

International Education Council
Meeting Minutes
February 4th, 2022
Zoom Meeting

Members present: Dr. Kristin Brown, Ms. Jenny Chi, Dr. Nichole Hugo, Dr. Vanesa Landrus, Dr. Mei-Ling Li, Dr. David Melton, Mr. Martin Osei, Ms. Olivia Triplett, Dr. David Viertel, Dr. Vernon Woodley

Ex-officio present: Mr. Mutombo Andy Kabasele, Dr. Ryan Hendrickson, Dr. Amy Rosenstein, Dr. Tanya Willard

Ex-officio absent: Dr. Michael Gillespie, Ms. Sarah Schmidt

Visitors present: Ms. Lutete Celina Carlos, Mr. Ben Rienbolt, Ms. Krishna Thomas

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Li called the meeting to order at 9:00.

She presented the minutes from the December 3rd, 2021, meeting. After review the Council unanimously approved the minutes as presented.

II. Reports

1. Study Abroad: Ms. Celina Carlos

- a. Ms. Celina Carlos provided an update on the Study Abroad activities since the last meeting. She gave the current number of applications for Summer and Fall Study Abroad programs and the deadlines to submit scholarships and to pay the deposits. The summer Faculty Led programs are still undecided since the countries that the programs would be held in are at a Level 4 for COVID.
- b. They recently held the Study Abroad Fair and had 51 students check in. This number of attendees was lower than normal since the weather kept many from attending. They did have quite a few external study abroad partners that were able to attend and answer students' questions.
- c. She also noted that the Study Abroad Club is continuing to meet every first Wednesday of the month. She is continuing to hold in-class presentations to share Study Abroad opportunities with students. Also, they will set up an information session table in Blair Hall on February 17th for students to receive information and ask any questions they might have about studying abroad.

2. International Students and Scholars and Study Abroad: Mr. Mutombo Andy Kabasele

- a. Mr. Kabasele gave the Council an update on the International Orientation held earlier in the semester. These sessions help students transition to EIU and give them an opportunity to ask any questions they might have. They are also given information about health insurance and what to do in case of a medical need. There are also sessions about lodging and transportation around Charleston and how to stay in compliance in regards to their F-1 visa. They are provided details about academic integrity at EIU and the importance of not cheating or committing plagiarism. In addition to the orientation, student organizations are helpful in mentoring the new international students when they

arrive. He noted that as the number of students increase, it will be important to provide activities and open communication with the students, so the retention numbers stay high.

- b. Ms. Krishna Thomas provided details about the current enrollment numbers. This semester (Spring 2022) had the highest enrollment of international students at 568. She provided a breakdown of the number of graduate and undergraduate students and the most popular majors. She noted that there are 56 countries represented and they also welcomed students from three new countries this semester: El Salvador, Argentina, and Mongolia. The majority of the students are from India (389).
- c. Mr. Ben Rienbolt gave an update on the various activities that have happened so far this year. They had a trip to Walmart earlier in the year since many arrived before the Panther Shuttle was running. They also had a bowling night which was well attended. In the future, they plan to attend a basketball game that will celebrate the international students. A late orientation will be held next week and there will be multiple meetings to discuss how they can maintain their visa status, OPT information, exit/reentry, and details about H-1B visas. They are also planning a grocery trip to Champaign and an evening at the Mattoon roller rink. They also hope to visit Casey and all the “big things” they have and to hold another bowling night. There will again be a Holi celebration in collaboration with the Indian Student Organization in April, and there will also be a reception for all the international graduates in May.
- d. AIS Update: Mr. Martin Osei provided an AIS update. He said they plan to have an AIS game night on February 23rd. They also plan to hold a sports day of cricket and soccer sometime in April when the weather is nicer. They have also been working with new international students to help them find apartments in Charleston and how to find housing while they are here.

III. Dean’s Report: Dr. Ryan Hendrickson

- 1. Dean Hendrickson thanked Ms. Krishna Thomas and the OISS staff for their hard work to process the increased level of applications. Also, for their work to admit and issue I-20s to all the new international students. Because of the extra workload, they’ve had additional GAs in the office to help support them. Also, Dr. Melton from the Technology department has been a big help with the application and admission process.
- 2. He provided more details about the upcoming basketball game and let the Council know that all international students would be eligible to receive a free pass to attend both the women’s and men’s games.
- 3. Also, he said that the IEC Subcommittee will again be asked to review the Virtual Study Abroad Program that Dr. Will Porter from the Music department created last year that highlighted Chilean Music. It will be held again this summer.
- 4. He also updated the Council on the Summer Faculty Study Abroad Courses. Currently, all of the countries that the programs were planning to visit this summer are still at a COVID Level 4 and the IBHE guidelines dictate that the programs won’t be able to go forward at that level. A final decision will be made on February 11 about whether the summer programs can move forward or not.

Dr. Li moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Mary Mattingly