

COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS
Minutes of the Meeting, September 27, 2017

I. Approval of the Minutes of the April 2017 Meeting

Professor Biehl welcomed a new member of the Council—Dr. Mara Huber, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education. A second new member, Jaimie Falzarano from the School of Management, was unable to attend. The minutes of the April 19 meeting were approved as distributed.

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

Professor Dunnett invited Steven Shaw, Director of International Admissions, to update the Council on the fall international enrollment picture. Mr. Shaw reported on the fall enrollment numbers. The enrollment picture is not as bad as had been feared in the period following the election and the subsequent travel bans imposed by the administration. However, there have been modest declines in both new undergraduate and graduate international enrollment. The freshman target was 400, the same as last year. A smaller number of freshman deposits earlier on indicated we might have an even lower freshman number than we ended up with—335. The “Trump effect” has been reflected in the calls and emails from students throughout the cycle, expressing concerns about how welcoming the US would be, about student safety, etc. There has been a very disheartening reaction from some students and families, who’ve simply decided to go elsewhere. Mr. Shaw anticipates continued anxiety and uncertainty going into the next cycle. Specific events, like the shootings of Indian students in Kansas, can impact enrollment in a significant way. The fall 2018 target is again 400 freshmen. International transfer numbers continue to decline—perhaps due to students’ increased inclination to remain where they are. To help reverse that trend, International Admissions hopes to begin awarding scholarships to international transfers in fall 2018.

The international graduate trends are more troubling than the undergraduate. Given the number of continuing students currently, a mass exodus of master’s students due to graduation, particularly in engineering, could cause a wild swing in enrollment, as has happened in the past. The provost’s enrollment plan aims to achieve 20% overall international enrollment, with an even split of undergraduate and graduate. Of the current sending countries, China is the largest, with India close behind. The Indian undergraduate number has been going down, as has that of Korea, part of a long-term trend that is due to increased higher education access in Korea. Iran is now the third leading country among graduate students. In fact, UB has one of the largest Iranian enrollments in the US. These students have to go through a third country for a visa, and of course Iran is now on the travel ban list. However, Iranians have a good network. Nineteen new Iranian students enrolled this fall, more than expected. Recruitment efforts will continue, targeting key markets and opening new ones. The profile in terms of leading majors for international students is familiar and not much different from last year. Professor Biehl asked about the enrollment data in Tableau, specifically with respect to students who decide not to come to UB. Mr. Shaw said that the data is not “clean,” and doesn’t cover all international students. The key competitors like Stony Brook, Syracuse, and Purdue are typical alternatives to UB.

Professor Dunnett noted that he, Lee Melvin and Graham Hammill were meeting with all the decanal units that week about graduate enrollment planning. These meetings have generally been downbeat, except for engineering. The problem is the decline in graduate applications, especially for master's programs. There appears to be a retention problem as well. Programs that have been popular for international students like MBA are declining precipitously. The College is also in a bad situation. There are new deans in several key schools, like GSE, Law, and the College confronting declining enrollments. They have excellent ideas for recruitment and for refreshing their graduate curricula—an initiative of Vice Provost Sean Sullivan. However, the new program proposals tend to get held up for approval at SUNY and the State Education Department (SED). The Governor has made it a priority to remediate the roadblock at SED. The School of Management has recently gotten several new one-year masters approved. In addition, some combined degrees and stackable credentials are coming on line. But it will take two to three years to mount a portfolio of new programs and begin recruiting. Centralized processing in the College will facilitate communication and enrollment management. Many positive changes are underway to remedy UB's enrollment challenges. The Trump factor will continue to trouble our enrollment from abroad. Fortunately, tuition won't increase in the short term, which should help UB to compete. Our improving rankings are helping as well. Joe Hindrawan has reported good turnouts at recruitment events in Vietnam, Myanmar and Thailand. Professor Dunnett encouraged prompt processing and outreach since this will enhance yield. The schools will need to continue to improve their graduate processing times overall.

Ellen Dussourd, Director of International Student and Scholar Services, reported that one Iranian student arriving this fall had to go to the US embassy in Afghanistan to get a visa and while he was there the embassy was attacked—an indication of the challenges students face in getting a student visa. All told, 1,414 students attended the fall orientation. Overall, the new students seem nervous and insecure, but they respond very favorably to supportive comments. A total of 438 students were processed by the Social Security office on the Saturday of orientation. They had a very positive and welcoming experience that set the right tone; moreover, some students received their Social Security cards within 10 days. The summer past was busy with a round of activities. ISSS has been invited to be part of 1Capen, though traffic to the ISSS advisor has been relatively light so far. ISSS will present 25 workshops this fall and organize ten trips. The International Education Week program being developed for mid-November features Andrew Bacevich of Boston University, speaking on US Militarism. Professor Biehl asked if there was a follow up with Social Security office to thank them for their excellent service. Ms. Dussourd said that the office employees were enthusiastic in cooperating, opening on Saturday, and they even wore orientation tee shirts.

Mr. Oscar Budde, Director of UB Immigration Services, reported on the new, more narrowly defined travel ban of September 24, which had been anticipated. This new order preempts the Supreme Court's taking action on the second travel ban, issued in the spring. Briefs have been requested by the Court, though it should be anticipated that the Court will defer to the administration. It may not rule on the religious discrimination implicit in the first two travel bans. The administration has written the new travel ban in such a way to make it more challenge-proof, being based on three reasonable criteria; namely, the capacity of a country—(1) to verify the identity of individuals who are traveling to the US; (2) to generate and share data about individual travelers; and (3) to evaluate the risk of potential threats among these travelers. The only two countries that have an indefinite ban on F-1s or

J-1s are Syria and North Korea. The other six countries are allowed to have immigrant and non-immigrant visas, including student visas. UB has a handful of students from Syria. In the case of countries like Iran there will be additional “extreme” vetting of visa applicants. J-1s will be treated essentially the same as F-1s. Individuals coming to the US from these countries might consider a J-1 instead of B-1, since the former may be more likely to be issued. It must be said the new travel ban is more defensible from a legal standpoint than the two previous bans. However, there are some grounds for challenging it. Does it go against the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 in using nationality-based criteria to restrict entry to the US? Family based immigration could be severely impacted, in terms of one family member sponsoring other family members. “Dual intent” visas like H-1B should not be impacted. Travelers’ social media is subject to review at points of entry—and this applies also to naturalized US citizens. Oscar said that dual nationals are consulting him about travel outside the US for advice about this issue and what devices are subject to inspection at the border (phones, tablets, etc). Professor Dunnett said he was interviewed at secondary inspection coming back from Spain.

Mary Odrzywolski, Director of Study Abroad Programs, reported on study abroad participation during the summer. She noted that recent US immigration restrictions may impact US students going abroad due to tit-for-tat retaliation. The current environment appears to have caused a recent decline in participation. However, the winter 2018 programs appear to be attracting strong interest. Ms. Odrzywolski presented the new Study Abroad website, which is more visual and addresses common questions students ask. There is a section about the Global Pathway and lists of partners where students can fulfill requirements for UB Curriculum. The UBC Path Finder tool integrates study abroad courses to make these more visible to students. The Study Abroad website features a new section for parents, some of whom are very involved in their children’s study abroad decisions and even accompany them to meetings with advisors. The new site also features easier navigation for students trying to find programs; they can search by means of several criteria, including continent, school, and term. Ms. Odrzywolski also showed the promotional video produced in 2016 that is featured on the Study Abroad homepage. It has been determined that students can do their UB Curriculum Capstone while they are abroad using the Digication platform.

Trevor Poag, Director of Global Learning Opportunities, updated the Council on the first Study Abroad Incubator, held in Costa Rica in June. This inaugural program generated great interest across campus, reflecting the interest many faculty have in leading study abroad programs. Seven faculty and one administrator were selected on a competitive basis to participate in the first Incubator. This five-day program focused on program design and experiential learning, with lots of hands-on opportunities. Several new study abroad programs have been developed as a result of the Incubator—including several in winter 2018. Dr. Poag thanked the Council for its input on the Incubator concept and for its support. It is anticipated the opportunity will be offered again next year—perhaps in a different region and with different topics. Professor Biehl suggested that at a future meeting the Council hear from one of the program directors who participated in the Incubator.

III. Discussion of the Implementation Report on the Inclusion and Engagement of International Students—Peter Biehl

Professor Biehl briefly reviewed the work of the Task Force on International Student Inclusion and Engagement and the subsequent implementation planning process that the Provost convened under Vice Provost Sean Sullivan, and that took place during the spring semester. Based on the work of three subcommittees, the plan was finalized by Vice Provost Sullivan and is being reviewed by the Provost. It has not been shared with others since it is not formally approved as yet. Professor Biehl invited comments and suggestions from the Council that he could take back to Vice Provost Sullivan.

Dr. Huber asked about the inclusive excellence strategy of Vice Provost Teri Miller's office. The implementation report importantly links its priorities to the broader inclusive excellence agenda. In this context, Professor Biehl noted, it is imperative that the survey of domestic students, originally proposed by the Task Force, be carried out. This will help with the implementation process. It is vital that UB works to help all students to achieve inclusive excellence. Professor Biehl pointed out the values statement called for in the plan and the priority given to inclusion generally. Professor Dunnett noted he would be meeting with Provost about the report and it is expected he will endorse it. In light of the limited time for feedback at the meeting, Professor Biehl invited members to email their feedback to John Wood within the next week. An email would go out to alert all members to the opportunity.

IV. Council Business

Dr. Wood reminded members of the upcoming Award Luncheon honoring Professor David Engel on Nov. 16. Please be thinking of possible nominees for the 2018 award. Nomination materials will be distributed in October, with a deadline for nominations at the end of March.

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Attendance at the Meeting, September 27, 2017

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