

## Minutes of the October 30, 2012 International Education Task Force Open Forum

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by Dr. Kate Hawkins. The members of the Task Force were recognized.

The three main goals for the Task Force were discussed:

1. Increase participation in International Education, broadly defined.
2. Identify desired student learning outcomes and determine ways to assess them in a reliable and valid way.
3. Examine structure and function of the International Education Center with the goal of maximizing its effectiveness.

Dr. Hawkins advised that extensive research was conducted to inform the Task Force in its development of its recommendations. Two consultants assisted in that process: Dr. Jesse Lutabingwa from Appalachian State University and Dr. Sean Williams from Clemson University. Dr. Uliana Gabara from the University of Richmond was interviewed. Dr. Hawkins' COMS 605-01 class conducted focus groups and online surveys, and researched other IE programs from peer institutions.

The Task Force made 42 recommendations: 18 immediate goals to be achieved by academic year 2012-2013; 14 short-term goals to be achieved by the end of academic year 2014-2015; and 9 longer-term goals to be achieved by academic year 2015-2016 or thereafter.

Recommendations that have already been implemented or are in the process of implementation were discussed (see PowerPoint presentation for details). The next steps are to investigate developing a relationship with English Learning Services (ELS) to offer ESL (English as a Second Language) training on campus, and to hire a permanent director for the International Education Center.

The following are some examples of issues discussed during the Q&A. This list is not intended to be exhaustive:

- Q. The timing for an ELS center on campus.
- A. The earliest would be next fall.
- Q. Have there been any programmatic attempts to expose students to study abroad who may not know about that option.
- A. Per Dr. Hawkins, beyond her presentations to participants in Quest, she is unaware of any other programmatic efforts ongoing in the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences (CHBS). Additionally, there used to be an international festivals held on campus. If these occurred again, it might general student interest.
- Q. Has there been any resolution regarding financial aid disbursements for students who have to "front" funds.
- A. Per Teresa King, such disbursements are mandated by the federal or state agency (depending on the type of financial aid).
- Q. Has the task forced talked about how to acclimate international exchange students?
- A. Dr. Hawkins advised that yes, some things were happening like the "A Fair of Nations" event that is being held on 11/12/12. There has also been discussion about how to support international students. The task force is aware there are some issues and that a quality

learning experience needs to be offered to the students. An ELS center, along with having a full-time director for the International Education Center should help.

- Q. RU used to have an International Friendship Program where a faculty member became the mentor to an international student. Are there plans to have this program again?
- A. Teresa King advised that this is on her “radar” to possibly start again.
- Q. Did the committee discuss increasing foreign language options and/or how to implement?
- A. Most undergraduate degrees are Bachelor of Science, not Bachelor of Arts. The Foreign Languages and Literatures department has been expanding its offerings by adding Arabic. It may also offer Portuguese in the future. CHBS is also bringing in a consultant to assist the department with strategic planning to meet the language instruction needs for RU students.
- Q. Did the task force discuss the possibility of having work required for credit hours because some students think just going on a study abroad trip counts for a credit hour.
- A. Per Teresa King, each program has to have this information included in their initial submission before a study abroad trip is approved. Also, unit heads and deans must approve all study abroad proposals before they go to the International Education Committee for its approval. This should serve to systematize the review and make it more rigorous.
- There is need for a full-time director for many reasons; one of which is that a letter must be written to the Taiwanese students who will be coming to campus in early 2013. Provost Minner advised he would write the letter.

Before the meeting adjourned, Dr. Minner thanked the members of the task force for all of their hard work. He will be working with Faculty Senate President, Laura Jacobsen, for a way to move forward with international education at RU. He advised he has set funds aside to hire a new director. The task force will consider recommendations from faculty members about how to constitute a search committee and will forward a summary of its recommendations to Dr. Minner.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda McCroskey