

NYU Sydney Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 27, 10am

383 Lafayette St, C-08

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Attendees

- Aurora Wallace (Steinhardt – MCC)
- Christopher Nicolussi (Global Programs)
- Eugenia Carol Kisin (Gallatin)
- Fred Myers (FAS – Anthropology)
- Gbenga Ogedegbe (School of Medicine & Global Programs)
- Jackie Klein (NYU Shanghai)
- Janet Alperstein (Global Programs)
- Jennifer Gerdes (Global Programs)
- John Burt (NYU Abu Dhabi)
- Joyce Moon Howard (CGPH)
- Linda Mills (Global Programs)
- Malcolm Semple (Site Director)
- Matthew Santirocco (Academic Affairs)
- Nancy Morrison (Global Programs)
- Nicholas Boggs (FAS – English)
- Paul Thompson (Tisch)
- Sonali McDermid (FAS – Environmental Studies)
- Tyra Liebmann (Global Programs)

Introductions and Announcements

As the global network continues to evolve and play an increasingly significant role in contributing to NYU's academic mission, and in response to suggestions from two key faculty committees, the University created new part-time faculty leadership roles related to global academic and faculty planning and conducted open searches to fill them. Coming out of that process, senior faculty members from five schools (i.e., Arts and Science, Global Public Health, Medicine, Shanghai, and Tisch) have taken on new roles over the past year:

- Associate Vice Chancellors for Global Network Academic Planning: Professor [Olugbenga \("Gbenga"\) Ogedegbe](#) (School of Medicine and College of Global Public Health) and Professor [Marianne Petit](#) (Tisch School of the Arts and NYU Shanghai)
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Network Faculty Planning: Professor [Zvi Ben-Dor Benite](#) (Faculty of Arts and Science)
- Senior Academic Convenor for the Global Network: Professor [Eliot Borenstein](#) (Faculty of Arts and Science)

Faculty members should feel free to reach out to Gbenga, Marianne, Zvi, or Eliot with comments or questions about the global network at any time.

Site Director Report & Fall Enrollment

Mal Semple gave an overview of the site director report, which was distributed to the committee in advance of the meeting. Mal reported that the semester is going well and Fall 2017 application numbers are very encouraging, though fall and spring enrollment imbalances continue to be a challenge. While this is true for most academic sites, NYU Sydney's imbalance is quite pronounced due to spring-only lab science offerings growing spring enrollment rapidly. Beginning next semester, pre-health science courses (including biochemistry) will be offered in the fall as well. Hopefully, over time, this will reduce the fall/spring gap.

Janet Alperstein noted that while there is a fall/spring imbalance, the classes on offer each semester have filled very well and very few courses have needed to be canceled due to low enrollment. She credited careful course planning by the faculty for this success. As an example, she offered the decision to select biochemistry for the fall in Sydney as it is required for the MCAT and it differentiates Sydney from London's offering of organic chemistry. Mal also noted that being thoughtful about course groupings and cross-listings can lead to viable and sustainable courses, even for smaller departments and student cohorts.

Janet also reported that next semester will see Stern students going abroad earlier (first semester Sophomore year). This is because companies participating in on-campus recruitment are shifting their recruiting cycle, so students who want to go abroad and also compete for these prestigious internships need to study away earlier in their academic careers.

Program Evaluations

Mal was pleased to receive strong evaluations from the fall 2016 cohort. Students come to Sydney with a very positive mindset and he is pleased to see that their experience meets those expectations. All students reported that they would recommend the site to friends.

Paul Thompson expanded on this further by noting that he had surveyed student interest for completing a business entertainment minor; the number of students interested increased when asked if they would want to complete such a minor in Sydney as opposed to New York.

Mal did bring forward one concern about the program evaluations surrounding the question of the site's academics. In previous semesters, student responses indicated that the site was quite academically challenging, but this has trended downwards recently and Sydney is now average when compared to other sites. Faculty have reported that while course content has not changed, students may not be completing all of the required readings. This semester faculty are focusing on changing this by making sure the readings are integral to the course. Initial feedback from faculty is positive and a formal mid-semester evaluation, which is customary at NYU Sydney, will also look at this.

Partnership check-in and Curricular Development

Matthew began the discussion by explaining that Virginia Cox (Academic Director, NYU Florence) recently convened a curricular planning meeting with NYU Florence SSAC members to focus exclusively on the academic development of the site and areas of collaboration. The conversation was very productive and generated a lot of great discussion and creative ideas on how to further develop the curriculum. The Florence committee came up with several "themes" around which to build interdisciplinary clusters like organized crime and social activism. Matthew then asked the Sydney SSAC if there are any themes around which NYU Sydney could build a cluster? Fred Meyers said that he felt that the Sydney SSAC was already doing this in areas like Global Health, Environmental Studies, and Film.

Linda then began to discuss the possibilities for documentary film at NYU Sydney, which had previously been discussed at the last meeting. Since that time, two options for pursuing documentary film have developed. One option would be to build a partnership with a local film school and create a highly specialized program for Tisch students. The other would be to hire documentary filmmakers to teach a more entry-level course, that would expose students, regardless of academic background, to documentary film as a medium and get them to make short films in the community. This model is currently being employed in Madrid to great success. The syllabus for this course will be shared with the committee.

The Committee supported the idea of adding documentary film in Sydney and felt this would be an effective way to encourage local engagement.. There was also some discussion of the

benefits and challenges of the different approaches. The discussion concluded with Linda saying she would pursue the discussion with Allyson Green (Dean of Tisch) and then follow up with Paul.

Fred added later that with the addition of documentary film, there may be a visual cultures nexus developing at NYU Sydney and that at the next meeting there could be more discussion of the particular clusters that are working well in Sydney.

Environmental Studies

Environmental Studies is looking at what kind of courses they could offer in Sydney. Ideally it would be a course that fits as an elective for both Environmental Studies students and Animal Studies minors, but it would likely also attract students from wide-ranging disciplines like Stern, Tisch, and Gallatin. Sonali McDermid explained that given the Australian context, they are considering courses that cover topics like marine conservation, biology and animal-human interactions, animal ethics, and climate change. With this in mind, they have identified two scholars who could potentially teach courses.

One of the scholars, Gyorgy Scrinis, from the University of Melbourne, works on environment, food and animal ethics within the food industry. These are topics that interest students but they would not be necessarily unique to the Australian context. The other scholar, Dr. Karina Hall, a Fisheries Research Scientist from the NSW Department of Primary Industries and an Adjunct Associate Professor at Southern Cross University, focuses her teaching on fisheries biology and marine ecology. She also focused a lot of her work on the Great Barrier Reef. Given the damage the reef has suffered, it may not be possible to visit it with a class, but it is a very pressing and timely issue. Dr. Hall does not live in Sydney and therefore would be more interested in team teaching a course as were many other lecturers contacted.

The committee discussed potential formats (including intensive shorter courses), the general approach to course creation, and how many courses would be sustainable. Janet offered her team as a resource for looking through historical enrollments and thinking through potential offerings with the department.

John Burt added that there would be a lot of interest from NYU Abu Dhabi students in environmental studies courses in Sydney, especially when it comes to climate change and management-related issues. John would also be interested in engaging further in the conversations around developing these courses and selecting faculty. Sonali and John will set up a call to discuss further.

John also spoke about possible interest from Abu Dhabi in expanding other science offerings at NYU Sydney. Due to capacity challenges in New York, they are considering Berlin & Sydney as possible additional sites for biology courses. These ideas are in the initial stages and require

more conversation with Carol Brandt (Associate Vice Chancellor, Global Education and Outreach, NYUAD).

TEQSA Registration

Mal explained the ongoing challenges with not being registered with Australia's Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TESQA), in particular not being able to sponsor student visas. The current work and holiday visas students get are only available for citizens of 31 countries. This especially impacts students from Abu Dhabi and Shanghai. One additional challenge is that while China is one of the 31 countries eligible for the current visa, there is a cap on the number of citizens who receive this visa each year and the spots for Chinese nationals fill very quickly. For this reason, there have been ongoing efforts to meet the standards for TEQSA for some time but there have been fairly serious moves this year in particular.

To qualify for TEQSA registration, NYU needs to offer at least 50% of a degree-granting program in Sydney. Mal asked the group to let him know if any of their departments would be interested in pursuing a one-year combined bachelor and masters or a stand-alone masters program at the site. The entire program would not need to be at the site, only slightly more than 50%. For example, a one year masters degree could have one semester and a J-Term or August intensive take place in Sydney. Linda offered the one-year MA program in Historical and Sustainable Architecture at NYU London as a potential model for what a program in Sydney could look like. Mal also noted that once Sydney is registered with TEQSA, they could enroll Australian students in the program, so it would be good to offer something unique that would not compete with local institutions.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts

Fred explained that efforts to train the NYU Sydney faculty around Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) matters as they relate to students are underway and that faculty are very receptive to these trainings. Mal added that local faculty have responded well to changes they have been asked to make, such as asking students where they "call home" Instead of asking students where they are from.

Linda shared with the Committee that the work being done in Sydney is being used as an example for other sites and that Sydney will be one of three or four pilots for the next phase of DEI efforts that Krystal McLeod (Global Programs) is leading.

Linda also mentioned that for the one year anniversary of the listening session in New York, students presented reflections on their global experiences and the presentation by an NYU Sydney student was particularly powerful. We will share the video of the performance with the committee.

Curriculum Updates

Janet called the group's attention to the "NYU Sydney 2017-2018 Curriculum Updates" document which details new courses and course updates for next year. The new courses are "Principles of Biology I" (fall only), "Biochemistry I" (fall only), "General Physics I" (fall only), and "Reading as a Writer" (fall and spring) and "Intro to Psychology," previously only offered in spring, will now be offered in both fall and spring.

Next steps

- Partnership check-in and Curricular Development:
 - Linda Mills will pursue a discussion about offering documentary film with Allyson Green and then follow up with Paul Thompson
 - Share with the committee the "Madrid Studies" syllabus with the committee
 - Discuss particular clusters that work well in Sydney at the next SSAC
- Environmental studies: Sonali McDermid & John Burt will have a call to discuss potential courses & faculty, followed by further group meetings to develop environmental studies course offerings
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Share with the video of the one year anniversary performance with the committee