

NYU Sydney Site Specific Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Attendees

Janet Alperstein
John Burt
Stephanie Leahy
Toby Martin
Sonali McDermid
Nancy Morrison
Fred Myers
Chris Nicolussi
Lauren Plusch
Matthew Santirocco
Mal Semple
Diana Silver
Paul Thompson
Marion Wrenn

Site Director Update

The meeting began with an update from Mal Semple, NYU Sydney Site Director. During the spring 2015 semester the site realized significant enrollment growth. To meet student demand, the site hired 13 new professors and offered physics for the first time. While exciting, the growth underscored the enrollment imbalances between the fall and spring semesters.

Mal also mentioned recent visits, in both New York and Sydney, from the University of Sydney. The school is interested in developing a relationship with NYU.

Current and Emerging Academic Pathways and Enrollments

There are several areas for academic growth in Sydney with both current and emerging pathways. The site is looking forward to launching the partnership with Tisch and to having their courses in the curriculum. Pre-health, Environmental Studies and Stern are other departments/schools whose students have shown a significant interest in Sydney.

The site thinks holistically about balancing the academic requirements and interests of each group of students/academic pathway; examples include creating schedules which enable a day off for internships and scheduling electives at times when the most students are able to enroll. The site has struggled with pre-health student schedules and internships because lab times are managed by the University of Sydney. Scheduling is part of the puzzle of creating fully-enrolled classes and attracting students from outside a discipline to enroll in elective courses.

If enrollment growth continues next spring, the site may need another major/pathway to have enough courses. Leveraging the connections of GIPH or Environmental Studies to other disciplines (CAMS, Psychology) might be one approach to meeting student demand while

balancing the site identity. While considering the enrollment imbalance is important, imbalance in semester enrollments is a trend seen in many sites, and historically is greatest in a site's first years of operating.

The committee brainstormed a few strategies for increasing spring enrollments.

- a. Teach Science 1 courses in the fall;
- b. Leverage Gallatin or another school/discipline to draw students;
- c. Explore relationships with the University of Sydney both during the semester and during intersessions;
- d. Focus on enrolling Abu Dhabi/Shanghai students and addressing differences in their science curricula;
- e. Adding an upper-level science course. There are two tracks for environmental science students; science, and society and values. For the science track nearly half of the majors want to go abroad but cannot because of science requirements. Perhaps adding a science course could draw these upper level students as well as Abu Dhabi students;
- f. Revise and enhance the Sydney website;
- g. Outreach through RAs, faculty in residence and student groups. There is a limit to what can be done in the academic realm and leveraging non-academic resources may be productive.

Internships

The site offers two internships programs: a not-for-credit "beyond the classroom" program and a for-credit program with an academic course component. The former is managed by the site and has developed around 25 partners within Sydney. The for-credit program is run in partnership with CAPA International.

For the spring semester, the for-credit program has 6-7 students enrolled. Prior to their semester away, students meet with CAPA to discuss placement options and meet with their match once in Sydney. The course component is labor intensive for the faculty member and, as the site grows, the course may need to be held in two sections. Multiple sections could allow for discipline-specific approaches to the academic content, i.e. science/health and arts/drama.

On-site, there was some skepticism regarding the internship program, but everyone is impressed thus far. Overall, students have enjoyed their experience and are able to articulate the academic value of their internships. Global staff also agreed that overall the program has had a successful first year, but recognize that operationally there is room for improvement in communicating with students and in managing student expectations. The committee feels that it would be helpful for the University to develop guidelines on appropriate internship experiences and academic value. Support from the University level will help the site/programs manage expectations and defend their internship programs.

The committee was reminded that CAPA is open to collaborating on placements and that any partner NYU introduces to the program remains NYU property. NYU does not need CAPA to find contacts, but they are essential for insurance and liability purposes.

New Courses and Programs

A diagram detailing the procedures for introducing new academic programs and courses at the sites was distributed to the Committee. If a department is interested in developing a new course, Global Programs can help provide data to understand “the bigger picture” such as the potential effects on course enrollments and other pathways. The Site Director is another resource as he has a good sense of the needs on the ground and how to discuss course with the relevant parties.

Site Evaluation

A committee convened by the Provost Office and comprised of Site Directors and faculty from Site Specific Advisory Committees has redesigned the site evaluation administered at the sites. In Fall 2014, the survey was piloted in Abu Dhabi and London. This new survey is shorter in length and aims to gauge both academic programming and student life during a semester away. The pilot resulted in a higher response rate than the previous survey and in general has received positive feedback. After a few minor adjustments, the survey will be administered to students at all the sites in May 2015.

Summer Programs

Summer programs run during winter in Australia, and the weather poses a challenge in convincing students and classes to visit over the colder months.

Committee Business

The following information was also announced:

1. A data packet was distributed detailing site and course enrollment information. Committee members can review the information and use it to inform course decisions at the site if helpful.
2. The AY15/16 course lists were provided to Committee members to bring back to their departments for review and discussion. Please advise global.academics@nyu.edu of any changes for AY16/17 prior to May 31st, so as to allow time for coordination with the sites.

If there are no changes, AY15/16 courses will rollover to the following year. AY16/17 courses will be posted online on July 1st.

3. A new Cross-School Arts Committee and Europe Committee have been formed and will meet as needed to discuss programmatic links between the sites.
4. The FAC-GNU committee has asked that members share information discussed at the Advisory Committee meetings with their departments so as to engage all faculty on activity at the global sites.