International Education Council
Meeting Minutes
April 1st, 2022
Conference Room 3108 Blair Hall

Members present: Dr. Kristin Brown, Ms. Jenny Chi, Dr. Nichole Hugo, Dr. Mei-Ling Li, Dr. David Melton, Mr. Dr. David Viertel, Dr. Vernon Woodley

Members absent: Dr. Vanesa Landrus, Mr. Martin Osei, Ms. Olivia Triplett

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

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

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

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Li called the meeting to order at 9:02.

There wasn't a quorum at the start of the meeting, so voting and approving the minutes was moved to later when others had arrived.

II. Reports

1. Study Abroad: Ms. Celina Carlos

a. Ms. Celina Carlos provided an update on the Summer Study Abroad programs. As was discussed at the previous meeting, the faculty-led summer aboard courses were canceled, but there are still students participating in independent study abroad programs and also the virtual study abroad class will proceed this summer which has quite a few students already enrolled. Also, there are ten students currently signed up for Fall programs.

b. She has continued to review various partnership agreements. Currently there are 48 partners so they are working on which ones they want to continue and which ones to expire. She noted that Europe is still the largest area represented so in the future the office may want to look for partners in other parts of the world like Africa, Asia and the Americas. Going forward, the agreements will be reviewed every three years so if changes or updates need to happen, they can be added to a new agreement.

Dr. Tanya Willard said that she will invite Study Abroad to new student orientations so students find out about opportunities early during their time at EIU.

Dean Hendrickson shared that they were preparing to give out scholarships for seven winners in the summer and four in the fall and when he notified Dr. William Weber about winners, Dr. Weber offered an additional $3,000 so each recipient could receive $1,000 each. These scholarships will greatly help the students with costs associated to study abroad.

2. Approval of Minutes

Once there was a quorum of members, Dr. Mei-Ling Li presented the minutes from last month's meeting. After review, the Council approved the minutes with Dr. David Viertel and Dr. Kristin Brown abstaining.

3. Vote to move elections to April and elect Chair, Vice-Chair

Dean Hendrickson explained that the IEC bylaws state that elections should be held at the last meeting of the year, but this year's final meeting is on the last day of classes and attendance may be low, so he recommended the bylaws be suspended and the Council vote on Chair and Vice-Chair at today's meeting. Dr. Mei-Ling Li motioned to suspend the bylaw voting rule and Dr. Kristin Brown seconded the motion. The Council unanimously approved.

Dr. Mei Ling Li then nominated Dr. David Viertel to be Chair next academic year. Dr. Viertel accepted and the Council unanimously approved.

She then nominated Dr. Nichole Hugo to be Vice Chair next academic year. Dr. Hugo accepted the nomination and the Council unanimously approved.

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

a. Mr. Kabasele updated the council on the number of Fall 2022 applications and the number of I-20s issued along with those who have made their SEVIS payments. They have had a record number at over 3,600 graduate and undergraduate applications. That number is more than double the number of applications compared to Fall 2021. They have also had an increase in the number of undergraduate applications compared to previous years. He also provided the number of those who are admitted for Fall 2022 so far.

Dean Hendrickson noted that with an increase in undergraduate international enrollment, OISS would need to work closely with Dr. Tanya Willard and the New Student & Family Programs department so the younger students will successfully acclimate to EIU.

b. Mr. Kabasele also let the Council know of the various meetings OISS has had to support the international students. There have been workshops about H-1B visas, OPT, CPT, exit and reentry, and also updates on changes due to COVID. Many of these issues are very dynamic with COVID and other issues, so it's important to keep students updated. He has recently been discussing the increasing cost of various fees (application, visa, etc.). These are costs that they should keep in mind in addition to tuition and housing costs.

c. Mr. Ben Rienbolt provided an update on various activities this Spring semester. He gave the dates for OPT and CPT sessions and also an exit and reentry session coming up before they leave for the summer. There will be a roller-skating party on April 2nd and they also still plan to visit Casey in the near future. He hopes to have an international student's ceremony during the upcoming Celebration towards the end of the semester and also Holi will be held on the 21st of April in the North Quad. Also, they will hold a graduation reception for the international students the day before commencement.

Mr. Kabasele noted that they are still trying to hold a Cricket and Soccer game, but it's still in the planning stage.

Mr. Rienbolt said that he is helping with AIS and they are hoping to hold elections soon for next year and then hope to find more experienced students who can be more active in the group and potentially help plan for activities. He also noted that he's working with the Indian Student Association to jointly participate in Holi, so hopefully it will be well attended.

III. Dean's Report: Dr. Ryan Hendrickson

1. Dean Hendrickson updated the Council on housing since the last meeting. He is going to have a meeting with Mr. Mark Hudson, the director of housing, and Dr. Anne Flaherty, the Vice President for Student Affairs, to discuss ways to entice more international students to live on campus. The students have said that the cost and food choices are some of the reasons why they decide to live off campus. Since the number of international students is increasing, it's important that students have more housing options on campus.

2. Dean Hendrickson also let the Council know that Ms. Celina Carlos will be leaving soon. He thanked her for doing a great job as the Study Abroad Advisor and for her contributions while she's been here. She is currently on OPT and it will expire on June 4th. They will hold a new search and Dr. Viertel, Dr. Brown, and Mr. Kabasele are part of the search committee along with Dean Hendrickson. There will be a position announcement soon and more information to come.

Regarding the housing issue, Ms. Jenny Chi noted in her department many students decide where to live based on word-of-mouth from other international students about low cost apartments or where other international students are living there, but she agrees that it would better for them to stay on campus if it were possible. She said she would discuss this issue with her students to see what could be done to give them more incentives to live on campus.

Dr. Li moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Mary Mattingly