

NYU Accra Advisory Committee Meeting
September 30, 2014, 9: 45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Attendees:

Mike Gomez (FAS-History)
John Singler (FAS - Linguistics)
Esi Sutherland-Addy (NYU Accra)
Akosua Anyidoho (NYU Accra)
María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo (FAS-SCA)
Yaw Nyarko (Africa House)
James Fraser (Steinhardt)
John Gershman (Wagner)
Gbenga Ogedegbe (GIPH)
Matthew Santirocco (Office of the Provost)
Nancy Morrison (Global Programs)
Linda Mills (Global Programs)

1. Committee Business

Welcoming New Members

The committee welcomed two new members from NYU Abu Dhabi, Hannah Bruckner and Carlos Guedes, who will be joining committee meetings going forward.

Faculty Chair

Matthew Santirocco asked committee members if anyone would be interested in volunteering to chair the committee. No one volunteered, so members agreed to revisit electing a chair at the next committee meeting. [*Subsequent to the meeting, Gbenga Ogedegbe volunteered to serve as chair.*]

AY 15/16 Course Lists

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

Partnerships and Affiliations

The committee reviewed the definitions of partnerships and affiliations. A partnership with a global site means that a school or department has a deep intellectual stake in a site and currently offers or is developing curricular pathways there. An affiliation with a global site means that a department or school currently offers or plans to offer at least one course at that site. The committee agreed that affiliates should be included in a future meeting (date TBD), in which the agenda would be tailored to their participation (e.g., a discussion of the overall curriculum at the site).

Travel Opportunities

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:

<https://www.nyu.edu/faculty/faculty-in-the-global-network/ny-faculty/teaching-at-the-global-sites.html>

If faculty are looking to conduct research or conference activities at the global sites, funds are available through the University's Global Research Initiatives: <https://www.nyu.edu/research/provosts-global-research-initiatives.html>

Finally, the newly-developed Global Faculty Fund (GFF) 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 their schools and departments. In order to take advantage of the GFF, local faculty will 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: <https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/provost/documents/faculty-global-network/GFFw.letterhead9.23.14.pdf>

Cross-Site Communication Mechanisms

The committee discussed ways of ensuring 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 concluded that this type of committee could be valuable, as it would allow for cross-site linkages and synergies to be discussed. That said, it might also be useful to look at

other, already existing committees, such as the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network or the Global School Liaisons, to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

2. Update from Site Director

Akosua Anyidoho shared with the committee that while courses have been suspended at the site for the fall semester, the site staff are using this time to receive training and develop workshops on a variety of issues, including cross-cultural communications and health/wellness issues. Staff are also updating internship materials and the student handbook.

Akosua and Esi Sutherland-Addy are developing a conference in partnership with the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon, on the role of the humanities in 21st Century Africa. They explained that the study of the humanities in Africa has increasingly come under siege as rapid developments in science and technology have led to the view that many aspects of the humanities and liberal studies are luxuries that cannot be afforded in the quest for economic growth and technological development. Sub-themes of the conference will include alternative models of development in Ghana/Africa, human & cultural foundations of development, music & dance therapy: cutting edge medical science, language and development of scientific thought, and science and technology for a human/e world.

The conference would involve NYU Accra faculty as well as faculty from across Ghana, and perhaps faculty from other global sites and New York. The conference was originally proposed for the second week of December, but Akosua and Esi will explore moving it to the spring to allow for increased participation.

Akosua also asked committee members to send her their thoughts on ways to celebrate NYU Accra's ten-year anniversary.

3. Advising

The committee briefly reviewed the PowerPoint presentation on advising, which had been distributed earlier to members, and discussed best practices. Members shared strategies for developing successful programs at NYU Accra, which included reaching out as early as freshman year to students and their parents about opportunities to study away; advising students on when they can fit study away into their academic plan (i.e., cohort planning); and, offering core courses at the sites.

Matthew shared with the group that the University is piloting a new online planning tool, called the Global Arch Initiative Academic Planner, to assist students (and their advisors) in creating four-year academic plans, including study away opportunities. Members noted that it would be helpful for the advisors in their schools to have a timeline of important dates for studying away, including deadlines for applications, visas, internships, as well as deadlines by which departments have to propose new courses.

4. Emergency Response Protocols/Resuming Classes at NYU Accra

Josh Taylor, Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Programs, discussed emergency response protocols with the committee. When making the difficult decision to suspend courses at NYU Accra, the Office of Global Programs consulted various members of the University community, including Akosua and her colleagues, the Office of Risk Management, the Student Health Center, HTH (the University's evacuation partner), and members of the committee. Josh underscored the importance of faculty consultation during these decisions and expressed gratitude for the advice and guidance that were given during the consultation period. Josh noted that the University ultimately made the decision to suspend courses because these consultations made clear that there was uncertainty around the pattern of spread of Ebola in the region, that students would be learning in an environment in which they might feel anxiety, and that their experience at NYU Accra, including opportunities for internships and community service, might not be what they have come to expect.

The committee discussed whether or not to resume courses in January. Members noted that there have been no cases of Ebola in Ghana thus far and that the UN has now established its regional response center in Accra. Members also underscored the importance of communicating effectively with both parents and students.

The committee ultimately agreed that, at present, the University should inform students that NYU Accra will resume classes starting this January, but that pre-departure communication to students and parents was critically important in terms of managing any potential anxiety. Students would be advised to purchase travel insurance and identify a back-up global site should conditions on the ground take a negative turn.

Members noted that the situation in Ghana provides students with an opportunity to understand how to respond to global health crises. NYU will also hold a conference on ways to help our colleagues in Ghana respond to the Ebola outbreak.

5. Next Steps

- Global Programs will develop a timeline of key dates to share with advisors
- Committee members will share with Akosua any ideas they have for commemorating NYU Accra's 10-year anniversary