

NYU Sydney Advisory Committee Meeting
Second Meeting: November 26, 2013 (2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. EST)

IN ATTENDANCE

- Peder Anker (Gallatin)
- Rebecca Giggs (NYU Sydney)
- Fred Myers (CAS – Anthropology)
- Chris Schlottmann (CAS – Environmental Studies)
- Mal Semple (NYU Sydney)
- Diana Silver (GIPH)
- Paul Thompson (Tisch)
- Global Academic Team
- Nancy Morrison (NYU Global)
- Matthew Santirocco (NYU Provost’s Office, brief visit)

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The committee considered whether to appoint a faculty chair, a question that the Faculty Advisory Committee on NYU’s Global Network had raised. The group felt that more time was needed before it would be clear whether a chair was needed, and what the role would entail. It was agreed that it made sense for now to have a faculty “convener,” who will work directly with the Office of Global Programs. It was noted that because the Sydney committee is smaller than the other Site-Specific Advisory committees, it should be easier for this committee to have one person managing this work.

CURRICULUM DISCUSSIONS

Members were reminded that over the next few months, global curriculum discussions will be conducted within schools, since all courses at our sites are sponsored by departments and schools. These conversations will give committee members the opportunity to review the history of course offerings at the Global Academic Centers. While every course/instructor at the Global Sites has been approved by a department or school on the Square, it is useful to have a process for reviewing course offerings on a consistent basis; also, departmental leadership changes frequently, and meticulous records of reviews have not been kept. The Office of Global Programs will now keep a detailed log of all Global course reviews.

After the global curriculum discussions take place in each school, the SSACs will be able to discuss academic synergies between schools and departments at the Sites.

NEW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES WEBSITE

The Office of Global Programs and the Office of the Provost are developing a website to help students understand the academic policies that are in place at the Global Academic Centers. In some instances (e.g., attendance), the Centers have policies that do not exist on the Square. Other policies (e.g., pass/fail) may simply vary by school, an issue that

the Undergraduate Deans are now exploring. Committee members were asked to review the draft website and to provide feedback.

GLOBAL CURRICULUM AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUND

Matthew shared with the group a draft of a new Global Curriculum and Faculty Development Fund (GCFDF). This 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 new grant will launch in spring 2014. In the meantime, the Square's longstanding Curriculum Development Challenge Fund (CDCF) has generously earmarked three grants for global faculty for this transition year. The deadline for global faculty who are interested in applying for a CDCF grant has been extended from mid-December to January 10, 2014, at the request of another SSAC. Matthew asked the committee members to get back to him with any further suggestions for improving the draft of the new fund.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The committee reviewed the online assessment tools currently used by the Office of Global Programs, e.g., course evaluations, program/site evaluations, and evaluations of the pre-departure orientation process. Committee members underscored the importance of understanding the survey, including why specific questions are asked and how the data will be used. There were concerns that the purpose of the survey is not entirely clear. It was noted that the site evaluations should, ideally, assess the overall academic and intellectual experience that students have while they are there, and, in doing so, demonstrate the value of studying away. There was strong support to launch a longitudinal study/survey, to be administered to students at multiple time points after their study away, which would help the University better understand the academic impact of the study-away experience on students. Additionally, there was some concern expressed about over-surveying students, as Sydney also performs mid-semester evaluations and exit interviews.

ENROLLMENT

The committee discussed the fact that because Sydney has so few courses, enrollment has so far been limited to students with flexibility in their majors. Expanding the number and range of course offerings will be necessary to support growing enrollment. It was noted that enrollment for Spring 2014 would be much higher than in Spring 2013, apparently because of the addition of several courses. There was consensus that it will be important to introduce new courses judiciously, ensuring that each new course pairs well with existing offerings to expand opportunities for students. One suggestion for increasing enrollments at the site was that Sydney could offer classes that have been historically

difficult for students to register for on the Square (e.g., Stern courses). It was also noted that Tisch is currently surveying students on study away programs and the global sites to better understand curricular needs and student demand. A significant challenge will be to boost enrollment during the Fall semester, which typically attracts lower enrollment across the GNU.

COURSES

Students have asked for core courses to be offered at the Sydney site. It was noted, however, that, at a smaller site, it is more challenging to offer core courses because of the need for qualified professors and the subsequent limiting effect on enrollments in elective courses. A larger site such as Florence can easily sustain core courses because of the number of students who enroll there. The group agreed that one of the benefits of studying away is the opportunity that students have to participate in smaller classes. It is, therefore, important to plan accordingly and to prevent individual course enrollments from getting too high, especially in light of expectations for Sydney's future growth. For the Spring 2014 semester, course enrollments are averaging 20 to 25 students per class.

In its first meeting, the committee had raised several potential course topics. Having now consulted with students in Sydney, the site director reported that many of these ideas are also where student interest lies: sustainability and environmental studies, immigration, health, and performing arts. Additional ideas included medical anthropology, archaeology, Australian Studies (as an expansion of the orientation course), and a sports management course.

NEXT STEPS:

- Diana Silver will circulate to the committee the GIPH course proposal.
- Janet Alperstein, Global Academic Director, will join the next meeting to discuss the current curriculum and ideas for adding courses.