

UCIA Meeting
November 12, 2009
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
International Affairs Office, Meeting Room A

Present:

Don Back, *Director, Language and Culture Institute*
Mike Bertelsen, *Associate Director, OIRED and Associate Dean, CALS*
Jeremy Billetdeaux, *Assistant Program Director, Education Abroad*
Laurie Brogdon, *Director of Multicultural Alumni Programs, Alumni Relations*
John Browder, *Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Architecture and Urban Studies*
John Dooley, *Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs*
Ana Dubnjakovic, *Performing Arts and Foreign Languages Librarian*
Julie Ingram, *Applicant Eligibility Coordinator, Scholarships and Financial Aid*
Reed Kennedy, *Instructor of Management and Director of International Programs,*
Pamplin College of Business
Mary Marchant, *Professor, CALS*
Miriam Rich, *Communications Coordinator, OIRED*
Glenda Scales, *Associate Dean for International Programs and Info Technology*
Richard Shryock, *Assoc Professor & Dept Chair, Foreign Languages and Literatures*

Action items:

- College update for November UCIA meeting – Glenda Scales, College of Engineering

1. Welcome, introductions, and approval of meeting minutes

The meeting was called to order by chair John Browder and participants introduced themselves. The minutes of the October meeting had been distributed electronically for approval by council members.

2. Education Abroad updates

Jeremy Billetdeaux provided this month's update on the activities taking place in Education Abroad. He noted that this is a busy time of the year for their office. International Education Week will be celebrated November 16 – 20 and the Education Abroad office will be sponsoring two events. A representative from the Boren Scholarships program will be on hand November 16 to answer questions regarding these opportunities for students interested in studying language and culture in areas deemed critical by the US State Department. Award recipients are required to work for a government agency upon completion of their studies; there is also job placement assistance available. On November 18 Jean-Marc Hachey will present a lecture on 'Global Career Skills' at the Graduate Life Center auditorium. The interest from council members in these two announcements prompted Dr. De Datta to inquire how these events are publicized. The primary means of distributing this information is through the UCIA list serve and the colleges' own networks, as well as the VT News 'Campus Notices.' Mary Marchant suggested that sending messages to the associate deans for academic affairs is also effective.

John Browder asked about the use of the 'Studio Abroad' software. Jeremy replied that usage is up but still varies widely. Dr. De Datta reminded the group that the Education Abroad office has a graduate assistant, Caroline Ickes, who is available to train anyone interested in using this resource. Jeremy continued by stating that the group of students who had been studying at the Caribbean Center for Education and Research in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, returned on November 10. They are now participating in de-briefings and program wrap-ups; they will have a public session at Torgersen at 2:30

p.m. on Friday, November 13. There are approximately 14 students who are interested in the CCER spring program, which is also sponsored by the College of Natural Resources but has a much more general focus.

The conversation then returned to the issue of information sharing, which everyone agreed can be challenging. Jeremy commented that the Education Abroad office has recently started using 'Twitter' to send out notices and it does appear to be popular, although it may be due to the novelty. Advertising in the 'Collegiate Times' is quite expensive and the paper rarely does special interest articles. The 'table topics' cards in the dining facilities fill up six months to one year in advance. Council members shared the different methods by which they distribute important information and announcements and the way their departments organize the various listserves. It is apparent that the attempt to reach out to the community is being made but perhaps is not being used by recipients as effectively as possible. Dr. Dooley suggested that when notices are sent out via the UCIA listserve they are designated with the type of action needed.

Dr. Dooley also asked if the alcohol policy group created at the last meeting had met. Laurie Brogdon replied that they are scheduled to meet on Wednesday, November 18. Dr. Dooley reminded the UCIA members to offer any additional follow-up remarks for this sub-committee to take into consideration.

3. Informational items

a. Briefing on TCE Seminar

John Dooley reported on a seminar he recently attended in Bangalore, India along with Dr. De Datta, Roop Mahajan, and Ishwar Puri. The seminar is organized in conjunction with Tata Consulting Engineers as part of a series on emerging technologies that provide overviews of critical issues and where research in the fields is leading. This particular seminar focused on energy; previous seminars featured nanotechnology and the intersection of biology and technology. The collaboration between Virginia Tech and TCE has proven to be very successful and highlights the need to step up this partnership in order to create professional development programs for engineers and broaden participation to a national seminar. Dr. Dooley noted that this stated need for more professional development courses is the outcome of high economic growth in India, which is also prevalent in China, and moving in that direction would provide more branding opportunities for Virginia Tech. TCE is hiring an additional 600 engineers this year; consequently there is a need for more frequent short courses and use of distance technologies. Dr. Dooley has reviewed a list of such programs available through Virginia Tech to see which might be compatible with the needs of these partner organizations. He stated that they will also be looking at ways to collaborate on other research areas and connect with programs here, ultimately creating a pool of resources with a 20-year research horizon. This could be a shared activity with Virginia Tech, TCE, and India Institute of Science as partners. Dr. Dooley is very interested in moving forward with these ideas, as such types of corporate collaborations are a viable strategy for broadening and enhancing Virginia Tech's visibility and prestige worldwide. Dr. De Datta concurred that the breakout sessions of the seminar were very engaging and interesting; the morning session featured presentations that defined the emerging technologies and discussed their implications, whereas the afternoon session challenged participants to create energy scenarios for an industrial park and a town of 1 million inhabitants. The results were submitted for evaluation by a review panel that judged the presentations not only on technical soundness and economic and socio-environmental considerations but quality and level of teamwork as well. This latter criteria is not traditionally a part of the Indian culture and as facilitator of the presentation session, Dr. Dooley felt it was enlightening to engage the participants as learners. There were approximately 45 in attendance at the event; both Dr. Dooley and Dr. De Datta praised Dr. Mahajan and Dr. Puri for their outstanding contributions to the seminar.

b. VT, India update: S.K. De Datta

Dr. De Datta continued by explaining that the purpose of the India trip was twofold and included work on the VT, India proposal. In addition to the VT, India steering committee in Blacksburg made up of Virginia Tech faculty, there is also an advisory board in India that meets annually. This year a subset of the advisory board members was convened along with the participation of several other influential individuals to participate in a strategy session, which took place in the boardroom of the Ashok Leyland headquarters. The group was given an update on all that has been done to date with the project and charged with providing advice as to the future direction of the plan. The original RFP had three stated requirements: 30 acres of land in or near a metropolitan area, 70,000 feet of built-up space, and \$5 million in cash, preferably in US dollars. The feedback from the session indicated that it was not clear as to why these particular requirements were necessary and how prospective partners would benefit from this investment. In response, a more detailed concept paper was drafted and given to the chair of the strategy session for approval before being widely circulated through the Advisory Board and the Steering Committee. Two field visits also took place in the Chennai region; a meeting with representatives from SRM University did not provide any leads whereas a visit with members of the MARG development group proved to be impressive and offered some promise and potential. Dr. De Datta requested that an offer be put in writing; a proposal from the MARG group was submitted but lacked the commitment to the 70,000 sq. ft. of buildings. A follow-up conversation indicated that MARG executives thought the building requirement was included as part of the \$5 million component of the RFP and will now come up with a strategy to address this. Dr. De Datta elaborated that conceptually there will be no interference with academic issues, the infrastructure of the project is a joint venture, and this appears to be a very attractive idea although it is still too early to tell what might transpire. Responses from the MARG group will subsequently be reviewed by the steering committee. A third invitation came from a private university in the city of Pune in the western part of India, although the Virginia Tech delegation was not able to travel to that location.

Dr. Dooley added that the Indian minister for human resources development recently visited the US for a college tour, which included Harvard, MIT, and Georgetown; in conjunction with the tour, US secretary of education Arne Duncan hosted events in Washington, D.C. which were attended by Dr. McNamee and Dr. Steger. The Indian prime minister will also be coming to the United States in late November on a tour designed to advance higher education collaboration between the two countries. Dr. Dooley reminded the group that Virginia Tech was the first to initiate such partnerships and should be considered the pioneers in this endeavor; unfortunately, government regulations interrupted some of the activities but the policies may soon be relaxed. Georgia Tech, Duke, and Harvard are among the institutions that have begun these type of collaborative programs; Dr. Dooley commented that Virginia Tech needs to ramp up its efforts in order to capitalize on this opportunity. Dr. Dooley noted that the entire state of Tamil Nadu in southern India graduated more than 140,000 students with bachelor's degrees in engineering last year, while less than 70,000 received the same degree in the United States; although the degrees are not necessarily of the same caliber as those in the US and are more often the equivalent of those awarded from a technical college, they are still indicative of the region's needs for educational opportunities as well as the potential for Virginia Tech to become involved in the vanguard of this movement. Dr. De Datta commented that schools in southern India tend to focus on engineering, whereas MBAs and management candidates come from the north and the west. In response to a question from Dr. Browder, Dr. De Datta and Dr. Dooley replied that if the current prospects do not materialize, the matter will be taken up once again before the steering committee here on campus. The RFP may have to be reviewed yet again to see whether it clearly articulates the benefits of this partnership.

4. College update

Mike Bertelsen, associate dean of CALS, provided a report on the activities of the college with statistics that had been provided to the dean as part of an annual report. CALS now has activities in 86 countries, an increase from 65. Most of the work takes place in China and India; collaborative research projects are the most prevalent type of activity. Participation varies among the units of the college. Dr. Bertelsen noted that the information he distributed, which was generated by an electronic reporting system used by CALS faculty, should be seen as a table of indicators as it double-counts some information and excludes others such as mentoring of graduate students. Much of this work is tied to OIRED activities; more than 30 CALS faculty members are providing mentoring opportunities. Dr. Bertelsen stated that this information supports goal #1 in the international strategic plan; additionally, the college would also like to promote participation in Education Abroad activities to include increasing the number of scholarships and receiving proposals from students to supplement the programs currently in place in Ecuador, Mali, Ireland, Italy, Brazil, and South Africa. Scholarships are available through the office and there is a considerable degree of enthusiasm from students for these opportunities but the faculty does not necessarily have the same level of interest; Dr. Bertelsen cited examples of the higher level of participation in the AgEcon, Entomology, and Plant Physiology and Weed Science departments as compared to Biochemistry and Human Nutrition, Food and Exercise and commented that the range of involvement varies from 10% to 60%. Another goal of the international strategic plan—to enhance world-class status and visibility—that the college is meeting is the offering of an online masters' degree program. As additional measures of success of CALS programs, Dr. Bertelsen referred to the USAID CRSP projects which were recently renewed, receipt of an IPM international excellence award, placing as finalists in the Bill and Melinda Gates 'Changemakers' contest and several other awards and honors received during the past year, as well as the college's rise in national rankings from #14 to #5. Dr. De Datta pointed out that this work is also academic in nature, not merely technical assistance to developing countries, and offered a recently-published book by Keith Moore as an example of the commitment to academic excellence. The impacts of all these endeavors are tangible and can be illustrated by factual information such as increases in family incomes in targeted countries. Glenda Scales also offered several comments regarding the reporting system used by CALS faculty and how such information can be generated and then standardized throughout the university.

5. Other items

The review panel for nominations for the alumni awards for excellence in international education, outreach, and research has been selected; Don Back, Matt McMullen, Glenda Snyder, and Debra Stoudt will serve on this committee.

Glenda Scales reported that a delegation from the VT-MENA project will be visiting the Virginia Tech campus November 30 – December 4 and that a group from Blacksburg will likely be traveling to Egypt soon. Although this visit is primarily an initiative of the College of Engineering, an effort will be made to reach out to other colleges as well.

Miriam Rich announced that the application for NAFSA's Paul Simon award for internationalization is near completion. She also referred to the recent nomination of Dr. Rajiv Shah as USAID Administrator and the positive impact his confirmation could have on Virginia Tech.

There were no additional items to discuss and the meeting was adjourned at 9:32.

6. Next meeting: Thursday, December 3; 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.