

NYU Buenos Aires Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 16, 2018, 9:30 am

383 Lafayette Street #C08

Attendees

- Millery Polyne (Committee Chair, Gallatin)
- Anna Kazumi Stahl (NYU Buenos Aires)
- Cecilia Calero (NYU Buenos Aires, via phone)
- Miriam Basilio (Art History)
- Amy Wilson (Law)
- Juan Pinon (Steinhardt)
- Maria Davila (Lourdes) (FAS, Spanish and Portuguese)
- Nancy J Morrison (Global Programs)
- Tyra Liebmann (Global Programs)
- Janet Alperstein (Global Programs)
- Melissa Aragon (Global Programs)

Introductions and Updates

The meeting began with a brief overview of Linda Mill's March 8th memo "[Updates on Study Away and Academic Developments at the Global Sites](#)." The memo noted that study away enrollments are continuing to grow, with 45% of bachelor's degree recipients studying away in the class of 2017.

NYU Buenos Aires (NYU BA) is celebrating its ten-year anniversary. While it was noted that spring semester enrollments are historically strong, and the site averages around 60 - 70 students per semester, there is capacity for higher fall enrollments. Generally, the undergraduate curriculum is focused on the humanities, particularly Spanish and literature courses. Recently, two committee members visited the NYU BA academic center to see what operations are like, meet with students and faculty and visit courses.

Site Director Report

Anna Kazumi Stahl, Site Director at NYU BA, summarized the Site Director Report, distributed to the committee in advance of the meeting. In particular, Dr. Stahl highlighted, and the committee discussed, the following:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

In addition to Breathing Room, a space available for student-led conversations and an active component of the NYU BA site, the [Global Equity Fellowship](#) is in its second semester, and has been a wonderful and productive addition to the university's DEI initiative. The Global Equity Fellow serves as a liaison between the students and staff and works with both cohorts to bridge connections between DEI matters in a local context and a global perspective. The current fellow has been researching and developing resources based on social movements and identity, and provides students with opportunities to think about DEI topics in a local context. Through the already established Breathing Room and programs developed through the Global Equity Fellowship, students continue to dialogue through difficult conversations. Through this pilot program, the Global Equity Fellow has been discovering which interactions are most effective and local student life staff is evaluating the fellowship in order to replicate the program across the global network.

Academic Updates

The committee discussed the development of courses at NYU BA:

- The Spanish and Portuguese department is looking to partner with other schools and departments, including Global Public Health, to create courses in Spanish that may not be directly related to Latin American Studies.
- There continues to be a tripartite collaboration comprised of the Spanish department, MCC, and Gallatin to support English-based media courses.
- The new course “Special Topics in Political Institutions and Economic and Social Policy” (POL-UA9795-B01) launched in Spring 2018 and had capacity enrollments throughout the add/drop period.
- “Cultural History of Latin America: Cities, Landscapes, and Architecture” (in Spanish, Spring only) (SPAN-UA 9306) replaced the Borges seminar (now Fall only) and has had a positive response from students.
- The faculty member teaching Survey of Developmental Psychology course (APSY-UE 9010) has worked with the Steinhardt faculty in New York to further incorporate local Argentinian research as well as the objectives of similar courses offered in New York.

The committee posed the question of whether courses could be clustered by theme as a way to help students find courses that complement one another. In response, a general question was posed regarding what courses could be bundled together to have a better collective meaning at the site.

Collaboration with local universities

It was noted that there has been an increase of Spanish-speaking students at the site, which has energized local engagement-focused programming. In addition, student leaders are advocating for the ability to visit and take classes at local universities such as the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA). Taking courses outside of NYU BA can pose logistical challenges for students, given incongruent academic calendars as well as and language barriers for non-Spanish speakers. While the site wants to encourage and support students in pursuing opportunities at UBA, the site also ensures realistic expectations. The site also communicates similar opportunities as may be offered via NYUBA to explore the city and local academic and cultural contexts. For example, fluent students can participate in a limited number of two-month courses with UBA Law or short-term courses at Universidad Nacional de San Martin. Arts or indigenous language workshops and ESL conversation with students have been offered as an extracurricular activity by Student Life staff; these activities also encourage local engagement.

Program Evaluation

Committee members discussed cross-cultural competency, a newer component of the program evaluation, and posed the question of how faculty can articulate cultural competency throughout their courses. It was mentioned that this is often achieved through faculty-led activities throughout the community. The committee considered how it would be best to articulate cultural-competency goals in courses, and how cultural-competency would resonate best with larger academic objectives.

Overall, the following evaluation results were discussed:

- Students enjoy the small but vibrant community at the NYUBA site.
- Students enjoy their homestays and volunteering opportunities.

Data Packet

Dr. Janet Alperstein reviewed the data packet, noting the fall/spring semester enrollment imbalance and that SPS sends students to NYU BA despite not having a pathway. There were eight Spanish minors at NYU BA (although many minors are not declared until a student's senior year, so the data may be incomplete). In addition, Spanish speakers (native and non-native) do not always major in areas specific to Latin America, and may be coming to the site for other reasons. Dr. Alperstein offered to meet with faculty and departments individually to discuss their course offerings and options for their majors in further detail.

Next Steps

Continue examining how courses from various departments can be grouped together into themes