

Prague Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 -- 11:00am - 12:15pm
Saadiyat Conference Room, 19 Washington Square North

Attendees

- Eliot Borenstein (Faculty Chair; CAS – Russian and Slavic Studies)
- Julie Avina (GIPH)
- Jo Dixon (CAS - Sociology)
- Stephen Gross (CAS – European Studies)
- Miriam Halsey (Global Programs)
- Chris Jaehnig (Tisch)
- Perri Klass (CAS – Journalism)
- Sunder Narayanan (Stern)
- Jiri Pehe (Site Director)
- David Schroeder (Steinhardt)
- Gail Segal (Tisch)
- Carol Sternhell (CAS – Journalism)
- Aurora Wallace (Steinhardt)
- Deborah Williams (NYUAD)
- Larry Wolff (CAS – European Studies)

Advising Ideas Summary

Eliot Borenstein, the Faculty Chair, opened the meeting with introductions of Committee Members and Global Liaisons.

The Committee then turned to the Advising Ideas Summary handout, which was distributed in hard copy and electronically. The Summary compiles ideas discussed across all of the Site Specific Advisory Committees at the last round of meetings in October, during which several common themes emerged. Members discussed these ideas and emphasized the importance of:

- Communicating and advising students on study away opportunities, especially for disciplines, such as Jazz, where students may not initially consider studying abroad.
- Ensuring that course offerings at the site are appropriate for the cohort of students going, and that students are advised of their study away opportunities in advance. This is especially important for departments with strict sequencing of requirements.
- Thinking strategically about structural programmatic development as a means to encourage study away. This may include:

- Pathways for majors
- Minors (4 courses), where all or most of the courses could be completed at the site.
- Certificates, of which there are two types:
 - State-recognized certificate – must be approved by New York State
 - Certificate of Attendance – can be offered without state approval
- Required semester abroad for certain majors, if academically appropriate.
- Encouraging returning students to use social media to communicate their experience with prospective students.
- Advising students of scholarship opportunities to alleviate the financial burden many face when exploring study away opportunities.

Program Assessment

The Provost's Office is revising the site evaluation, which was suspended last spring in anticipation of a new version being developed. The updated version will be shorter in length and will include questions not only on student life but also on the academic program at the site, specifically on the level of student immersion and engagement students have while studying away.

The survey also aims to assess the value of study abroad as a whole, including how it may affect future academic performance. Though there has been limited research conducted on this topic, what is available suggests positive learning outcomes. The GNU is uniquely positioned to become a leader in this area. A committee comprised of Site Directors and faculty from Site Specific Advisory Committees will provide guidance to the Provost's Office on this initiative.

Site Director Update

Jiri Pehe followed with a brief update about NYU Prague. The site is expecting 196 students in the spring – one of the highest enrollments ever – which exceeds the site's housing capacity. Jiri Pehe is coordinating with the hotel across the street to reserve additional rooms. Stern in particular is becoming a larger presence in Prague, with four courses and 50 to 60 Stern students at the site.

NYU Prague has also hosted several successful conferences this term to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. The site will be hosting another conference later in the semester that will focus on the transformation of media in the Czech Republic.

Further Understanding Enrollments & Curriculum

The Committee reviewed the Data Packet together and discussed the site's curriculum. It was noted that, given recent global events, several students had asked about adding a course on Russia. Eliot Borenstein and Jiri Pehe agreed to discuss this further after the meeting.

While it was agreed that new courses and programs may require several semesters to reach their full enrollment potential, Members raised the question of how best to address non-requirement courses that have consistently low enrollment numbers. It was noted that some of this may be attributed to a shifting student body at the site – a trend that may continue as pathways develop further. Although small classes are not an issue financially for the site, many classes, from an academic perspective, are most successful with at least 10 students in the class to facilitate dynamic group discussion. If any Members are concerned by a particular course or by a possible mismatch in course offerings, they are encouraged to reach out to Janet Alperstein in the Office of Global Programs.

Members also wondered if it would be possible to capture whether courses taken while studying away inspired future major or minor declarations in that discipline. Global Programs will look into this.

Course Proposal Procedure

The Committee discussed the procedure for proposing new courses and selecting local faculty at the site. (With the exception of NYU DC, it can be challenging for New York faculty to teach at the global sites due to labor and tax considerations). As portal campuses, NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai are also able to sponsor courses at the global sites. Members noted that it was important to think of the site holistically when designing new courses to ensure that they complement the existing curriculum.

Site Identity and Global Presence on NYU.EDU

Members discussed site identity and how NYU Prague can take advantage of its proximity to other global sites and its position within the GNU. This may entail coordinating with NYU's other European global sites to offer a course that incorporates local inflections and includes field trips among the sites. Alternatively, it may entail using technology to collaborate with non-European global sites, as has been done successfully with the course, "Where the City Meets the Sea."

The Committee also discussed the idea of working with the Global Student Leadership Initiative, which is currently in the preliminary stages of development,

to create a program for global leadership training. Members noted that the study away experience and learning how to be articulate and comfortable in a global setting has shown to benefit students in their job searches, both in the United States and internationally.

Members agreed to delve deeper into site identity at the next meeting in the spring.

Prague Next Steps

- Global will explore how to encourage leadership training in the GNU and, possibly, a future collaboration with the Student Global Leadership Initiative.
- Global will conduct an analysis on how courses at the site impact students' choice of majors and/or minors.