

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

Minutes of Meeting

September 23, 2015

### **I. Welcome of New Members: Approval of Minutes—David M. Engel**

Professor Engel welcomed Council members back for the new academic year. He introduced a new member—Professor Meredith Lewis, Vice Dean for Graduate and Professional Programs at the Law School and Director of the school's Cross-Border Legal Studies Center. Professor Lewis had previously attended a Council meeting to report on her Winter 2015 Study Abroad Program in New Zealand.

Professor Engel asked if there were any corrections to the draft minutes of the April 22, 2015 meeting; none being offered, the minutes were approved as distributed electronically.

### **II. Report from the Vice Provost for International Education—John J. Wood**

Professor Engel invited John Wood to report on behalf of Professor Dunnett, who could not attend the meeting due to a medical procedure. Mr. Wood asked Joseph Hindrawan, Director of International Enrollment Management, to provide a report on international enrollment and recruitment plans for fall 2015. Mr. Hindrawan referred members to a handout with enrollment data current as of September 22, 2015. He noted that UB had fallen somewhat short of its freshman target, though a larger number of transfers enrolled this fall. Despite a higher number of new international graduate students, the overall international graduate enrollment declined due to the larger number of graduating international master's students over the past year. Mr. Hindrawan pointed out that the recruitment landscape is increasingly competitive; moreover, the stronger U.S. dollar has made international students even more price-sensitive, while increasing the appeal of competing countries such as Canada and Australia. Mr. Wood asked if the economic slowdown in China would eventually have an impact on student numbers from that country. Mr. Hindrawan said that no effect has been seen as yet; any lag effect may impact graduate enrollments from China, depending on the availability of jobs in the PRC for new graduates. Another factor in the mix is the opening of new universities in China for fee-paying students, which are not subject to government quotas. These may take up some of the demand currently met by overseas institutions; however, Chinese parents view these new programs in China as being inferior in quality and ranking. Mr. Hindrawan explained that a senior enrollment planning process has been launched this fall to look at how the university can increase its enrollment by 2000 students over the next five years.

Mr. Wood invited Ms. Ellen Dussourd, Director of International Student and Scholar Services, to report on the fall 2015 Orientations and programming for international students. Ms. Dussourd said that a total of more than 1,600 new international students attended the graduate and undergraduate orientation programs. Among the innovations this year is an effort to provide more pre-arrival information to incoming students online. Mail Chimp is being used to provide this information and analytics will track these communications. At the orientations themselves ISSS is trying to be greener, with reduced dependence on paper handouts, though these provide a valuable back-up. Ms. Dussourd circulated sample notebooks distributed to orientation participants. She pointed out that despite the highly organized and orchestrated approach to orientation programming, unforeseen circumstances

can be disruptive, such as the fire alarm in Knox during check-in, server crashes that disrupted students acquiring their UBIT passwords, immunization holds causing back-ups during check-in, and the rejection of stamped signatures on employment letters presented to the Social Security Office.

Ms. Dussourd also briefed the Council on ISSS programming during the fall semester. Twenty-six workshops will be offered, including two new workshops—ones on Immigration for Entrepreneurs, and the U.S. Army program that provides a fast track to citizenship for non-immigrants with critical language skills. ISSS organized the UB Safe Day, held at the Student Union Lobby on September 21. The Transcending Border Program and the Global 360 residential program, both directed by Chris Bragdon are being ramped up this fall. Ms. Dussourd reported that UB is working with members of the University Heights community on housing issues. Fewer housing violations have been reported this fall.

Mr. Wood asked Ms. Olga Crombie, Assistant Director of Study Abroad, to report on behalf of the Director, Mary Odrzywolski, who is currently on maternity leave. Ms. Crombie reported that the online study abroad application system had 309 active applications for winter session programs. At least 130 of these were complete and more would be completed by the deadline of October 1. A significant increase over last year's UB winter enrollment of 125 is thus anticipated. In addition to nine existing programs there are two recently added winter programs (in China and Israel). Strong enrollments are anticipated in the two programs in London, as well as in the programs in Italy and Hong Kong. The programs in Barbados and Tanzania are helping to advance diversity efforts in study abroad. Professor Maria Horne pointed out that the arrangement this semester to align winter program acceptances with scholarship awards is causing problems due to delays in working out in-country arrangements in a timely fashion. Mr. Wood said that exceptions to this practice could be made on a case-by-case basis to address this problem.

Mr. Wei Loon Leong, Director of International Alumni Engagement, reported on the upcoming presidential trip to Bangalore, India to attend the commencement ceremony for the two UB dual master's degree programs conducted with Amrita University, and to host the first-ever Alumni Association reception in India. Both events are scheduled for Saturday, October 31. Mr. Leong encouraged members to contact him with names of alumni in India who can be invited to the alumni gathering in Bangalore. Given the number of graduates from UB's programs at Amrita and the presence of UB graduates working in multinationals in Bangalore, the city is the logical place to identify a critical mass of alumni with whom to build a future alumni chapter.

### **III. Report from the Task Force on International Student Inclusion and Engagement— Peter Biehl**

Professor Engel thanked Professor Biehl for his continuing leadership of the task force, which begins a second year of work. Professor Biehl referred to the draft report prepared by the task force at the end of the spring semester. He noted that the task force was building on the excellent work of previous CISP committees, including the International Student Committee chaired by Professor Barbara Bunker; surveying the current landscape; and assessing challenges and opportunities. The task force will continue to meet this semester and among other things will be analyzing data from the survey of international students conducted at the end of the spring semester, developing surveys of domestic students as well

as faculty and staff, and ultimately developing an action plan tied to a budget to advance the inclusion and engagement agenda. The task force is looking at the international student experience at all stages—from recruitment through to alumni status. Clearly there is a lack of awareness in many quarters at UB regarding the growing community of international students, their special needs, and the opportunities for engagement. The task force is also considering the branding of UB as a global university and how international students play a role in that institutional identity. The new UB Curriculum represents a special opportunity since this affords new possibilities for engaging international students, along with domestic students, by means of new courses and other emergent curricular options, including the International Experience Track of the Global Pathway.

The task force is also looking at best practices across the university and taking into account successful models already in place, including ISSS programming, and course- and cohort approaches used by the School of Management and School of Architecture and Planning, among others. Working groups are focusing on both curricular and co-curricular activities as these foster inclusion and engagement. Appointing a faculty point person at the school level to address international student matters, as has been done in the Law School, is another best practice. New experiential learning opportunities such as domestic travel programs are very promising; so are efforts to promote international student career development by means of the extended UB community.

Professor Biehl reported that the spring-semester survey yielded a 26 percent response rate, which is very good, especially considering its timing at the end of the semester. A total of 1,222 international students responded, and over 80 percent said they would recommend UB to their friends and classmates. The survey produced hundreds of qualitative comments. This feedback will inform that next phase of the process, involving focus groups of international and domestic students. Ultimately, the task force would like to go beyond making recommendations and identify action steps tied to a budget so that concrete steps may be taken.

In the discussion which followed, Professor Bunker said that she welcomed the report and the many great recommendations it makes. She said that what is being called for is a culture change at UB. What is missing is an explanation of how the power brokers at UB are going to make this happen. How is institutional change of this kind to be led and organized? Professor Biehl said that the experience with the UB Curriculum demonstrates the need to persuade stakeholders that such change is good for the institution and the university community at large. It is important to determine whether the priorities of the task force reflect the priorities of our students. The survey data, which is being analyzed now, will confirm the alignment of students' perceptions with task force priorities. Mr. Wood asked whether the survey might be blind to needs that students themselves are unaware of; the value of support systems may not be fully reflected in the survey responses.

Professor EunHee Lee noted that many of UB's international students are from Asia, and Asian Studies has difficulty finding faculty to teach courses about Asia. What is the general level of faculty knowledge about Asia? Professor Engel pointed out that the draft report focuses on the needs of international undergraduates, even though it's noted that the majority of international students at UB are graduate students. Should these groups be addressed separately? Are there fewer issues for international graduate students? Professor Biehl said that undergraduates, particularly those living on campus, typically have more time

and opportunity for campus inclusion and engagement than many graduate students. Mr. Wood added that since master's programs involve much shorter stay times at UB, the opportunity for inclusion and engagement is commensurately less; moreover, some of the highly enrolled programs such as those in engineering have relatively little diversity. Ms Dussourd recommended building on successful school-level strategies and practices. The schools of Social Work and Architecture and Planning stand out in this regard. Professor Biehl agreed and said the action plan will call for this. Mr. Wood said that facilitating productive cross-cultural interactions between international and domestic students is best achieved in the classroom through intentional activities that foster such interactions. A recent report from the University of Minnesota confirms this view. Professor Horne cautioned that in the faculty and staff survey there may be some reluctance on the part of some to say what they really feel out of a sense of political correctness.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Wood, Secretary

## COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Attendance at the Meeting, September 23, 2015

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