

# FOSTERING OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS THROUGH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN STUDIES OF A TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

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Students majoring in engineering should be prepared to live and work as global citizens and understand how engineers contribute to society. They should develop a basic understanding of business processes; be adept at product development and high-quality manufacturing; and know how to conceive, design, implement and operate engineering systems of appropriate complexity. They should increasingly do this within a framework of sustainable development, and be prepared to live and work as global citizens. As Crawley (2007) notes, that is a tall task... perhaps even an impossible one. Nussbaum (2003) argues universities have a variety of roles, but their most crucial role is nourishing intellectual life. Nevertheless, usually university programs are constructed in a way that they overlook the fact that particular intellectual and cultural qualities acquired by fostering transferable skills are, directly or indirectly, valuable in virtually all occupations. As Axelrod (2002) notes, cultivation of transferable skills at university refers to activities that are designed to cultivate intellectual creativity, autonomy, critical thinking; a combination of intellectual breadth and specialized knowledge; the comprehension and tolerance of diverse ideas and experience; informed participation in community life; and effective communication skills. Foreign language skills have been part of the liberal education ideal for centuries, although their prominence in many education curricula has waned in recent years. Educators originally believed that learning foreign languages trained the mind and exposed students to philosophy and literature in the language of the authors. Recently arguments for foreign language instruction have focused on appreciation of other cultures and preparation for careers in the international business community. The idea of transferable skills as a value for successful professional career should be one of the core elements in university studies and relevant in today's society. In modern, multicultural world skills of communication, cooperation, motivation for

continuous learning, flexibility are becoming vitally important and language studies should be aimed to foster these abilities.