

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2013

Members present: Dr. Rigo Chinchilla, Dr. Marilyn Coles, Dr. Lania Knight, Dr. John Willems, Dr. Jacquelyn Frank, Dr. Tesa Leonce

Members absent: Dr. Dan Carter, Dr. Ryan Hendrickson, and Dr. Dejan Magoc, Zeenat Chaudhary, Nicolas Ferry

Ex-Officio present: Dean Augustine, Ms. Beth Craig, Mr. Kevin Vicker, Ms. Sara Schmidt,

Ex-Officio absent: None

Invited Guests present: Ms. Aimee Romack.

I. **Welcome:** Dr. Lania Knight

II. **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of September minutes Lania Knight Second by Dr. Marilyn Coles
Approval of October minutes Dr. Coles Second by Dr. Rigoberto Chinchilla
Changes were made to both for spelling of names and an update on the international plaza.

III. **Reports**

a. **Dean's Report:**

The discussion stated with the student scholarships and the concerns of the council. The original concern had to do with the variety of waiver programs at the university. That was designed to provide financial support for students who would like to attract diversity including graduate assistants. The financial model for study abroad is through the School of Continuing Education and that financial model requires that student resources pay into the pool of resources. Paid waivers are excluded from that kind of a financial model, if you have a tuition waiver it cannot be used and it excludes those students. Graduate students are eligible for the study abroad scholarships; however, it might be equivalent to the amount that tuition waiver would be if they earned the amount, we have this as a short term solution. More than a decade ago, under college of international education, we were having a big barrier to study abroad in this perspective. The University rules for regular courses that are taught in the curriculum, not those taught by Continuing Ed. How financial model works is students sign up and are billed. They pay their bills and the money goes into the central pool. That money is sent out to the departments so that they have enough money to operate. The money is pulled centrally and is sent out so programs with lots of students may be subsidizing programs that have programs with a small number of students, programs that don't have majors are subsidized by those that have majors. In study abroad, ten years ago, we were being told that each

individual study abroad program ran by a team member had to be sustainable on its own, so it had to generate enough students to survive on its own. We studied other institutions, particularly University of Illinois, we learned they followed the model the Dean described earlier, where all the money was put into a large central pool. When we have study abroad programs that have 12 student minimum and 11 sign up it gets cancelled. Those 11 students didn't get their courses and the faculties weren't getting paid. In the new model, almost all of them go and it provided good outcomes for us and we operated under that model for a period of time. That model has the same problem in which we talked about earlier; we can't use tuition waivers, those forms of financial aid. We were told we had to go back to the old model that we were using 10 years ago, because of the audit funding. The University of Illinois was still using the same model that we were using and the Dean didn't believe that so they brought back a yet different scenario. The different scenario was that almost 50 students studied abroad last summer didn't pay their bills, and that's why study abroad is in the red. The Dean told them if they didn't pay their bills that means they are no longer enrolled here and they walked away from their degree programs. This shows how complicated the problems are than anticipated and the Dean is working on the solution.

The director of study of abroad from University of Illinois kept telling us that we are misinterpreting LAC guidelines. They have gone right back to that because this audit. If an auditor says we must do this, we have no choice. An audit is supposed to make sure you are following your practices in a way that makes sense. In this audit finding the Dean is concerned. All the right people have been alerted. We are going to find a solution because the goal is to get more participation for study abroad. Everything we're doing right now will reduce participation for study abroad. If we were to go to the finance model where it was included at any class at a university, that could open up some real opportunities for us because tuition waivers can be used. It would no longer be in the financial category called unique programs. U of I has told us that unique programs include study abroad programs run through geography and geology, where all the students go to the badlands in the summer time and they do geographic exploration. What U of I says is that you can't combine all the funds for study abroad with other programs. What our people keep saying is that you can't combine all the funds from Italy, with Spain, with France. The U of I told us that is all one entity. The audit finding was you are subsidizing and you can't do that with unique programs, so we keep coming back to the audit. This is a work in progress.

We have launched the search for the Study Abroad Director position. The paperwork is with the civil rights and the Dean rewrote the position description, based on the input that he received. He wanted to include a broader group of people than the past. Phone interviews will be conducted to limit the pool, probably in February campus interviews somewhere in March, and name someone for the faculty in April to start in July.

The Dean is delighted to introduce Interim Study Abroad Director, Dr. Marilyn Coles for the remaining of the fall semester. Her hours can be obtained from the International office, and in the spring she will be Interim half time and by

appointment. Dr. Coles comes to us with extensive background international education; she launched her career as a singer in Germany. She also has been a huge advocate for international education for the program of music, in the Deans opinion that is why the program has gained a variety of efforts for international education. She is also the former director of O. Center in the Netherlands. She brings to us good experience as the Director of Study Abroad and has her own study abroad program. She has been a member of the International Education Council for at least 6 years and has been the former chair of the council. Dr. Coles will primarily be working with the faculty and will also be helping with usual problems that arise when students/faculty are abroad and making sure they are safe. The Dean has been talking with her about the different issues and delighted to welcome her to the Study Abroad Office.

b. International Students and Scholars: Mr. Kevin Vicker

Kevin went on a recruiting trip to India and Kazakhstan to establish a market in India and a new market in Kazakhstan. In India, he counseled some students that have already applied; we have around 200 applications from India for Technology. He also had the opportunity to visit the feeder schools, one being JNTU, the largest state institution, where a vast majority of our students are from. They are trying to internationalize their campus. MLU is a handshake agreement saying "we're going to agree to work with you" and we are going to try to work on it at different levels, but the scholarly exchange of information or student intake, but it's not committed to anything, but it's just more of a "paper handshake"

Dr. Chinchilla stated with the new numbers of incoming students housing is more difficult. He has asked us to do something new to help accommodate the new students with housing.

Kevin stated we're looking at our orientation procedures because this semester we had a unique situation in which University Apartments filled up, the graduate housing filled up. We're no longer able to offer all of our graduate students housing on campus per se. So this semester we are going to have a full day dedicated to housing. There is plenty of housing near campus. The question more with this population is if they are going to pay for it.

Dr. Chinchilla stated there was an influx of 2-3 years. A lot of students came from India, Pakistan, and Nepal. They rented a home for \$1000 a month and had 20 people living in causing problem for landlords. Kevin stated this is why we have a new policy, because we had a similar situation where students were giving us incorrect addresses. We created a policy that students living off-campus must provide a lease to include their names.

Kevin stated they can live in dorms; however the cost is not competitive for graduate students. UA is fairly competitive, which is why students want to live there, but if you look at regular dorms, they are not competitive to what you can find off-campus. If we have all these spaces available, why not lower it to University apartment cost. The Dean stated what they learned last year, which were doing with the language center, is that while residence halls are often marketed as cost-effective, what we charge here is on the higher end of institutions. Kevin said the theory is that we were competitive within Illinois, he was surprised to learn that

even our competitive institutions were charging somewhat less than what we were charging. The larger amount of students that you accommodate, the smaller the cost, because more students participate making cost lower. We do not have graduate student space in residence halls. Dean stated we have communicated to the university that with two residential halls empty, this is an opportunity to create different lifestyle spaces. So we have planted that seed and made that suggestion. We have sent 3 staff members abroad to develop a better understanding for international culture and all 3 came back with new perspective so we still have it on our list.

Dr. Chinchilla asked if students can live off-campus, and don't have any staff relationships, networking system going on, is there something we can do for transportation. If we have that increase of volume, then maybe we should have a regular running system.

Kevin's stated there is local, walking distance housing available. If there isn't, then yes, we will look at it. We do have quite a few international students living off by Walmart with transportation available, University Village offers it as well, and if they live close to campus they can use the university shuttles, in which they are using. The one consideration is that once we have a language center here, there will be transportation issue, because we don't have that in the summer, but at this point, we always need more family friends, we've placed about 50 students with families.

Kevin stated he is impressed by the market in Kazakhstan. It is the largest economy in the former Soviet, a lot of resources. He attended an auto show that brought in a large number of people. Their English skills were good, definitely better than other markets. We already have one application from Kazakhstan. It is a market that a lot of schools don't know about. He was the only school from Illinois, other than U of I that only had flyers. Many people were looking but they don't know about the U.S. which is the biggest barrier.

Dr. Chinchilla asked if we had any connections with recruiters, some of students were complaining about the ones they used. Kevin stated we work with a few that have a contract; there are 3 or 4 we have a relationship with. One is in Pakistan, Dubai, and we are starting to work with China. Students go on their own; it is out of our control. Dr. Chinchilla said the students are misinformed by the recruiters. Kevin said there are good recruiters; it depends who you work with. Our current agencies that he works with have recruited current students who are referred by the student. The bad recruiters are telling the student to just get here then they can get funding like graduate assistantships. One student who had a bad experience was from Nigeria. Kevin said it's difficult to get a GA without face-to-face interaction with the professor we use Skype and email. Dr. Chinchilla's last two GA's accepted before they came here, he used Skype to assist with this. Kevin said if the students get a GA there is almost a 100% chance to get the visa.

I-20s sent out have more than doubled we are 5 ahead on the I-20s for undergrad for the spring and are numbers are up with applicants and I-20s. Our office also has Skype chat, Skype interviews, and we have an actual chat service on our website.

Kelly did a good job and got the international education award turned in, so we are hoping we get to be part of the finalist. Thank you for reviewing the application and giving your feedback.

Study Abroad: Mr. Evan Lohmann

The application deadline closed in October and next week we met with Dr. Magoc to review applications for scholarships. We had about 15 apply for scholarships, which is a little low for scholarships. They awarded 14 scholarships and 13 of them accepted. We have increased numbers in terms of exchange programs – students are going out and studying exchange programs. After December 6th, we will be awarding more scholarships. The next deadline is December 6th for Spring break, January 31st for any of our faculty for the summer, and February 28th for fall and more independent programs in the summer, students can apply directly to our partners. They have not had any graduate applications, because they are still eligible for our scholarships. The Dean stated the graduate school needs to do better communicating the tuition waiver does not cover study abroad.

There are about 6 going next semester and one school we never sent one to, some students are going to Wales, New South Wales. We don't have any students for study abroad on our partnerships or faculty-led programs currently.

Study Abroad Sub Committee – Evan stated they have reviewed application and choose up to twenty.

Project Sub Committee – Kevin stated he has requested essays for the Carl P. Koerner scholarship deadline is December 1st.

OISS Scholarship Sub Committee – Aimee stated the scholarships have been chosen for new scholarship there are two undergrads and around thirteen grad, the amounts are determined by the committee and is based on credit hours.

In 2 weeks, November 14th at 5pm, the English department is presenting an ESL workshop. Three people are going to be presenting a graduate student; Dr. Knights husband who teaches ESL and ESL courses at Lakeland College. There is a third presenter and an informational email will be sent out.

Meeting adjourned around 10:00 a.m.
Next meeting scheduled December 6, 2013
Blair Hall Conference Room 3108