1International Education Council

Meeting Minutes
October 9th, 2026
Blair Hall Conference Room 3108

Members present: Musrat Hasan Emon, Grace Glass, Nichole Hugo, David Viertel, Jessica Tindira, Lisa Brooks, Ayaka Hisanaga-Probst

Members absent: Kiran Padmaraju

Ex-officio present: Richard England, Keerthana Saraswathula, Heather Crank

Ex-officio absent: Angela Jacobs, Catherine Polydore, Bobbi Kingery, Sham'ah Md-Yunus

Visitors present: Ben Rienbolt, Cheyenne Brickner

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

David called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Minutes from September 2026 approved. The committee elected Jessica as Vice Chair. They also chose to move the meeting time to the 3rd Friday of the month as several members have conflicts with the current meeting time. The committee approved the proposed changes to the Bylaws, including member selection language and the amendment to change the Representative from International Programming to an Ex-Officio member. They also approved the Global Student Ambassador Program. David, Jessica, and Nichole volunteered to be on the Scholarship Committee.

II. Reports

1. International Students and Scholars: Mr. Tyler Custer

Mr. Tyler Custer gave an update on enrollment, current in office events, and recruitment. For Spring 2027, there are 141 total graduate applications with 48 incomplete (34%), 67 decisions made (48%), 16 pending department decisions (11%), and 7 cancelled (5%). Ghana is leading applications with a total of 69, followed by Pakistan (26) and India (13) respectively. For Spring 2027, there are 209 total undergraduate applications with 82 incomplete (39%), 124 decisions made (59%), 0 comp R2R (0%), and 3 cancelled (1%). Ghana leads applications with a total of 76, followed by Pakistan (24) and Uganda (19) respectively. OISS hosted informational sessions regarding the OPT application process, applying for a STEM Extension, and an I-765 overview. These events were lightly attended. The next planned events are sessions with US Bank. Tyler informed the committee that there is a new proposal for a $70,000 OPT application fee and encouraged the group to submit public comments to Homeland Security with their thoughts and concerns.

2. **International Programs: Mr. Ben Reinbolt & Musrat Hasan Emon**

   Mr. Ben Rienbolt gave an update on international programming events, such as the panel discussion about how U.S. elections effect international students. This event was lightly attended. He also proposed a Friendsgiving event in collaboration with Home Church. Ben reminded the committee that November 10-14 is International Week, with the 14th being Global Cultural Night.

   Mr. Musrat Hasan Emon discussed that AIS is continuing to look for ways to better help international students on campus.

3. **Study Abroad: Mrs. Heather Crank**

   Mrs. Heather Crank gave an update on study abroad programming sessions and events. She currently has 3 faculty lead proposals and is planning to hold 1 more workshop for faculty lead programs this month. There is a total of 45 applications to study abroad for the 2026-2027. Study Abroad has been a part of Comic Fest and a TRIO event with a good turnout of about 40 students total coming to the booth and asking questions. Study Abroad has more promotional activities coming up, including EIU's Open House and Discover Day at Charleston High School. David and Ayaka volunteered to be on the Study Abroad Scholarship Committee.

III. Dean's Report

Because of Dean Jacob's absence, Mr. Tyler Custer discussed the Backpack/Brown Bag Program, which would provide food for international students during the holiday breaks. He also discussed the Friends of International Students program. This program would provide international students community during the holiday breaks. Volunteers could offer their homes as a place to stay, meals to share, and American events to attend.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56am.