

Council on International Studies and Programs

Minutes of the Meeting

February 13, 2019

I. Welcome and Approval of the Minutes of the November 2018 Meeting— Peter Biehl, Chair

The minutes of the November 2018 meeting were approved as distributed. Professor Biehl mentioned that additional university leaders would be invited to the Council. It is anticipated that Professor Venu Govindaraju, Vice President for Research and Economic Development, would attend an upcoming meeting to discuss international research.

II. Report from the Chair—Peter Biehl

The “Campus Climate” survey was recently rebranded as the “Campus Culture” survey. Faculty, staff, and students will soon receive an email to take this new survey, developed with help of a company called Skyfactor. There are two versions of the survey: one for students, and one for faculty and staff. This morning (February 13), there was an email sent, asking for focus group volunteers. Professor Biehl asked the council members to please participate in these focus groups, especially to have an international voice heard. The focus groups may help change the structure of the survey, even though the survey will be launched soon. The limitations are that the survey takes 30 minutes to complete, and is not available via mobile devices. Dr. John Wood asked about the focus group email being sent this morning, as he and other councilmembers did not see such an email. Professor Biehl will make sure that all council members receive the focus group email.

Dr. Wood has met several times with Professor Despina Stratigakos, Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence, to help facilitate implementation of the Task Force Report on Inclusion and Engagement. Professor Biehl said that many universities are consulting our reports, which are public. While she has many other things on her plate, Professor Stratigakos is starting meetings, Dr. Wood noted.

The Boldly Buffalo Committee had its first meeting of brainstorming, and then a subsequent meeting with Professor Biehl; Director of International Alumni Engagement, Wei Loon Leong; and Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement, Rod Grabowski. The committee will be sharing its ideas with the Council for feedback. The committee would like to feature study abroad but is open to other suggestions. If a council member wants to join this group, they should email Professor Biehl.

There has been an ongoing collaboration among assistant and associate deans to focus primarily on recruitment and enrollment efforts for international graduate students. Ad hoc meetings take place every six weeks, with attendance from six major schools: School of Architecture and Planning, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, School of Management, School of Law, and the School of Public Health and Health Professions. Professor Biehl and Dr. Christine Human will head soon to Turkey and Lebanon to recruit international students. In Lebanon, Professor Biehl will go to the Lebanese American University, and Dr. Human will go to the American University at Beirut (AUB).

Professor Biehl felt privileged to organize a panel on the global liberal arts at the recent AIEA Conference in San Francisco. Because of the panel's success, Professor Biehl was invited to propose another session on this topic for the 2020 conference in Washington D.C. Dr. Wood asked when faculty staff survey come out. Professor Biehl said the Campus Climate survey will be pushed out in April, and will be open for three weeks. One council member said that councilmembers should encourage colleagues within their own units to take this survey. Dr. Wood adds that Professor Despina Stratigakos is working on the development of statement of values. This statement will not be out until fall, but she is waiting on the responses from the survey to help shape the statement.

III. Report from the Interim Vice Provost—John J. Wood

For about five days in January, Dr. Wood and President Satish Tripathi visited the United Kingdom. They felt privileged to visit several UB study abroad sites, as well as two faculty-led programs: Professor Maria Horne's Cultural Appreciation program, and Professor Debby Street's Sociology of Food programs—two very successful programs. Dr. Wood said the trip was very useful, and he is very gratified by this opportunity. Further, Dr. Wood and President Tripathi visited two UB study abroad locations: Swansea in Wales, and Sheffield in Yorkshire. Dr. Wood asked Professor Horne to comment.

Professor Horne said, "We had lunch at wonderful Indian restaurant near St. Paul's Cathedral." During lunch, Professor Horne told her students to have questions for President Tripathi, to be uncensored, and address pressing topics with the president—some raised the issue of on-campus parking. Professor Horne said that President Tripathi arrived to lunch early, and with productive conversation between the president and the students, the lunch event lasted about four hours. Professor Horne said President Tripathi opened up the floor for discussion, and was charming, warm, and open. The students felt comfortable with it all, which Professor Horne said was fantastic and transformational, for both the students and President Tripathi. Professor Horne is very thankful for the exchange, and hopes it can happen in future study abroad programs. Dr. Wood commented that President Tripathi was also very pleased with the exchange.

Barbara Ricotta asked how many students were in this group. Professor Horne's program had 15 students, while Professor Street's program had around 25 students. Professor Walter Hakala asked what the president said to Dr. Wood about the experience. Dr. Wood said President Tripathi hadn't had the opportunity to do a trip like this before, and it was valuable for the president to understand study abroad from the students' perspective. While London may not involve as large a cultural adjustment compared to other programs, Dr. Wood said the program is a high-value experience. Professor Horne added that the students who participate in the London programs are more likely to participate in subsequent study abroad programs. Dr. Wood added that a primary goal of the trip was to explore expanded collaborations with the longstanding UK partners, the University of Sheffield and Swansea University.

Mary Odrzywolski shared the changes made to the study abroad programs website. UB students must now complete two pathways as part of their UB Curriculum, and modifications to the study abroad website show more clearly how study abroad can be integrated into the pathways. When a student selects study abroad through the Path Finder tool, the Office of Study Abroad Programs reaches out to that student with resources like eligibility requirements and application deadlines. This is meant enhance program selection in study abroad. Professor Horne asked whether all courses are listed on the lists. Ms. Odrzywolski said the courses shown are those that are only offered abroad; it is not an exhaustive list of programs.

Dr. Wood said the Office of the Registrar has been developing a way to differentiate the domestic and study abroad versions of the same courses using different course numbers. Professor Hakala asked whether students could still articulate non-UB courses, such as those from other SUNY programs. Ms. Odrzywolski said students could still articulate those non-UB courses by selecting a placeholder course option on the UB study abroad website. Dr. Human asked if students know they can take just a single course when they study abroad. Ms. Odrzywolski said that her office is now working with UB Curriculum office to clearly detail that students may take one or more courses when they go abroad. She noted that it the website is a SUNY-wide system, so takes a while to get everything into place. Professor Biehl asked if there is data to show the growth of study abroad. Ms. Odrzywolski said that it is too soon to understand any trends on study abroad demands. Dr. Wood points out that for many students, perhaps there are too many choices, and maybe UB needs more faculty and advisors to help students clarify what programs are best for them. He said that the pathfinder tool would help. Professor Hakala noted that the new SUNY study abroad website does not work. Ms. Odrzywolski explained that the SUNY website is new, having been in development for the past eight years.

Ms. Odrzywolski showed the resources listed on the new website, including advisement walkthroughs, a page for accepted students, and student testimonials.

There is also a course search feature for students to search programs by their curriculum requirement. This feature gives UB students the UB course equivalents of the offerings at exchange partners. Professor Biehl agreed this is great resource, and he recommended that there be information sessions to train undergraduate administrators to use the Office of Study Abroad Programs as a resource. He said that we lose interested students when they go to faculty or advisors who are unequipped to assist with study abroad. Ms. Odrzywolski is working with the undergraduate advisement community, and said she can help train the advisors.

Mr. Steven Shaw, Director of International Admissions, provided a report on international enrollment for spring 2019. Referring to the handout provided, he noted there was a decline in the number of incoming freshmen, offset by growth on the transfer side. Overall, the international undergraduate number declined due to fewer continuing students. Graduate programs are enrolling more students in spring semester, which has helped increase the number of incoming international graduate students this spring. The continuing international graduate numbers is also up. Mr. Shaw pointed out the leading sending countries and the distribution by school. These follow national patterns. He said the environment remains challenging and the enrollment cycles ahead will be difficult. Professor Biehl inquired whether Slate would help. Mr. Shaw said that it could. The CRM functions of Slate will facilitate better communications with prospects and admits throughout the cycle. The ongoing implementation of Slate on the graduate side is providing to be a major challenge. Professor Dunnett pointed out that IIE recently predicted that its next Open Doors report would likely show a 5 percent decline in international enrollment nationally.

Ms. Katie Tudini, Director of International Student Services, highlighted several areas of focus for her office. One is to help promote intercultural communication, a need that has been identified by departments and units across campus. CISP members are welcome to be involved in developing a toolkit and resources for the campus. For spring semester, ISS has piloted an online pre-arrival process to facilitate the arrival and orientation of new international students. This reflects a more robust pre-arrival communication process. ISS expects to fully implement the online pre-arrival process for the fall orientation. In addition, ISS is moving to a month-long transition period during which new students can have more time to digest orientation information. Thirdly, ISS is working with units to help implement the new Curricular Practical Training policy taking effect this month.

Caitlin Rioux, Inclusion and Engagement Coordinator, reported on the inclusion grants recently awarded for four successful proposals, out of a pool of more than twenty submitted from across campus. She provided a handout describing the units awarded seed funding for projects this semester—Asian Studies, the Community for Global Health Equity, Counseling Services, and Student Engagement.

Professor Dunnett reported on his recent visit to Singapore to review the UB programs at the Singapore Institute of Management. This fulfills a contractual obligation that the PI visit twice a year for this purpose. The renewal of that contract is pending, and the leadership of the program at SIM is currently in transition. However, given the long-term success of the UB programs, it is expected that the renewal will go smoothly. In fall 2019, the seventh degree program, in Geographic Information Science, will be launched, with promising enrollment prospects. Unfortunately, one of the reasons students say they prefer to enroll in UB programs in Singapore rather than in Buffalo is negative impressions they have of the current administration.

Professor Othman Shibly of Dental Medicine reported on his recent visit to the Kurdish region of Iraq to provide dental care to Yezidi refugees. The Kurds managing the refugee camps are very pleased to have a dental mission set up, especially for the many displaced children. Professor Shibly noted the generosity of the Henry Schein Company in providing funding to support dental clinics for refugees in Syria, Turkey and Iraq.

IV. Council Business

A reminder that nominations for the Council's Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education are due March 29.

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Attendance at the Meeting, February 13, 2019

Present:	Peter Biehl, Chair	Anthropology/College of Arts and Sciences
	Oscar Budde (ex officio)	UB Immigration Services
	Yu-Ping Chang	Nursing
	Filomena Critelli	Social Work
	Kathy L. Curtis	English Language Institute
	Stephen C. Dunnett (ex officio)	International Education
	David Fertig	Linguistics
	Walter Hakala	Asian Studies
	Christopher Hollister	University Libraries
	Junhao Hong	Communication
	Maria S. Horne	Theatre and Dance
	Mara Huber	Undergraduate Education
	Christine Human	Engineering and Applied Sciences
	Mary Odrzywolski (ex officio)	Study Abroad Programs
	Trevor Poag (ex officio)	International Education
	Barbara Ricotta	Student Life
	Steven L. Shaw (ex officio)	International Admissions
	Othman Shibly	Dental Medicine
	Katie Tudini (ex officio)	International Student Services
	Lisa Vahapoglu	Community for Global Health Equity
	Claude E. Welch, Jr.	Political Science
	Lillian S. Williams	Transnational Studies
	John J. Wood (ex officio)	International Education
Excused:	Katharina Azim	Psychology
	Tilman Baumstark	Faculty Affairs
	Janina Brutt-Griffler	Graduate School of Education
	Colleen Culleton	Romance Languages and Literatures
	David Engel	Law
	Christian Flaugh	Romance Languages and Literature
	Graham Hammill	Graduate School
	Daniel Hess	Architecture and Planning
	Joseph J. Hindrawan (ex officio)	International Enrollment Management
	Shaun Irlam	Comparative Literature
	Wei Loon Leong	Alumni Engagement
	Meredith Kolsky Lewis	Law
	Zhiqiang Liu	Economics, Confucius Institute
	Donald McGuire	Classics
	Lorraine Oak	College of Arts and Sciences
	Mulchand Patel	Biochemistry
	Jessie P.H. Poon	Geography
	Dorothy Siaw-Asamoah	Management
	John H. Stone	Public Health and Health Professions