

NYU Prague Site-Specific Advisory Committee Meeting

March 3, 2014 (9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. EDT)

IN ATTENDANCE

- Eliot Borenstein (CAS – Russian & Slavic Studies)
- Stephen Gross (CAS – European Studies)
- Chris Jaehnig (Tisch)
- Tomáš Klvaňa (NYU Prague)
- Jiri Pehe (Site Director – NYU Prague)
- Joe Picharillo (Tisch)
- Matthew Santirocco (Provost's Office)
- David Schroeder (Steinhardt)
- Carol Sternhell (CAS - Sociology)
- Aurora Wallace (Steinhardt)

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 4/23/14, 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 this 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:

- Since its inaugural program in 1998, NYU Prague’s curriculum and site identity have focused on three areas that build upon the unique resources available in the city: post-communism transition, Central Europe, and Slavic Studies. The committee offers an exciting venue to think collaboratively about the site’s academic identity and to examine whether these areas of focus should be altered or enhanced. Committee members discussed Slavic Studies in particular as an area for potential growth.
 - Much of the curriculum at the site seeks to identify and utilize local resources and perspectives uniquely found in Prague, giving the curriculum a strong tie to the local culture.
- Stern students are increasingly choosing NYU Prague as their study-away site and now make up a significant portion of the site’s student population.
- Tisch shared with the committee its strategic planning document which identifies existing and proposed course offerings in Prague, along with their rationale, projected enrollments, and any special needs associated with the course. It was noted that additional Tisch Drama students could add a useful contingent of English-speaking students that may open more opportunities for English-based program collaboration with local institutions.
- Developing core courses was suggested as a way to draw more students to the site. To that end, NYU Prague faculty could visit New York for collaborative training exchanges for such courses. Core courses should also be aligned to ensure all necessary pre-requisites are met prior to taking advanced coursework.
- Committee members reviewed enrollments, and noted that altering the number of sections offered relative to a course’s popularity may be a prudent, flexible step to accommodate student interest.
- The committee suggested identifying and distinguishing “major” courses from other courses available at the site.
- The committee discussed the current language offerings at NYU Prague and questioned if all four current offerings remain necessary. Some members suggested eliminating Polish, which is not offered on the Square. While Czech is no longer a required course, it remains quite popular among students. The Committee suggested reaching out to former students of Czech at NYU Prague to solicit feedback on their motivations and outcomes for studying the language.

“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:

- Faculty agreed that 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. It was agreed that more can be accomplished if predictable student enrollments are guaranteed in advance of course offerings.
- The following proposed Pathways emerged from discussion:
 - Dance
 - Film and TV
 - Media, Culture, and Communication
 - Journalism/Media Studies
 - Prelaw
 - Music
- The following proposed Program/Opportunities emerged from discussion:
 - Business
 - Economics
 - Politics
- The following proposed Themes emerged from discussion:
 - Post-communism Transition
 - Central European Studies
 - Slavic Studies

WEBSITE NARRATIVE

The current NYU Prague homepage and academic website narratives were shared with the committee for review and discussion in the context of the themes and synergies under consideration by the committee. The committee decided to share the website narrative via a

Google document for collective input and discussion at the next meeting. It was also suggested that the Global website should have a search function. [This is now being developed.]

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

- Global Programs will share a Google document containing NYU Prague's website narrative with the committee for its input and discussion at the next meeting.
- Committee members were asked to continue to think about the themes they would like to have incorporated into the site's academic narrative and to discuss these with their departments.
- Committee members were asked to recommend topics for the next meeting, which may also review new course ideas and horizon planning.
- Next meeting: the committee agreed to focus on academic advising (including website ideas) and to continue the conversation and development of academic pathways, opportunities, and themes. The committee also asked to take a more in-depth look at core courses and their enrollments.
- The committee would also like to be updated on the continued development of the Global website.