In the first reviews of the grouped data, three interesting facts emerged; all institutions surveyed listed the maintaining of current contact information as very challenging, no matter the size of the international alumni population; email is the method of communication used by all alumni offices surveyed to contact their international alumni; and an alumni relations office's mention, or lack of mention, of international alumni in their mission statement does not determine if outreach to that population does or does not occur. A more detailed discussion of the results will be presented in the following discussion and conclusion chapter.

## Chapter Four: Discussion/Conclusion

### *Introduction*

The final chapter of this thesis reviews the results of the study in relation to the original research questions. To assist the reader, the rationale of the project, the research questions, the methodology of the study and analysis techniques and the results are summarized. A detailed discussion of the results and a conclusion complete the chapter.

### *Rationale*

Approximately five hundred thousand international students are currently pursuing degrees at institutions in the United States (2007 Open Doors report). After graduating, these students take on a new role as International Alumni. Alumni relations personnel face unique challenges in working with this population as these alumni often live an ocean away from the alma mater and are unable to attend the typical alumni events such as reunions and sporting events. Another challenge is the fact that many non-American cultures do not have a tradition of maintaining a relationship with the alma mater. Little insight into the topic of international alumni outreach is provided in a literature review due to a lack of published studies.

### *The research questions*

As explained in chapter one, the purpose of this study is to identify and quantify the challenges faced by four year colleges and universities in the United States in cultivating successful international alumni relations. Two research questions were formulated based on informal interviews with alumni professionals and a literature review regarding international students, alumni relations and international

alumni relations. The research questions were: What are the challenges of developing and maintaining an international alumni connection? What have been the outcomes of these efforts? These questions motivated the creation of a nine question survey instrument which was dispersed to two groups of alumni professionals at four year institutions in the United States.

### *Review of Methods*

As described in the second chapter, two groups of alumni professionals in the United States were surveyed via an online nine question survey hosted by SurveyMonkey. The survey questions investigated institutional type, formation of international alumni organizations and maintenance of relationships with international alumni. Survey Group A consisted of alumni professionals working in the alumni offices of the U.S. institutions with the top forty highest numbers of international students. The Survey Group B consisted of alumni professionals that are members of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Alumni-L listserv. Both groups were sent emails explaining the project and inviting them to participate in the study by clicking an embedded link to the survey. The resulting data was analyzed and cross tabulated using SurveyMonkey.com.

### *Summary of Results*

A total of 59 alumni professionals represented their institutions by taking the survey. Twenty one of these responses were from American institutions with high populations of international students (Survey Group A) and 38 of the responses were from American institutions that were members of the CASE Alumni-L listserv (Survey Group B). The combined survey results showed that a majority of responses

were provided by alumni personnel at large public colleges or universities (more than 10,000 students). Seventy-three percent of responding institutions had some type of international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups and the majority of this outreach was instigated by the alumni relations office or was a collaboration between the alumni office and international alumni. Respondents then were presented with a list of challenges facing alumni offices in their outreach to international alumni and asked to rank the severity of the challenges. Surprisingly, all of the challenges were most commonly found to be either Very or Somewhat challenging by the office. The next two questions regarded the methods of communication that alumni offices use in communicating with their international alumni. While several methods of communication are used, email emerged as the most commonly used method of contacting international alumni populations. Survey respondents were asked to identify if the mission statement of their alumni relations office included international alumni outreach, and fifty percent of respondents stated that it is not included. The responses to certain questions were then cross tabulated to identify potential relationships between variables. Following these cross tabulations, the data from the two survey groups was then separated and displayed. A detailed presentation of results can be found in Chapter three.

### *Discussion*

This section contains a discussion of the results categorized by survey question. The categories feature a discussion of the combined and individual data from Survey Group A and Survey Group B.

### *Survey Respondents*

The total number of survey responses, fifty-nine, hint that this topic is of great importance to the alumni relations field. As previously stated, the highest number of responses (24) came from large public colleges or universities having more than 10,000 students (See figure 3.1). This high number was a result of the responses from the Survey A group who by default were institutions with high numbers of international alumni due to their large numbers of international students (see figure 3.16). Given that large campuses generally have higher percentages of international students in their total population, it seems logical that these institutions would be very interested in responding to this topic. However, the next highest number of responses came from alumni professionals at small private colleges or universities with less than 3,000 students (see figure 3.29). Interestingly, these responses all came from the Survey B group, who are members of the CASE Alumni-L listserv. While these institutions do not necessarily have high numbers of international students, they are equally invested in keeping track of those students when they become international alumni. The reason for this investment is explained later in this chapter.

### *International Alumni Outreach Efforts*

The importance of international alumni relations can also be shown by the fact that 72.9% of responding institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups (See Figure 3.2). Broken down by survey group, 95% percent of institutions in the Survey A Group have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups but only 60% of Survey Group B institutions participate in these alumni outreach efforts. Again, this seems to correlate directly

with the fact that the Survey A Group is known to have high populations of international students resulting in potentially high populations of international alumni.

The formation of the international alumni organizations (see figure 3.3) also seems to have a relation to total international student population. Combined, the responses show that the majority of international alumni organizations are instigated by the alumni relations office. However, looking at the responses by survey group shows that this again is determined by potential number of international students. At the Survey Group A institutions, almost 50% of the international alumni organizations were instigated through a collaboration between the alumni relations office and international alumni (see figure 3.17). However, at Survey Group B institutions, only 23% of the international alumni organizations are instigated through a collaborative venture. Instead, the majority (59%) of their international alumni organizations are instigated by the alumni relations office (see figure 3.31). This could be due to the fact that Survey Group B institutions, unlike Survey Group A institutions, lack a critical mass of alumni in certain locations which would hinder the alumni from contacting the alumni relations office for a collaborative organizational project.

#### *Challenges facing international alumni relations offices*

While it is notable that all of the institutions leaned toward ranking the list of challenges as being either Very Challenging or Somewhat Challenging, these results are best discussed when the Survey Group A and Survey Group B data are separated and viewed comparatively.

The Survey Group A respondents ranked the following four challenges as being Very Challenging with the highest frequency; maintaining current contact

information for international alumni (figure 3.18), funding international alumni outreach (such as postage) (figure 3.22), measuring return on investment for outreach to international alumni (figure 3.24) and staffing dedicated to international alumni outreach (figure 3.25). Survey Group B respondents frequently found the same four challenges to be Very Challenging, plus one more; Creating and maintaining international alumni relationships with limited budgets (figure 3.37). Survey Group A respondents identified this challenge as being Somewhat Challenging. Why would this challenge be ranked as less challenging by Survey Group A respondents than Survey Group B respondents? Given that the international alumni outreach efforts at Survey Group A institutions tend to be a collaborative venture between international alumni and the alumni relations office, it would make sense that maintaining a relationship with international alumni would be less challenging than if all of the effort had to come from the alumni relations office like with most Survey Group B institutions.

#### *Methods of communicating with international alumni*

When reporting on their means of communicating with international population, all respondents relayed that email is used as a method of communication (see figure 3.14). E-newsletter and online communities and social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace are also commonly used which supports literature stating that internet based contact is of increasing use in the field of alumni relations. Surprisingly, despite the expense, post is still used by fifty percent of the alumni relations offices in their outreach to international alumni. There appeared to be no correlation between the institution's potential number of international alumni and use of post as this percentage was true for both Survey Group A and Survey Group B (see

figures 3.28 and 3.42). E-newsletter and online communities were more commonly used by Survey Group A institutions, while social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace and the telephone were used slightly more often by Survey Group B respondents.

Again it seems that the potential size of the international alumni population can have some influence on methods of communication used by the alumni relations office. Online communities thrive when there is a mass of international alumni to populate the community and Survey Group A institutions are more likely to have that critical mass. A reliance on free social networking sites by Survey Group B could also indicate a lack of funding and institutional buy-in to support more expensive web applications, like software to create online newsletters or network space to host online communities. A higher reliance on telephone by the Survey Group B could also be an indicator that there are less total international alumni to contact meaning that international telephone calls are less fiscally draining to the institution compared with institutions that attempt to contact thousands of international alumni.

#### *Mission statement*

In order to better understand the reason why alumni relations offices support international alumni outreach, all survey respondents were asked if the mission statement of their alumni relations office included international alumni outreach as a component. Slightly more than half of all respondents stated that their mission statement does not make mention of international alumni relations. Eighteen respondents stated that their office does include international alumni relations in the

mission statement and nine survey respondents stated that their alumni office does not have a mission statement at all.

When investigating this data by survey group, some interesting findings emerge. Forty-five percent of the Survey Group A institutions have mission statements that mention international alumni outreach. But forty-five percent do not have mention of international alumni relations efforts in their mission statement. Ten percent of the Survey Group A do not have a mission statement. The responses to Survey Group B are much different, with 27% of respondents stating that international alumni relations is included in the mission statement of their alumni office. Fifty-four percent of Survey Group B respondents stated that international alumni outreach is not included in the mission statement, and nineteen percent stated that their office does not have a mission statement.

Given these findings, it became important to investigate a correlation between the mission statement and the international alumni outreach efforts of the institution. A total of eighteen alumni relations offices mention international alumni outreach in their mission statement, and seventeen of those offices undertake international alumni relations efforts. This indicates that if international alumni outreach is in the mission, the alumni relations office will, for the most part, be attempting to work with this alumni population. However, of the 30 institutions who make no mention of international alumni outreach in their mission statement, 19 have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. And of the nine survey respondents that have no mission statement, five are participating in international alumni outreach. This

suggests that a lack of mention of international alumni relations is not indicative of an absence of international alumni outreach efforts.

### *Cross tabulated results*

*Institutional size and type in relation to international alumni outreach.* When investigating the link between institutional size and type in relation to international alumni outreach efforts, institutional size played a determining factor. Of the private colleges and universities that participated in the study, the smaller the total student population, the less likely it was for the alumni relations office to have international clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Only six out of the 15 small private institutions that participated in the study have some form of international alumni outreach, but seventy percent of the mid-sized private institutions do have international alumni outreach as do 100% of the large private institutions.

The surveyed public institutions showed a similar pattern, although since no small public institutions participated in the study, data representing institutions of this size is not available. However, as 50% of mid-size public institutions, and 90% of large public institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups, it can be inferred that the larger the total student population of a public institution, the more likely they are to be participating in international alumni outreach efforts.

There are several possible explanations for total student population being a contributing factor in whether or not the alumni relations offices at institutions undertake international alumni outreach. First, the larger the total student population, the more likely it is that there are high numbers of international students, and in turn,

high numbers of international alumni. Secondly, bigger institutions tend to have larger alumni relations budgets as a result of the high number of alumni paying dues to be in the alumni association. These dues can be used to fund staffing and outreach to support connection with domestic and international alumni.

The institutional category (Land Grant, Liberal Arts, Category One Research, Category Two Research) to which the respondents self identified as also provided insight when cross tabulated with the responses regarding if the institution had international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. All of the responding Land Grant and Category Two Research institutions had international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. Ninety percent of Category One research institutions have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups. However, only 60% of respondents who identified their institution as being in the Liberal Arts category identified having these types of international alumni outreach.

Given the high numbers of international students that come to the United States to pursue graduate studies in fields commonly associated with Land Grant and Research institutions, such as science, engineering, technology and mathematics, it is likely that these institutions would have international alumni populations large enough to necessitate international alumni relations efforts.

*Favorable outcomes.* The favorable outcomes of international alumni outreach reported by Survey Group A and Survey Group B represent a wide variety of institutional benefits that communication with this alumni population can cultivate. If looking at the responses from the two groups, it can be noted that the one difference in themes is that Survey Group A respondents mentioned enhanced collaboration

between international alumni and faculty as an outcome, while Survey Group B made no mention of this benefit. Given that Survey Group A respondents tend to be from large public institutions, it is plausible that some of their faculty research global issues with which international alumni, and possibly former students, would collaborate with great interest. As the majority of Survey Group B respondents are from small private liberal arts institutions, it is plausible that the faculty do not have as many opportunities to research global issues that would attract international alumni collaborative ventures.

What can be garnered from the lists of favorable outcomes is that creating and maintaining relationships with international alumni can benefit every area of higher education. From academics (faculty and alumni collaboration), to student recruitment, to administrative organization (board member and trustee involvement), to study abroad opportunities and international student services (assistance with exchange agreements), and institutional funding (gifts to capital campaign) international alumni are not just willing, but excited to support all aspects of the institution that granted them a college degree. This fact is what drives institutions of all sizes to maintain a connection with their international alumni population.

#### *Insights from research*

The data gathered and discussed in this thesis provides several key insights related to international alumni relations. These findings, listed below, should provide solid foundation for future studies of this topic.

- The larger the student population, the more likely that international alumni outreach is occurring.

- All alumni relations offices face challenges with similar difficulty no matter the size or category of the institution.
- Mission statements of alumni relations offices have no determining influence on international alumni relations efforts.
- Efforts to create and maintain connection with international alumni populations can benefit all areas of the institution.

#### *Relationship to prior research*

The quantified data in this thesis serves to support many of the topics that were referenced and examined in the literature review in chapter one. The relation of the survey data to three of these topics is deserving of further discussion.

*Challenges and rankings.* The list of challenges that were provided to survey respondents for ranking was created after speaking with alumni professionals and reviewing literature on the topic. When ranked, all of these challenges were identified as being Very or Somewhat challenging the majority of the time. All survey respondents were given the opportunity to comment on this question and add challenges that were not mentioned. Interestingly, no new challenges were mentioned. This proves that the challenges facing the alumni relations field in connecting with international alumni are well known and common to all institutions. Yet, the fact that most institutions feel that they are Very and Somewhat challenging shows that there is still a large disconnect between these challenges and realistic ways of dealing with them.

*Use of online networking websites.* The literature in chapter one highlighted the increasing influence that online social networking websites are having on alumni outreach efforts. This trend is supported by the survey data. While all survey

respondents mentioned that they use email to communicate with their international alumni, many stated that they do use social networking websites such as Facebook and Myspace to communicate with their international alumni. Facebook is set to become the top social networking website outside of the United States due to the fact that the company has translated and marketed the site internationally. It seems that this method of alumni outreach is set to grow as the traditional methods of alumni contact such as post and telephone are less cost effective than Facebook and the other online social networking options.

*Success as determined by Havlik and Ryan.* In their list of indicators of successful international alumni outreach programs in chapter one, Havlik and Ryan provide a list of seven results. When comparing the Havlik and Ryan list to the list of beneficial outcomes that were provided by the survey respondents, almost all of the beneficial outcomes could be grouped under larger themes which Havlik and Ryan identified. However, one beneficial outcome was mentioned by survey respondents which is not covered by Havlik and Ryan's list; the fact that international alumni feel more encouraged and respected by the alma mater. This finding is important because it provides the basis for all of the other indicators of success. If the international alumni do not feel encouraged and respected by the institution, they have no reason to maintain a connection with their alma mater. Without a connection, it is unlikely that the international alumni will go on to support the institution in all of the areas that were mentioned earlier in this chapter.

### *Implications for practice*

The findings of this thesis are applicable to alumni relations offices at institutions of all sizes in the United States. This data shows that all alumni relations offices face similar challenges when creating and attempting to maintain relationships with international alumni. This information should prove helpful to alumni offices that are just beginning their international alumni outreach and also serve to reassure alumni offices with international outreach in place that they are not alone in their challenges.

Several questions emerged from the survey data which could influence the administration and functions of the alumni relations office in general. In chapter three it was found that if the mission statement of the alumni relations office included international alumni, outreach was being made to those alums. However, if it was not mentioned, in most cases efforts to connect with international alumni were still being made. Knowing the challenges involved, why do alumni relations offices with no mention of international alumni relations in their mission still undertake these efforts? It appears that international alumni outreach has become so normative in the field of alumni relations that its practice is inferred in the mission of all alumni relations offices if international students are enrolled in the institution.

### *Limitations*

The review of the data led to several realizations about limitations of the study.

*The survey population.* The Survey Group A population was approached to participated in the study based on being one of the institutions with the top 40 highest numbers of international students enrolled. The Survey Group B population was approached via the CASE Alumni-L listserv and the number of international students

was not a parameter for participation in the study. Given that these results infer that the population of international students could determine the characteristics of international alumni outreach, it would be good to survey a population that is known to have low numbers of international students to see if there is truly a link.

*International alumni population.* None of the survey respondents were asked to quantify the size of their international alumni population. The number of international alumni affiliated with the institution could help to determine if the size of the international alumni population has any influence on the severity of certain challenges facing alumni professionals in their work with this population. The number of international alumni in different countries would have also been beneficial because it correlations between critical mass and alumni outreach successes and challenges could have been identified.

*Timing of the study.* This study occurred in the autumn of 2008, with the survey instruments being open for exactly one month. Autumn is a very busy time for alumni professionals given that they are generally busy planning homecoming and holiday events. Although the response rate for both surveys was very good, it might have improved if the surveys had been dispersed during a different season when alumni professionals had more time to participate.

#### *Recommendations for further research*

*Investigate the international alumni perspectives.* The published body of literature regarding international alumni relations is predominately from the perspective of alumni relations professionals and institutions. This study provides a solid background for future investigation of international alumni relations from the

perspective of the alumni. International alumni might identify challenges they encounter when attempting to collaborate with the institution that coincide or differ from the challenges identified by alumni professionals in their efforts to work with these alums.

It would also be beneficial to survey international alumni to inquire why or why not they are members of their alma maters alumni association. Their reasoning might provide keys to assist alumni professionals in unlocking the challenges they commonly identify in their international alumni outreach efforts. International alumni could also identify potential benefits to the institution that have not been revealed by Havlik and Ryan or this thesis.

*Staffing.* Outreach to international alumni is both time consuming and potentially financially draining given the challenges associated with the work. Some institutions are able to have personnel in their alumni offices that are dedicated to working with this particular alumni population. However, many alumni offices do not have budgets that allow for staffing devoted to this alumni group. A study of the personnel of alumni relations offices could shed light on relationships between staffing in correlation with indicators of successful international alumni outreach efforts.

*Response to challenges.* The list of challenges facing alumni professionals in their international alumni outreach efforts is well established. However, little information is present regarding what specific efforts are made to face these challenges and minimize them. A simple follow up question regarding methods of coping with challenges could be added to any inquiry regarding type and severity of challenges associated with this type of alumni relations work.

*Technology use and young alumni.* The use of social networking websites for alumni outreach and communication has been touted as a method of increasing importance. Indeed, it is highly applicable for use with international alumni populations due to translated social networking websites already being in place. However, use of these networking tools by alumni, both domestic and international, might be influenced by age and generation. Are recent graduates more likely than aged alumni to join alumni groups on these social networking websites? Will reliance by young alumni on organizational online networking break a longstanding tradition of attending alumni events, such as reunions, at the alma mater? Will social networking websites decrease the contact alumni offices have with their domestic alumni, but increase interaction with international alumni who were never able to return to the alma mater for events? A longitudinal study could be put in place in the near future to measure how online social networking websites will influence the work of alumni professionals in both their domestic and international contact and programming.

*Model for International Alumni Outreach.* All alumni professionals participating in this study ranked international alumni outreach challenges as being of similar severity. As there was little correlation between institutional size and type and challenge, it could be assumed that alumni relations professionals are following similar models in their outreach to international alumni. Several model programs are featured in the International Alumni knowledge community on the NAFSA: International Association of International Educators website, however it is unknown if other institutions are actually using them as models for their programming. It would be beneficial to study program models to determine if the models in place are being used

and if these models are appropriate for all types of institutions, in the United States and abroad.

### *Concluding thoughts*

There is no doubt that international alumni relations will remain an important area of study during the next ten years. The number of international students arriving in the United States to pursue college degrees has increased fourteen percent since 2006, and there is no indication that the growth will slow anytime soon (Open Doors Report 2008). All areas of higher education must be prepared to face the challenges that will occur as American college campuses internationalize their student body. Alumni relations offices need to understand the challenges they will face in working with this population and begin to actively work to lessen these challenges. Institutions also need to realize the benefits that occur when the international alumni population is made to feel valued and respected by the alma mater. This study lays a foundation for future investigation of challenges and benefits associated with cultivating strong relationships between institutions and international alumni.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Survey Instrument

#### Informed Consent Page

##### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Challenges of creating and maintaining viable international alumni relations programs

Principal Investigator: Dave Kovac, College of Education

Student Researcher: Lillian Read, College of Education

##### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to investigate the challenges faced by alumni relations offices at four year American colleges and universities in their attempts to create and maintain viable international alumni relations programs. The results of the study will be used as the basis for a master's thesis. We are studying this because as colleges and universities internationalize, they face the increasing challenge of maintaining relationships with international students after the students graduate and return to their home country. A review of literature relating to international alumni relations provides little insight into this specific topic due to the lack of published works.

##### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

##### WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are an alumni relations professional.

##### WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

At the bottom of this page is a button titled "next". By clicking on "next" you consent to participate in a nine question survey which should take approximately five to ten minutes to complete.

##### WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no foreseeable risks to participants of this study.

##### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You will not personally benefit from this study. However, the researchers hope that in the future other people might benefit from this study as it increases the body of knowledge regarding international alumni relations.

##### WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

##### WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. To help protect your confidentiality, the names of participants will not be recorded and all raw data will be coded and stored in locked filing cabinets. If the results of this project are published the names of participating alumni professionals and institutions will not be made public.

##### DO I HAVE A CHOICE TO BE IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You are free to skip questions that you would prefer not to answer. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected and this information may be included in study reports.

##### WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:

Dave Kovac, 541.752.4390, kovacd@onid.orst.edu or Lillian Read, 541.737.1810, lillian.read@oregonstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541)737-4933 or email IRB@oregonstate.edu.

## Appendices (continued)

### Appendix A (continued)

#### Survey

Please answer the questions below.

**1. Please indicate the size and type of institution with which you are affiliated:**

- ☐ Small private college or university (less than 3,000 students)
- ☐ Mid-size private college or university (3,000 to 10,000 students)
- ☐ Large private college or university (over 10,000 students)
- ☐ Small public college or university (less than 3,000 students)
- ☐ Mid-size public college or university (3,000 to 10,000 students)
- ☐ Large public college or university (over 10,000 students)

Other (please specify)

**2. Please select the categories that best define your institution:**

- ☐ Land Grant Institution
- ☐ Liberal Arts College or University
- ☐ Category 1 Research Institution
- ☐ Category 2 Research Institution
- ☐ Unsure how to categorize my institution
- ☐ Other (please specify)

**3. Does your institution have international alumni clubs, chapters, networks or affinity groups?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you deem it necessary, please feel free to explain your international alumni outreach efforts:

## Appendices (continued)

### Appendix A (continued)

**4. Which of the following groups instigated the formation of the international alumni organization(s) affiliated with your institution?**

- ☐ International Alumni  
☐ Alumni Relations Office  
☐ It was a collaboration between International Alumni and the Alumni Relations Office  
☐ This information is not known

**5. Alumni offices face certain challenges when supporting outreach to international alumni. Please review the list below and rank the level of challenges that are faced at your institution.**

	Very challenging	Somewhat challenging	Not challenging	Not applicable
Maintaining current contact information for international alumni.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting faculty, individual schools or colleges to share their international alumni contacts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivating international alumni to want a meaningful connection with the institution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding the alumni services desired by the international alumni population.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding international alumni outreach (such as postage).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating and maintaining international alumni relationships with limited budgets.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Measuring return on investment for outreach to international alumni.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staffing dedicated to international alumni outreach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focusing on specific regions of the world while knowing you are leaving other regions out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrating international alumni initiatives with campus-wide strategic plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)				

**6. What are your means of contacting international alumni? Please select all that apply.**

- ☐ email  
☐ post  
☐ telephone  
☐ e-newsletter  
☐ online communities  
☐ social networking sites such as facebook and myspace

Other (please specify)

**7. What is your most frequently used method of contacting international alumni? Please select one response.**

- ☐ email  
☐ post  
☐ telephone  
☐ e-newsletter  
☐ online communities  
☐ social networking sites such as facebook and myspace

Other (please specify)

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix A (continued)

8. Does the mission statement of your alumni office include international alumni relations as a component?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ We do not have a mission statement

9. What have been the most favorable outcomes of your international alumni relations work? Please skip this question if it does not apply to your institution.


If you would like to clarify your responses, further discuss the challenges of creating and maintaining an International Alumni Relations program, or be notified of the results of this survey, please email the researchers at [illian.read@oregonstate.edu](mailto:illian.read@oregonstate.edu).

Thank you for your participation!

## Appendices (continued)

### Appendix B IRB Initial Application



Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research Integrity

### Initial Application

*Please read through the entire application before beginning. Requested information must be typed and submitted to the Human Protections Administrator, Office of Research Integrity, 308 Kerr Administration Bldg. Be sure to allow adequate time for review and comments. Incomplete requests will delay the review process. Applications will be returned without review if the application involves technical language without common explanations or if the application is poorly constructed grammatically. Send an email to [IRB@oregonstate.edu](mailto:IRB@oregonstate.edu) or call (541) 737-8008 with any questions.*

Project Title: <a href="#">Challenges of creating and maintaining viable international alumin relations programs</a>		IRB Application #: Assigned by IRB Office
Principal Investigator: <a href="#">Dave Kovac</a>	Department: <a href="#">AHE</a>	
PI Email: <a href="mailto:kovacd@onid.orst.edu">kovacd@onid.orst.edu</a>		PI Telephone: <a href="#">541.752.4390</a>
Student Researcher: <a href="#">Lillian Read</a>	Class or Degree Program (if requirement for student): <a href="#">MS Ed in College Student Services Administration</a>	
Primary Contact Person: <a href="#">Lillian Read</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:lillian.read@oregonstate.edu">lillian.read@oregonstate.edu</a>	Telephone: <a href="#">971.322.5364</a>
Campus or US Mail Address (to send correspondence): <a href="#">International Programs Office, Snell Hall 444</a>		Date: <a href="#">August 22, 2008</a>

#### 1. Level of Review Requested:

- ☒ Exempt from Full Board — Allow a *minimum of two weeks for the initial review* and additional time for modifications, if required for approval.
- ☐ Expedited — Allow a *minimum of one month for the initial review* and additional time for modifications, if required for approval.
- ☐ Full Board — A schedule of upcoming Full Board meetings and submission deadlines can be found at: <http://oregonstate.edu/research/osprc/rc/humansubjects.htm>

#### 2. Method of Submission:

- ☒ Via campus/US mail — Hard copy of application and appropriate materials (e.g., recruitment materials, informed consent document) sent in mail. *For Exempt from Full Board applications submit 1 copy, for Expedited and Full Board applications submit 3 copies.*
- ☐ Via email — Submit application and appropriate materials as email attachments. *The signature page (page 4) must be mailed or faxed to complete the application.*

#### 3. External Funding (present or proposed):

- ☐ Yes Contract or grant title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Funding source: \_\_\_\_\_  
*If funded by NIH, DHHS, PHS (including subcontracts), submit a copy of the grant.*
- ☒ No

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix B (continued)

## 4. Certification of Education:

**All research staff** involved in this project must receive training in the ethical use of human participants in research. To document this training, the **Certification of Education form** must be submitted (available at: <http://oregonstate.edu/research/osprc/rc/humansubjects.htm>). The Certification of Education form is **NOT** the confirmation issued by the educational tutorial. The Certification of Education form needs to be submitted only once for each researcher. **\*Submission of all necessary certificates is a prerequisite to review.**

Research Staff Name	Role in Project	Certification of Education Submitted
Dave Kovac	Principal Investigator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
Lillian Read	Student Researcher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*

*Attach additional sheet if necessary.*

5. Project Start Date (i.e., recruitment of human participants): September 15, 2008

6. Expected Duration of the Study: 10 months

7. Does this study only involve de-identified data or samples?\*

- ☐ Yes If "yes", then skip to Question 10.  
☒ No

\*Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, tissue culture cells, or pathological/diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to subjects.

## 8. Risk/Benefit Assessment:

- ☒ Minimal risk  
☐ Greater than minimal risk, but holds prospect of direct benefit to subjects  
☐ Greater than minimal risk, no prospect of direct benefit to subjects but likely to yield generalizable knowledge about the subject's disorder or condition  
☐ Research not otherwise approvable but presents an opportunity to understand, prevent, or alleviate a serious problem affecting the health or welfare of the subjects.

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix B (continued)

## 9. Subject Population:

Number of subjects that will be enrolled over the life of the study: 140

*In order to enroll more than the number specified, a Project Revision request must be approved.*

**Participant age range** (check all that apply):

*Populations designated with an asterisk (\*) are vulnerable populations and ineligible for exempt review.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> *0-7: Youth (include parental consent form)        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18-65        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> *8-17: Youth (include assent and parental consent) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 65 and older |

**Populations targeted in this research** (check all that apply):

*Populations designated with an asterisk (\*) are vulnerable populations and ineligible for exempt review.*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> *Persons with mental/emotional/developmental disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> *Pregnant women/fetuses/IVF |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender imbalances – all or more of one gender             | <input type="checkbox"/> *Prisoners                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> *Minority group(s) and non-English speakers               | <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly subjects            |

## 10. If the research involves any of the following, check the appropriate box:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio or videotaping<br><i>Ineligible for Exempt review</i>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey/questionnaire   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deception<br><i>Requires review at Full Board level</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral observation            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radiation<br><i>Complete and submit Attachment A</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Study of existing data            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human materials (i.e., blood or other bodily secretions)<br><i>Complete and submit Attachment B</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Microorganisms or recombinant DNA |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waiver of documentation (signature) of informed consent<br><i>Include justification in the protocol</i>   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver of informed consent<br><i>Include justification in the protocol</i>   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent material in another language<br><i>Include consent material in other language and an English translation; provide details regarding qualifications of translator and of research staff obtaining consent in other language</i> |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other research site (i.e., school, tribal reservation, etc)<br><i>Provide documentation of the approval of the relevant IRB, school principal, tribal office, etc.</i><br>Name of other research site(s): _____                        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International research site<br><i>Provide documentation of the approval of the relevant IRB, community leader, FWA, etc.</i><br>Name of international research site(s): _____  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted to another institution's IRB for review<br>Name of institution: _____  |  |

## Appendices (continued)

### Appendix B (continued)

#### 11. Attachments (check all that apply):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol ( <i>required</i> )   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant (required for NIH, DHHS, PHS funded projects)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Document  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recruiting tools (scripts for recruitment/screening) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assent Document   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test instruments (e.g., questionnaires, surveys)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment A: Radiation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Material in other languages                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment B: Human Materials   | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional information (e.g., debriefing materials)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approvals from other research sites (other IRB, school principal, tribal office, etc) |  |

#### 12. Will the study need to be registered with ClinicalTrials.gov?

- ☐ **Yes** For more information: <http://www.oregonstate.edu/research/osprc/rc/humansubjects.htm>
- ☒ **No**

#### 13. Conflict of Interest:

Federal Guidelines require assurances that there are no conflicts of interest in research projects that could affect the welfare of human subjects. If this study presents a potential conflict of interest, additional information will need to be provided to the IRB. Examples of potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- A researcher or family member participating in research on a technology, process or product owned by a business in which the faculty member holds a financial interest
- A researcher participating in research on a technology, process or product developed by that researcher
- A researcher or family member assuming an executive position in a business engaged in commercial or research activities related to the researchers University responsibilities
- A researcher or family member serving on the Board of Directors of a business from which that member receives University-supervised Sponsored Research Support

For more information: <http://oregonstate.edu/research/osprc/rc/conflictinterest.htm>

#### Conflict of Interest Statement:

Could the results of the study provide a potential financial gain to you, a member of your family, or any of the co-investigators that may give the appearance of a potential conflict of interest?

- ☐ **Yes** Please describe any potential conflicts of interest in a cover letter and disclose in the informed consent document.

Has this potential conflict been disclosed and managed? ☐ **Yes\*** ☐ **No**

- ☒ **No**

***IRB will confirm with Conflict of Interest Officer that potential conflicts of interest have been managed.***

Final IRB approval cannot be granted until all potential conflict matters are settled. The full IRB committee grants final approval regarding the disclosure of conflict statement in the consent form.

---

By signing below, I certify that the above information is accurate and complete. I understand that research involving human participants, **including recruitment**, may not begin until full approval has been granted by the IRB.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
*Principal Investigator (required)\**

**\*If submitting Initial Application via email, mail or fax this page with the PI's signature to the Human Protections Administrator.**

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix C

## Letter of Invitation to Survey Group A

**Text of email introduction to Group A:**

September 15, 2008

Dear Alumni Relations Professional:

My name is Lillian Read and I am a graduate student at Oregon State University in the College Student Services Administration program working under the direction of Dr. Dave Kovac. For my Master's thesis I am studying the challenges that alumni relations offices face in creating and maintaining a connection with international alumni. Your school was selected for survey as it is in the top 40 list of American four year institutions with the highest number of international students on campus. I have created a nine question survey regarding international alumni relations. The survey should take no more than ten minutes to complete. Please assist me in collecting data for my thesis. The survey will be open until October 15<sup>th</sup>. Any questions regarding this project can be directed to me at [lillian.read@oregonstate.edu](mailto:lillian.read@oregonstate.edu).

The survey can be found at this link:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qRz2HffQ2sMXCaHSfQKX7Q\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qRz2HffQ2sMXCaHSfQKX7Q_3d_3d)

Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Lillian Read

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix D

## Letter of Invitation to Survey Group B

**Text of email introduction to Group B:**

September 15, 2008

Dear CASE Alumni-L colleagues:

My name is Lillian Read and I am a graduate student at Oregon State University in the College Student Services Administration program working under the direction of Dr. Dave Kovac. For my Master's thesis I am studying the challenges that alumni relations offices face in creating and maintaining a connection with international alumni. I have created a nine question survey regarding international alumni relations. The survey should take no more than ten minutes to complete. Please assist me in collecting data for my thesis. This survey will be open through October 15th. Any questions regarding this project can be directed to me at [lillian.read@oregonstate.edu](mailto:lillian.read@oregonstate.edu).

The survey can be found at this link:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=VhKcg3DAyRty6Y9V7o1Cpw\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=VhKcg3DAyRty6Y9V7o1Cpw_3d_3d)

Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Lillian Read

## Appendices (continued)

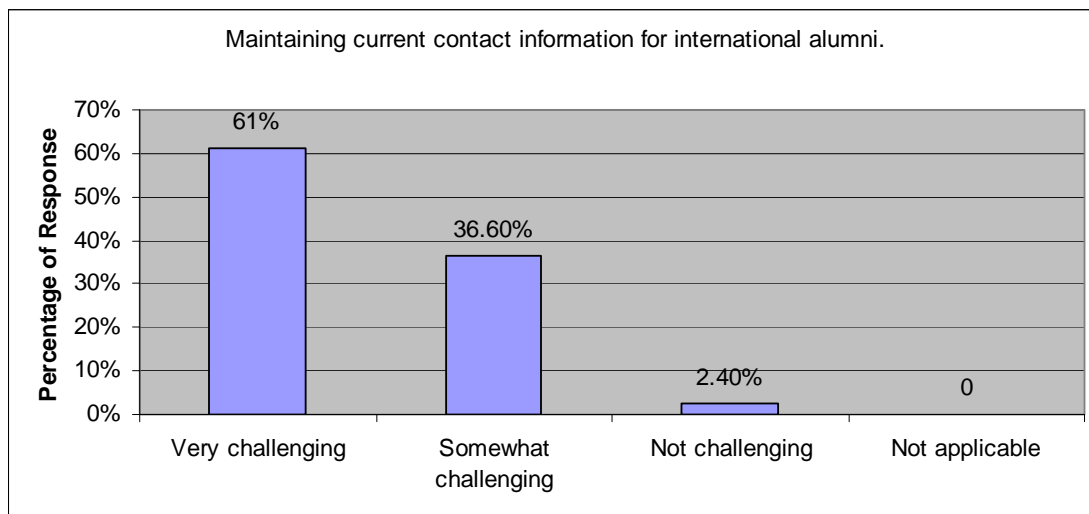
Appendix E  
Figures 3.4 through 3.13

figure 3.4

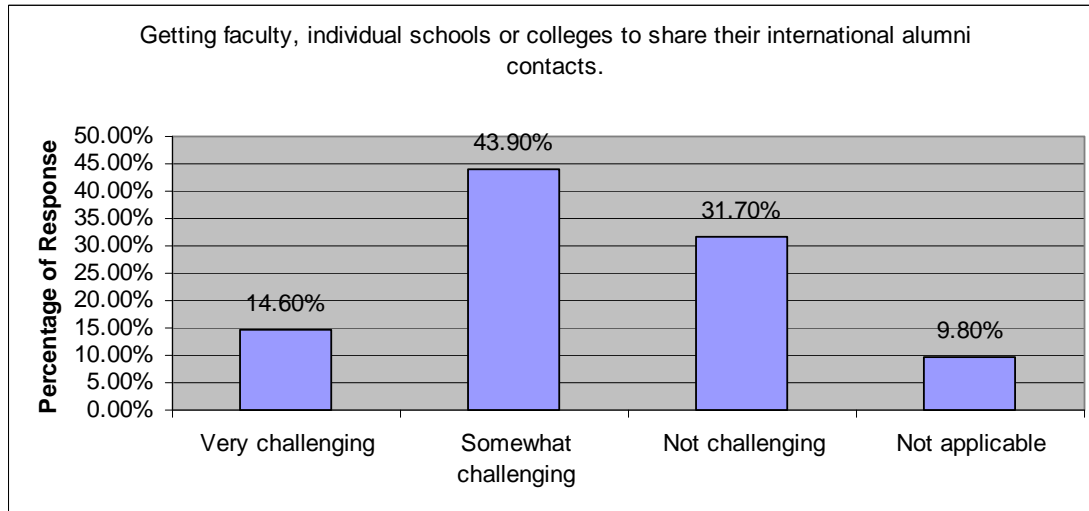


figure 3.5

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix E (continued)

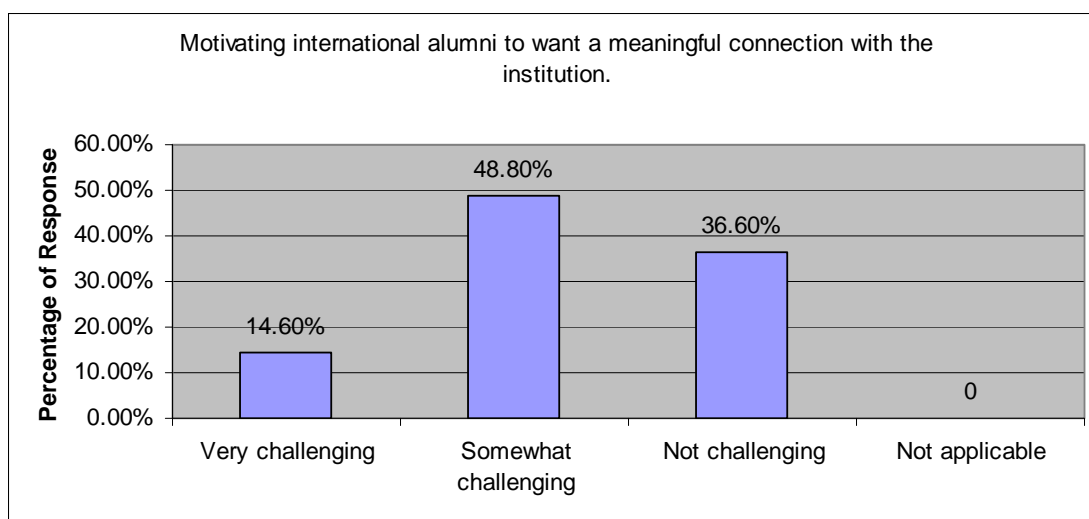


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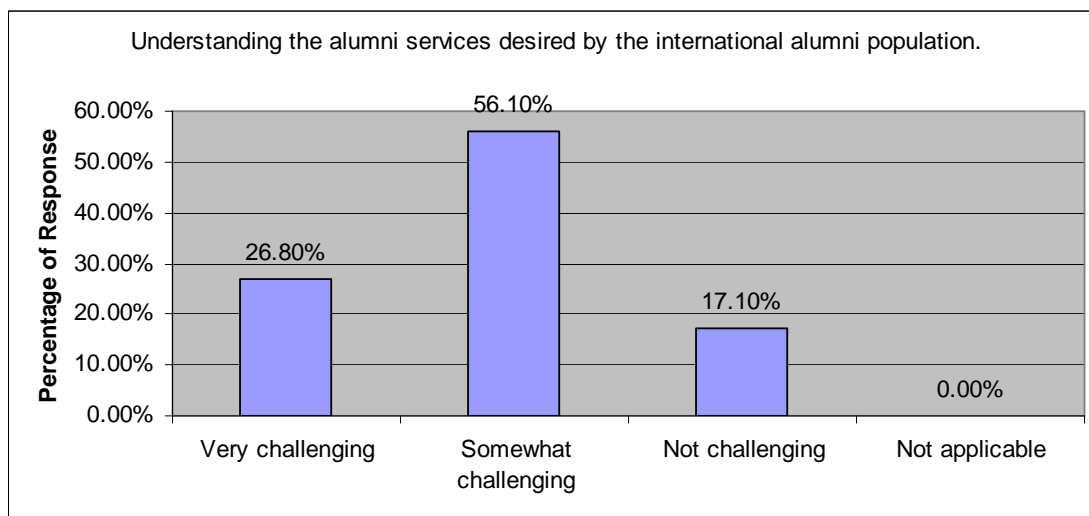


figure 3.7

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix E (continued)

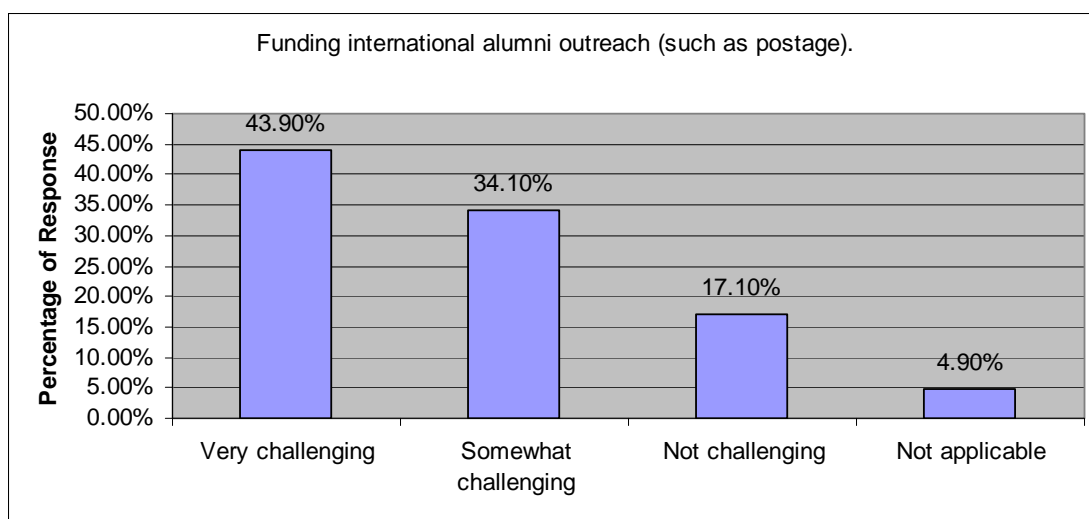


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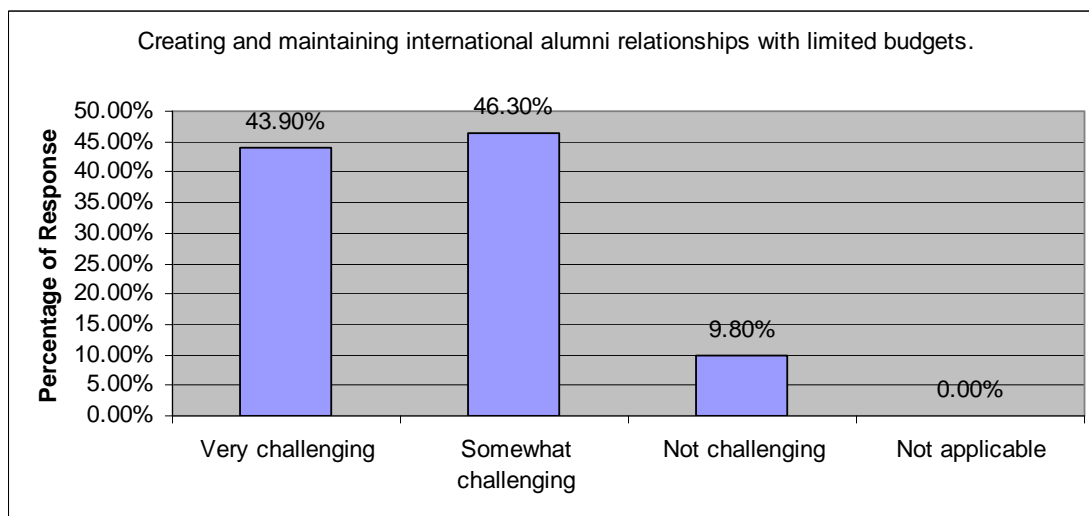


figure 3.9

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix E (continued)

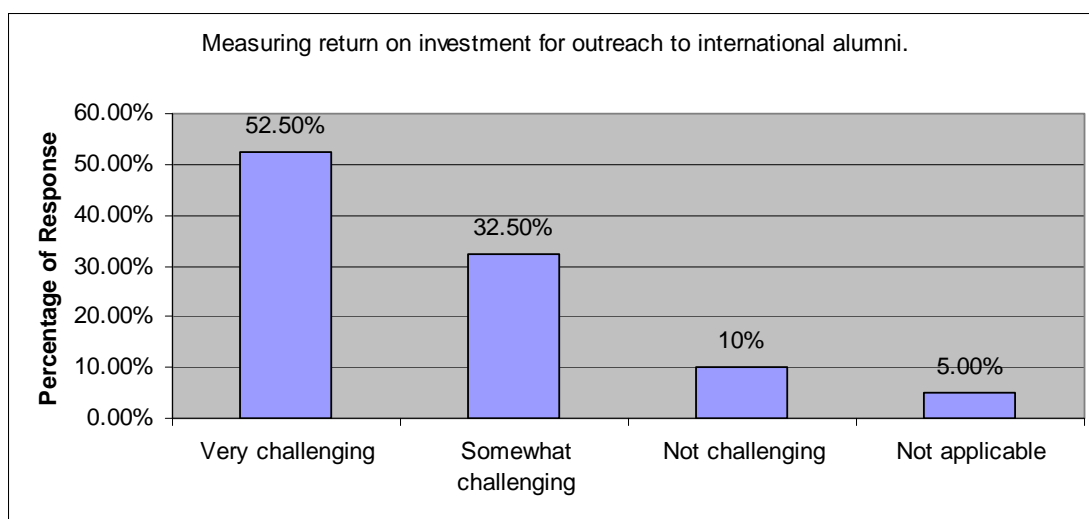


figure 3.10

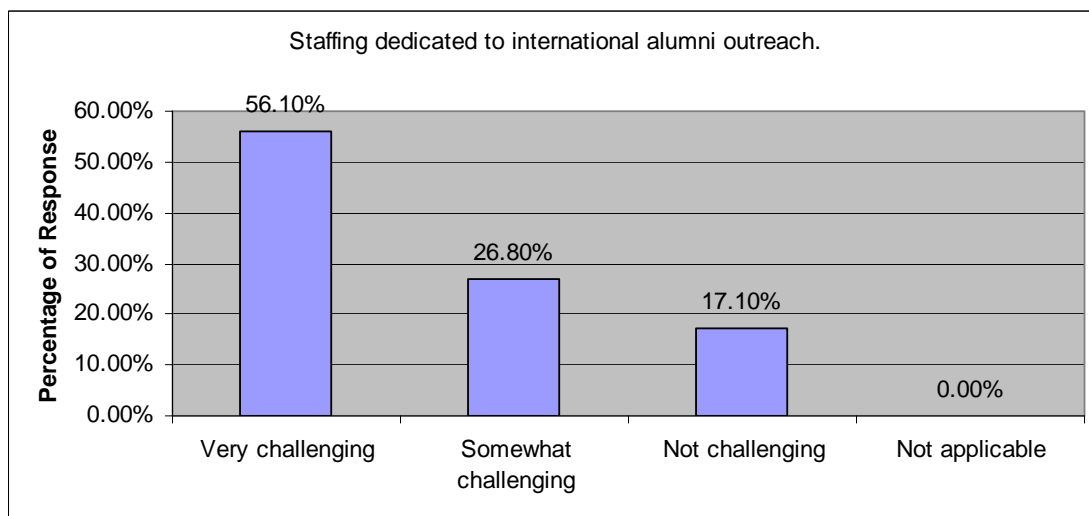


figure 3.11

## Appendices (continued)

## Appendix E (continued)

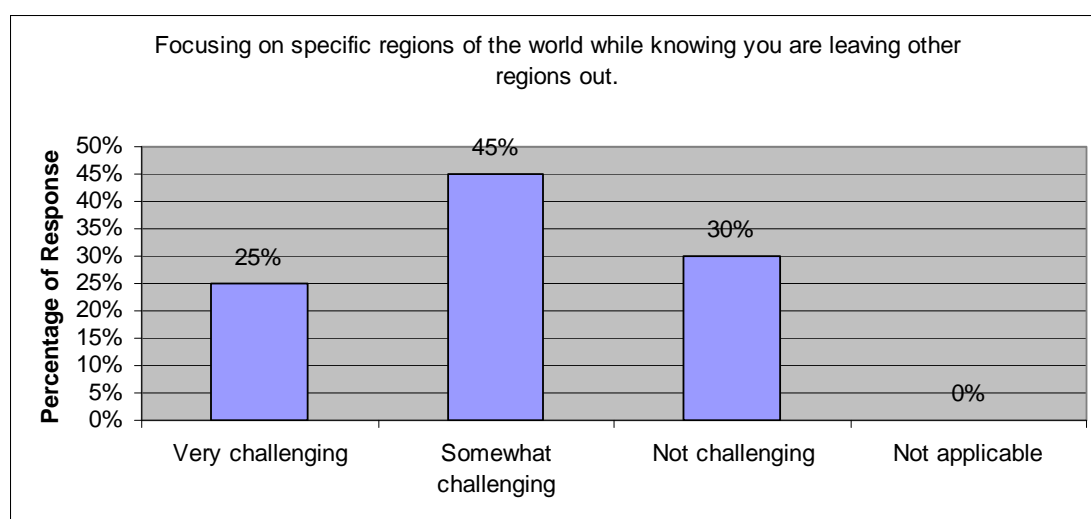


figure 3.12

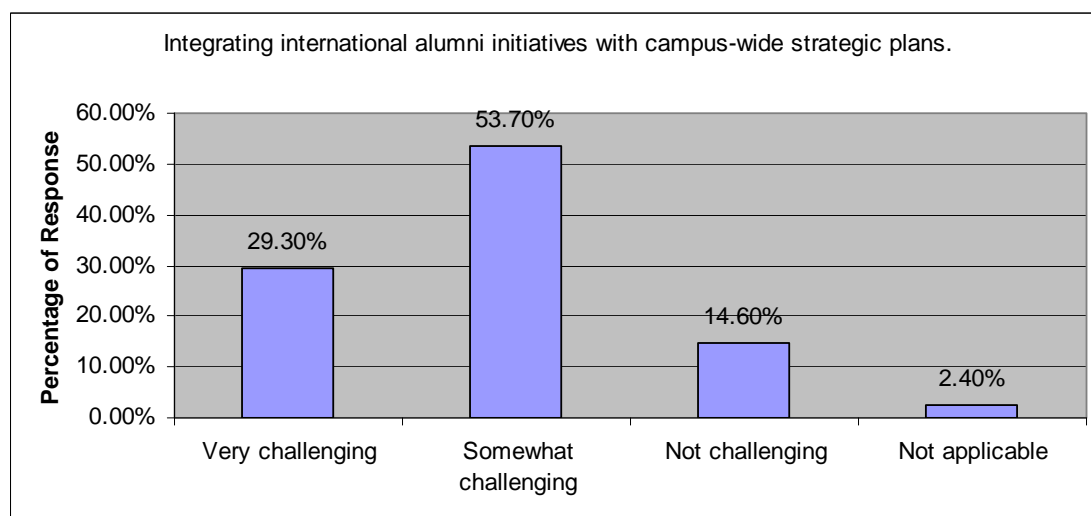


figure 3.13