

Council on International Studies and Programs

Minutes of Meeting

February 8, 2016

I. Approval of the Minutes of the November 30, 2016 Meeting—Peter Biehl

Professor Biehl greeted members and wished them well for the new year. He welcomed a guest—Sean Sullivan, Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Convener of the Steering Committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the task force recommendations on the inclusion and engagement of international students. John Wood introduced a new member of the Council, Professor Zhiqiang Liu of the Department of Economics, the newly appointed director of the UB Confucius Institute. The minutes of the November meeting were approved as distributed, with corrections noted from Ellen Dussourd.

II. A Conversation with Sean P. Sullivan, Vice Provost for Academic Planning, on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on International Student Inclusion and Engagement

Professor Biehl introduced Vice Provost Sullivan, who congratulated the Council on the work of the task force and noted he was fortunate to be working on the implementation of the task force recommendations. The report is an impressive one, with 54 recommendations spanning the institution. The question is how do we sequence our efforts and engage the right people to move this forward? The implementation planning document shared with the Council is the work of administrative staff and so it is good to get the Council's feedback before the process begins. Mr. Sullivan described the structure. It requires a steering committee to cut across the institution—and have several key working groups: a student life and support services working group, a recruitment and communications group, and an educational strategy group. The aim is to put together the action steps, resources and deliverables, to orchestrate an institution-wide effort and produce an action plan and resource requests.

Mr. Sullivan identified some of the key folks who are involved in the process, including the deans from three schools with the most international students (the College, Engineering and Management). These schools will be represented on the working groups. It's preferable not to work with an overly large committee, but rather involve three sub-groups, with Barb Ricotta, Jeff Smith and John Wood as conveners, respectively. Three meetings are planned for the Steering Committee—an organizational meeting, one to discuss progress reports from the working groups, and a final meeting to look at the draft implementation strategy. The concern is that we not create duplicative services and structures for international students but rather enhance and supplement existing services and programs to better address international student needs. Mr. Sullivan's role is to be a neutral arbiter and to manage resource—his office can support the effort going forward. A carefully worked out implementation strategy is the end goal.

What is the role of the Council in the process? The Council can have the opportunity to provide input to the implementation plan at its meeting in April and provide final feedback before the report is submitted. Professor Eunhee Lee asked how the working groups were identified. Mr. Sullivan said that he sought advice for proposed members of the working groups. The Provost will reach out to prospective members to extend an invitation. The deans and vice provosts were consulted as was the Vice President for Student Life. The plan

has gone through several drafts before this stage. Professor Biehl noted that many members of CISP have served on past working groups of the task force.

Professor Meredith Lewis asked about the problem of the isolation of international students. Is there existing policy that UB should avoid separating international students in classes and programs? Mr. Sullivan responded that there is a concern generally that international students not be ghettoized. Professor Biehl said that's why Vice Provost Teri Miller's involvement is important. The report's recommendations on the role of diversity are key. The current situation in terms of the US posture may be helpful in raising awareness more generally about the lack of welcome. Ms. Dussourd said that the pedagogical efforts recommended for international students would benefit other groups such as refugees and recent immigrants. Should the aim of this effort be broadened? Professor Bunker noted that course syllabi might include a standard clause about international diversity and any special accommodations for international students. She said that she is often approached by second-language speakers about their concerns regarding assignments and assessments. Professor Biehl said that the Faculty Senate would need to be involved in making such a change to the standard elements of the course syllabus. Certainly this point is germane to the Educational Strategy Working Group's work. Dr. Lorraine Oak asked about the Graduate School's involvement on Steering Committee? Professor Biehl said that the three deans will address graduate student interests on the Steering Committee. Dr. Human pointed out that support services have a strong undergraduate focus and could use more representation from graduate side. Professor Horne cited the example of a non-native speaker at UB who could not understand material in English and needed language support. There needs to be provision for enhanced programming for second language support. Mr. Shaw provided an overview of test thresholds for entry and proficiency and for ESL courses. He noted that standardized tests are limited in what they can do. The new UB Curriculum has new Communication Literacy courses with a focus on writing in the disciplines. He pointed out the issues that also affect refugees and immigrants. Ms. Dussourd followed up on Professor Horne's question about students with language issues who are not international. Some students have trouble navigating the university. Their tendency is to spend most of their time in niche groups where they can speak native language. Professor Biehl asked members to consider whether there were aspects of the report and its recommendations that were not addressed by the implementation plan and to notify John Wood with any feedback by Friday of this week.

III. Report from the Vice Provost for International Education—John J. Wood

Professor Biehl introduced Mr. Shaw, who reported on spring enrollment and concerns going forward regarding international recruitment and enrollment. He noted a slight decline in the numbers of undergraduates this spring, despite the total international enrollment going up. On the graduate side there was a decrease in new students as well as continuing students. He referred to the handout that was distributed. The totals do not include numbers for external programs at SIM or Amrita. The new enrollment at SIM saw a healthy increase. A dip in spring at UB is not unusual since there are typically a fair number of students graduating in fall semester. Mr. Shaw referred to the lists of leading sending countries and enrollment by school. China and India are still the leaders, with Iran growing rapidly. These tend to be graduate students since visas tend to be difficult for undergraduates from Iran to get. UB does not have that many students from seven countries in the travel ban, but the fear is that the number of countries will increase. International Admissions is monitoring social media to see how students overseas are feeling. Prospects, applicants and admits are all commenting on the situation, expressing concern by email about how welcoming the US and UB will be. Should they even apply currently? The media leads them to believe they either

won't be able to come or won't be able to complete their degrees here. They are also concerned about CPT and OPT, and eventual work visas down the road. The long-term impact of Trump policies is a major concern for prospective students. International Admissions is working with Graduate Enrollment Management Services and other units to reinforce UB's welcoming message. Six graphical emails are being sent to students in the current cycle to reinforce that welcoming message. Some of these are going out from President Tripathi. These emails are being shared with the schools and departments communicating to prospective graduate students. The main message is "don't defer." Normal recruitment efforts are ongoing, with four recruiters currently overseas—they're seeing the usual questions from students. Unfortunately, the focus has shifted from "Why UB?" to "Why the US?"

Professor Biehl asked about the admissions cycle at this stage. Mr. Shaw said that undergraduate applications are up currently about 2.5% and so are admits, but deposits are down, perhaps reflecting student uncertainty about committing. At the graduate level applications across the board are down due to other reasons such as the strength of the US dollar and the economy. There has been an effort to expedite decisions on graduate admissions. There is a concern from both Engineering and Management which have seen Indian students turning down offers for their master's programs. These students are reacting to the administration's stance, which is frightening them away.

Ms. Dussourd reported on the situation with respect to current international students. She noted that at the November meeting the Council discussed concerns about Trump's plans post-election. Now international students are expressing anger at the recent Executive Order. One of the Iranian students was finally able to return the day before for his final semester. An Iranian dental student who needs to take an exam in Canada faces possible disruption. Iranian students are presently the biggest concern. The leaked draft executive orders about work visas are being discussed in the Indian press. Some students have used the situation as an excuse for not arriving on time this semester. Some students have been very upset, and ISSS is counseling them. There is so much misinformation about what's happening. The good news is that there have been a lot of effective interventions by the legal community, and many protests advocating on behalf of internationals. It is heartening to see this support and activism. Customs and Border Protection is taking a lot of time to review cases at the border, thus causing big delays. It's good that other countries have not been added to list on the travel ban, as was initially rumored. The current situation offers many reminders of the post-9/11 playbook. Out of an abundance of caution, a general travel advisory is in place to prevent students leaving the country and then not being able to return.

Mr. Oscar Budde, Director of UB Immigration Services, addressed short-term concerns connected to the executive order now being reviewed by Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. If the Court does not resolve the matter, perhaps Congress will do so through legislation. A second executive order dealing with immigration enforcement in the interior of the US is very concerning since it allows the federal government to identify sanctuary jurisdictions and withhold federal funding. Immigration enforcement is often undertaken under the cloak of darkness, as Mr. Budde knows from handling asylee cases in Ohio. An attorney downstate noted that ICE is raiding large places of employment to find illegal aliens. This second executive order is also badly written and raises questions of due process. There is so much to deal with in the present environment. What about rumors and disinformation? Rumors about possible countries being added to the travel ban came from attorneys. Immigration attorneys are often invited to speculate about future. [American Immigration Lawyers Association](#) (AILA) is one of the better sources for reliable and updated information on

immigration matters. One needs to be very careful about updating information on websites. With respect to individuals affected by the travel ban, UB has 22 individuals from the 7 affected countries under auspices of UB Immigration Services. One post-doc from Iran was due to arrive on Jan. 31 and could not get a visa. The vital research this person is expected to conduct is very important to UB and is federally funded. Out of the blue on February 7 a US consular official in Armenia got in touch about this person to finalize his visa, so hopefully the post-doc can travel here soon. Mr. Wood noted that the administration's immigration changes would have a chilling effect on outbound mobility and particularly study abroad.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Wood, Secretary

COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Attendance at the Meeting, February 8, 2016

Present:	Dr. Tilman Baumstark	Faculty Affairs
	Dr. Peter Biehl, Chair	Anthropology
	Mr. Oscar A. Budde (ex officio)	Immigration Services
	Dr. Barbara B. Bunker	Psychology
	Dr. Yu-Ping Chang	Nursing
	Dr. Colleen Culleton	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Ms. Kathy L. Curtis	English Language Institute
	Ms. Ellen Dussourd (ex officio)	International Student & Scholar Services
	Dr. David Engel	Law
	Dr. David Fertig	Linguistics
	Dr. Christian Flaugh	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Dr. Graham Hammill	Graduate School
	Mr. Christopher Hollister	University Libraries
	Dr. Junhao Hong	Communication
	Ms. Maria S. Horne	Theatre and Dance
	Dr. Christine A. Human	Engineering and Applied Sciences
	Dr. EunHee Lee	Asian Studies
	Mr. Wei Loon Leong	Alumni Engagement
	Ms. Meredith Kolsky Lewis	Law
	Dr. Zhiqiang Liu	Economics/Confucius Institute
	Dr. H. Lorraine Oak	College of Arts and Sciences
	Dr. Mulchand Patel	Biochemistry
	Dr. Trevor Poag (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. Pavani Ram	Epidemiology and Environmental Health
	Mr. Steven L. Shaw (ex officio)	International Admissions
	Dr. Natalie Simpson	Management
	Dr. John H. Stone	Public Health and Health Professions
	Dr. Claude E. Welch	Political Science
	Dr. John J. Wood, Secretary	International Education
Guests:	Dr. Lisa Lenker	Community for Global Health Equity
	Mr. Sean P. Sullivan	Academic Planning
Excused:	Dr. Stella Batalama	Electrical Engineering
	Dr. Janina Brutt-Griffler	Learning and Instruction
	Dr. Filomena Critelli	Social Work
	Dr. Stephen C. Dunnett (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. Daniel Hess	Architecture and Planning
	Mr. Joseph J. Hindrawan (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. Shaun Irlam	Comparative Literature
	Dr. Donald McGuire	Classics
	Ms. Mary Odrzywolski (ex officio)	Study Abroad Programs
	Dr. Jessie P.H. Poon	Geography
	Dr. Othman Shibly	Dental Medicine
	Dr. Lillian Williams	African American Studies