

**UCIA Meeting  
May 27, 2010  
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.  
International Affairs Office, Meeting Room A**

Present:

Mike Bertelsen, *Associate Director, OIRE*  
Jeremy Billetdeaux, *Assistant Program Director, Education Abroad*  
John Browder, *Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, CAUS*  
S.K. De Datta, *Associate Vice President for International Affairs and Director, OIRE*  
John Dooley, *Vice President, Outreach and International Affairs*  
Reed Kennedy, *Instructor of Management, Director of International Programs,  
Pamplin College of Business*  
Marilynn King, *Senior Associate Director, University Scholarships and Financial Aid*  
Matthew McMullen, *Program Director, Education Abroad*  
Miriam Rich, *Communications Coordinator, OIRE*  
Debra Stoudt, *Associate Dean for Academic Policies and Procedures, CLAHS*

Guests:

Jamie Penven, *Student Affairs*

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

John Browder called the meeting to order and asked participants to introduce themselves. Minutes from the April meeting had been distributed previously and were approved as submitted. Dr. Browder asked if there were any additions to the agenda; he then proposed adding a follow-up to issues that had not been completely resolved and carrying those items over to the coming year. The agenda was amended accordingly.

Dr. De Datta announced that Matt McMullen has resigned his position as program director of Education Abroad and will be relocating to Washington, DC for family reasons. His last day at Virginia Tech will be June 10. The posting for the position has been approved and a search committee will be formed. Dr. McMullen will also make an announcement at next week's NAFSA conference in Kansas City. Dr. Browder thanked Dr. McMullen for his efforts to restructure, centralize, and improve the Education Abroad office during his tenure here.

**2. Education Abroad updates**

Matt McMullen summarized the year's accomplishments, noting that things have gone surprisingly well despite the difficult and challenging economic times. Thanks to a campaign of aggressive marketing and faculty outreach and recruitment, the number of participants finally broke the 1200 mark for a total of 1211. This places Virginia Tech among the top 50 universities for education abroad participants in the country, according to 'Open Doors' magazine. Counterpart universities have stagnated in their numbers or even declined. The team has also increased travel (from 289 to 347) to non-traditional study abroad (non-western European) countries, including destinations such as Egypt, Ecuador, Malawi, Peru, Bulgaria, and Martinique. Also, this year service learning internships were tracked; more of the colleges are now interested in offering zero credit options for these opportunities, which will likely serve to further increase numbers of participants. The information reported to the Board of Visitors will vary slightly from those reported to 'Open Doors' since they collect data from different timeframes.

Reed Kennedy asked if there was a particular reason or college that had produced the surge. Dr. McMullen replied that the increases were fairly even across the board, although Engineering and Liberal Arts had slightly higher numbers. There was more participation in faculty-led programs and even the swine flu pandemic was not a long-term deterrent to travel. Total attendees in this year's summer programs are likely to be higher as well, since there have been few cancellations. Although the new urban studies program in Punta Cana, DR offered by CAUS did not materialize due to low enrollment, it is expected to take place next year, along with a new engineering program that has already obtained funding. Dr. De Datta also recommended focusing on the new center at the University Austral in Valdivia, Chile; he encouraged faculty to visit the center to increase awareness and growth of programs available there.

Dr. McMullen next brought up the health clearance form, which has been presented to legal counsel and amended as per their recommendations. Dr. McMullen asked if the council members supported its implementation and its importance in identifying any kind of student health issues, physical or emotional, prior to the start of a trip. Dr. McMullen emphasized that this should not hinder anyone from going abroad but rather serve to facilitate everyone's positive participation. John Dooley noted that it seemed as if an endorsement/action was expected and asked if there were any arguments against the use of the form. Dr. McMullen reiterated that this would not deter students from participating or faculty from initiating trips. John Browder clarified that there had been two separate issues that had been brought before the council: the health clearance form and the health insurance. Marilyn King recalled that Stephen Capaldo of University Counsel had offered to research the insurance used by Old Dominion University and the possibility of attaching Virginia Tech to their existing policy. Dr. McMullen stated that the insurance can be made a requirement for participation in individual programs and for Education Abroad programs as a whole. Dr. De Datta commented that it would be beneficial to implement this immediately to avoid any potential problems in the future. Dr. McMullen agreed that it is the norm among other institutions and it is in Virginia Tech's best interest to protect itself. John Browder asked to clarify the costs involved and Dr. McMullen responded that it would be approximately \$1 per day. Dr. Browder asked if this could be imbedded into the program costs; Dr. McMullen stated that the drawback would be that a student who already had adequate insurance coverage would then be paying twice for the same benefits. Reed Kennedy noted that the insurance offered by companies such as Medex is generally broader in scope and included additional components such as evacuation and repatriation. Mike Bertelsen cautioned that even this extended coverage may have glitches, citing the example of non-traditional countries that don't accept credit cards or insurance cards; insurance companies will eventually reimburse patients but they might have to pay cash up front. Dr. McMullen agreed that not every scenario is perfect, but plans would be researched to get the best possible fit. Dr. De Datta asked Jeremy Billetdeaux to draft a proposal on how to handle the matter of insurance coverage. John Browder noted that there seemed to be a favorable consensus among the group to implement the health insurance requirement and moved to create a small task force to address the topic in the fall that would recommend the policy change and resulting fee structure. Reed Kennedy seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Dr. Browder then asked if any additional discussion was necessary to move forward with this with the health clearance form. Matt McMullen reiterated that it had been approved by legal counsel. Copies of the form were distributed to council members for review and clarification. Jeremy Billetdeaux suggested that there were several issues that warrant that the matter be discussed further: previously, students had been allowed to self-disclose any issues that might impede their participation. Additionally, legal counsel had informed the Education Abroad office that according to the Americans with Disabilities Act, an earlier 'allergy and dietary form' was not permissible for use. Finally, it can be a

burden for students to make the doctor's appointment necessary to obtain the physician's referral. Matt McMullen stated that top institutions across the country have such forms in place, but the current edition can be moderated to meet the needs of students. Marilyn King observed that there were FERPA and HIPAA considerations to take into account as well. The form as presented is based on models obtained from schools such as Michigan State and the UCAL system, selected from a portfolio offered by legal counsel; Paul Knox has also reviewed these for use at CESA. John Browder closed the discussion by asking council members if they were willing to endorse the form in its current state or to endorse it after further review. John Dooley noted that there were still programmatic concerns to be addressed and recommended that the four college representatives in attendance refer the issue to their colleges for additional feedback. He suggested that the topic be introduced not as a hindrance to faculty or students but as an enabler to enhance the opportunities and experiences for all participants. He also mentioned that the form cannot be made program specific, even though some trips might present greater challenges than others. Marilyn King inquired as to what the Virginia Tech's liability would be once this information was obtained; Dr. McMullen replied that faculty are liable whether or not the information is collected. Debra Stoudt asked for clarification as to what the advantage would be to using this form if faculty would be held responsible regardless; Dr. McMullen responded that participation can be denied ahead of time. John Dooley recommended that the discussion move away from concerns about liability and focus more towards programmatic aspects, stressing that it becomes unfair both to students and faculty if too much time and attention are diverted to accommodating needs that could have been identified ahead of time. A motion was then made by Reed Kennedy and seconded by Matt McMullen to endorse the principle of mandatory medical disclosure pending further discussion by faculty members at the college level, to be resolved in the fall of 2010; the motion passed. As a follow-up question, Dr. De Datta asked why faculty would be held liable; Dr. McMullen replied that in representing the university they are held to a different standard of care.

### **3. Global Living Learning Community**

Jeremy Biletdeaux introduced Jamie Penven from the Residential Life Office of Student Affairs, who was on hand to discuss the proposed Global Living community. Theme housing has been in place at Virginia Tech for the last 10 – 2 years and is currently focused around particular majors, such as English or biological sciences, with students who live together sharing similar coursework. However, there are no defined learning outcomes for these endeavors. There is a worldwide community in place at Newman but no one has taken ownership of this and the effort could be better organized. Jeremy and Jamie are working with fellow committee members Kim Beisecker, Jennifer Quijano Sax, Matt Grimes, Yannis Stivachtis, and two RAs to identify how this can be accomplished. The consensus was that language theme clusters with academic and programmatic components would best fit students' needs. The committee is interested in how to provide specific learning outcomes as well as curricular and co-curricular components. The group envisions an overarching goal of enhancing foreign language skills and hopes to attract a mix of native speakers, second language speakers, and heritage speakers (i.e., individuals who have grown up speaking a language with little or no formal/grammatical instruction). The secondary purpose will be to increase intercultural awareness and competence. The initial language offerings would be French, Spanish, German, and Russian, with an English option for international students. A third objective would be to encourage participation in Education Abroad programs and help students become more intentional about the choices related to their classroom and career goals. The community would assist them in capitalizing on and mentoring them in those experiences. Dr. De Datta commented that Arabic and Chinese are emerging language needs highly sought by the U.S. military and increasingly in demand; Jamie replied that if the pilot project is successful it can be expanded to include additional languages as well as considerations such as various dialects. Dr. Browder thanked him for this information and invited Jamie to return next year and follow up with more information. Dr. Dooley

observed that this project is consistent with the proposed certificate in global/international competence and commended it as a good resource. He inquired as to anticipated start date; Jamie replied that it is scheduled to be launched in the fall of 2011. Dr. Dooley also asked if it would be an issue that many juniors and seniors who would be potential mentors are no longer living on campus at that point. Jamie answered that the communities would provide enough interaction with these peer leaders early on in the experience to serve as a defining presence and encourage continued participation in the program.

#### **4. Nomination of vice chair, 2010 – 2011 academic year**

Dr. De Datta thanked John Browder for his leadership during the past year. He welcomed incoming chair Debra Stoudt and nominated Reed Kennedy as the incoming vice chair. Dr. De Datta asked if there were additional nominations from the floor; none were forthcoming and Reed was elected unanimously.

#### **5. Follow up topics for the 2010 – 2011 academic year**

Dr. Browder addressed the following topics for action in the coming year:

##### **A. Certificate in global/international competence**

A subcommittee will be formed in the fall to work on this project, which has been deemed of importance by council members.

##### **B. International guest housing**

John Dooley reported that the task force is still collecting data regarding the university's needs for international guest housing. A prospective and anxious donor is awaiting this information in order to proceed with the purchase of an existing property which would then be turned over to the university as a gift. This matter will not be resolved over the summer, but it is essential to receive and compile the data.

Dr. De Datta recalled having seen a bed-and-breakfast called the 'VT Inn' and asked if there was ownership that would control use of Virginia Tech names, logos, etc. It was noted that this was brought to the attention of the town council and the establishment is not properly zoned to operate in that capacity.

##### **C. International program updates by colleges**

The council concurred that these updates were interesting and informative; Dr. Browder asked if it can be re-formatted to be used by the community. All the reports made during the year (from five of the eight colleges) have been turned over to Alexandra Sommers, who is in the process of compiling the information to upload on the website. Dr. De Datta observed that in writing the 'Global University' newsletter, many departments do not initially submit information but do respond to outreach efforts. He suggested that this strategy be used in the fall to contact colleges and receive the most up-to-date reports.

##### **D. VT, India**

Dr. Browder asked for an update on this endeavor. Dr. De Datta stated that it is a long-term project in which the university will be engaged for quite some time. There currently is a bill in the Indian parliament that would define the terms of engagement under which foreign universities can operate in India. As introduced, the bill seeks to have any foreign university which seeks to commence operations in India deposit \$11 million into a corpus fund that cannot be touched, although 75% of the interest earnings can be used. Institutions of 'great repute' will be exempt from this requirement. Four universities have been named as meeting this standard:

Harvard, Yale, Oxford, and Cambridge. Dr. Steger, Richard Benson, Dr. Dooley, and Dr. De Datta will be traveling to Washington, DC on June 1 to meet with the minister of human resources Dr. Kapil Sibal and discuss this development as well as obtain clarification on how an institution can meet the definitions for exemption. The initial project was to focus solely on the subjects of science and engineering, but there has since been interest expressed in other disciplines as well.

#### **E. Health Insurance and medical disclosure**

As per today's meeting, discussion of these subjects will be resumed in the fall.

#### **6. International research resource page**

John Dooley commented that in creating this resource, he wished to demonstrate the richness of the colleges' international work. One segment of the webpage in which he is particularly interested is to bring forth the distinguished international alumni; Dr. Dooley forth a call for ideas as to how to include them, stating that international students are often neglected and there is a need to help them reconnect with the university.

#### **7. Informational items**

Incoming UCIA chair Debra Stoudt referred to the bylaws posted on the website and suggested that they be reviewed during the coming year. She cited the example that there no clear rules as to succession of leadership positions. Dr. De Datta replied that there are some actions that are practice and not policy. John Dooley concurred that it would be timely to relook at the document.

Dr. Stoudt also asked how quickly the health insurance requirements would go into effect should they be endorsed/approved by the council. Reed Kennedy added Pamplin faculty start recruiting one year in advance for their study abroad programs and would need to inform students as early as possible in the process in order to incorporate the costs into their program fees. It was suggested that a date fairly far in the future would be most beneficial. Dr. Dooley suggested that feedback into start dates be made part of the dialogue among colleges as well, and reiterated the importance of stressing the added value of the insurance requirement.

#### **8. Next meeting**

This was the final meeting for the 2009 – 2010 academic year; meetings will resume in August. A tentative schedule had been proposed but conflicted with Reed Kennedy's teaching commitments for next year. Council members suggested that Monday afternoons would be a good time to hold the meetings. A revised schedule will be forthcoming.

There were no further items to discuss and the meeting was adjourned at 3:31.