

COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS
Minutes of the Meeting, November 29, 2017

I. Approval of the Minutes of the October 2017 Meeting—Peter Biehl

Professor Biehl welcomed Dean Aviva Abramovsky of the School of Law and Professor John Atkinson of the Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering as guests at the meeting. Dean Abramovsky had been invited to lead a conversation about her experience and plans for international education in her School. The minutes of the October 2017 meeting were approved as distributed.

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

Professor Biehl reported on a meeting the previous day with the deans and vice presidents at which the inclusion and engagement implementation plan was presented by Vice Provost Sean Sullivan, Professor Biehl and implementation subcommittee members. The audience was impressed by the plan and the efforts of the committee members. The question of how the implementation would be led and coordinated was discussed at that meeting. This effort would benefit all UB students, both domestic as well as international. Even though there are three main schools enrolling most of the international students—Engineering, the College and Management—there are pockets of international students across UB; moreover, all units are keenly interested in international enrollment at a time of increasing international competition from Canada, the UK, Australia and elsewhere. As part of the report to the deans, Barbara Ricotta, John Wood, and Jeff Smith reported on the goals and action steps of the three subcommittees. Student Life is already working on aspects of the implementation plan. Jeff Smith is looking at broader communication strategies, including an institutional statement of values that can reflect a more inclusive campus culture. Provost Zukoski is now considering how the process of implementation will be organized—with oversight by a large or small steering committee, or perhaps by the council of deans itself.

III. Conversation with Professor Aviva Abramovsky, Dean of the School of Law—Peter Biehl

Professor Biehl asked members to introduce themselves to the new dean. Dean Abramovsky thanked the Council and congratulated them on their role in international education. She reported on her past role at Syracuse University, which looked to UB as a model with regard to international education and services. She said Syracuse is currently doing a report on the same challenge—the inclusion and engagement of international students. Dean Abramovsky is committed to internationalizing the Law School and has some experiences that may be transferrable. At Syracuse she anticipated the enrollment cliff that followed the financial crisis in 2008 and looked to international enrollment as an opportunity. Since the Syracuse LLM program costs \$50,000, it was a challenge to find student markets. For programs in law there are many potential student sponsors. For example, she approached the educational attaches of various embassies in Washington. She approached her international alumni network. Embassies often have infrastructure to support mobility in both directions. Saudi Arabia, for instance, has a large sponsored program. She had Syracuse Law added to the

Saudis' list of approved institutions as well as those of other sponsored programs. She sought to position the law school with the officials administering these scholarship programs. This involves the cultivation of relationships over time. Having a more senior person such as an associate dean do these visits is important for buy in. Such a "diplomatic tour" can be highly gratifying and productive. Most countries are interested in these opportunities. Dean Abramovsky also worked with Organization of American States and other international agencies to promote awareness of her programs. Every time she travels to recruit, she visits her contacts and EducationUSA staff. She gave lectures on how to apply to US universities. Often the process is different in other countries. Everything is appropriately branded. There is a need to educate foreign constituents about the US higher education system. Working with American Chamber of Commerce in other countries can provide additional access. Faculty contacts can help facilitate recruitment. The Soros Foundation, the second largest private foundation in the world, also worked with Syracuse to sponsor students. This required good coordination on campus. UB can learn from the Syracuse experience in responding to the needs of other countries—thus, the institution needs to be flexible in developing new programs. At Syracuse, they took advantage of a database of faculty who co-publish with faculty in other countries to identify areas of shared interest around the world. At Syracuse she also established agreements to facilitate mobility, including degree-seeking students. In fact, she rejected the claim that students would not wish to come to Central New York. Overall, she increased the LLM enrollment at Syracuse to nearly 40 students. Already there are 200 alumni from the program who are interested in assisting future recruitment.

A second initiative at Syracuse was to strengthen English proficiency of international students. Syracuse had a conditional program for students coming in, but there was a need to do more cultural work aimed at domestic students, to prepare them to welcome international students. A mentoring program was organized that paid \$15/hour to students to be friends with US students. The latter were encouraged to think of international students as potential clients once they became lawyers. This means acquiring professional skills to network and provide customer service, which requires cultural awareness and sensitivity. A special orientation was organized for law students that addressed what the legal profession actually entails. There were career services focusing on professional opportunities accessed through various international channels. The "self-limiting" perspective of US students needs to be overcome. There is always a tendency to "silo" international students, as if they were not like other students. A "Legal English" program to prepare international students for the language of the law is very appealing to international students; the study of law involves many nuances of language the codes of the law.

Ms. Dussourd complimented Dean Abramovsky on the "Trump and the Law" series this semester that was insightful for both her and her staff. This would be a good series to take on the road. Dean Abramovsky said that at Syracuse she got rid of the TOEFL requirement altogether—their ELI could do its own testing of internationals. They used a conditional admission for students doing intensive English before their law program. She also deferred to Fulbright and Soros regarding English proficiency—these students are already carefully vetted. Conditionally admitted students might have to do a year of intensive English.

Professor Biehl asked about the situation of international students not having American friends. What about inclusion and engagement strategies? The same challenge exists

everywhere. At Syracuse, they are merging orientations to better integrate students and facilitate interactions between domestic and international students. There are also freshman seminars to foster inclusion and training for faculty to promote inclusive pedagogies. Bringing together of domestic and international students has to be intentional and structured. The LLM students who come to US law schools are practicing attorneys in their own countries and should be looked on accordingly. US students are out of touch with their own system, not to mention foreign systems. When she was on the road recruiting, Dean Abramovsky was surprised at the number of students who were interested in English literature, a field that had prestige. Her recruitment approach was premised on offering full-tuition scholarships. She said that outbound mobility, including externships, for US law students is important; there are opportunities for these in Canada and the UK. At the graduate level, a more immersive experience is better. With more bilingual students in the Law School there can be more externships in non-Anglophone countries.

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

Professor Dunnett thanked Dean Abramovsky for her thoughts on international recruitment. He noted the challenges as reported by World Education Services (WES), which operates in Canada, where there is a policy to attract one million skilled immigrants. Currently, US competitiveness is harmed by administration attempts to tamper with work visa policies. WES business in US is down 40% this year (for fall 2018 enrollment), offset by a 45% increase in Canadian business. In Ontario there is no subsidy for international students and the tuition differential is not sufficient to cover costs. Clearly, there has been a major impact on where students wish to go. UB anticipates a decline of up to 10% on new enrollment in fall 2018. Next month Professor Dunnett is giving seminars in China on achieving success in US undergraduate programs, while attending UB Confucius Institute Board meeting. Dean Abramovsky said that other Syracuse units were not quick to follow her lead. The School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) is a leader at UB in this regard. Professor Dunnett noted that units like SEAS are signing combined degree programs to attract new enrollment. These also help promote name recognition abroad. International students are paying one third of UB's overall tuition. During a visit to India recently, Professor Dunnett heard concerns raised about safety in the US and the future of the H-1B program. This has the potential to discourage students from coming. For them it is imperative that they get work experience in the US.

Professor Dunnett asked Mr. Leong to report on the recent alumni events in India and Malaysia. All told, 89 alumni attended the event in Bangalore, where there was a good Q&A, and the deans who were there could share updates on their schools. The alumni event in Kuala Lumpur had 24 attendees. Mr. Leong met a Fulbright from UB who is now working in educational advising in Malaysia. Mr. Hindrawan reported that the recruitment fairs are well attended, even in Turkey. But the same questions are asked—is it safe, will I get a visa, etc.? Ms. Dussourd reported on International Education Week (Nov. 13-17), which featured 27 events. The keynote speaker had to cancel three days before coming—however, his agency offered an alternate speaker, Graeme Wood, a national correspondent for the *Atlantic*. The support from decanal units was as never before; nine schools, the most ever, contributed “without Borders” presentations. The attendance was mixed—from 9 to 40, but most were 25 or more. Things are happening in adjudication arena that are slowing things down. A class action suit on behalf of international students was of interest to the American

Civil Liberties Union in NYC. Dean Abramovsky noted that Professor Nicole Hallet, a clinical faculty member, does pro bono work in immigration arena.

Dr. Trevor Poag reported that Professor John Atkinson was part of the Study Abroad Incubator in Costa Rica, where he got to know and recruited him to develop a program in sustainability in that country. Professor Atkinson pointed out that seven months previous he had no interest in study abroad, but the incubator educated him about the possibilities, and, working with Trevor, he was able to develop a program for January 2018. Costa Rica is a country well known for sustainability. Would students be interested? He didn't want students who all think alike and did not want only environmental engineers (his own field). He sought out a larger pool and marketed the program energetically to various areas, including environmental sciences and geosciences. His information session attracted 80 students, which surprised him. The level of interest is high. All told, 45 students completed applications for only 16 slots (35 applicants were engineers). Many students complained that engineering curriculum is too limiting to allow students to go abroad. Doing it in January makes it more realistic. Professor Atkinson acknowledged he had never studied abroad himself. He had an opportunity to spend a semester in Asia as a graduate student.

V. Council Business

Nomination materials for the 2018 award were distributed in the meeting packets, with a deadline for nominations of March 30, 2018.

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Attendance at the Meeting, November 29, 2017

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