

UCIA Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2015

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

International Affairs Offices, Meeting Room A

Beth Armstrong, *Director, University Scholarships and Financial Aid*
Don Back, *Director, Language and Culture Institute*
Suzie Baker, *Interim Director, Cranwell International Center*
Jacqueline Bixler, *Chair, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures*
Cynthia Bonner, *Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs*
David Brady, *Director, Export Control and Secure Research Compliance*
Andrea Brunais, *Communications Director, Outreach and International Affairs*
Rachel Fitzgerald, *Assistant Director for Program Management, Global Education Office*
Andrew Fortin, *Financial Aid Specialist, University Scholarships and Financial Aid*
Guru Ghosh, *Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs*
Monika Gibson, *Director of Student Services, Graduate School*
Michael Herndon, *Director of Summer and Winter Programs*
Sonia Hirt, *Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, CAUS*
Theresa Johansson, *Director, Global Education Office*
Reed Kennedy, *Director of International Programs, Pamplin College of Business*
Stephanie Lang, *Academic Advising Coordinator, College of Natural Resources and the Environment*
Ian Leuschner, *Director, International Support Services*
Huiying 'Maggie' Mao, *Graduate Student Assembly*
Jennifer Nardine, *University Libraries*
Jerzy Nowak, *International Programs, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences*
Miriam Rich, *Communications Coordinator, OIRED*
Ginny Ritenour, *Alumni Chapter Coordinator, Virginia Tech Alumni Association*
Nicole Sanderlin, *Director of International Programs, College of Engineering*
Debra Stoudt, *Associate Dean for Academic Policies and Procedures, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences*
Elankumaran Subbiah, *Associate Professor, VMRCVM*
Judy Taylor, *Staff Senate; Office of the Provost*
Eric Vance, *Faculty Senate; Assistant Research Professor and Director of LISA (Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Statistical Analysis)*

Guests:

Gene Ball, *Director, International Finance and Administration, OIRED*
Hunter Gresham, *Chief of Staff, Division of Student Affairs*
Michael Mulhare, *Director, Office of Emergency Management*
Timothy Sands, *President*

1. President Sands on VT's international direction

In response to Don Back's invitation, President Sands attended the meeting to discuss his vision for the international direction of the university and to hear council members' aspirations and barriers to achieving their goals. President Sands stated that internationalization is a topic that has become increasingly more important over the years; land-grant universities have had a growing global impact for the last 50 years and this trajectory will continue. The current international community at Virginia Tech

is rather small and feels like a family, but diversity does not automatically generate inclusiveness. President Sands acknowledged that there are obstacles to studying abroad yet he would like all students to have that opportunity. The university is planning to increase efforts to generate funding for experiential learning programs that many students otherwise might not be able to afford. This includes innovative programming at the residential level to create a type of international house, although the specifics have yet to be decided. A similar program was underway at Purdue when he left and it promised to be an exciting environment. President Sands noted that Virginia Tech has surpassed its previous record for applications. Guru Ghosh reported that the IEPC had met prior to this to discuss ways to make study abroad more affordable while incentivizing faculty. The current system is fragmented and needs coherence as well as a plan to encourage faculty participation at all career levels, and there should be appropriate recognition of all the work that goes into planning and leading a study abroad trip. Virginia Tech's current model for study abroad with in-state vs. out-of-state tuition rates is outdated especially given that study abroad poses no additional stress on university facilities; however, even the Wintermester online courses are charging extra for out-of-state students. Hunter Gresham reminded the group of the planned Global Village learning/living community that will be comprised of international and domestic students; it may seem an expensive venture but fits well with the overall university expansion efforts. The project is not just about the living/learning community but also about consolidation of international services, many of which are currently located off-campus and therefore seem to indicate their marginalization rather than their playing a central role to the community; for example, visitors will often arrive at the wrong office, giving a bad first impression. President Sands indicated that he would prefer the project have a different name and commented on how it could be a vibrant destination with music, cafés, spaces for visiting scholars, and lectures that people want to visit. Of present concern are the international rankings; Virginia Tech is somewhat lacking in scholarship reputation and faculty recognition. This is being addressed by building on the national growth that Virginia Tech has achieved in recent years; nationally it is well-ranked but internationally is in the 250-350 range. All memorandums of understanding (MOU) should include some type of exchange in order to be worth considering and are best initiated at the grassroots level; at the same time, support for the importance of internationalization needs to come from the highest level of administration. Eric Vance commented that as part of the LISA 2020 project he had just returned from Nigeria where a VT graduate student will be working for the next six months. This kind of work fits not only into the outreach mission of a land-grant university but also serves as a unique type of education abroad. President Sands remarked on the enthusiasm of the group and encouraged council members to keep the momentum going, adding that he would like to spend more time with Guru Ghosh and urging the group to think beyond a typical 5 – 10 year planning horizon to a vision that extends decades. Virginia Tech has to prepare students to be global, and this can include internationalizing the curriculum and course content.

2. Welcoming the GEO director

Jackie Bixler introduced new GEO director Theresa Johansson, who started work today. Ms. Johansson comes from William and Mary where she served as an assistant director in their Global Education Office. Dr. Bixler thanked the search committee for their work.

3. Ebola update

Guest Michael Mulhare, director of the Office of Emergency Management, gave a presentation on the status of the Ebola epidemic and Virginia Tech's response to the situation. Ebola has long been considered a threat but was ruled out as a means of bioterrorism because it is infectious but not contagious. He gave an update on total numbers of cases worldwide, pointing out that it is leveling off and that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has imposed Level 3 travel warnings to countries hardest hit, meaning only medical workers should travel there. The Virginia Department of Health

adopted an early and aggressive response to become actively engaged in dealing with the situation, implementing hotlines, monitoring of travelers, and establishing of medical protocols. Currently 56 travelers have been screened and managed in Virginia and plans are in place to mobilize should a case be reported. VT's responses have also been swift: there is just a small group of students from West Africa on campus, no new students arrived at the start of the semester, and there has been no travel to or from the region. Mr. Mulhare explained and emphasized the difference between contagion and infection and discussed personal responsibilities in the situation: talk to a health care provider if you have been exposed or in contact with someone who may be suffering from the disease. Information and links are on the emergency management website. Among the lessons learned is that the Virginia Tech population is at greater risk for the flu than Ebola, but it is nevertheless important to have a plan in place and to address the panic factor in the early stages of the epidemic. Mr. Mulhare commented that it is a difficult decision to enforce a travel ban and noted that there is a strong bond between Virginia Tech entities and other government organizations. Other diseases have the potential to elicit similar responses, such as MERS, meningitis, and those for which there are vaccinations such as mumps and measles. One particular challenge in these situations is the "traceback" or finding all the people who have been in contact with a victim.

4. Approval of December minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the December meeting was made by Jackie Bixler, seconded by Ian Leuschner, and approved unanimously.

5. Constituent updates

a. International Education Policy committee

Ian Leuschner gave a recap of the summary Guru Ghosh had provided earlier, noting that the committee will explore options for alternatives to the current funding model for study abroad, and will make recommendations by the end of the semester.

b. Global Education

Rachel Fitzgerald reported that that the office is thrilled to have Theresa Johansson in place as director. Ian Leuschner will be leading the search for the risk management position. The office is accepting nominations for inbound international students with a February 1 deadline; the deadline for outbound students is February 15.

c. OIRED

Miriam Rich announced that Mike Bertelsen has retired and interim director Keith Moore is currently accompanying a group of Senegalese university administrators to the Council for Higher Education Administration (CHEA) conference in Washington, DC. The Senegalese government recently passed legislation mandating community service as part of the higher education curriculum as well as integration of the private sector in university governance. USAID has given permission to announce the awarding of an \$18 million grant to the Integrated Pest Management Feed the Future Innovation Lab, whose work will focus on East Africa and Southeast Asia. The InnovATE project also received a \$2.5 million grant for a three-year project in Armenia that will address the 40% rate of unemployment among youth by training them in business and agriculture.

d. Language and Culture Institute

Don Back distributed the flyer for the reduced-fee English language programs offered by the VTLCI for international spouses and partners as part of the diversity initiative. Brochures are being developed as well. Four students have enrolled thus far, including the male spouse of an Egyptian PhD candidate, and

feedback has been positive. The free conversational foreign language programs will be starting soon; classes in French, German, Spanish, and Italian will be offered during lunchtime and evening hours. Information will be updated on the VTLCI website. These are also open to visiting scholars. This program is funded by the Offices of Research and Outreach and International Affairs.

e. Cranwell International Center

Suzie Baker announced that Brian Bolton has left for a position in the Foreign Service and she is serving as the interim director. There are 53 new international students this semester. Suzie shared the flyer for the transitions program for new students that addresses challenges particular to studying in the U.S.; classes started on Sunday and are ongoing. Graduate students are also welcome to attend but the classes are most effective with a smaller group. The deadline for admissions for the fall semester is approaching and since a record number of applications is expected, staff hope to further streamline the process. There is some difficulty accessing areas of Cranwell after business hours because it is now located in a residence hall; for regularly scheduled classes they can “green-light” the entrances but this will be an ongoing issue as activities and services will expand. The search committee for Brian’s replacement will be handled by a recruitment firm and will focus on candidates with vision who are able to take on the establishment of the Global Village.

f. Graduate School

Monika Gibson had nothing to report.

g. OESRC

David Brady offered to give an update next month on the status of global programs with data gathered from his office.

h. International Support Services

Ian Leuschner provided an update on the new English language requirements for visiting scholars. The department has worked with VTLCI to develop a protocol which to date has received mixed reviews. They are working on developing an online interview to be conducted by an outside provider (Berlitz) at a cost of \$65 per person within a tiered system that requires visitors in teaching positions to have a higher skill level than those working in labs. ISS is trying to be responsive to departmental concerns while working within the parameters of standardization. As part of the cultural programming component of the J-1 exchange program, a group of 40 scholars and their family members visited the geosciences museum. The office is also revising codes to help extend optional practical training (OPT) for students in STEM fields; outdated categories have recently resulted in a loss of employment opportunities for those individuals.

i. OIA

Guru Ghosh announced that the review of applications for the associate vice president for international affairs position will begin February 6. He has been traveling to follow up with partner projects in India and Oman. The Global Education Office will be receiving funding to help incentivize internationalization of the curriculum. The search for the OIRED director is ongoing; George Norton is chair of the search. The ten-day International Faculty Development Program for junior to mid-career faculty will take place in the United Kingdom. A call for nominations was recently sent to college deans and six participants will be selected.

6. Eduroam

Don Back presented information on the Eduroam network that allows widely available national and international wireless access; login is available through any participating university and it can also serve as one's default network. Virginia Tech has vetted this and subscribed to it; there are no known security issues but caution is advised as in all situations.

7. Other items

- Elankumaran Subbiah expressed concerns that a proposed increase in international student fees went directly to the budget office without going through governance. Guru Ghosh and Karen DePauw are aware of this and are working on it.
- Nicole Sanderlin is the recipient of a Fulbright award for university administrators and is scheduled to travel to India for two weeks in February.

There were no further items to discuss and the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

8. Schedule of meetings for 2014 – 2015 academic year (all meetings to take place from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Conference Room A, International Affairs Offices):

February 23

March 23

April 27