

Minutes of the December 11, 2008 Meeting of the International Education Committee

Committee Members Present: Lynnette Claire, Lisa Ferrari (Associate Dean), Mark Harpring, Diane Kelley, John Lear, Donn Marshall, Jan Moore (Study Abroad Advisor), Mei Rose, Peter Wimberger, Jannie Meisberger.

Absent: Tristan Burger (student representative)

Guests: Kris Bartanen (Academic Vice President and Dean of the University)
Sue Hannaford (Faculty Senate liaison to IEC)

Chair John Lear convened the meeting at 9:04 a.m.

Financial Viability of the Study Abroad Program

Kris provided a brief history of the Study Abroad programs and noted that the Summer of 2007 is when financial considerations became especially visible and led to the formation of a Study Abroad Work Group to consider academic and financial viability of the program. She then discussed some sources that impact the Study Abroad program, such as a loss of net tuition revenue (when students go on approved programs), program costs (billed to the university for partner programs), institutional financial aids subsidies (for students on partner programs), and unbalanced housing occupancy for the Fall and Spring semesters. Kris advised that while there will not be a decrease in the current budget for Study Abroad, there may not be an increase in the future budget given current economic realities. As such, the committee should evaluate and address the present programs to function within the present bounded budget.

Issues Involving Reducing Programs

John mentioned Kris's previous email, clarifying that there may not be a need to have a committee recommendation for the January 09 cabinet meeting. However, having committee input on a pricing model would be useful to aid in assessing and reducing the number of Study Abroad programs. Kris noted that in previous discussions, International Programs and Student Financial Services staff suggested that less programs are more manageable within a bounded budget scenario. Studies of other schools suggest that 30 to 40 programs are sufficient while the 155 programs offered by UPS seemed to be a lot.

Heidi questioned the issues involving program reduction as to whether the resulting effort is to make the programs more manageable or the save the University money.

Ideas for Manageable Programs within Bounded Budget

Kris explained that fewer programs are easier to manage, given the individual academic and financial analysis necessary to maximize participation within the boundary of our budget. She then provided two suggestions on how to accomplish this. The first is to try to balance different programs based on cost. In order to maximize student participation, not all students can choose highest cost programs. The second is to have a single application deadline to determine what works for all student interested in different

programs. John reiterated the need of a pricing model first to be able to determine which programs to cut or keep.

Balancing Different Programs

Lisa questioned the issue of value-equality of access to all students. Should the committee leave some programs but allow selected students to participate or keep only programs where the University can easily accommodate students?

Lynette discussed the issue of having grades on transcripts and GPA calculations. She questioned the ethics of not listing grades if students are paying tuition. Kris acknowledged the issue of integrity as to the institution in which students are actually enrolled being the one who will grant grades on transcripts. Jannie added that students going to graduate school need a US transcript and must pay the fee for the transcript from the university sponsoring the study abroad program. However, grades from Study Abroad are not computed into UPS students' GPAs unless they are enrolled in a Puget Sound program.

Peter supported the idea of all approved programs where students pay both the program and administration fees and have access to a financial aid pool. He suggested that students should decide on which programs they go on, rather than the University "rationing access." Peter then discussed some issues to consider between the approved and partner program financial models including the whether restricting merit aid would discriminate against some of our better students being able to study abroad.

John suggested that for all models it appears that students with more financial aid will be most affected and wondered whether students would be able to do their own calculation (based on their financial aid) and decide on which approved programs to participate if they depend on a less-predictable financial aid process for study abroad.

Kris suggested that whatever approach is implemented, there should be clear communication for students upfront and students should be given time to plan ahead and the knowledge of what aid will be applied.

Single Application Deadline

Jannie discussed the difference between one and two application deadlines. A single application deadline (on May 1st for Study Abroad in the following year) would be too late for students to meet program application deadlines for the summer, fall/full year programs. Two deadlines (February 15 for summer, fall/full year programs and May 1 for the following spring programs) would address this issue. It will also allow the University to know how many students will be studying abroad and at what cost. A two deadline application is more helpful in that it will aid departments in course enrollment projections for the following academic year.. In response to Lynette's suggestion that we should just enroll more students to make up for those who are away for study abroad, Kris noted that we have already done that in moving the target first-year class from 650 to 675 and face challenges in the ability to replace study abroad students with Freshmen and transfer students.

Future Conversation

John noted that cutting programs to favor more rigorous programs may also cost more due to the institutions offering them. Kris handed out an article from the *Chronicle* and suggested that, over the longer term, the university may want to develop different opportunities, such as more shorter-term program options. Heidi added that we cannot be all things to all people. Kris concluded the meeting by suggesting more conversation in Spring 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 10.01 am.
Respectfully submitted,

Mei Rose