

**International Affairs Committee
October 22, 2024**

Members Present

Steven Anton
Becky Asher
Charria Campbell for Harry Ingle
Tina Girdley
Jimmy Guadalupe
Bobbie Maynard
Amy Miller
Matthew Nisbet
Queen Ogbomo
Mary Pashley
Padmini Veerapen
Zack Williams

Members Absent

Pedro Arce
Heather Cathey
John Crow
Dennis Duncan
David Gallop
Shipra Patel

Guests

Andrew Bleignier
Charles Wilkerson
Jerri Winningham

Dr. Miller called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda had been provided to the committee members earlier via Teams committee folder and by e-mail. Dr. Ogbomo made the motion to approve and Mr. Guadalupe second the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of March 5, Minutes

The March 5, 2024, minutes had been provided to the committee members earlier via Teams committee folder and by e-mail. Dr. Pashley made the motion to approve and Ms. Girdley second the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Center for Global Experiences

The Center for Global Experiences has relocated to the library room in room 248. Open House is scheduled for this Thursday, October 24 from 11 am to 1 pm. Students are using the space to hang out and for studying. The staff are working on obtaining additional signage for students and others to be able to find the space.

Study abroad numbers have increased. We have twenty-four students going abroad for spring 2025. The program has faced obstacles like financial aid no longer covering minor course requirements. Numbers for the program are around the same number of attendees prior to COVID.

The office staff are now providing additional support to international students with the beginning of the fall semester. A global ambassador program was initiated with approximately twenty-five students which about half are international and the other half are students who have studied abroad. These students are volunteering their time and had to commit for fall and spring semesters. Students do receive early registration times for spring and fall. Approximately one hundred international and exchange students were assigned to the ambassadors. The ambassadors contacted the students to see if they needed any help with Tech Express, housing application, inform them of services available on campus and to answer any questions that they may have. Ambassadors were trained prior to contacting the students.

The staff are also revamping the bike sharing program. The students are allowed to check out a bike for week instead of daily like had been the practice in the past. There are only 10 to 15 bikes available. Some bikes need repairs. The bikes are available through the fitness center.

Dr. Miller shared information about group trips and that they have been trying to advertise to generate interest in faculty who have not traveled. Dr. Anton questioned what the best way might be to share information in the College of Engineering. Dr. Miller responded that it may be helpful to find out who has traveled abroad in the past from the college and what kind of interest do the faculty have in international programs. Several faculty members that may share information with others are Dr. Weathers, Dr. Darvennes and Dr. Stretz but the last two have retired from the university. Dr. Stretz is currently serving as interim chair of Chemical Engineering. Dr. Miller suggested scheduling an info session where she could share information and include the faculty who have led group trips abroad.

Discussion was held by the members regarding transportation to and from the airport. Dr. Miller responded that this was another item that they were working on to address. She believed that the shuttle service charges around \$150 for one way trip and that is for each individual student whereas if a group of students uses an Uber, they can split the charge. There have been some club and organization members who have volunteered to pick up students. One example was the African Student Union. Another option is the UCHRA bus, but it only operates Monday through Friday. Some faculty and host family members have offered to pick up students.

Additional discussion was held by the group regarding the difference between the number of students entering the university in the fall and spring. Three additional events were held in the fall in addition to Week of Welcome events. Staff identified gaps where there were no food options. Two days breakfast

was provided and one day pizza lunch was provided with pizza and variety of related choices. Sponsors covered the cost. International students do not always select a meal plan for the cafeteria.

Updates from International Programming Office

Dr. Miller recognized Mr. Wilkerson to share information from the International Programming Office. Mr. Wilkerson shared with the committee members that the CESL program has twelve students enrolled this semester. He has fifty applications pending for spring semester. There is uncertainty with visa issuance for ESL programs nationwide. The US embassies are scrutinizing applicants with their bank documents because they want to ensure they can afford to attend.

Mr. Wilkerson is focusing his efforts on virtual college fairs which are held face to face and conducting recruitment training events with the organizations that assist us in recruiting students. He has held events with India, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, and Vietnam recruiters.

Many applications are being submitted but the issue is applicants must show they have \$42,000 so they may obtain an I-20 document which is used to apply for a visa. The \$42,000 is to cover the \$27,000 tuition charged to international students and the cost of living on campus is \$15,000. The committee held discussion.

Policy 242 International Undergraduate Admissions

Dr. Miller recognized Mr. Wilkerson to review Policy 242 International Undergraduate Admissions with the members. He is not requesting for any changes to be made to the policy but that the office name and his title to be updated. The policy is to be reviewed every four years. No member requested for any additional changes to be made. No action needed.

Policy 243 Transfer Credit for International Undergraduate Students

Mr. Wilkerson reviewed Policy 243 Transfer Credit for International Undergraduate Students with the members. He is not requesting for any changes to be made to the policy but that the office name and his title to be updated. The policy is to be reviewed every four years. No member requested for any additional changes to be made. No action needed.

Policy 244 International Undergraduate Students Readmissions

Mr. Wilkerson reviewed Policy 244 International Undergraduate Students Readmissions with the members. He is not requesting for any changes to be made to the policy but that the office name and his title to be updated. The policy is to be reviewed every four years. No member requested for any additional changes to be made. No action needed.

Policy 247 International Health Insurance

Mr. Wilkerson turned the meeting over to Mr. Bleignier to review changes for Policy 247 International Health Insurance. He is not requesting for any changes to be made to the policy but that the office name

and his title to be updated. The policy is to be reviewed every four years. No member requested for any additional changes to be made. No action needed.

Such Other Matters

Mr. Wilkerson shared that the University had a visitor from the Roman University of Fine Arts and that he and Amy had the opportunity to meet with him. He also met with the School of Human Ecology faculty and the College of Fine Arts faculty.

Dr. Pashley was thanked for her years of service with the committee. She plans to retire at the end of the semester.

Dr. Pashley made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Asher second the motion. Meeting adjourned.