

Sydney Site-Specific Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 1, 2014 11:30 – 1:00 pm, EDT
Soho Conference Room, Bobst 1244

Attendees

Janet Alperstein (Global Programs)
John Burt (NYUAD)
Megan Carrigy (NYU Sydney)
Tyra Liebmann (Global Programs)
Sonali McDermid (Environmental Studies)
Toby Martin (NYU Sydney)
Fred Myers (Anthropology)
Matthew Santirocco (Provost)
Mal Semple (NYU Sydney)
Diana Silver (GIPH)
Paul Thompson (Tisch)
Marion Wrenn (NYUAD)

1. Introductions

The committee welcomed new members: from NYU Abu Dhabi, John Burt and Marion Wrenn and from the Environmental Science Department, Sonali McDermid.

2. Enrollments and Curriculum

The meeting began by looking at application numbers for Spring 2015 which have increased to 152 applicants for the Spring 2015 semester compared to 114 for Spring 2014 (which had a total enrollment of 66). To help accommodate the anticipated enrollment numbers for Spring 2015, the site is adding a history course; this will be the site's 24th course.

While growth was expected, the actual increase is incredible and the committee can only surmise as to why – the primary reasons being that an increase in course offerings makes it possible for not only more students to be attracted to the site but also enroll at the site, and that the initial groups of students who studied away at Sydney are now spreading the word and speaking highly of their experiences.

The site received 39 applications from CAS students with undeclared majors – a trend which is evident across all semesters. Trends such as these could help us evaluate the current advising practices and how schools use the cohort model.

The NYU Sydney staff at the meeting noted that the sciences, in particular environmental science, have emerged as popular among students and that they have received numerous requests to increase the science course offerings. Additionally, NYUAD is in the process of organizing an environmental science major which will be quantitative and lab-based. However, NYUAD is currently constrained for sciences and have historically directed students to New York and London. Learning about the facilities and the program at Sydney makes it clear that it is also an alternative for science-focused students and an opportunity for professors to engage with local research institutes.

In addition to the sciences, Tisch also expects to be sending students and fueling site growth in the coming semesters.

With growth imminent, the committee questions how to best support students, staff and the curriculum. There is a worry that growing too quickly will affect the overall student experience and strain the community. The Sydney community is intimate and balancing the community with the growth will be essential to the overall student experience.

3. Faculty

In anticipation of needing additional faculty members, the committee was interested in learning how the site hires staff. The site is the most successful in hiring when the home department assists in the search process and/or refers applicants for the position. Additionally, engagement of the home department often introduces new faculty members to academic expectations, University protocols and performance management. More challenging is when the home department provides little guidance and leaves the majority of the faculty search to the site.

Currently, the faculty at NYU Sydney are a collegial and close-knit group. Many faculty fill multiple roles, both elective (trips, extra-curriculars) and required (teaching). Faculty have worked hard to provide a robust program of extracurricular opportunities and field trips. With larger classes and more students on-site, there are questions about how this dynamic will change as trips are harder to manage with larger class sizes. Fortunately, the site can use the strength of the Sydney academic community to supplement the classroom experience with guest speakers. As Sydney grows, this could be a moment to explore how faculty could use technology to enhance the classroom experience (i.e. guest speakers from other locations).

4. Facilities

The capacity of academic center is 150 students, holds 4 – 5 classrooms and has 2 – 3 classes running concurrently. Scheduling begins with the pre-health classes which are the hardest to manage because of the requirements. Students from Stern and Tisch often overlap in their elective choices making courses such as psychology and marketing popular and important to make accessible to all students.

The new super lab at the University of Technology, Sydney may provide NYU Sydney the opportunity for growth in the sciences as it will free up the generic labs for increased use.

The site is currently expanding its library– both books and films – based on the courses and interests/identity of the Sydney site and building outward from there. Students also have access to additional resources including the library at the University of Sydney, Technology, AFTRS (the Australian film and television library) and the NYU virtual library.

Residential space is not an issue as the provider, Urbanest, is very accommodating to the changing housing needs.

5. Internships

Internships are challenging in Sydney as the idea of an “internship” is just becoming normal practice and thereby makes finding suitable partners difficult.

NYU Sydney students have two types of internship opportunities available to them 1) for-credit and 2) not-for-credit. The for-credit internships are arranged in coordination with CAPA International and require enrollment in an internship seminar – there are currently five students enrolled. CAPA international absorbs the liability for the internship and helps with placement. They have been on campus and have regularly checked in with both the students and staff to monitor the quality and overall experiences of the internships. The not-for-credit internships, which have approximately 10 students participating, are arranged and overseen by an NYU Sydney member; managing the internships is a significant part of her job description as they take considerable effort to oversee.

The environmental science program requires their majors to undertake an internship in their junior year but, in Sydney, it is challenging not only for the students to find internships but also for the department to manage the experiences remotely. To help students find placements, the department has an informal blog where they post internship opportunities. Global staff informed the committee that when NYU finds the internships placement, CAPA International can help cover liability and other issues associated with internships. NYU, however, remains the primary contact and relationship-holder with the organization/internship provider as per the contract with CAPA International.

Tisch is looking to implement a course with an internship component, similar to their BBC program in London, but the school had doubts about the capability of CAPA international to manage operational issues. Given the feedback thus far on CAPA and their successful management of the program in this inaugural semester, the course idea will be revisited.

Despite the success of the internship program, there are still the larger questions of the value of “the internship” and how to infuse it, a non-academic practice, with academics and professionalism. The affiliated fieldwork course is one solution but still has drawbacks as the course is generalized. The committee also discussed whether internships provide more value to students who have declared a major/have an academic direction than students with undeclared majors.

To help students gain greater academic value from their internships, GIPH has developed an on-line seminar which will be launched in the spring. This format allows students to take internships abroad, enroll in a major-focused supplementary course, and help GIPH mitigate course costs. Another approach GIPH is considering is using the site as the location of the internship. For example, they are considering using NYU New York as the location for an internship/study looking into smoking policy. This idea could resolve issues for departments which question the academic integrity of an internship.

Internships are an example of how sharing information between sites can help schools/departments develop programs - GIPH has watched the DC site develop their internship program and is applying many of the same strategies in Sydney.

6. Course Proposals and Approval Process

As the site grows, courses will need to be added to maintain a robust curriculum. The committee expressed their desire to be involved in the course approval process so they can help develop/stabilize the identity of the site while simultaneously act in the site’s interest. In order to be effective in this capacity, the committee would like access to new courses early in the

approval process and subsequently provide constructive feedback before the proposal proceeds to school deans or curriculum committees. The committee serves as an intermediary between global and the schools, departments and faculty and can represent the interests of both faculty and global programs. Additionally, the committee can think holistically about how a new course may affect enrollments, faculty capacity and create/enhance synergies at the site.

Global should provide an overview of the course approval process and what makes a successful and exemplary global course. In this changing moment between faculty and global programs, it is important for faculty to understand what makes a good course and the process.

7. J-term and Summer

J-term has been small but the students, mainly from NYUAD, have had a positive experience. Bringing in local experts help visiting faculty situate in Sydney and change the class structure. The site would be willing to looking into expanding the J-term Program.

8. Outreach

The committee feels that now that the Sydney site is successfully through its first semesters there need to be more advocates (English, applied psychology) who can vouch for and add value to the site. The committee would like to see greater publicity and outreach to departments so they can understand the potential of Sydney as a study away location.

At NYUAD each major lists at which sites they recommend their students study. Currently, only three of the 17 majors suggest Sydney. While this may reflect the newness of the site, NYUAD should reevaluate which programs make sense to connect with Sydney. For example, at NYUAD there is no journalism/creative writing major. The journalism courses at Sydney and the possibility of growing the program could balance the writing experience at NYUAD create a productive partnership.

9. General Committee Business

Cross-site committees

The committee discussed ways of fostering communication between and among SSACs. One idea that was discussed was developing a cross-site committee, with representatives from each Site-Specific Advisory Committee. Members felt that the Site Directors serve in this capacity already and were not interested in establishing another committee.

Global Faculty Travel

Working closely with the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network and Global School Liaisons, the Office of Global Programs has developed a process for NYUNY faculty to propose short-term visits to the global sites. The central purpose of the visit will be to strengthen a school or department's academic relationship with the site. Faculty who wish to apply for travel funds should work with their department chair and Global School Liaison to obtain sign-off, and with the site to accommodate the timing of their proposed visit given all that is going on at a site at any given time. Pre-existing curricular conversations are not necessary when applying for funding, but the objective of the trip should be focused on furthering a school or department's academic connections with the site. Funds can also be used to look at ways to partner with local institutions or programs. Further information can be found [here](#).

There is also a newly-developed **Global Faculty Fund (GFF)**, which provides opportunities for site faculty to enhance the courses they teach, establish multi-site projects, pursue professional development opportunities, and travel to New York to strengthen relationships with the schools and departments sponsoring their courses. In order to take advantage of the GFF, local faculty should consult with their Site Directors and then develop proposals that will be reviewed by a committee consisting of: one Site Director, one faculty member from a (different) global site, and two faculty members from New York who are currently serving on Site-Specific Advisory Committees representing another two global sites. Members were enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring local faculty to New York to meet with colleagues in their departments. Further information on the GFF can be found [here](#).

If faculty are looking to conduct research or conference activities at the global sites, funds are available through the University's [Global Research Initiatives](#).

AY 15/16 Course Lists

The committee reviewed the course lists for Academic Year 15/16 and had no edits at this time. It was noted that approving course lists early is critical to horizon planning and advising students on study away opportunities.

To Dos/Ideas

- Formulate a checklist for new courses
 - the course approval process
 - what makes a good global course (add-value, semester differences and the best sites).
- Create a list of interests, ideas, subjects that matter to the site would add-value to Sydney and comport with the site identity i.e. aboriginal health, politics of environment
- Organizational chart of global and the global committees
- Town hall for global where all faculty are invited