

# NYU Accra Site Specific Advisory Committee Meeting

May 13, 2015

## In Attendance

- Janet Alperstein (Global Programs)
- Akosua Anyidoho (NYU Accra)
- Kate Bruce (Global Programs)
- Erich Dietrich (Steinhardt)
- Mike Gomez (CAS – History)
- Karen Krahulik (CAS)
- Jessica Levin (Global Programs)
- Tyra Liebman (Global Programs)
- Pat McCreery (Gallatin)
- Linda Mills (Global Programs)
- Yaw Nyarko (Africa House)
- Gbenga Ogedegbe (Global Institute of Public Health)
- Josie Saldana (CAS – Social and Cultural Analysis)
- Matthew Santirocco (Provost's Office)
- John Singler (CAS – Linguistics)
- Josh Taylor (Global Programs)

## Website Updates

In conjunction with representatives from all the sites, Global Programs is working to improve the website user experience by decluttering pages, ensuring consistency across program pages, and bringing the academic offerings to the forefront. As part of this, the [Global Study Planner](#) was created and launched to allow students (and faculty, advisers, parents, etc.) to search easily for programs based on academic disciplines, language courses, and / or term. The planner currently is for fall and spring only but has the capability to include J-term and Summer offerings. The Global Study Planner will eventually be replaced with the University's Academic Planner but is for now an excellent planning resource for students. Committee members are encouraged to review the planner and send any feedback to [Josh Taylor](#).

## Site Evaluations

A revised version of the site evaluations was piloted in London and Abu Dhabi last fall and is now being rolled out to all sites. The new evaluations include questions on academics, student services, advising, residential life, and health and wellness, but also assess students' cross-cultural competencies. In the past, these surveys had been modified by individual sites and used to make changes for specific programs. The surveys will continue to shape changes and modifications to programs but also provides the opportunity to look at the site in a broader context. A working group will be meeting this summer and fall to identify outcomes and metrics for global learning for our students.

## Update from Site Director

In April, NYU Accra and the Institute of African Studies (IAS) of University of Ghana hosted a conference entitled "*The Humanities and a 21st Century Africa: Towards Alternative Models of*

*Human Development.*” The very successful two-day conference had 126 registered participants on the first day including faculty and graduate students from University of Ghana and NYU Accra. A unique feature of the conference was a poetry dramatization and dance performance which brought out an audience of 200 people.

For more information about the Conference please see the [University of Ghana article](#) and [scanned copy of the program](#).

### **Enrollment Discussion**

Committee members discussed ways to promote NYU Accra’s academic pathways to students. Members suggested that possible enrollment obstacles may include lack of awareness of the program, lingering fears of Ebola, the closing of the fall 2014 program and the resulting lost cohort of students to provide word of mouth, and a general dip in humanities majors within CAS.

In terms of advising materials, NYU Accra has a [designated section](#) on the global programs website, as well as a [site specific flyer](#), and is also included in department flyers promoting specific pathways like [History](#) and [Teaching & Learning](#). Schools advise students on all study away programs starting at freshmen orientation and through classroom visits, and messaging is focused on academic pathways. It was suggested that a single document be created for committee members to be able to review all promotional efforts by departments. Kate Bruce will work with the committee members and Global Programs and will distribute shortly.

The committee discussed how choosing to study at NYU Accra can present different challenges from those at other programs, specifically those in Europe. Among those challenges may be parents’ reservations about safety and the costs of a long list of required vaccinations. The committee agreed, though, that despite these initial hurdles, the opportunities available to students studying in Accra are unique. Committee members suggested that students be advised on academic pathways as well as the unique qualities of the overall experience of the program.

It was noted that even historically successful summer programs have also experienced low enrollments resulting in the cancellation this summer of four of the six planned programs. This may suggest possible concerns surrounding the Ebola outbreak. It was noted that Teaching & Learning has experienced a marked drop-off of students interested in Accra after the close of the program in the fall 14, going from 12 to 5.

Specific suggestions included:

- Host two university-wide advising conferences to speak to students about specific programs including Accra; the one in the fall for sophomores, and one for freshmen in the spring. Students who have been to Accra and faculty should participate in these conferences. This will serve to highlight the program in Accra.
- Have students participate in awareness campaign; students get to share their experiences with the other students.
- Create a flyer addressing the Ebola outbreak and any lingering fears that students and / or parents may have.
- Create a flyer or brochure that highlights unique experience of students in Accra; what makes Accra unique.

- Create messaging to students with an interest in social justice and / or development; and
- Work with visiting schools that have previously sent students to Accra like Spelman and Wake Forest.

### **Enrollment Discussion: Potential Pathways**

The committee discussed the possibility of an Economics pathway at NYU Accra that would utilize already established research activities and relationships. As part of this offering students would be able to participate in research internships at NYU affiliated centers located in the city center and a rural location. There is already student interest in this type of research, with 10 students going to Accra and one Abu Dhabi student inquiring about the possibility of an independent study to do research in spring 2016.

### **Next Steps**

Global Programs to share site evaluations with committee members in advance of next meeting.