

Minutes of the November 6, 2008 Meeting of the International Education Committee

Committee Members Present: Tristan Burger (student representative), Lynnette Claire, Lisa Ferrari (Associate Dean), Mark Harpring, Diane Kelley, John Lear, Jan Moore (Study Abroad Advisor), Heidi Orloff, Mei Rose, Peter Wimberger, Jannie Meisberger (Director, International Programs), Donn Marshall (Associate Dean of Students).

Chair John Lear convened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Approval of minutes: Diane noted that she forwarded corrections to John, and the corrections were minimal. With that report the corrected minutes were accepted.

John noted that this committee is scheduled to meet three more times this semester, with three regions to be considered. Diane noted that the *Europe* region is currently scheduled to be considered by the full committee on December 4, and the *United Kingdom* programs are scheduled for November 20. Since the *United Kingdom* folder describing the programs is not yet ready, Diane offered on behalf of the *Europe* group to switch weeks. All agreed. Jannie noted that there are a few additions to make to the binder with material for *Europe*. Jan will flag those additions so they can be spotted easily by committee members who have already completed their review.

Program Review: Americas Subcommittee report

Mark led the discussion of the report previously circulated from the *Americas Subcommittee*. Overall they report feeling pleased with the opportunities to study in the region, with just a couple of exceptions: the IES program in Argentina, and the concentration of programs in Chile being most troubling. Subcommittee members also noted the need for additional programs in Central America. John and others noted that the CGE Central America program is a strong one, and would recommend to have it supported as a sponsored/partner program, rather than as approved.

Peter noted that there seem to be three different kinds of program evaluations that we see:

1. Those completed by evaluators who are unaffiliated with the program in question.
2. Evaluations that are completed mostly by staff of the organization (IES evaluations seem to fall here.)
3. Faculty evaluations that are based on seminars sponsored by the programs.

Discussion ensued about how thorough and honest these evaluations may be when there are possible conflicts of interest. Lisa noted concern about evaluation panels that include current program students in the group, as they are in a vulnerable, being dependent on the program's standing, resources, and even goodwill of program administrators for their safety and general well-being while abroad.

Concentration of the programs in Chile was discussed, noting their relative strengths and weaknesses. John noted that by counting "programs" differently (i.e., by counting "providers" instead) we might be able to reduce the apparent numbers of offerings while retaining options for student choice. Peter noted that more careful study of these

programs might require sending representatives from our faculty to complete on site evaluations.

Peter commented that changing a program from “approved” to “partner” is against his understanding of the spirit of the moratorium on program approval.

Lisa questioned the strengths of the Turks & Caicos program. Peter noted that it was seriously restructured since one of our students had a bad experience there. Lisa recommended flagging it for ongoing attention. Peter agreed, and added that we should do the same for the SFS Costa Rica program.

John summarized, stating that he thought there were three things the IEC could vote on from this subcommittee report.

1. Status of the El Salvador Casa program.
2. Status of the IES Buenos Aires.
3. Change in status of the CGE program.

El Salvador CASA program. Discussion: Only one student has gone on it. It is a difficult city to manage. Some other program would make more sense. Jannie and Jan concur. Mark **moved**, Peter seconded that it be **dropped** from our list. **Approved by voice.**

IES Buenos Aires. Discussion: Jannie reported that this program does not seem to meet the needs of our strongest students, but there are not good alternatives. Lynette questioned how much we need to meet all student requests. If a stronger program in Argentina does not get student enrollment, she questions how motivated they are for the academic experience there. John noted that student evaluations were critical of the weaknesses of this program while enthusiastic about Buenos Aires. Lisa recommended that we stop sending students on this program until we are confident in the academic standards. Mark noted that the Spanish majors already do not have IES Buenos Aires available to them for '09. **Moved** that we not allow students to go to IES Buenos Aires beginning with fall 2009 pending further review. **Seconded** and **Passed.**

Moved that we postponed disallowing enrollment in the IES Buenos Aires program until fall 2010. **Seconded** and **Failed.**

Proposed change of status of Center for Global Education Central America program from approved to partner status. Discussion postponed due to limited time.

Lynette **moved** to accept the *Americas Subcommittee* report with commendations for their strong work. **Seconded** and **Passed.**

Meeting adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,

Donn Marshall