

NYU Sydney Site-Specific Advisory Committee
Inaugural Meeting: October 9, 2013 (5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. EDT)

IN ATTENDANCE

- Rebecca Giggs (NYU Sydney)
- Fred Myers (CAS – Anthropology)
- Linda Mills (NYU Global)
- Nancy Morrison (NYU Global)
- Lauren Plusch (NYU Global)
- Matthew Santirocco (NYU Provost’s Office)
- Chris Schlottmann (CAS – Environmental Studies)
- Mal Semple (NYU Sydney)
- Diana Silver (GIPH)
- Global Academic Team

INTRODUCTIONS

On behalf of their departments/schools, members of the Committee introduced themselves, their areas of academic interest, and their relationship to NYU Sydney.

FORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE

Matthew Santirocco explained that the Site-Specific Advisory Committees grew out of extensive consultations last year with the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network and the GNU Initiatives Committee of the Faculty Senators Council, as well as with the Site Directors, School Deans and many NYU departments, schools and faculty members. Four themes emerged from those conversations: (a) every site is different owing to its history and trajectory of development; (b) faculty would like to be more actively involved with the Global Sites, not only by approving course syllabi and instructors, as they do now, but by engaging in deeper conversations about curriculum planning and site identity; (c) while many faculty were involved in setting up and developing the Sites, they served primarily in an individual capacity and not as representatives of their schools and departments; and (d) no forum existed to discuss synergies among academic programs at the Global Sites. As a result, site-specific faculty committees were formed. The committees comprise faculty from schools and departments with existing or planned partnerships at Global Sites, though faculty from affiliated schools and departments will be invited to participate in the curriculum discussions of the site committees. (More information on these committees can be found here: www.nyu.edu/global/global-academic-partnerships-and-affiliations/faculty-discussions-on-global-sites.html)

SITE OVERVIEW

NYU Sydney Site Director Mal Semple provided the group with an overview of the Site that covered the following areas:

- **Site history:** Founded in 2012, NYU Sydney now has over 19 instructors and administrative staff. Forty-three students studied there in spring 2013; 20 students are

enrolled in 10 classes this semester. The site added science and pre-health courses to attract more students and to take pressure off of London, which was, until recently, the only pre-health site in the GNU. There is confidence that enrollments will grow significantly, noting that 1,000 incoming freshmen expressed interest in Sydney as a study away site and it is anticipated that more than 70 students at NYU Sydney will enroll in the spring 2014 semester.

- **Facilities:** Housed in an historic site, the academic center sits in a prime location and provides enough space for enrollments to expand. Pre-health and science courses are held at Sydney Technical Institute, which provides both classroom and lab space. The residential facilities for students are a 30-minute walk from campus and even closer to the University of Sydney.
- **Faculty:** Sixteen faculty have taught at NYU Sydney over the last two semesters; 75 percent hold PhDs or terminal degrees, while the other 25 percent are expert practitioners in fields such as journalism. Most faculty also teach and conduct research at institutions such as the University of Sydney, Macquarie University, and the University of Technology, Sydney.
- **Curriculum:** As a new site Sydney offers a unique opportunity for NYU to develop innovative collaborations between departments, such as Environmental Studies and Anthropology. He added that a critical examination of Australian culture and history should lie at the heart of the Site's curriculum.
- **Experiential learning:** Operating in a culture in which internships are relatively uncommon, NYU Sydney has made considerable progress in cultivating internship opportunities for students; this will be a priority in the coming year.

Committee members praised the site director and his staff in Sydney for their hard work and close collaboration with the Square in many areas.

KEY ISSUES

- **Course sequencing:** Members talked about the importance of developing a vertical curriculum that would allow students to take upper-level courses at the Site. Noting that faculty availability and expertise will influence the Site's curriculum, the importance of finding and retaining qualified faculty to teach upper-level courses was underscored.
- **Recruitment/advising:** The group considered the importance of developing effective engagement strategies for the Site and horizon planning that will allow students to plan their own courses of study well in advance; it was also agreed that effective recruitment will require more course offerings in Sydney. Another important consideration will be how to build enrollments without undermining the unique curriculum that the committee envisions for NYU Sydney.
- **Efficiency:** Pointing out that it is a challenge for smaller departments like Anthropology to maintain robust curricular pathways, it was agreed upon that interdepartmental partnerships will be important and that crosslisting courses at NYU Sydney should be a priority for all departments involved. Anthropology's connection with Global Public Health is an example. It was also suggested that affiliated departments might play more of a role in enhancing enrollments at NYU Sydney than at other GNU sites, and thus the committee should bring these departments to the table this semester.

- **Curriculum development:** The committee agreed to take an especially active role in developing the Site's curriculum by reaching out to other schools and departments that are not yet academic partners (e.g., Tisch and Wagner). Tisch seems a particularly good fit because Sydney is so rich in the Arts. The site could develop a broad curriculum that would be unique in its cross-departmental collaborations and its focus on the history and culture of Australia. As a way of offering core courses outside of New York, those departments that are interested in NYU Sydney might follow the example of Global Public Health, which has several courses that share general content while also adapting to their sites by including materials unique to them.
- **Faculty circulation:** The committee noted that there is a pause on faculty circulation as the School Deans and the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network consider this issue; Global Programs is also researching the related visa, tax, and labor issues. The Committee discussed ways of building stronger ties between NYU Sydney and the Square. It was agreed that research opportunities and academic symposia might be useful strategies for connecting faculty across sites.

NEXT STEPS

The committee agreed to meet again when the site director returns to New York in November to discuss the current Site curriculum and explore ideas for new courses and cross-listing opportunities. A larger meeting with NYU Sydney affiliated departments will take place after that. Mal agreed to speak with students in Sydney about why they chose the Site and what might attract their peers to it.