

## **Council on International Studies and Programs**

Minutes of Meeting

November 30, 2016

### **I. Approval of the Minutes of the October 26, 2016 Meeting—Peter Biehl**

Professor Biehl greeted members and welcomed two guests—Kristin Woods, the new Associate Vice President for Alumni Engagement; and Wendy Irving, Associate Vice President for Individual and Planned Giving. He noted that the meeting would allow for discussion and brainstorming about relevant issues in the wake of the election, including the proposed DACA petition. Professor Biehl reminded members about the upcoming Council Award Luncheon on December 5 honoring Professor Debra Street. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as distributed, with corrections noted from Ellen Dussourd.

### **II. Assessing the Implications of Potential Policy Changes in the New Administration—Stephen C. Dunnett and John J. Wood**

Professor Dunnett noted that members have seen communications from the President and himself in response to post-election concerns regarding the potentially threatened status of undocumented students and international students, especially those from Muslim countries. Students have been talking to their advisors, chairs and deans' offices about their concerns, and many faculty and staff are likewise anxious about what's ahead. Some report feeling unsafe. A petition has been drafted that UB declare itself a "sanctuary campus." This is a well-intentioned initiative, but this is not realistic possibility in regard to undocumented students who may be subject to deportation by the federal government. There is strong support on many campuses for such actions, especially in California where there is a large number of undocumented students. There would be serious potential consequences for institutions that attempt to hinder immigration law enforcement. The SUNY Chancellor and SUNY Counsel have indicated that the presidents of campuses cannot on their own authority declare their campuses as sanctuaries. Given the heightened level of anxiety, deans and departments have been urged to counsel their students and offer town hall meetings to address their concerns. The best advice may be to wait and see what happens and avoid assuming campaign rhetoric will translate into the policies of the new administration. It is reassuring that Mr. Trump seems to have backed away from some of the most extreme positions voiced in the campaign. The Republican Congress appears to have no appetite for mass deportation, or even for constructing a wall on the Mexican border. Certain positions may sound good in campaign events for the party base but do not make could policy proposals. Nevertheless, the university has to be prepared. The deans are uneasy about the enrollment prospects in the short term—and how much the changes might impact fall enrollment and thus tuition revenue. The first thing to say to international students on F-1 visas is that they are legally in the country and they will not be sent back. Undocumented students cannot be so easily reassured.

Professor Dunnett asked his directors to speak about their own areas in this regard. Joseph Hindrawan reported that his office has increased its recruitment activities to meet their target for fall 2017. Many other institutions report having fallen short in terms of their targets for fall 2016. Before the election, most students overseas assumed Hillary Clinton would win and they made plans accordingly. They were very surprised by the actual outcome. Their immediate fears are about safety and about not being able to stay in the U.S. Muslim students have been particularly concerned. Some countries—Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, for

example—are reducing the number of scholarships for students going overseas. UB recruiters have tried to reassure students that Trump will have limited impact on their plans. Students are also worried about the economic situation, with the US currency growing in value and making US higher education generally more expensive; in contrast, Australia and Canada are becoming more affordable, which is helping them attract more students. This is a time of great uncertainty and therefore it is difficult to be definite in our reassurances.

Steven Shaw addressed the international admissions picture. While most currently enrolled international students are fine, there are students, e.g. Turkish students, who worry about being sent home for other reasons. Students wrongly believe that if Trump does away with the Department of Education this would imperil their studies in the US—not realizing that DoE does not function like a ministry of education in other countries. Prospective students are asking about whether they will be welcome and safe in the US. International Admissions is sending email newsletters to reassure prospects about UB's welcoming environment. Undergraduate applications for fall 2017 are up at this point, but it's very early in the cycle. About 80% of the application pool is received by February. The number of applications have to increase seven-fold for us to stay on target. Applications might decline at the point when the new administration comes in. The yield this year is also a worry. International graduate applications are more of a concern since those deadlines are earlier. Currently, the College is down 26%, GSE 18%, Law 41%, SOM 11%, Nursing 71%, RPCI 21%, and SEAS 11%. Masters students in SEAS and SOM are largely self-funded, so their trends are more worrying.

Professor Culleton asked about the impact of election on the admission cycle. Mr. Shaw said the current trends may not reflect that impact. There are many factors at work. Going forward, the concern is yield on graduate applications. Also, the future of Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a concern, to the extent this might be in doubt going forward. Engineering students particularly are focused on accessing the US labor market—and OPT is critical to their plans. They self-invest to realize a big payoff in the US labor market, particularly now with the 36-month STEM extension available. Any negative changes to OPT would cause a major hit to SEAS graduate enrollment. Cost issues continue to be a big problem, with year-on-year 10% tuition increases and a \$40,000 I-20 cost. These high costs will hurt our yield. Our local costs are going up in part thanks to Buffalo's renaissance, which is driving up housing and other costs. Ms. Dussourd said that many Indian students take out loans to pay for their masters program at UB with the plan to access OPT and earn back the loan amount. Some 2,400 UB alumni are on OPT this year. Thankfully, there is no talk so far about reducing or restricting OPT. The private sector clearly favors the continuance and expansion of OPT to get the highly skilled workers they need. Dr. Oak said that she has heard students express concern that their health insurance will be taken away if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. Mr. Hindrawan added that the experience after 9/11 should reassure us that we can get through the current circumstances without too much disruption. Mr. Shaw said that UB has a structurally strong recruitment and admissions infrastructure, but the rising costs are a real challenge.

In her report, Ms. Dussourd echoed some of the observations about student upset at the election, and cited examples of Egyptian students and Indian Muslim students who are considering going home before finishing their degrees. Some are thinking of switching to a Canadian program. ISSS has planned a session with international students to allow them to discuss these issues. Ms. Dussourd is concerned about the unfortunate echoes of 9/11 in the current context—talk about resurrecting NSEERS (National Security Entry-Exit Registration System), which was in place from Sept. 2002 to **2012**. ISSS was obliged to notify

male students from certain countries to visit the local INS ~ DHS did not exist until March 2003 office to register and be fingerprinted. This Special Registration took place in fall 2002 and spring 2003. In addition to being discriminatory, these programs did not help find terrorists—it was very ineffective and alienated the American Muslim community and had negative effects on US foreign policy. It became a kind of immigration trap, with 13,000 persons put in removal proceedings as a result. It became a superfluous program since all US visitors are now fingerprinted via the US Visit Program, and SEVIS monitors all international students and exchange visitors. Also troubling was the previous “catch and release” program—in which DHS staff would find out-of-status persons who were evaluated for their risk to US national or community security or whether they were flight risks. In July 2006 President Bush declared that all out-of-status individuals would be detained. This represented a major change in policy. What happened previously was that non-Muslims would not be detained, but after 2006 everyone was to be detained. Since the DHS agencies endorsed Trump, there is concern that such regressive programs will be brought back, resulting in innocent folks being detained and deported.

Oscar Budde addressed what the election might mean for UB employees and visiting scholars. In the past year, UB has hosted 246 H-1Bs, 649 J-1s and some O-1s and TNs. There are about 800,000 H-1Bs currently active in the US; 18,000 H-1Bs have been assigned to US higher education, which is not subject to the cap. DHS will put in place on Jan 17, 2017 a change to H1-B policy that is very friendly to H1-B employers; it provides increased flexibility and continuing preference without a numerical cap. No extra filing fees pertain for higher education H-1B petitions. The definition of “affiliated entities” to higher education institutions has been broadened to include more options, such as research entities. These can now be state or local, and not necessarily federal. Higher education institutions and affiliated entities can file any time, so UB can file petitions throughout the year. Here at least is a positive development that takes effect before the inauguration.

Trump’s campaign rhetoric has not focused on the employee side, but on the enforcement side. On Nov. 21 he said he would direct the Department of Labor (DOL) to investigate abuses of work visa programs. Investigations are to be conducted by DOL, which already monitors various aspects of the H-1B program (e.g. whether appropriate salaries are being paid). DOL has had a limited role in enforcement actions. It may be given enhanced powers to crack down. Abuses of visa programs that undercut the American worker—this has been largely interpreted to refer to the higher technology community, which accounts for most of the H-1Bs and not paying them the going rate, or farming them out to other entities with less scrutiny. It would appear that Trump will continue the major elements of the H-1B program. Even Senator Jeff Sessions, nominee for attorney general, sponsored a bill that gives preference to those with advanced degrees from US institutions, or the equivalent from a foreign institution. This bill limits H-1B to three years, with extensions available to folks from US higher ed, professors and individuals of outstanding ability. Mr. Budde said UB can draw some comfort from recent initiatives in Congress. We don’t know which DHS secretary will be nominated—whether it will be Chris Kobash of Kansas, Sheriff Arpaio of Arizona, General John Kelly who led in Iraq and Afghanistan, or US Representative Michael McCall, who has said that the law is metaphorical, and whose focus on operational control of southern border. Their focus is expected to be on border security. There is a general desire to defer discussion of immigration policy reform. New executive orders are possible, but these are subject to judicial review by states going to federal court. This happened with the DAPA executive order of President Obama, which resulted in a court injunction. Professor Biehl noted that this will continue to be a subject of great concern. Dr. Wood and Mr. Budde will attend the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting next week to discuss

the draft sanctuary petition. Members are invited to submit their thoughts and observations on the current situation. In her work in the Academies, Professor Culleton asked about the concerns her students have raised. This is the first week she has spoken to domestic students about the election. One Trump supporter was fearful of expressing that preference at UB. Students of various persuasions feel anxious about their ability to speak freely.

**III. A Conversation about International Alumni and Philanthropy**—Kristin J. Woods, Assistant Vice President for Alumni Engagement, and Wendy M. Irving, Associate Vice President for Individual and Planned Giving

Professor Biehl noted how important the international alumni and philanthropy effort is to UB. Ms. Irving introduced herself. She has been in Philanthropy since the mid-1990s and is developing a strategy for international fund-raising. The domestic approach doesn't necessarily apply to the international context, especially in countries where there isn't a philanthropic tradition. It's early days yet and she is doing a listening tour to learn about the issues. She wants to learn from the schools' experience and not reinvent the wheel. There is an effective existing infrastructure. She plans to reach out to individuals across campus about her strategic planning exercise. Philanthropy benefits all of us at UB, and needs to be done well. Her questions include: what are the priority countries? Where to begin? Where do we have strong existing relationships? The aim is to start small and do it well. China, East Asia and Southeast Asia are the most logical starting points. UB needs to better understand cultural issues around charitable giving in other countries, where the tax codes may not favor this. In some countries charitable giving may be in its infancy. Where international students pay full freight, they don't feel beholden to alma mater. They can't be appealed to in the same way. Will domestic messaging work for prospects overseas? How to reframe the appeal? How to demonstrate success in the home country of international alumni? How to tailor our approach in terms of annual giving, etc? Only 8,300 alumni (with only 4000 current emails) outside US have updated addresses—and only 37 of these gave to UB in the past year. This is not troubling since we have not reached out to them systematically. Professor Biehl noted that in the future the eportfolio platform used in the UB Curriculum should help sustain contacts with international alumni, who can use the eportfolio after they graduate for career purposes. Professor Dunnett said that this is a fledging operation that has not been a priority in the past. He said Ms. Irving's questions are spot-on. He expressed appreciation for her excellent work to date. Kristin Woods briefly introduced herself—she has been at UB only four months and previously served in alumni engagement roles at the University of Richmond and Bucknell University. She looks forward to meeting with the Council again once she has developed plans for international alumni engagement that she can share with the Council.

**IV. Council Business**

Members were encouraged to RSVP for the annual CISP Awards Luncheon on December 5, at which Professor Debra Street would be honored. The nomination materials for the 2017 Award were distributed, and members urged to nominate worthy colleagues.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Wood, Secretary

## COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Attendance at the Meeting, November 30, 2016

Present:	Dr. Stella Batalama	Electrical Engineering
	Dr. Peter Biehl, Chair	Anthropology
	Mr. Oscar A. Budde (ex officio)	Immigration Services
	Dr. Yu-Ping Chang	Nursing
	Dr. Colleen Culleton	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Ms. Kathy L. Curtis	English Language Institute
	Dr. Stephen C. Dunnett (ex officio)	International Education
	Ms. Ellen Dussourd (ex officio)	International Student & Scholar Services
	Dr. David Fertig	Linguistics
	Dr. Christian Flaugh	Romance Languages and Literatures
	Mr. Joseph J. Hindrawan (ex officio)	International Education
	Mr. Christopher Hollister	University Libraries
	Dr. Junhao Hong	Communication
	Ms. Maria S. Horne	Theatre and Dance
	Dr. Christine A. Human	Engineering and Applied Sciences
	Dr. Shaun Irlam	Comparative Literature
	Mr. Wei Loon Leong	Alumni Engagement
	Dr. Donald McGuire	Classics
	Dr. H. Lorraine Oak	College of Arts and Sciences
	Ms. Mary Odrzywolski (ex officio)	Study Abroad Programs
	Dr. Mulchand Patel	Biochemistry
	Dr. Trevor Poag (ex officio)	International Education
	Dr. Jessie P.H. Poon	Geography
	Mr. Steven L. Shaw (ex officio)	International Admissions
	Dr. Claude E. Welch	Political Science
	Dr. John J. Wood, Secretary	International Education
Guests:	Ms. Wendy Irving	Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement
	Dr. Lisa Lenker	Community for Global Health Equity
	Ms. Kristin Woods	Alumni Engagement
Excused:	Dr. Tilman Baumstark	Faculty Affairs
	Dr. Janina Brutt-Griffler	Learning and Instruction
	Dr. Barbara B. Bunker	Psychology
	Dr. Filomena Critelli	Social Work
	Dr. David Engel	Law
	Dr. Graham Hammill	Graduate School
	Dr. Daniel Hess	Architecture and Planning
	Dr. EunHee Lee	Asian Studies
	Ms. Meredith Kolsky Lewis	Law
	Dr. Pavani Ram	Epidemiology and Environmental Health
	Dr. Othman Shibly	Dental Medicine
	Dr. Natalie Simpson	Management
	Dr. John H. Stone	Public Health and Health Professions
	Dr. Lillian Williams	African American Studies