

## **Council on International Studies and Programs**

Minutes of Meeting

December 3, 2014

### **I. Approval of Minutes—David M. Engel**

Professor Engel requested comments and corrections to the draft minutes of the November 2014 meeting; none being offered, the minutes were approved as distributed.

### **II. Conversation with the Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion—Teresa Miller**

Professor Engel introduced Professor Miller, his colleague in the Law School and the first person to be appointed to the position of Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion (VPEI) at UB. He noted that there were areas of shared interest between Professor Miller's office and CISP, and thus this opportunity to discuss the mission of the new office and its future plans was timely and helpful. Professor Miller said that in her first nine months in the position she has been busy crafting that mission in consultation with many different constituents across campus. The portfolio of the position is large and the challenge of developing programs and processes as she goes along is considerable. The establishment of the office was a key recommendation of the University Commission on Academic Excellence and Equity convened in 2009 by then-Provost Tripathi and chaired by Professor Athena Mutua of the Law School. The commission was initially charged with looking at the status of female faculty hiring, promotion and retention. Its focus subsequently was broadened to consider other kinds of diversity. UB is somewhat behind peer institutions in establishing an office at the vice provost level to address institutional issues of diversity and equity. There is recognition that UB's mission to promote academic excellence depends on the provision of diverse perspectives, and this should inform the recruitment and hiring processes.

The new office has a number of overarching goals—promoting a culture of equity and inclusion to foster a community that embraces diversity; engaging units across campus in the recruitment of minorities—students, staff and faculty; enhancing research and education addressing equity and inclusion; increasing cultural competence and awareness among members of the UB community of their own cultural perspectives; and making UB a more welcoming place. The Office of the Vice Provost should be distinguished from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, which is the compliance and service office on campus and reports to the president. VPEI is strategically focused and seeks to collaborate with units across the university in support of UB's commitment to academic excellence.

In the first five months in her new role Professor Miller undertook a listening tour of the campus through 90 meetings with 126 individuals. She learned a great deal about all aspects of the university and heard many perspectives on current challenges and opportunities. Among other issues, she learned about the challenge of integrating international students and encouraging more mutually beneficial interaction between them and local students. One study reports that 40 percent of international students who complete a degree in the US indicate not having one American friend during their studies here. A VPEI initiative addressing this challenge on a small scale is the Inclusive Thanksgiving, organized by International Student and Scholar Services. Both UB faculty and staff and international students were surveyed to recruit participants in the Inclusive Thanksgiving. Then ISSS matched students and hosts. Some 60 students participated, as did Professor Miller and the

Provost as hosts. Photos and emails from participants were shared with the Council. The challenge is to scale up this small initiative in coming years. Professor Miller encouraged CISP members to consider being hosts for future Thanksgivings.

Professor Miller reported that her office is putting together a community of equity and inclusion researchers to better encourage and support those doing this work. There is a need to foster a more sophisticated dialogue on campus around equity and inclusion. She noted that she is forming an Equity and Inclusion Council as an advisory group and sounding board for her office; it will provide a vetting process for new initiatives. She invited CISP members to contact her should they be interested in serving on this new Council. She then invited questions and comments from the Council.

Professor Engel thanked Professor Miller, noting that the Provost has charged CISP with making recommendations concerning (1) the international components of the new General Education Program; and (2) enhancing the inclusion and integration of UB's international students. Professor Patel recalled that he had come to the University of Illinois as a graduate student nearly 50 years ago, and he was befriended by a local family not connected to the university who hosted him for local cultural events and celebrations including Thanksgiving. The memory of their generosity remains with him and he continues to be in touch with the family. He recommends that the initiative at UB go beyond the campus and involve non-university families in the larger community. Professor Bunker pointed out that the students in the Dalian MBA program in China who came to UB in the mid to late 1980s and were hosted by local families are still in touch with them today. She suggested that the problem of scale might be addressed through alternate means of fostering local contacts that increase the pool of potential hosts. Professor Miller said that three things stood out when she hosted international students for Thanksgiving—(1) the Moroccan female student who was shocked to see males active in the kitchen; (2) the assumption that the carving ritual would be assigned to a “patriarch”; and (3) the general hunger among the guests for interaction with Americans.

Jessica Scates asked how the students were selected. Professor Miller consulted with ISSS and it was decided that they would start with a subset of international students who are sponsored (e.g. Fulbrighters) and have high TOEFLs. At least two students were assigned to each family so they would be more comfortable and to make it easier for them to interact. Ms. Scates suggested that with the large immigrant and refugee community in Buffalo there may be additional hosting opportunities. Professor Biehl asked if international post-docs might be included in this initiative, as they are often left out. Oscar Budde pointed out that UB currently has approximately 400 post-docs and some 150 dependents. The Department of State, overseeing the Exchange Visitor Program, is pushing for more cultural integration among exchange visitors. Professor Bunker said that in many cultures a dinner invitation is viewed as the beginning of a longer-term relationship; are these kind of expectations addressed? Professor Miller said that this consideration was taken into account in the selection of host families. Professor Shibly said that if the invitation is understood as an opportunity not only to learn about American culture but also to share one's own culture it may be more appealing.

### **III. Update on Task Force on International Student Inclusion and Integration—Peter Biehl**

Professor Biehl reported that the task force has been formed and has had initial discussions about the scope and charge of the task force. The first meeting was two weeks before, and the second would be two days after the CISP meeting. Professor Biehl is working on adding members from schools not currently represented. There will be working groups assigned to aspects of the larger issue that will begin work over the break. These groups will report back to the task force and be responsible for parts of the final report. A UB Learns site has been set up to share documents, data, minutes, etc. Surveys of students are planned. A further report will be made at the first CISP meeting in the spring semester.

Professor Engel thanked Professor Biehl for chairing the task force and getting it off to a strong start. He asked if there are ways the Council could be more helpful to the task force. Professor Biehl said that the group is already benefiting from the brainstorming that the Council did at its last meeting. Ms. Scates asked if there were any schools not represented on the task force. Professor Biehl said there were several and he would welcome nominations of prospective members.

### **IV. Update on the General Education Proposal—John J. Wood**

Mr. Wood reported that the day before the Faculty Senate had voted to approve the proposed new General Education Program. This represents a great advance for UB in terms of global learning opportunities for undergraduates. The inclusion of the International Experience Track in the Global Integrative Cluster positions study abroad as a much more visible and compelling opportunity for students who otherwise would not consider the possibility during their UB studies. The program assigns considerable prominence to global learning generally as an essential part of a UB undergraduate education. CISP will have an advisory role in the implementation phase and the development of the global clusters and the study abroad programs that are part of them.

Professor Engel thanked the Council for their contributions to the development of the new program and the creative thinking around the significant international experience that is now part of General Education. Professor Dunnett pointed out that the implementation of the previous (and current) General Education Program met with considerable resistance, with schools opting out of various requirements. This ultimately undermined an otherwise innovative and effective program. The current process has been much more inclusive and harmonious, and this is a reflection of the successful efforts to Dean Stott and the General Education Steering Committee.

### **V. Report from the Vice Provost for International Education—Stephen C. Dunnett**

Professor Dunnett reported on the successful recent negotiations with Capital Normal University and the Hanban, the agency of China's Ministry of Education responsible for Confucius Institutes worldwide, to renew the agreements for the UB Confucius Institute. The new agreements allow for enhanced support from Hanban, particularly for UB's academic, research and study abroad activities. Professor Dunnett pointed out that the UBCI has never experienced any interference in its administration of the Institute by the Chinese government—of the kind alleged in media reports earlier this year. He reported that the

UBCI has placed 18 teachers of Chinese in local schools. As many as 4,800 K-12 students are now studying Chinese in Western New York thanks to the Institute. Among the initiatives made possible by the increased funding for the UBCI is the launch of a new Ed.M. degree program in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, with a faculty member provided by Capital Normal University and approved by UB. Professor Williams inquired about the teachers sent from China. Professor Dunnett responded that they are certified language teachers from CNU and other Chinese universities, who undergo a thorough vetting and preparation process and then receive a full orientation by the UBCI to US classroom teaching and culture upon arrival. These teachers typically stay here to teach in local schools for three years. Two CNU faculty currently have assignments at UB.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Wood, Secretary

## COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Attendance at the Meeting, December 3, 2014

Present:	Dr. Stella Batalama	Electrical Engineering
	Dr. Peter Biehl	Anthropology
	Mr. Oscar A. Budde (ex officio)	Immigration Services
	Dr. Barbara B. Bunker	Psychology
	Dr. Colleen Culleton	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Dr. Stephen C. Dunnett (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. David Engel, Chair	Law
	Dr. Daniel Hess	Architecture and Planning
	Mr. Joseph J. Hindrawan (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. Junhao Hong	Communication
	Ms. Maria S. Horne	Theatre and Dance
	Dr. Wooksoo Kim	Social Work
	Dr. H. Lorraine Oak	College of Arts and Sciences
	Ms. Mary Odrzywolski (ex officio)	Study Abroad
	Dr. Mulchand Patel	Biochemistry
	Dr. Jessie P.H. Poon	Geography
	Mr. Joseph Schneider	Law School
	Dr. Othman Shibly	Dental Medicine
	Dr. Natalie Simpson	Management
	Dr. John H. Stone	Public Health and Health Professions
	Dr. Claude E. Welch	Political Science
	Dr. Lillian Williams	African American Studies
	Mr. John J. Wood, Secretary	International Education
	Dr. Jiyuan Yu	Philosophy
Guests:	Ms. Teresa Miller	Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion
	Ms. Jessica Scates	Global Health Initiatives
Excused:	Mr. Dennis Black	Student Affairs
	Dr. Janina Brutt-Griffler	Learning and Instruction
	Dr. José F. Buscaglia	Caribbean Studies
	Dr. Yu-Ping Chang	Nursing
	Ms. Kathy L. Curtis	English Language Institute
	Ms. Ellen Dussourd (ex officio)	Intl. Student and Scholar Services
	Dr. David Fertig	Linguistics
	Dr. Christian Flaugh	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Dr. John T. Ho	Physics
	Dr. Shaun Irlam	Comparative Literature
	Dr. EunHee Lee	Asian Studies
	Mr. Wei Loon Leong	Alumni Relations
	Dr. Patrick McDevitt	History
	Dr. Donald McGuire	Undergraduate Education
	Dr. Pavani Ram	Epidemiology and Environmental Health
	Dr. Surajit Sen	Physics
	Mr. Steven L. Shaw (ex officio)	International Admissions
	Ms. Margaret Wells	University Libraries