

**Minutes from the
University Council for International Affairs (UCIA)**

February 9th, 2005
325 Burruss Hall
10:30 – 12:00 noon

Present:

Kim Beisecker, Director, Cranwell International Center
George Crofts, Associate Dean, College of Science
Ron Daniel, Academic Director, Center for European Studies & Architecture
Jack Davis, Chair of UCIA, College of Architecture and Urban Studies
S. K. De Datta, Associate Provost for International Affairs and Director of OIRED
Gene Egger, Director Special Programs, College of Architecture
LuAnn Gaskill, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences
Monika Gibson, Director of Student Services, Graduate School
Dixon Hanna, Associate Provost
Paul Hover, Library Systems
Sharon Johnson, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
Chad Miller, Econ. Dev. Specialist/International Programs
Miriam Rich, Communications Coordinator, OIRED
Tarun Sen, Associate Dean, College of Business
Nammalwar Sriranganathan, College of Veterinary Medicine
Kathleen Stadler-Thompson, Education Abroad, OIRED
Tony Sutphin, Scholarships & Financial Aid
Rien Visser, College of Natural Resources

Welcome and Introductions

Action Items

I. Approval of minutes

Minutes from January 18th, 2005 were distributed electronically and changes can be sent to Hope.

Information Items

I. Brief review of revised travel guidelines for education abroad programs – sent electronically – Jack Davis

These are guidelines for travel during education abroad programs. Davis explained handout – group travel, purchasing. The main changes are on page two. If the program is less than \$50,000 it does not have to be approved – if it is greater than \$50,000 it must go

through Purchasing – must be an approved travel agency. If Kuoni gets approved it will make things much easier – the travel agency is being reviewed in Richmond right now.

Discussion on grace period for deposits that are due right now.

University will pick up emergency fund problems because the departments cannot raise the money for this. It needs to be collected centrally by the University at the Bursar's Office. Audit will look badly on a department or on Education Abroad/OIRED if handling of cash is done by other than a University wide office (like Bursar's Office). That is a benefit for faculty/department – it takes management away from them, the University deals with it now. Bursar's office can also put a hold on class schedules etc. in order to get the money. This way, also, the Bursar's can funnel all tuition issues as well.

Discussion on payment plan for students – this would all be streamlined through the Bursar's Office. Add contingency amount for strength of dollar at the time.

Davis asked committee to please read and review document and become familiar with it. We can add this to the next agenda.

II. Update on Travel Expo, faculty letter and financial aid questions – Kathleen Stadler-Thompson

Stadler-Thompson handed out information sheet that students fill out and check sheet for financial aid (just developed).

Tony Sutphin (in for Barry Simmons) explained that there is \$21 million in private funds when financial aid goes through study abroad. If the student does not get federal or state aid they can harness this money. It will, however, go against semester financial aid.

Discussion on handouts, reasons behind each field. If the price of the program changes (goes up) student needs to simply fill out a new financial aid sheet and it will be built into the program. Handouts are in process of being written/rewritten – suggestions welcome.

Study Abroad Expo's – these highlight programs with our third party providers. Please disseminate to anyone who might be interested or involved.

Stadler-Thompson will send update to point people – please send out to whoever might need it and cc: Kathy.

Faculty need to be sure to send students to the study abroad office so they get all necessary papers: 2205, financial aid forms, and other procedural forms.

Short discussion on departure timeline (to be online). Stadler-Thompson said those web pages are already there or being developed.

Discussion on liability/responsibility when there is a problem during a study abroad trip. Kathy's office needs to be informed but faculty/department (trip coordinators) need to be responsible.

Discussion on timing with the state/federal financial aid forms. Problem of chicken and egg – cannot go on trip without money, cannot get money until program starts. All study abroad students have a financial aid counselor and they must sign up for FAFSA when they study abroad. These counselors can help each student individually. If a student goes from undergraduate to graduate is he/she still able to get loans? Technically not because during the in between time he/she is not students – at this point the person may get private loans.

III. Update on CESA – Ron Daniel

Eleven faculty and staff went on a trip to CESA organized by Arnold Schuetz and Andy Becker. The trip was highly successful because the faculty and staff had the opportunity to interact with the students and staff they work with. CESA has an excellent group of teachers and the subjects dovetail well. We had some big challenges when the cook died and Daniella was successful in retaining an accomplished new cook. We have also hired a new housekeeper and front office person.

The CESA Center installed ten new computers though we are encouraging students to bring laptops to better utilize space. We are making progress on the library, since we cannot afford a full-time librarian, some of the students are assisting.

This summer we will have seven very diverse programs at the center, including student, faculty and external groups. We are adding additional furnishings in the lobby and fireplace room to make the areas in the villa more accommodating and friendly.

IV. Update/visitor from Punta Cana – S. K. De Datta and Kelly Robinson

Kelly Robinson who is currently servicing as the Director of the Biodiversity Center at Punta Cana, Dominican Republic is visiting VT campus for a couple of days. Dean Sutphin was CAL's led program point person who set the initiative up – he stepped down from his position as Associate Dean. Dean Quisenberry does not want CALS to be involved in the Punta Cana programs at this time. Thus the University asked De Datta to take leadership and coordinate the initiative. Sutphin will still be involved in the transition period because of his knowledge and experience in the Punta Cana initiative. The University is appreciative to Dean Sutphin for bringing the opportunity to the table.

De Datta introduced Kelly Robinson – Director at Punta Cana. She has a lot of experience in the Dominican Republic, starting out as a Peace Corps Volunteer. She is looking to possibly get a graduate degree from Virginia Tech.

Robinson explained the Punta Cana initiative – we work with several universities and local institutions and NGO's. We have a bio-education, natural sciences center. The bio-

diversity center has five labs to welcome students to look at biodiversity and help with environmental solutions and to provide a living laboratory. They can study issues that are relevant to the southern hemisphere.

Dixie Rawlins has given \$48,000/year for a new clinic/wellness/health center in Punta Cana. There is one full-time doctor and four other doctors rotate at the center.

Robinson explained programs/opportunities with Punta Cana – they are always looking for new initiatives/ideas – anyone can come to her and discuss an initiative.

V. Brief on international student exchange programs/visit with ISEP president – Jack Davis, S. K. De Datta

De Datta briefed the group about the discussion that took place with John Dooley and De Datta with the President of ISEP Mary Ann Grant. There are some advantages to involving ISEP where reciprocal exchanges and equivalence issues are at play. VT can go under ISEP MOUs instead of signing numerous MOUs for student exchanges.

However, concerns about ISEP management have been mentioned – they have been disorganized in the past. The handling of student agreements has not been successful. It was suggested that there is a niche where ISEP can be very helpful – with reciprocal agreements – but that we have to balance that with the problems we encounter with ISEP. ISEP will balance the student exchange ratio for instance. It might be helpful to see a presentation on all programs – pros, cons etc. Stadler-Thompson will prepare presentation on all programs for the March UCIA meeting.

Beisecker gave information on F and J taxes – The Cranwell International Center has purchased a tax software program for use by most F and J visa holders in completing their Federal tax returns. The cost is \$5 per student/scholar.

Davis adjourned meeting at 11:35 AM.