

NYU Berlin Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

March 29, 2017, 11:30 am EST

383 Lafayette St., Room C08

ATTENDEES

- Kate Bruce (Global Programs)
- Clayton Curtis (Psychology)
- Katrin Dettmer (NYU Berlin)
- Tom Ertman (Sociology/CORE)
- Gabriella Etmektsoglou (Site Director – NYU Berlin)
- Regina Gramer (Liberal Studies)
- Karen Hornick (Gallatin, Committee Chair)
- Jason King (Tisch)
- Kevin Kuhlke (Tisch)
- Tyra Liebmann (Global Programs)
- Andrew Monson (Classics)
- Marianne Petit (Tisch ITP)
- Matthew Santirocco (Provost's Office)

INTRODUCTIONS

Matthew introduced Marianne Petit to the Committee in her new capacity as Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Network Academic Planning, a position announced by President Hamilton in fall 2016. In this role she will focus on undergraduate academic development and programming at the global sites. Matthew noted such new roles indicate a maturation of the Global Network's structure and organization. Matthew also announced he will be departing the Committee for a sabbatical in the fall.

SITE DIRECTOR REPORT

Gabriella highlighted various components of the Site Director report she distributed to the Committee in advance of the meeting. She noted the growth of the Global Liberal Studies cohort as well as the Tisch Drama special program at NYU Berlin that enrolled 16 students in Spring 17. She credited these Tisch enrollments largely to Kevin's cultivation of great relationships with notable players in the German theater scene, many of whom are meeting for the first time through NYU Berlin's courses. Kevin mentioned that people can work mere blocks away from one another and never meet, but a third party such as NYU Berlin can help people connect, giving back to the host country by fostering these connections. Kevin said that the program is also offering NYU faculty an opportunity to collaborate with new people whom they have not previously encountered, widening their networks.

Now in the program's second iteration, Kevin noted there have been many positive changes to the program, particularly to the curriculum, including more integration with language courses. Katrin added that the FIND Festival is a highlight of the semester, bringing together acting students from across Europe to workshop and view productions developed across the continent; NYU Berlin has established a fixed presence among Berlin's top acting schools, and a former NYU Berlin student (Sp'11) is a Teaching Assistant in the class and assistant artistic director to Director Thomas Ostermeier of the renowned Schaubühne.

Katrin also mentioned that combining sections allowed for new media collaborations with Drama students, which has worked well and engaged and challenged students. Midterm feedback suggested the course is time-consuming and intensive, but well received by the students with a steep learning curve.

A group of Sp'16 Drama students also produced *The Hamlet Machine* at Tisch, after being developed extensively in Berlin, giving the program an extended life in New York as well. Gabriella noted that the NYU Berlin site is a creative *Baustelle* (construction site) always evolving to offer new, quality experiences for the students. For example, the recently initiated Clive Davis Recorded Music program – launched in the fall of 2016 – has already adapted significantly, including the addition of three new courses and the transformation of a series of workshops into a class. Tyra commended Gabriella and NYU Berlin for its adaptability with the new program to make it such a success, including an end-of-semester concert that drew a sizeable audience beyond the NYU Berlin community, extending the reach of the site to the local population. Gabriella thanked Jason for his close collaboration on building the new program, keeping affordability in mind as they explored partnerships with existing recording studios that did not require a large investment up front. Gabriella acknowledged some student pushback in the Recorded Music evaluations relating to the mandatory nature of the Berlin requirement; she noted that they have learned a lot from this first launch, as students sometimes simultaneously have their own careers and studios in New York apart from their academic program in Berlin, which creates unique needs and challenges. With the requirement now well established, that can be better communicated to incoming cohorts.

Steinhardt is offering a new interdisciplinary Project Studio Art course, *Photo/Video, Performance, Installation*, which should offer interdisciplinary appeal to students beyond Steinhardt. With such spectacular studios offered in NYC, it is difficult to entice Studio Art students to Berlin, but Jesse is working with Gabriella to attract more Steinhardt students. Karen noted that Studio Art should be promoted more at Gallatin, as she suspects students are unaware of the course offering and would be interested. Gabriella promised to send Karen a course description to help advertise the opportunity at Gallatin.

The new *Urban Ecology and Migration* course has been a success, offering students an opportunity to reflect on the timely intersection of climate change and migration. Gabriella noted that a great scholar from Pakistan, Salman Qureshi, teaches the course and adds a diverse perspective. The course offers a field research component, putting it in alignment with the goals of the Urban Greening Lab established by Anne Rademacher (Environmental Studies).

Gabriella noted that local engagement remains a priority. Three students offer English language tutorials through *Carl von Ossietzky Grundschule* in Kreuzberg. A new partnership was also launched with “Germany-Land of Ideas,” an initiative working with approximately 500 companies, increasing NYU Berlin’s access to high-quality internships.

President Andy Hamilton hosted a reception at the end of 2016 for many NYU alumni, parents, friends and members of the NYU Community in Berlin. The event was held at the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum, and students from the Clive Davis Recorded Music program performed at the reception.

In addition, Gabriella remains involved in [NYU's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Task Force](#). In addition to her work with the site's EDI Council, she continues to review syllabi to see what changes can be incorporated to meet the Task Force's recommendations and University's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Affordability

Affordability remains a focus at NYU Berlin, with an attention toward affordable catering for events, sharing excess food with refugees, utilizing guest speakers already in town, and utilizing free space for Orientation and other events at Humboldt Universitaet as just a few examples.

Gabriella added that the Global Research Institute continues to be a great resource for the site. With a new GRI center opening in Athens, new collaboration opportunities will open for the site, including connections to some of Gabriella's research. 38 faculty at NYU Berlin are active in research, creating great potential for collaboration in the NYU network.

ENROLLMENTS

Tyra provided an overview of enrollment trends at the site, noting Spring 2017 numbers were down slightly (mainly due to exceptional Fall 2016 enrollment numbers), but the site continues to see very strong enrollments. NYU Berlin has 95 beds and may need to seek more to accommodate demand, but this also provides a good opportunity for students to stay in alternate housing. There have been fewer visiting students admitted to NYU Berlin (indeed, only through Tisch's program) and across the board at all global sites, giving priority to NYU students, especially when sites near capacity. NYU Berlin hosts a majority cohort of juniors, which is not the case at every global site. Gallatin students make up a sizeable portion of the students at NYU Berlin, but are unpredictable in the exact size of their cohort (with 25 in F'16 and 13 in Sp'17).

Gabriella said the site continually works to identify courses with low enrollments and works with schools to make changes to attract more students; Gabriella noted many courses have strong enrollments, but she is happy to revisit any particular courses if departments are interested in doing so.

Program Evaluations

Gabriella stated that changes to the orientation made a big difference in providing a smoother transition to the city and the academic program. A more detailed overview of the orientation program's components, a visit to the Reichstag, and a bus city tour were among the changes. Moreover, a new focus on German narratives of diversity added to the orientation schedule was mentioned as a key point of interest, as students coming from different geographic locations were familiarized with varying definitions of diversity. These conversations enabled students to reflect on perceptions of themselves and others within the context of Germany as well as beyond.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of incentivizing participation in the program evaluations as well. An example of a housing competition that awards the cleanest rooms with a cooking lesson from a Syrian refugee demonstrated how incentivizing program evaluation participation could be tied to community engagement activities at the site as well.

Matthew outlined Virginia Cox's approach to defining curriculum development around themes at NYU Florence (such as migration and activism, organized crime, etc.). Karen was interested to learn more about this development at NYU Florence and how it is working. Matthew noted that Gallatin could be a galvanizing force for such curricular development, and Gabriella said she was happy to explore developing a list with Karen of thematic topics which could lead to clustering of courses or a new course. Gabriella also suggested including undergraduate research components in this development, particularly focusing on the perspectives of portal students. Tom cautioned that very few CAS students would be attracted to the site for focused research opportunities; Tom suggested focusing on a core of good courses/faculty that provide word-of-mouth advertisement, which he suggested plays a stronger role in driving students to the site. Tom noted that CORE is in the process of a large CORE review with NYU Shanghai, and are in constant contact with the portal campuses through the CORE program.

The Committee turned to a discussion about scheduling courses in three-hour blocks, as Clayton noted this was discussed at the NYU London meeting as well. Gabriella said that this structure works well for some courses, such as Museum Island, but others are best offered twice-a-week at shorter durations. Logistics become a huge factor, especially since some students commute between the Academic Center and St. Agnes. Matthew noted that distinguished faculty slots can sometimes contribute to the 3-hour slot structure as well. Kate said this discussion was addressed in Accra, too, where they are training with lectures. Clayton noted that his biggest concern with such a structure would be the pressure it puts on faculty coming from other locations. Karen noted that Gallatin uses a two-hour-forty-minute structure, but course lengths should not be a one-size-fits-all approach.

AY17-18 REMINDERS

The Committee was reminded to please notify the academics team in Global Programs (global.academics@nyu.edu) if a department has any course changes for the AY17-18 year. If a Committee member will be on sabbatical at any point next year, please also notify the staffer who has been nominated to represent the respective department.

NEXT STEPS:

- Gabriella will send Karen course descriptions for Studio Art courses that may be of interest to Gallatin students.
- Gabriella and Karen will work together to come up with a list of proposed interdisciplinary courses which may be of particular interest to Gallatin students, but also students in other schools and departments as well.