

NYU Berlin Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
November 29, 2017, 10:00 am EST
19 Washington Square North, Global Seminar Room

ATTENDEES

- Janet Alperstein (Global Programs)
- Oliver Buhler (Math)
- Clayton Curtis (Psychology)
- Katrin Dettmer (NYU Berlin)
- Tom Ertman (Sociology/CORE)
- Gabriella Etmektsoglou (Site Director – NYU Berlin)
- Regina Gramer (Liberal Studies)
- Peter Holm (Global Programs)
- Karen Hornick (Gallatin, Committee Chair)
- Kevin Kuhlke (Tisch)
- Tyra Liebmann (Global Programs)
- Andrew Monson (Classics)
- Marianne Petit (Tisch ITP)
- Elisabeth Strowick (German)

INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting commenced with introductions of committee members. Marianne Petit announced the release of a report by the Faculty Working Group on Global Learning Objectives (GLO). The GLO Working Group first convened in October 2016 for the purpose of having a faculty-driven conversation about global learning objectives. Comprising 17 faculty members from across the university, the committee met 8 times during the 2016-2017 academic year.

In May 2017, the committee issued a report on its findings (available on the NYU website [here](#)). The report articulates proposed learning objectives for study away for students across all disciplines so that the University can ensure program alignment and begin to measure its success in meeting these objectives.

The report was discussed at the Fall 2017 site directors' meetings, and in Spring 2018 it will be featured and discussed in a series of "global conversations" among faculty convened by Professor Eliot Borenstein, a member of the Working Group and the Senior Academic Convenor for the Global Network. As a leading institution in global education, NYU is well positioned to be advancing thinking and practice in this area, as well.

After serving as Committee Chair for several years, Karen Hornick recommended a new member lead the Committee in the future. Karen received a Global Faculty Fellowship and will teach at NYU Berlin in the spring semester. Tom Ertman assumed the role of Committee Chair.

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 large student demand to attend NYU Berlin that necessitated the use of multiple residences to accommodate the students. Despite the difficulties that inherently come with multiple housing facilities, the site sees this growth as an opportunity to develop new programs towards community building that also engage local

German students and refugees. A student hotel in Alexanderplatz will also be completed in approximately one year and may be an additional option for student housing in the future, located conveniently near good public transportation and the Humboldt University.

Gabriella discussed developments in the academic programming, especially the two Tisch special programs on music and performance. She noted that Jason King of the Clive Davis Institute would return to Berlin the following week in preparation for the third offering of the Recorded Music program, which is mandatory for Recorded Music students. Twenty-one students are currently enrolled in the program and ten students are currently enrolled for Spring 2018. In addition to ongoing collaboration with Riverside Studios, a new working relationship with the company Native Instruments is also anticipated.

As regards Tisch performance, Katrin Dettmer said that the Drama Special Program is adapting and doing well. The academic schedule is being successfully reconfigured to accommodate the commute from St. Agnes to the Academic Center; students also provided feedback about needing time to switch between “creative thinking” and “academic thinking,” further encouraging the scheduling changes. Katrin also noted that the relationship with Universität der Künste remains strong and the exchange offers useful advice for the Tisch actors.

Kevin Kuhlke noted that in its third year the program continues to do well and it admitted sixteen students from a pool of nearly fifty applicants. While it had more males in the 2017 cohort, there is more diverse representation in the spring 2018 semester. Lars Eidinger – a well-known German actor – will be working with the students in a Masterclass. Christoph Buchegger, an assistant director at the Schaubühne (who happens to also be an NYU Berlin and Tisch alum) will be working with the students on their final performance. Gabriella highlighted Director Thomas Ostermeier’s comments on NYU Berlin students’ talent and professionalism. Students will again participate in the FIND Festival at the Schaubühne, which is now co-sponsored by NYU Berlin and brings together acting students from across Europe.

While there are some challenges – including access to facilities related to the Clive Davis program – Gabriella noted the new Tisch programs are developing in a positive way, deepening connections with the city and making an impact on local academies and universities.

Noting an increase in German majors and minors, Gabriella also welcomed Elisabeth Strowick to NYU and to the Committee; NYU Berlin looks forward to intensifying its relationship with the Department of German, particularly as more students return to the Square after studying away and subsequently seek German minors. With affordability and innovation in mind, language instructors are also increasingly using online interactive tools that are replacing textbooks.

With regard to Psychology, Gabriella highlighted that a volume co-edited by two NYU New York faculty and a NYU Berlin lecturer will be presented at Humboldt Universität in spring 2018. Clayton noted the department’s revamp of its website to encourage Global Pathways, hopefully driving more Psychology students to the site. Gabriella noted a developing collaboration with Freie Universität as well.

Overviewing curriculum changes, Gabriella discussed the replacement of the political science course on the European Union with a course titled *Cities on the Move*, focusing on migration and climate change. The connection between media and technology also presents a potential thematic cross-school collaboration opportunity for new curricular developments as well.

Diversity

Gabriella encouraged the Committee to take the Being@NYU university-wide assessment; Gabriella sits on the task force conducting the assessment, which requires a 30% response rate to use the results. The Task Force is trying to rethink diversity at all levels, from hiring practices to curricular development.

NYU Berlin is one of three sites to host a Global Equity Fellowship in partnership with the NYU Leadership Initiative. In addition, in spring 2018 NYU Berlin's Global Equity Council intends to launch a diversity fellowship program (named the Martin Luther King Jr. Fellowship) in collaboration with the ongoing work with the Carl von Ossietzky school in Kreuzberg; the fellows will both be of non-German ethnic backgrounds. Tom asked how the fellows would be selected and Gabriella clarified they would be selected via a committee and application process, which Gabriella would share with the Committee. Two fellows were identified to help support each other. Additionally, the site is launching a new series of workshops on LGDPQ+ themes, the topic of freedom of speech, and the issue of gendered languages. German students participate in these workshops.

SPRING 2017 PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Gabriella credited continued improvements to the orientation program and the rigorous academic program as contributing to the overall high marks on the program evaluations. 100% of students said that they would recommend the NYU Berlin program to a friend. In an effort to deepen students' immersion experiences and expand their transcultural communication skills, NYU Berlin was particularly focused on improving responses to the statement "I developed a deeper understanding of people who are different from me." Over 90% of respondents indicated the two highest ratings, showing improvement from the previous evaluation.

Recalling the Global Equity Fellows discussion, Tom suggested applying this initiative to other sites. Tyra noted that the program is indeed being piloted at three sites – Berlin, Sydney, and Buenos Aires. The students are all tackling different subjects, but are working with their site's Diversity Council to develop appropriate topics, along with ways to share these ideas with other sites. Berlin and Sydney will receive new fellows in the spring, while Buenos Aires's fellow will continue for the full year at the site. Tyra congratulated Gabriella for her work to create a welcoming environment for such conversations to occur and be encouraged.

Gabriella elaborated on immersion being difficult to achieve in only one semester, especially given the students' busy schedule and intense travel plans. But the presence of the refugees in the city, she noted, has brought out the best in the students, and partnerships aimed at initiating planned student interaction with those communities (often including travel) increase opportunities for intercultural dialogue and cultural immersion.

ENROLLMENTS

Janet Alperstein of Global Programs provided an overview of the enrollment data provided to the Committee and offered to speak to any classes who might be interested in learning more about curricular offerings and internship opportunities at the site. She noted the fall/spring imbalance prevalent at most sites is much smaller at NYU Berlin due to the popularity of the site (although the Recorded Music number offset that slightly for this particular semester). She also pointed out that any freshmen that show up in the data are actually sophomores who fall short on credits, but are indeed in their second year (unlike sites such as Florence and London that indeed welcome freshmen). An interesting trend is the uptick of sophomore enrollments – an increasing trend across many sites.

Looking at the data by majors, many of the CAS undecideds are often late to declare a major, and double majors are counted more than once. Gabriella noted that German language requirement reminders often have to be sent to students after they register, reminding them to enroll.

Gabriella also noted that the spring semester is overrated among students, often due to the perception of travel opportunities in the summer. Gabriella, selling the fall semester's attributes, noted the nice weather and greater potential for auditing courses at Humboldt during the fall semester as well. The spring semester does, however, offer the Berlinale Film Festival, which draws a lot of student interest and collaboration potential with the site. Tom, half-jokingly, suggested advertising with February weather videos might help drive fall enrollments as well.

Regina noted the sizeable fall/spring imbalance among the sophomore population (36 in Sp'17 and 9 in F'17) which is offset by the inverse among the junior population. Janet noted that increased sophomore spring enrollments is a global trend. Academic advising messaging to students from the beginning of their academic careers significantly influences their study away behavior, she said.

NEXT STEPS:

- Gabriella will share the application process for the Martin Luther King Jr. Fellows with the Committee.