

UCIA Meeting  
Monday, January 23, 2017  
10:30 a.m. – noon  
International Affairs Offices, Conference Room A

Present:

Don Back, *Director, Language and Culture Institute*  
David Brady, *Director, Office of Export and Secure Research Compliance*  
David Clubb, *Director, Cranwell International Center*  
Debra Eason, *Global Engagement Specialist, College of Engineering*  
Juan Espinoza, *Director of Diversity and Access Initiatives, Office of Undergraduate Admissions*  
Monika Gibson, *Director of Student Services, Graduate School*  
Alex Hyler, *Graduate Student Assembly*  
Theresa Johansson, *Director, Global Education Office*  
Ian Leuschner, *Director, International Support Services*  
John Lipsey, *Associate Director, Strategic Partnerships and Program Development, Office of International Research, Education, and Development*  
Gary Long, *Associate Dean for Curriculum and Instruction, College of Science*  
Shelby Miller, *Coordinator, Student-Athlete Development*  
Gerhardt Schurig, *Professor, VMRCVM and International Programs Strategist*  
Debra Stoudt, *Associate Dean for Academic Policies and Procedures, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences*  
Samantha Winn, *University Libraries*

Guests:

Andrea Brunais, *Communications Director, Outreach and International Affairs*  
Tyler Oxley, *Assistant Director, Office of Undergraduate Admissions*

**1. Welcome, introductions, and approval of November minutes**

David Clubb called the meeting to order and asked participants to introduce themselves. A motion to accept the minutes of the November meeting was made by Alex Hyler, seconded by Ian Leuschner, and approved unanimously.

**2. Special Presentation: International Student Recruitment and Admissions**

Juan Espinoza attended the meeting to discuss international student recruiting initiatives that seek to diversify the applicant pool and balance the countries of origin for international students beyond China, which dominates enrollment statistics. At Virginia Tech currently 56% of the undergraduates and 30% of the graduate students are Chinese; the national average is about 30% but research institutions tend to draw greater numbers. The deadline for applications was January 15, 2017 so Juan was able to share very recent statistics regarding international enrollments. Virginia Tech is a popular choice and changes are being made to facilitate and encourage applications. The SAT is now no longer a requirement, since students must take the IELTS or TOEFL exams to gauge their English proficiency and access to test centers is sometimes an issue. The Office of Admissions is working with a company called InitialView to conduct in-person interviews that are unique to each applicant and also verify their English proficiency and assess how they might interact in the classroom and with their peers. Recruitment is often conducted in collaboration with the Language and Culture Institute, and a brochure has been developed that is used for all levels (English language instruction, undergraduate, and graduate programs). Specific markets are

targeted; recruiting in the Middle East has been quite successful—the United Arab Emirates has now become the third largest student group—as has Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam, Singapore, and Malaysia. Many of these countries offer a good return on investment. The office is also engaging with students in emerging countries, such as Central Europe where travel for recruitment can be cheaper. They plan to focus on other regions as well this year to include the Central Asian Republics and Central and South America. Other countries, such as Turkey and Vietnam, have relatively robust scholarship programs, but a faculty mentorship component for graduate students is very important. The Office of Admissions strives to respond to all emails within 24 hours of their receipt. This cycle the office received more than 2500 applications, an 8% increase from the last year, with fewer of those being from China. Some countries' numbers are still in the single digits, but this is a start and they anticipate a longer-term impact. The Office of Admissions sets goals and takes into consideration that some disciplines such as engineering are more attractive. Approximately 70% of the applications submitted get offers after being managed for discipline and diversity. This year they made 420 offers of admission (compared to 136 in 2016); they note that early offers get a quicker response. National origin of students can be difficult to track; for example, there is a category for the US because international students now attend US high schools to better prepare for college admission. Likewise, the UAE has a large population of Indian nationals. The Indian economy has been doing poorly, which will likely affect applications from that country for the near future. Monika Gibson was asked to present on this topic as it relates to the graduate school. She invited committee members to send her questions that can be used to prepare the presentation in collaboration with Dannette Gomez Beane, director of recruitment and diversity initiatives for the graduate school. Monika noted that graduate students are less often self-funded, resulting in some socio-economic differences from undergraduates.

### **3. UCIA Bylaws – changes approved by COIA**

David announced that the revisions to the by-laws changing the name of the UCIA to the 'University Committee on International Affairs' has been approved by the Commission for Outreach and International Affairs and is now official.

### **4. 2018-19 Core Fulbright US Scholar Program competition**

The Fulbright US Scholar competition will be opening on or about February 1. The Global Education Office and International Support Services will host webinars on January 23 and January 30 that give an overview of the programs and discuss how Fulbright programs can help internationalize campuses. The Outreach Lecturing Fund is another resource offered through Fulbright and a proposal-based strategy that incentivizes faculty to invite visitors to campus is being considered. Four VT students were named as finalists in the US student competition; they will be notified later in the spring if they have been selected for the awards. The student competition will be open again from April 4 – October 10 for awards for the 2018-2019 academic year. VT faculty were thanked for their guidance and mentorship with the student candidates.

### **5. Constituent reports**

#### **a. OIRED**

John Lipsey reported that office personnel are conducting a scoping visit to Egypt in conjunction with a USAID-funded STEM project. They are also working on a Haitian student network program in partnership with a Haitian university, conducting a STEM workshop in Oman, collaborating with the VMRCVM on a health project, and starting a refugee and immigration group. They are waiting to be notified about two smaller grants in Cambodia. The InnovATE team is currently in Armenia conducting a food safety workshop. The office would like to establish a database to compile research expertise and connect researchers.

#### **b. Language and Culture Institute**

Don Back reported that staff from the LCI are embarking on the spring recruitment tour, visiting Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, UAE, Japan and Korea. Recruiting is broad-based and conducted on behalf of Undergraduate Admissions and the Graduate School as well as the LCI. Some countries have attractive potential; for example, Vietnam is promising for its investment in international education initiatives such as a 9-1-1 program structured to build capacity in the professoriate. The LCI is hosting a group of 25 Argentinian students for six weeks for a preparatory program that can help recruit them to return for masters and doctoral programs in engineering and science. They are also enjoying some social activities, such as a ski trip.

#### **c. Global Education**

Theresa Johansson reported that she will be traveling frequently to western and southern Africa in conjunction with the capacity-building grant awarded to the office. The GEO has agreed to join the Generation Study Abroad initiative that seeks to double the number of study abroad participants by 2020. The Steger Center is implementing a new program; the 'Deans' Semester for Global Challenges' that focuses on food, water, and energy challenges and will feature rotating instruction from five colleges and trips to Senegal and Croatia. This week the push for recruitment will start, with a video available on VT News for sharing and a series of info sessions. The cost of the program is being finalized. There is no minimum GPA beyond the general requirement of 2.5 for study abroad participation, and organizers are looking for students who are exceptionally engaged. The Ghana summer program has 12 applicants, exceeding the minimum needed. This is a 6 ½ week program that will first work with Saha Global on water purification and solar energy projects before moving to Cape Coast University where Kwame Harrison and local professors will teach the history and culture of Ghana. Brett Shadle will be teaching a pre-departure prep course on ethical service. Theresa also expressed concerns that the new Partnership Incentive Based Budget (PIBB) for budgets seems to disincentivize internationalization in the colleges. This initiative is still in the comment period and Theresa encouraged committee members to share their thoughts and feedback with her.

#### **d. International Support Services**

Ian Leuschner reported that the office continues to be involved in developing the partnership with Shandong University. An application has been filed with authorities for construction work and after the March 1 they will issue an RFP for renovations.

#### **e. Cranwell International Center**

David Clubb announced that the Center is now fully staffed, and they are planning a meet and greet event. The Sunapsis batch software is on track to launch this fall. There will be a site visit in July in preparation for its implementation. Cranwell is planning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Student Achievement Ceremony for commencement; Guru Ghosh was the keynote speaker at last year's ceremony. The new international undergraduate student orientation process will be revised in partnership with the new Director of New Student Programs in the Division of Student Affairs. Several institutions now conduct pre-departure orientations in the home countries, which is very well received and allows parents and alumni to participate. In large countries such as China, for example, the orientations can be narrowed down to Beijing and Shanghai, the cities that send the most students. Cranwell is considering working with campus partners to explore this option for 2018. The International Street Fair will take place in April. Another major event in April, which Cranwell is now taking a lead role in, is the VT World Cup, a one-day soccer tournament. David added that Cranwell staff will holding a workshop in April for academic advisors regarding how to correctly pronounce Chinese names.

**f. Graduate School**

Monika Gibson announced that the next application season is starting. The most recent deadline was January 15 but it has been extended due to a server outage. They anticipate 10,000 – 11,000 applications, more than half of which are international. The number of international students has remained fairly flat over the years, at about 1500. About 30 – 45% of the international applicants get enrollment offers and about 80% of those accept. 65 – 70% arrive funded, particularly the PhD students.

**g. OESRC**

David Brady reported that the office is working with the Graduate School to monitor three countries for sending students with prior or current military affiliations. This worked well for the spring cycle. There are new requirements in place now for Russia and Iran.

**6. Other items**

- Alumni Award nominations for excellence in international education, outreach, and research are due Monday, January 30 by 5:00 p.m. Ian Leuschner agreed to serve on the review committee.
- Concerns were voiced about the post-election campus climate in regards to the international community. President Sands met with the Tech DREAMers organization. For the moment things seem relatively calm, so action will be deferred until necessary.

There were no additional items and the meeting was adjourned at 11:50. The next meeting is scheduled for February 13.