

USA Council on International Education Meeting
May 8, 2008 – 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
AHE Extension Room 101

Attending: Isabel Brown, Peggy Delmas, Jim Ellis, David Feinstein, Woody Hannum, Russ Lea, Sara Majors, Mohan Menon, Steve Morris, Maggi O'Brien, Samuel Russ, John Sachs, Julio Turrens

Absent: Vaughn Millner

Reviewed and approved (as amended): June 2, 2008 meeting

Lillie Samuels, Secretary, Office of International Education and USACIE

Executive Summary: This first meeting of the Council included extended introductions as well as discussions about the role and responsibility of the council. The minutes reflect the wide ranging discussion and topics of discussion. The bylaws and operational structure were discussed and deferred to the next meeting to give members an opportunity to review them in greater detail. The election of a co-chair was discussed and deferred to the next meeting. The members also agreed on the need for monthly meetings as the group organizes itself and begins to identify priorities and related activities. Issues from identifying all the IE functions across campus to development and the need for a strong IE infrastructure were raised and discussed. Committee members were urged to have their respective colleges include on their home web pages a college specific international mission, recommendations and resources link with IE specific information for their students, faculty, staff and the university community in general. All members were asked to identify the international priorities of each of their colleges and to report back at the next meeting. The next meeting was set for the first week of June.

Discussion notes: Introductions took place with all members present giving an overview of their international experiences.

Jim Ellis distributed the notebooks prepared for the Council; gave a brief overview and brief background on the formation of the Council. He provided a brief overview of OIE and reported that Ana Burgamy was now back to full time status and getting programs up to speed. OIE also hired a temporary worker for the summer; Crystal Samples, a former study abroad student through this office. She is going to help develop our study abroad library and help with freshman orientation. Dr. Ellis gave a tabulation of the number of students studying abroad, and highlighted activities of the Office and what we expect in years to come. He emphasized that we are still developing the Office. Dr. Covey and Dr. Wells have been extremely encouraging and helpful.

Dr. Ellis reviewed the organization structure and discussed the role of chair and recommended that the group elect a co-chair. Discussion began on the purpose and role of the Council and with recommendation that the group explore thoughts they had on how this Council should function. The previous role of advisory was contrasted with the proposed active role for this Council. As outlined in the draft bylaws this Council is expected to provide advice and feedback and recommendations to the senior USA administration on IE issues and activities. As envisioned the Council should elect a co-chair who, in collaboration with the chair, would participate in leading the Council on both Council originated recommendation and areas of interest as well as in the review of recommendations provided by OIE.

Discussions returned to clarification of the purpose and role of the Council. It was recommended that the Council members review the draft bylaws as these were outlined in detail. The Council should carefully consider the founding guidelines/bylaws as the proposed structure places significant emphasis on an active Council collecting/reviewing data and making recommendations with respect to areas of specific interest to the colleges and the Council as a whole on International Education issues.

Dr. Ellis pointed out that care should be given on how IE is defined and that it is not solely study abroad. Furthermore, study abroad is not solely what has historically been considered traditional as it includes research, internships, service learning, and formal study. IE should be viewed across all university functions, integrated into the curriculum. It was acknowledged that USA colleges have a number of development initiatives underway and there were several ways of going about it that reflect the needs of each academic area. Question: "Are we trying to get X number of international institutions involved." It was highlighted that USA needs to develop strategy for our campus. Some structures and resources are already present on campus. However, to address this area we need to

have action; it was pointed out that the vision is for this Council to be active and participatory reflecting the needs of each and all colleges and university areas.

Criteria for addressing this process are readily available from national organizations such as ACE and the Forum for Education Abroad. Baseline questionnaires were provided in the notebook for review and future discussion. It was highlighted that key to this discussion will be the collection and review of baseline information on what USA is doing, where it would like to go and what the objectives of each college are. Dr. Ellis indicated that the American Council on Education had several projects under way which include the Internationalization Collaborative which to date have no representation from the State of Alabama. It was noted that an invitation to join this national collaborative could be forthcoming; however, such an invitation would require institutional commitment (president and vice president) and support from the Council. With over 88 institutions participating from nearly 35 states the collaborative offers an opportunity to share resources with other institutions around the US and to develop IE initiatives on the basis of USA internal needs. Dr. Russ Lea indicated that the new director of ACE (American Council on Education) Molly Corbett Broad, former President of University of North Carolina, is a very strong advocate of internationalization. He mentioned that it would be a good opportunity for South Alabama to join this initiative especially with the new USA mission statement and national focus on the need for international education.

It was pointed out that this is one of a number of initiatives which are on the international education agenda. Dr. Ellis also alerted the Council to the Paul Simon Foundation initiative before the US Congress for funding; a fund with initial funding of over two million or more dollars to provide scholarships for study abroad, and significant funding being directed to students and providing for funding as well for program development initiatives but with requirements for inter-institutional collaborative efforts in IE.

Discussion returned to the role of the Council with the question “Are we a liaison to various colleges?” – Yes! Furthermore it was pointed out that dean’s appointed the representatives for this Committee. The Council is the place for all the university initiatives to be explored. The deans also indicated an interest in receiving minutes of these meetings; however, the group, as constituted is a council with the independence to make recommendations and foster the interests of USA International Education.

The question was raised as to “What are the priorities of each college?” – Although details were not immediately available, Council members were urged to give this question some thought for the next meeting. Is it research, study, internship – what is study abroad, international education within the mission of each college? Major?

Sara Majors wanted to know how much experience was at the table. She stressed that she needed a bit more education about what we have in place already. She would like to hear from others about international studies. Dr. Ellis assured her that she was not alone and that she was right on point with her questions. Committee agreed with members discussing their experiences and what they brought to the discussion.

Dr. Julio Turrens wanted to know if the Committee would be involved in research level activities. Dr. Ellis stressed that the International Education office would be involved in the breadth of IE functions. He mentioned that in the past there does not appear to be much of a presence of this office in USA collaborative international research. He reiterated the need to also foster undergraduate research abroad as well. The question was how this would take place. It was pointed out that this should not be confused with the fact that international programs offices were often funded through grant activities for a narrow range of functions. This has changed as international education is now much more focused on integration within the curricular and co-curricular components as well as developing support core infrastructure support for these efforts (which would include study abroad, research, etc.).

Dr. Hannum noted that the office of International Education performs a significantly amount of work that does not generate revenue and that one charge for the Committee would be to see that this office is clearly defined as service to the University and with an appropriate support infrastructure as well as budget. Dr. Ellis pointed out that the USA mission statement (copies provided to the Council) recently was changed to incorporate an international direction. This includes the major goals. This led to discussion of identifying the “mission” objectives and priorities/goals for each college. Colleges based on the needs of their disciplines, faculty and staff may have distinctive approaches to IE efforts.

Dr. Russ Lea mentioned that in times past the mission statement did not include such a direction. Now it can be seen. This was now an opportunity for each college to identify how they would address the international goals of the university.

It was noted that these goals and objectives will help frame the structure of support for OIE. Dr. Ellis shared the draft guidance memo for the office. He further brought attention to the web page “USA Gateway to the World” which is now up and available for use. He discussed the vision of having a link from the USA main home page to lead everyone to the USA global presence and activities. He indicated a recommendation that all colleges should also put their international statement of priorities and goals on the college home page. This page could be as simple as a brief statement of directions for students and faculty about IE with a link to the USA IE home page and to other college initiatives around the world. It was also pointed out that this, along with each college IE statement would be critical for reporting through the institutional assessment process in TracDat. Clearly there are institutional goals and mission statements related to IE that every unit on campus will eventually have to address in greater depth. The Council could play a significant role in this process by identifying and clarifying such objectives and outcomes to be addressed.

Dr. David Feinstein and the committee as a whole spoke of infrastructure; we have to go underneath before pushing out there to the top. It needs to start in the International Education office.

Dr. John Sachs invited Dr. Ellis to make a presentation at the next faculty senate meeting, which was accepted.

Discussion returned to how the Council would structure itself. Dr. Ellis noted that much of the discussion revolved around many of the items noted in the draft bylaws and that the Council should come to some decision on this. It was agreed that the Council should address what they feel is important and that the Council should make their recommendations to the senior administration. The selection of a co-chair was also revisited.

Additional items were very briefly raised for future discussions and consideration by the Council: policy review of foreign travel with respect to State Department warnings, the need to establish a directory on all the international resources/expertise on campus, international initiatives, exchange programs with their related infrastructure needs, endowment initiatives, marketing initiatives for IE and study abroad, etc.

Dr. Ellis reiterated several questions:

1. Again, how do you want to be structured?
2. Elect a co-chair.
3. Identify College IE goals
4. Come up with future directions
5. Identifying what USA is already doing related to IE.

Dr. Woody Hannum recommended adding the following topics to discuss at the next meeting:

- Actual location of the International Education office and
- The fact that a lot of people on campus are not aware of the mission statement of the OIE office, so how can we communicate to the University about our office profile.

Dr. Ellis concluded by once again stating that the group needed to make nominations for a co-chair of the Committee stressing that the OIE office would do the leg work to get this group underway. It was pointed out in the discussion that the level of work this Council will be doing will require potentially release time for the co-chair and added support. Dr. Ellis committed to the support needed through the resources of OIE. It was agreed that all council members would review the draft bylaws, review their college initiatives/recommendations for IE and bring those to the next meeting. Once a decision on the structure is arrived at it was recommended that the Council send an update to the senior administration. It was recommended that the Council would reconvene in one month – first week of June. Most members indicated they would be available during the summer months.

The meeting adjourned with the agreement that the next meeting would address the key organizational structures and principles outlined above.