

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

Minutes of Meeting

December 9, 2015

### **I. Welcome of New Members: Approval of Minutes—Stephen C. Dunnett**

Professor Dunnett said he would be filling two roles at the meeting since the chair, Professor David Engel, was on his way to Thailand. The minutes of the October 21 meeting were approved as distributed.

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

Professor Dunnett noted that the study abroad programs are moving forward despite concerns about terrorism following the attacks in Paris. Olga Crombie, Assistant Director of Study Abroad, reported that 151 students had deposited for winter programs, but that 16 subsequently withdrew for a variety of reasons, including health and financial reasons. The Paris attacks and Worldwide Travel Alert have caused anxiety among students and parents. Study Abroad has been pro-active in its messaging to students and parents to reassure them. Communications from the office have helped to point out UB's safety protocols and its ongoing efforts to monitor the situation overseas. SUNY campuses in general are not canceling programs due to concerns about terrorism, and there are regular conference calls for SUNY study abroad staff to share information. No students in UB's spring programs have withdrawn at this point. Students who apply to winter programs do not have the same level of commitment as those enrolling in semester programs. The pre-departure orientation last week highlighted safety measures. Much of this is common sense—not to put oneself or others at risk. Follow up emails will go out to students with a request that they be shared with parents. All told, there are presently 208 students all told in winter and spring programs. There are 135 on UB winter programs and 15 on other SUNY winter programs.

Professor Dunnett thanked Ms. Crombie for her exceptional efforts over the weekend of the Paris attacks to confirm the safety of UB students in Europe and to reassure parents. He also thanked Professor Christian Flaugh and his colleagues in Romance Languages and Literatures who also reached out to students and colleagues in Paris. Inexpensive air travel allows easy mobility within Europe. Professor Dunnett noted that no one could “guarantee” the safety of a student abroad—this is an unrealistic expectation. He said that the U.S. is often viewed by international students and their parents as unsafe due to frequent gun violence. Institutions like the University of Kansas allow concealed weapons on campus per state law. Ms. Dussourd said that it was fortunate that UB does not allow weapons to be carried on campus. Professor Welch said that Amherst is typically ranked among top 10 small cities in terms of safety. Professor Dunnett said he was pleased at the good numbers for the winter programs, despite cancellation of one program (to Israel). Dr. McGuire said his program had lost a few students, and that parents are a bit skittish. There have been regular terrorist attacks in Istanbul, and a pipe bomb went off there just a week ago. Twelve students remain committed, and two other UB staff will be accompanying the group, Professor Munroe Eagles and Ms. Letitia Thomas. Dr. McGuire will be consulting local State Department officials about the situation there. Professor Ram said she knows a colleague in Istanbul who keeps a “go bag” ready in case an emergency departure is warranted. Ms. Dussourd noted that after 9/11 the Council organized a series of talks about

national security and foreign policy. Given the current situation, perhaps something like this is warranted again. Professor Dunnett reported that President Tripathi had inquired about international students who are Muslim and may be anxious in the current circumstances. Council members such as Professor Othman Shibly can help address this. Perhaps Don could do something once he's back.

Ms. Crombie summarized the Study Abroad measures for students, including helping them be more aware of the local setting and context of their program. Faculty-led programs rely on directors to make students aware of places to avoid and what not to do. UB has great health and evacuation insurance coverage through HTH. The new State Department website for study abroad students is a very helpful resource for health and safety information. Study Abroad seeks to make students aware of their own responsibility for personal safety. Professor Dunnett noted it had been a painful semester, with the loss of a UB student in September due to an accident during his study abroad in Australia. This student went to New Zealand on holiday during a break and was involved in a kayaking accident in which two students died from hypothermia. UB sent the assistant resident director from UB programs in Singapore to Melbourne to meet the students returning from New Zealand after the accident. The big challenge was the repatriation process since it involved a third country. Professor Dunnett met the parents at the student's funeral in New York City. He was attracted to UB partly because of the universities international programs. We can't prevent young people from risky behavior. The current situation suggests we need more study abroad, not less and redouble efforts to promote health and safety.

Professor Dunnett reported that he accompanied the President, Professor Ram Ramesh, and Professor Bharat Jayaraman on a trip to Bangalore, India for the graduation ceremony for two M.S. programs delivered in partnership with Amrita University. First they went to Amrita's main campus at Coimbatore to sign a new agreement and to see Amrita's Live-In-Labs program with Indian students and international students in a variety of fields—experiential learning; major focus on sanitation; latrine deployment; local buy-in is challenge; use of current technologies through engineers; electrification of villages. Amrita has invited U.S. universities to be involved. President Tripathi agreed that UB would try to send students on this program. Professor Dunnett raised questions about health and safety. Fortunately, the villages involved are located relatively close to hospitals, etc. Amrita works with villages on infrastructure as well as changing behaviors. There is a need for a multidisciplinary approach.

### **III. Briefing and Discussion of the Community of Excellence in Global Health Equity—Pavani Ram**

Professor Ram explained her role in the Community of Excellence in Global Health Equity (CGHE). She was representing three other faculty co-leads—Professors Korydon Smith, Li Lin and Samina Raja—as well as 75 affiliated faculty in the CGHE. She noted that “equity” does not mean the same thing as “equality.” Her own work deals with early childhood health in Africa and Asia— issues of sanitation, sold fuels for cooking and heat, refugee health in Western New York. The CGHE addresses unjust differences in health provision and outcomes between persons of different socioeconomic groups. The CGHE seeks to support the influencers including research bodies to address gaps in science, facilitative organizations; policymakers and implementers; and professional organizations. The Community seeks to inspire transdisciplinary work involving many units. There is a need to leverage underutilized

domains. Focusing on the health disciplines alone is not sufficient to overcome inequities in health—engineers, planners, architects, policy analysts, etc. are also needed. The health scientists together with these “impact disciplines” to foster creative interdisciplinary teams of scholars. The CGHE is working with consultants to facilitate/expand collaboration and foster synergies among UB faculty and to address under-served challenges, e.g. inadequate sanitation, which affects 1 billion people. This problem impacts the quality of life tremendously. The UN Goal is that by 2030 there will be adequate sanitation for all. Unfortunately, various disabilities prevent access to sanitation—so there is a need for planning, inclusive design; health in housing.

Moreover, there is a need to build external partnerships with organizations to impact inequities—with academic institutions, policymakers, international NGOs to transform scholarship. It is gratifying that the UB leadership is interested not only in traditional metrics—research funding, papers, enrollments, but also the impacts on the problems constituting global health inequities. There is a need to engage alumni to support this effort. The initiative promises novel collaborations within UB and beyond. The Community will mentor junior faculty to join the effort. It will offer experiential learning and global health opportunities across the university. Some pending initiatives include a global health experiential learning opportunity during spring break, and eventually a winter-session global health program. The CGHE would like to develop sites abroad for long-term engagement, where sustainable efforts can occur, and to support refugee health initiatives. Working groups in the Community focus on child survival and development; infectious disease; non-communicable, chronic diseases; and refugee health and well-being. There are opportunities for students—campus conversations—gatherings of students and faculty throughout year, coursework in global health, a new public health minor and eventual global health undergraduate major, field experiences, a Global Environmental Health Track in the MPH program. Professor Raja’s three-week outing to India in January as part of a spring-semester course will focus on sanitation. A spring break program, “Spring Break with a Purpose: Inclusive Design for Sanitation,” will be run March 14-17, 2016. A schedule of CGHE activities for semester has been developed including grand rounds once a month; dialogues, and critical conversations open to everyone on campus.

The campus home for CGHE is currently in Parker Hall on the South Campus. Professor Ram is the director focusing on research and is currently hiring administrative and engagement coordinators. She will keep the Council updated on the CGHE’s progress. Ms. Dussourd asked about dissemination of information about the CGHE. Professor Lillian Williams asked about whether the Buffalo Urban League was involved. Professor Ram said not as yet, but there perhaps was an opportunity in terms of the refugee effort. Professor Mulchand Patel asked about the Community’s work on pollution. Professor Ram said there is a spectrum of issues affecting inequities, e.g. reluctance to use latrines due to cultural and behavioral issues; public toilets intended for all require inclusive design. The air pollution issue is critical, and involves the exposure of mothers and newborns to air pollution from solid fuel fires and tobacco smoke in countries where tobacco use is more than 50% among men. Professor Patel pointed out that there are cost-effective solutions that can be easily adopted. Professor Christian Flaugh asked about work at the intersection of cultural and sanitation issues. Professor Ram agreed it is incredibly important to work with experts on cultural and social norms to arrive at solutions.

#### **IV. Update from the Task Force on International Student Inclusion and Engagement—Wei Loon Leong**

Professor Dunnett invited Mr. Leong to report on behalf of the Task Force Chair, Professor Peter Biehl. The task force is divided into several working groups with charges described in a handout that was provided: Best Practices, Undergraduate Education and Experience, Graduate Experience, Faculty Engagement, and Budget and Resources. The approach is data-driven and based on survey results—both of students and faculty and staff. The task group is mindful of not over-surveying UB. Mr. Leong's working group serves as the clearinghouse for the others, in terms of what will be needed to address needs that have been identified. Task Force findings will be based on hard evidence. Professor Dunnett noted that the Provost would like the task force report by the end of April. In addition to data collection and outreach to various units, the group is looking at AAU peers to see what they're doing, to identify best practices. This is the reason that extra time is needed. Survey responses have been interesting in terms of student satisfaction with various opportunities here—e.g. internships. Analyzing all the data is a challenge. The student comments on faculty relations are informing the draft survey of faculty and staff. Professor Dunnett thanked the task force and reiterated the Provost's interest in their important work.

#### **V. Discussion of the CISP Award**

Professor Dunnett reminded members that nominations were open for the 2016 CISP Award and that more nominations were needed. Plenty of time remained since the deadline was not until April 1, 2016. Professor Dunnett announced that a Marie Curie Global Fellowship had been awarded to CISP member Professor Daniel Hess who will be in Estonia for two years to study the decaying public housing built throughout the cities of former Soviet republics. Professor Hess plans to continue his summer program in Estonia and to stay on the Council.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Wood, Secretary

## COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Attendance at the Meeting, December 9, 2015

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