

NYU Florence Site-Specific Advisory Committee Meeting

Third Meeting: March 4, 2014 (9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. EDT)

IN ATTENDANCE

- Virginia Cox (CAS – Italian Studies)
- David Darts (Steinhardt)
- Bruce Edelstein (NYU Florence)
- Chris Flinn (CAS – Economics)
- Hallie Franks (Gallatin)
- Giampiero Gallo (NYU Florence)
- Allyson Green (Tisch)
- Brendan Hogan (Liberal Studies)
- Ann Morning (Sociology)
- Ken Silver (CAS – Art History)
- Ellyn Toscano (NYU Florence)
- Josh Tucker (CAS – Politics)

CURRICULUM DISCUSSIONS

The committee was updated on the global curriculum discussions that have been taking place in schools and departments on the Square. At the time of the meeting, approximately 34% of schools and departments had already reviewed and approved their global curriculum; approximately 32% were taking ongoing steps to enhance their global curriculum; and approximately 34% were still reviewing their global offerings. These curriculum discussions are an important initial step in ensuring that schools and departments have a sense of ownership over their global course offerings. These conversations also ensure that global course offerings are coordinated with curriculum on the Square and are thus in line with department goals and objectives.

[Update: As of the distribution of these notes on 4/22/14, 95% of schools/departments have reviewed the history of their curricular offerings (except Paris course offerings, which are currently being assembled in anticipation of the inaugural Paris Site-Specific Advisory meeting). Global Programs has been and continues to be in discussion with several schools/departments and sites about their course offerings in the global sites. If you have questions or feedback about these reviews, please let us know, as we have carefully tracked the responses. We will now make these reviews a regular (every semester) part of a process of engaging the departments on the Square in the global curriculum they sponsor, both through the partner departments and schools on the site-specific committees and for those departments with affiliations in the global sites.]

CURRICULAR AND CROSS-CURRICULAR BRAINSTORMING

With school/department discussions wrapping up, the committee was able to take the opportunity to review the site's entire global curriculum using the course list and enrollment handout distributed at the meeting. The committee reviewed course offerings at the site, including those

that are cross-listed between departments, their enrollment numbers, and major/minor data across four academic terms. The following topics and ideas emerged from this collective review:

- Students have many options to pursue coursework at the sites, and it would be helpful to further articulate these options:—e.g., major, global track in major, minor, certificate, and B.A./M.A.
- A “certificate” in European Politics should be explored given both Italy’s role in the European Union and the large European footprint of NYU’s academic centers.
 - Many department representatives agreed that the prospect of offering certificates was appealing and that they would be popular among their own students, as well as students from other universities.
 - Gallatin students in particular are seeking opportunities to develop “expertise” in areas of interest, and earning a certificate would be useful to and popular among Gallatin students in this regard.
 - Since the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) at CAS has in the past been cautious about certificates, it was suggested that creating a “Global Certificate” template might be explored with the UCC in order to provide an established foundation upon which departments could build and which they could tailor to their own specific needs with minimal administrative effort.
- Italian Studies offers a model B.A./M.A. program that gives students an opportunity to earn both degrees in a shorter period of time. The committee was interested in developing additional B.A./M.A. programs that would use NYU Florence as a venue for some of their courses.
- As an alternative to a certificate, a “capstone” project focusing on cultures and contexts and incorporating a regional inflection could be another option to pursue. This approach has the benefit of avoiding additional course requirements, which often limit students’ flexibility.
 - Committee members were encouraged to look at NYU Abu Dhabi, which offers a similar capstone structure and could be used as a model in Florence.
- The “Cultures & Contexts” course in the College Core Curriculum (formerly the MAP) is currently so popular that it now has to be offered in two sections. Many faculty representatives were interested in the content of this course and what overlapping curricular topics might exist.
- The committee noted that the La Pietra Dialogues offer an important vehicle through which faculty can tie courses to timely, specific program topics (e.g. local elections). The La Pietra Dialogues calendar (found [here](#)) identifies spring 2014 programs, and it was suggested that all available topics be distributed to the committee as far in advance as

possible.

- It was recommended that a possible parallel entrepreneur program could be developed alongside the Dialogues to build a series of lectures centered on a variety of European industries (fashion, pharmaceuticals, etc.). These lectures could be live-streamed with NYU London for cross-site interaction, which would allow for comparison of the various cultures of European businesses. Several members agreed with this approach, and it was noted that some work with NYU alumni is already underway to develop business-related lectures, guest-speakers, and other programmatic ties to the site.
- Tisch shared with the committee its strategic planning document, which identifies existing and proposed course offerings in Florence, along with their rationale, projected enrollments, and any special needs associated with the course.

“PATHWAYS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THEMES”

As schools and departments establish and develop their connections to the site via partnerships and affiliations, the committee can begin the next phase of articulating the site’s academic identity: identifying “pathways, opportunities, and themes.” A “pathway” is a well-developed curricular structure that is the result of a school or department’s investment in the site, and that offers sufficient coursework to enable students to advance in their majors. Pathways can cross schools and departments and also be interdisciplinary. “Opportunities” are small groupings of courses that enable students to learn more about a particular field. Finally, “themes” are the overarching interdisciplinary topics or areas that are explored through the site’s curriculum, and which the committee would incorporate into the site’s academic narrative. The committee articulated the following in the context of developing the site’s academic identity:

- Pathways are a crucial component of a site’s identity and will allow students to plan their study away experience based on how well the site’s curriculum meets their academic needs.
- Pathways provide sites with more predictable enrollments, allowing for more advanced and accurate horizon planning. Approximately 10 courses each semester are canceled at NYU Florence due to low or no enrollments. It was agreed that more can be accomplished if predictable student enrollments are guaranteed in advance of course offerings.
- The committee concluded that opportunities are flexible, encompassing both full-term course offerings and special, time-restricted programs.
- The following proposed pathways emerged from discussion:
 - Arts (cross-discipline)
 - Politics
 - Economics/Business
 - Italian Studies

- Photography
- Social Science (human rights/immigration)
- The following proposed programs/opportunities emerged from discussion:
 - Global certificates (various programs, including arts, science, and technology)
 - B.A./M.A. (various programs)
 - Entrepreneurial Dialogues/European Business/Culture of Business
 - Fashion/Costume
- The following proposed themes emerged from discussion:
 - Social Sciences
 - Immigration

WEBSITE NARRATIVE

The current NYU Florence homepage and academic website narratives were shared with the committee for review and discussion in the context of the themes and synergies under consideration. It was noted that NYU Florence’s current website is advanced in terms of articulating academic themes, with phrasing such as “aligned humanities curriculum” and “focused concentration in Social Research;” the current website narrative was a concerted effort developed by a group of faculty, but that it could still use updating with input from the full Advisory Committee. It was noted that some disciplines, such as Italian Studies, could use updated language to reflect better the current curriculum, which is not exclusively literature-focused. Bruce Edelstein volunteered to share a Google document containing the website narrative with the committee for its input.

FEEDBACK ON THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Committee was asked for feedback on the utility of the current committee structure. The group noted:

- The meetings are useful, particularly for representatives who are both Global Coordinators and Directors of Undergraduate Studies (DUSes), as they provide a venue to discuss curricular matters.
- The committee is helpful also for horizon planning, as it brings together the key partner departments necessary for long-term development discussions at the site.
- The committee gives schools/departments the opportunity to collaborate in a way that is not currently otherwise available.

GLOBAL CURRICULUM AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUND

At the previous meeting, the new Global Curriculum Enhancement and Faculty Development Fund (GCEFDF) was announced. This fund will provide grants of up to \$5,000 to global faculty who propose to work with faculty and departments on the Square to improve existing courses or to undertake other projects that will promote faculty development and collaboration in

connection with teaching. The Office of General Counsel is working with the Site Directors and legal counsel at each Site to create guidelines that take into account the various local labor laws and tax restrictions.

NEXT STEPS

- NYU Florence's website narrative Google document was to be shared with the committee for their input and discussion at the next meeting. [*Completed on March 10, 2014*]
- Committee members will continue to think about themes they would like to see incorporated into the site's academic narrative.
- Ellyn agreed to circulate the planned topics for future La Pietra Dialogues.
- Next meeting: the committee agreed to focus on academic advising, including the use of the web to guide students to course offerings/sites, and to continue the conversation and development of academic pathways, opportunities, and themes.