International Education Council

Meeting Minutes
February 6th, 2026
Blair Hall Conference Room 2116

Members present: Lisa Brooks, Kristin Brown, Krishna Daravath, David Melton, Catherine Polydore, Jessica Tindira, Dave Viertel

Members absent: Micheal Beck, Miracle Langston, Kiran Padmaraju, Gopal Periyannan

Ex-officio present: Tyler Custer, Angela Jacobs, Bobbi Kingery, Agnes Yigah (Afi)

Ex-officio absent: Andrew Kerins

Visitors present: Ellie Bush, Heather Crank, Ben Rienbolt

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Kristin Brown called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM. Approval for both November and December minutes were approved via voice vote by Jessica Tindira and seconded by Dave Viertel, respectively. Catherine Polydore abstained from voting for December meeting minutes. The committee welcomed Agnes Yigah, or better known as Afi, to represent Student Life for the remainder of the semester as Tanya Willard has departed from EIU. Bylaws will be revisited after the budget for next year has been released. Additionally, the climate survey was discussed, and there were concerns brought up regarding participation and anonymity. To get the best response, the committee decided to keep it anonymous and use the incentive of a gift card.

II. Reports

1. International Students and Scholars: Mr. Tyler Custer

Mr. Tyler Custer gave an enrollment update and touched, travel restrictions, and visa issues students are experiencing. In spring 2026, there are 242 international students enrolled at EIU, which is 77 students down from fall. For fall 2026, there are 946 undergraduate applications, 613 graduate applications, and 8 post-baccalaureate applications. Of the undergraduate applications, 309 are complete (33%) and 637 are incomplete (67%). The top countries we're receiving applications from are Ghana (597), Nigeria (212), Pakistan (83), Bangladesh (69), and India (60). There are more barriers in place that make it harder for international students to get an approved visa, including a reduction in federal workers. Another barrier being discussed by the current administration is regarding the duration of status. There have been talks of only allowing students four years to finish their degree without leniency, as well as limiting their ability to change their major or transfer to other universities. Nothing official has been announced at this time.

2. **International Programs: Mr. Ben Rienbolt & Krishna Daravath**
   Prior to winter break, International Programming hosted a coat drive, and it went fantastic. Not only did they have an excess of coats, but many students were able to leave with additional winter clothing. International bowling night was a big hit and many students attended, so they had to order more pizzas. Tax season is coming up, and programming provides a service for international students through Sprint Tax. At the end of the month, students will be taking a grocery trip to Champaign to visit specialty markets that aren't accessible in this area. Concerns were brought from the student's perspective that many of these markets will hike their prices when they know a group of students are coming. There have been talks about buying many of these goods in bulk and keeping them at the food pantry, so students have access to them. Krishna touched on AIS events from the past month. He participated in a panel for Martin Luther King Junior Day. At Panther Palooza, the AIS booth gave students the opportunity to make homemade keychains.

3. **Study Abroad: Mrs. Heather Crank**
   Mrs. Heather Crank provided an update on faculty-led programs, study abroad promotional activities, and Morocco partnership. Thus far, there are 4 finalized faculty-led programs. For the 2025-2026 academic year, they have 82 applications. For the 2026-2027 school year, there's a total of 6 applications. For more information, see the attached report. Heather attended the NAFSA Inaugural Global Summit in Tangier, Morocco where she won the Fulbright International Educators Administrators Award. She will be spending 2 weeks in Taipei, Taiwan recruiting partners for EIU. Additionally, she will be collaborating with other international educators with how to implement Chinese learning on campuses. Heather will be in Taiwan from March 9th to March 20th.

III. Dean's Report

Dean Jacobs reported on the strategic planning meeting that took place January 9th. The event went well and had a good turn out from multiple administrative and academic entities across campus. This is the first strategic plan for the Office of International Students and Scholars, and there was focus on retention and support. This helped establish relationships between OISS and offices across campus. There's a plan to partner with Student Services to meet the needs of international students and carve avenues for peer support through mentorship. Additionally, the local Salvation Army is interested in partnering with the international office to provide their services along with monetary donations. Currently, an international alumni advisory board is in the works. Dean Jacobs is working on a global partnership with China through 1+1, 2+2, and 3+1. The committee has discussed the lonliness epidemic amongst international students, who often come from collectivist cultures. In the next 3-5 years, the goal is to create an on-campus housing Living Learning Community geared towards international students.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 AM.

IEC Monthly Meeting – 02/05/2026

Faculty Led Programs Update

These are the finalized programs we have thus far.

- Exploration of Italian Business, Technology, History, and Culture – Jay Grabiec and Nic Robinson
- Art in Florence and Rome – Dr. Eskilson and Jenny Chi
- CDS Therapy Abroad in Jamaica – Dr. Throneburg
- Sport Industry in the United Kingdom – Dr. James Barkley

Other Study Abroad Programs and Study Abroad Scholarships on Academicworks

Deadlines for J-Term, Spring Break, Spring Semester: - October 28th
Deadline has passed, and scholarships have been disbursed.

Summer 2025, Faculty Leds – February 11th, 2026

Fall and Academic Year 2025-2026 – March 4th, 2026

Fall 2025 Enrollment

We have 7 Students going abroad this fall.

2 South Korea, Costa Rica, Ireland, Spain, Australia, Germany

AY 2025-2026 Applications (as of 02/05/2026)

0 – both AY students decided to return this fall.

Total = 0 Students

Spring 2026 Enrollment (as of 02/05/2026)

We have 6 Students participating this spring.

2 Costa Rica, Australia, Greece, Japan, New Zealand

J-Term 2026 Enrollment (as of 02/05/2026)

Total = 0 Students

Summer 2026 (as of 02/05/2026)

10 students have started an application

4 has been accepted

4 students have committed

Total = 18 Applications

Faculty Led 2026 (as of 02/05/2026)

Applications for Exploration of Italian Business, Technology, History, and Culture

- 18 Started
- 8 Accepted
- 13 Committed
- Total = 39 Applications

Application for the Art in Florence and Rome Program

- 4 Applications started
- 1 student accepted

Applications for the CDS Therapy Abroad in Jamaica program

- 4 Applications Started

Fall 2026 Applications (as of 02/05/2026)

4 students have started an application

1 student has committed

Total = 5 applications

- 1 Committed

Applications for Sport Industry in the UK

- 1 Student Accepted
- 2 Applications Started
- 2 Students Committed

Total = 51 applications

Academic Year 2026-2027 Applications (as of 02/05/2026)

Total = 6 Applications

Total Applications 25-26 as of 02/05/2026 – 82 applications

Total Applications 26-27 as of 02/05/2026 – 6 applications

Study Abroad Promotional Activities – Past

Class Presentations to BIO 1150

Pantherpalooza

Study Abroad Micro Fair

Study Abroad Promotional Activities – Future

Taste of EIU

WorldStrides Campus Visit

American Anatolia University in Greece Campus Visit

Study Abroad Club Meeting – 2/11 @4pm Blair 1207

Other Information

NAFSA Inaugural Global Summit, Tangier Morocco Update (Attached)

I have the wonderful achievement of receiving the Fulbright International Educators Administrators Award! I will be spending 2 weeks (March 9th to 20th) in Taipei, Taiwan recruiting partners for us along with collaborating with other international educators with how to implement Chinese learning on campuses.



2026

NAFSA Global Summit

TANGIER, MOROCCO

Introduction

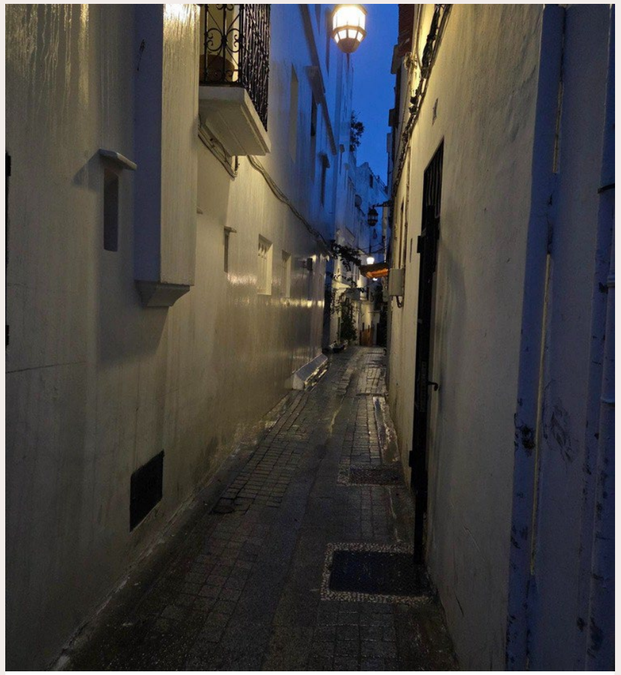
2026

Tangier—long a gateway between continents, cultures, and civilizations, and a historic nexus of Africa, Europe, and the Mediterranean—provides the ideal setting for the NAFSA inaugural Global Summit. The groundbreaking Summit convenes future-focused **International Education thought leaders, strategic architects, and innovators** to reflect deeply and act boldly on what it means to be future-ready —as institutions, as societies, and as a shared global community—amid a time of profound uncertainty, opportunity, and transformation.



City Highlights

2026



Tangier Medinas



Asilah



Trip to Chefchaouen

Important Topics Learned







Education in 2030

- Global Student Flows 2025 Report from Lumina Foundation
- Africa only region with most 10–14-Year-olds

Partnerships - Education USA

- Building Trust
- Be willing to rethink methodology
- What are we trying to show?
- Triple Degree - 1+1+1

Rethinking ROI for Students

- Oversupply vs Demand
- Credentials matter now more than ever
- Skills + Experience
- Digital skills + Soft Skills
- Translating International Experience

Important Topics Learned

2026







Virtual Reality with Study Abroad?

- Makes study abroad more accessible for students around the world
- Trial at University of Deusto, Spain

AFRETEC

- Preparing African talent for a global, sustainable tech-enabled world is not Africa's challenge alone.
- It's a shared responsibility.

Future of Global Mobility

- Students are hyperaware
- Focus on Employability and Affordability
- Future work will be more decision driven rather than task driven

Potential Partners

2026

Morocco

- International University of Rabat
- Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane
- Rabat Business School
- ESCA, Tangier

Other Countries

- University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain
- Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara, Turkey





2026

The End

THANK YOU