

**UCIA Meeting**  
**May 8, 2008 10:30-12:00**  
**International Affairs Office Meeting Room A**

*Present*

Don Back, Director, English Language Institute  
Andrew Becker, Chair of UCIA, Associate Chair Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures  
Mike Bertelsen, Associate Director OIRED  
Jeremy Billetdeaux, Senior Coordinator for Education Abroad, OIRED  
S.K. De Datta, Associate VP for International Affairs and Director, OIRED  
Steve Duke, Assistant Director for Education Abroad, OIRED  
Tom Hammett, Professor, CNR  
Paul Hover, University Libraries  
Mary Marchant, Associate Dean and Director of Academic Programs, CALS  
Lance Matheson, Associate Professor, Pamplin College of Business  
Richard Shryock, Department Chair, Foreign Languages and Literatures  
Greg Sagstetter, Alumni Association  
Barry Simmons, University Scholarships and Financial Aid  
Wendy Vaughn (for John Browder) CAUS

1. Welcome and introductions: Andrew Becker, Committee Chair

*Discussion Items*

2. **Education Abroad issues:** Steve Duke
  - **Follow up regarding the proposal to link tuition to faculty salaries for education abroad programs.** To encourage steady growth in the number of students going abroad and faculty interest in leading education abroad programs, the university needs to update its process for distributing money to departments to support faculty abroad. After discussing this earlier in the year with UCIA, Dr. Duke has proposed that faculty salaries be included in student program fees that way the money is more easily accessible to departments who need it. Under this plan, out-of-state students would pay a nominally higher amount, but this ultimately would make it easier for departments to offer more opportunities abroad AND it would generate additional revenue for Virginia Tech. After a motion from Paul Hover was seconded by Lance Matheson, UCIA unanimously voted to endorse this change in policy. Dr. Duke will pursue this throughout the summer.
  - **Follow up regarding the Allergy and Dietary Needs form and informed consent issue.** Dr. Duke has drafted a “Guidelines and Voluntary Disclosure to Promote the Health and Safety of Students During International Study” form. Modeled after a similar form used by the University of Miami, this form is

intended to encourage students to educate themselves on the challenges of traveling and studying in a foreign country, as well as to give them the opportunity to disclose any medical conditions or dietary restrictions that may impact their trip. UCIA members discussed this at length. There was a lot of concern about the language used because some of it implied that all countries are more dangerous than the U.S. and might cause undue fear among students and their parents. The group agreed that the form should paint education abroad opportunities in a more positive light, but it should encourage students to make themselves familiar with U.S. State Department warnings about the countries in which they choose to study. Disclosure of health restrictions on this form would be voluntary, but a signature would still be required to show that students have read the form and viewed the State Department information. Lance Matheson, Tom Hammett, and Andrew Becker will assist Dr. Duke with revising the document. After a motion from Lance Matheson and a second from Richard Shryock, UCIA approved that the form be significantly revised and then submitted to university legal counsel for review in the next few weeks. If all goes well, Education Abroad can start distributing this to students studying abroad during the fall 2008 semester.

- **Recommendation to create an ad-hoc International Travel Advisory group.** Some universities have a group of faculty who monitor global conditions and help students and faculty to make wise choices regarding their activities abroad. Virginia Tech does not have one of these committees; however there is a need for a central “clearinghouse” of more information. The group discussed the possibility of building a committee for these purposes, but there was some concern about how this group could provide comprehensive leadership in activities spanning the globe. There was also concern about such a group conflicting with current university policy regarding travel to areas under U.S. State Department warnings. Current university policy states that programs will be cancelled if the State Department has issued a warning in that country. It was decided that the Education Abroad Office (with leadership from OIRED) should work to develop a website that serves as a central location for information on preparation for travel abroad. Education Abroad should also tap into the resources of OIRED to provide analysis and leadership in such cases where a State Department warning may conflict with scheduled travel and activities. S.K. De Datta committed OIRED/Education Abroad resources to improving the availability of information and asked Jeremy Billetdeaux to address this issue on behalf of the Education Abroad Office when the committee resumes meeting in the fall (Steve Duke is leaving the university in July and Jeremy Billetdeaux will represent the Education Abroad interests until a new assistant director is hired).
- **Education Abroad student interest survey.** This survey is sent out to determine student interest in certain programs, as well as to generate student interest in education abroad. The latest survey has generated just 800 responses so far, but more e-mails will be sent out later in the week. Continuing to establish new Virginia Tech centers in various regions will also generate more interest among

students. Richard Shryock pointed out that these opportunities need to correspond with foreign language opportunities so that Virginia Tech can provide their students with rich experiences in their cultural and language studies.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rachel Judy