

**NYU Accra Advisory Committee Meeting Notes**  
**Wednesday, March 29th**

10:00 am - 11:15 am (New York) / 2:00 pm-3:15 pm (Accra) / 6:00 pm - 7:15 pm (Abu Dhabi)  
383 Lafayette Street, Room CO8

**Attendees**

- Gbenga Ogedegbe (CGPH)
- Rosalind Fredericks (Gallatin)
- Akosua Anyidoho (NYU Accra)
- Frankie Edozien (FAS-Journalism)
- Robyn d'Avignon (FAS-History)
- Renee Blake (FAS-SCA and FAS - Linguistics)
- Mark Sanders (FAS- Comparative Literature)
- Susan Kirch (Steinhardt)
- Matthew Santiroco (Provost Office)
- Nancy J Morrison (Global Programs)
- Janet Fern Alperstein (Global Programs)
- Kate Bruce (Global Programs)

**Introductions & Announcements**

**TBD – September**

Robyn d'Avignon was introduced as the new the representative from the History Department, replacing Mike Gomez. Robyn is an assistant professor of African history with a focus on West Africa.

**Site Director Report & Discussion**

Akosua Anyidoho, Site Director at NYU Accra, discussed highlights of her report:

*Local Engagement:*

- As was done last term at the start of the semester, NYU Accra hosted a faculty workshop to discuss cultural immersion and site visits as part of the overall lecturer development plan.
- Similar to NYU Washington DC an award system has been introduced to incentivize students to take advantage of immersion opportunities provided by the program.

*Academics and Enrollment:*

- Spring 2017 enrollment was 26 students. Notably, 12 of the 26 students enrolled in courses at University of Ghana Legon.
- The Gallatin and History co-sponsored course, “Cocoa and Gold: Ghana’s Development in Global Perspective”, began this spring with nine students.

### *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI):*

- A workshop on “Intersectionality in the Ghanaian Context” is being planned for students and staff for the coming term. The workshop will be a series of discussions hosted throughout the semester. Each residence will host a discussion about a particular topic identified by the larger group during a meeting in week three as an area they would like to learn about while in the country. Each meeting will have time for students to discuss their own experience within the context of their study away experience.

### *Affordability:*

- Affordability remains a priority for the site with staff and faculty continuing to work together to find creative ways to help students. The meal plan, which had previously been dinner on weekdays only, has been expanded to include provided breakfast and lunch items at the residences for students.
- Faculty and staff are reviewing alternative options to purchasing print materials for course work. The option of eBooks is being explored but is not a simple answer considering the limitations of internet speed.
  - The committee also discussed increasing the library on site which currently at least one copy of all assigned readings. The possibility of faculty bringing their own copies or encouraging students to donate their own copies of materials was also considered.

### *Highlights and Special Events:*

- The Cross-Continental Master of Public Health (MPH) first cohort of students successfully completed their fall program at NYU Accra. Akosua shared a memo sent from the students expressing their “genuine and heartfelt appreciation toward the NYU Accra staff for ensuring that our stay in Ghana was as fruitful as possible.”
- Directors of NYU Accra and NYU Tel Aviv paid a short visit to each other’s sites to build further collaboration. As smaller sites, both which were closed the same semester, they have unique challenges that other programs might not encounter.
- Organized jointly with the English Department at the University of Ghana, NYU Accra hosted Former President John Dramani Mahama to speak about his recent book *My First Coup d’Etat: Memories from the Lost Decades of Africa*. The event which started as an invitation to speak to the students of the NYU Accra Creative Writing and Colonialism and the Rise of African Literature courses and creating writing majors from University of Ghana, evolved into a televised event with swing space created to accommodate the larger audience.

### **Program Evaluations**

The committee discussed the program evaluations and the continuing efforts to increase student engagement and the level of faculty and staff effectiveness.

Staff and faculty are making concerted efforts to help students find ways to become involved in the local community.

- Lecturers are encouraged to invite students from their Legon courses to attend site visits and activities.
- Legon and NYU students paired in language course to practice Twi.
- NYU Accra students shown where local libraries, research facilities, museums, national theatre, and concert halls are located through the city. Staff are gathering information about and promoting happenings in the city, helping larger groups with the planning should there be interest from the students.

Lecturer effectiveness continues to be a priority, with ongoing training on diverse teaching styles and expectations.

- NYU Tel Aviv Director, Benny Hary, suggested creating a peer evaluation process for lecturers by which they could receive feedback from their peers rather than just by students via the written evaluations. Assistant Director of Academics, Nick Okai is working on implementation.
- Akosua noted the limitations to the lecturers schedule for these types of trainings. As full time faculty at Legon, they are at the NYU Accra academic center on a limited basis meaning course meetings are once a week for 3 hours. Any additional time for training or peer evaluations will require additional compensation.
- Committee members suggested the possibility of bringing NYC based faculty to Accra over the summer to provide peer training for lecturers. This would also raise issues of compensation and timing, but is something to consider.

The committee discussed the low response rate of 55% and possible ways to require or incentivize students to complete the evaluation.

### **AY 17 – 18 Reminders**

The Committee was reminded to notify the academics team in Global Programs if their department has any course changes for the AY17-18 year. Members were asked that if on sabbatical at any point in the coming academic year to notify the Global Programs of the department replacement for the committee.

### **Next Steps**

The committee discussed possible recruitment efforts and messaging to promote Accra to NYU undergraduate students.

- Identify required classes for relevant majors for short class visits promoting the program.
- Consider best ways to engage SSAC Committee members and other faculty who have been to the site.
- Frankie to connect with Robyn about attending her survey course to speak about experience teaching in Accra.

The committee discussed possible new pathways or clustering of courses that may appeal to students and be unique to Accra.

- Expansion on Gbenga's contacts within country and the Cross-Continental MPH program to Global Public Health undergraduates.

- Pursue opportunities for students interested in economic and political development through courses and research opportunities.
- Dinner planned for SSAC members around next meeting to further foster collaboration.