

**Committee on International Students and Scholars
September 19, 2008 Minutes
Room 337 Jones Building, Macon State College**

Meeting called to order at 10:15 a.m.

Members in Attendance:

Jason Wynn	GCSU
Libby Davis	GCSU
Sharon Palms	FVSU
Jeanette Luster	AMC
Dwight Call	GCSU
Sue Watson	BOR OIE
Liz Travis	MGC
Sylvia Shortt	West GA
Heather Housley	GA State
Irina McClellan	VSU
Hollis McCollum	KSU
Jared Goodall	NGCSU
Tanya Grubbs	Ga Southern
John Parkerson	Clayton State
Jim Anderson	AASU
Adam Johnson	Columbus State
Erica Oshier	FVSU
Julio Espana	KSU
Chaudron Gille	Gainesville State College

10:20am

Item #4 on the agenda is discussed

Biggest issue is seen as the BOR strategic planning goal of having non-US citizens constitute 10% of total USG enrollment by 2012.

During questions and comments on the issue, it was discussed by the committee members what is the definition of a “non-US citizen.” Are those with dual-citizenship (between US and another nation) considered to be international for the purposes of fulfilling the enrollment goal?

Jim Anderson also made an excellent point that we should not forget about recruiting permanent residents who are already here, as they are considered to be non-US citizens, and we don’t have to go abroad to find them.

10:27am

BOR Update from Sue Watson:

The fiscal year has yet to be decided for BOR, and is still uncertain as to whether or not there will be any budget cuts.

BOR is going forward with the Internationalizing Campus Grant. Deadline for proposals is November 7, 2008. The four finalists will be posted on the website.

There is one faculty seminar to Thailand, sponsored by the Asia Council, which will have a criminal justice theme. The deadline to apply is January 2, 2009.

The core curriculum revision has been indefinitely abandoned. There will be a new committee appointed to determine whether or not they will go forward with a new core. Contact Dr. Susan Herbst, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer for the University System of Georgia, for more details.

New World Regional Council Chairs: Jose Da Cruz-Americas Council, Erik Kendrick-Asia Council

All-day workshops are becoming too expensive due to new budget constraints; therefore, mini-workshops have been suggested. Suggestions on mini-workshops?---Driver's License for international students and dependents.

Seven Revolutions: Fourteen faculty members have been selected for the 2008/09 year. Those selected will be attending a conference at UGA this October. For more information, please contact Susan Pratt susanpratt@usg.edu

10:37am

Update from World Regional Councils:

European Council:

There is a new summer program in Waterford, Ireland headed up by Charles Johnston of Valdosta State University.

The European Council no longer supports or has affiliate programs. The Montepulciano, Italy and Greece programs are no longer considered to be European Council programs.

10:40am

Sub-Committee Reports:

International Sub-Committee:

May need new chair for the sub-committee.

New report on progress of the sub-committee is needed.

There has been a complaint about not accepting 3-year Bachelor's degrees from abroad. Why can't they enter into master's degree programs?

IETLS and TOEFL Sub-Committee:

BOR must approve the use of IELTS for the purposes of undergraduate admissions to USG colleges/universities. Either each university needs to seek approval from the BOR to use the IELTS, or there can be a new motion passed, that would be state-wide, requesting that all USG institutions accept both exams.

BOR has already put together a sub-committee to work towards the adoption and approval of using both the IETLS and TOEFL exams.

Jason Wynn has volunteered to write a report rationale for the BOR approval committee and send it to Julio España (head of IETLS & TOEFL sub-committee). Julio will send rationale report along to the BOR committee for final approval. Jim Anderson suggests that all reports be dispersed electronically to expedite the process of approval. There is no opposition to this suggestion, and it is agreed to be done in that fashion.

International Student Handbook Sub-Committee:

After CISS meeting is adjourned, this committee will meet and determine who will be revising specific sections of the handbook.

Health Insurance Sub-Committee:

Progress has been difficult for the sub-committee.

There is a new differential fee structure for the 2008-2009 insurance plan for international students: Graduates=\$946 per year, Undergraduates=\$830 per year

The differential between international and domestic students is not resolved yet. There needs to be further clarification on what is happening, but the committee is not certain it is even worth pushing given the current budget restraints. Also, the status of the insurance policy holder is economically unstable (AIG current insurance policy holder).

A survey was conducted to see if the college/university presidents would be receptive to promoting a new policy regarding the international student insurance.

Bottom Line: Apart from the differential fee structure, Pearce&Pearce continues to be very difficult to work with, and unresponsive to the needs of the schools.

The BOR Student Health Insurance (SHIP) committee chair indicated that a consultant would be used to examine the insurance plan data, but subcommittee members quickly dismissed this idea as an unnecessary expense. It is unclear whether or not the SHIP committee will heed the advice of the CISS insurance subcommittee to not move forward with hiring a consultant. The data has already been examined and analyzed.

Some schools do not require certain (non-international) students in allied health profession majors to use this insurance -even though they comprise part of the "mandatory" population - but it is always mandatory for international students to use it. In doing so, international students bring down the cost for the domestic graduate assistants.

11:15am

Rick Sutton, the University System of Georgia Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs, joins the committee for further student health insurance and other sub-committee discussions:

Dwight states that there are two possible directions to be taken at this point:

1. Resolution to SCIE calling for a re-bid of the insurance plan
2. Resolution to the college/university presidents calling for a re-bid of the plan

Rick agrees that a consultant would be completely unnecessary. There is no need for a Needs Assessment.

One of the main issues is the problem is continuously bounced around at the BOR office. Currently the student insurance committee is headed by Tonya Lam, The Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and the needs of international students (who comprise the majority of plan users) are not being adequately addressed.

Rick believes the situation would be strengthened if the college/university presidents were involved at the chancellor's level.

Rick suggests a compromise: If the sector presidents say they want out of the insurance plan, this would allow each institution to deal with negotiating its own separate plans. ---Not entirely fair, but the situation is a catch 22 either way.

Whatever statement is written regarding the insurance issue will go straight to SCIE, but there will need to be strong presidential leadership in the process.

If no compromise or resolution is reached, then there might be a renewal of the current policy instead of a re-bid.---It is generally agreed that most schools would rather opt for a re-bid, or the schools that don't wish to continue with the plan can opt out.

Rick believes that the suggestion of a consultant is a stalling tactic by Pearce & Pearce.

Institutions need to mobilize their presidents to bring about change.

Jim Anderson suggests having an executive summary from last year to reference---idea very much liked by group.

The opt-out revision seems to be the overall preference of the committee members in order to get away from the current insurance problems.

SCIE will be meeting on Oct. 3rd, and a resolution will be drawn up and presented to them at that time.

11:26

Recommendation for IELTS to be used as well as TOEFL put to Rick.

Rick suggests that that also be discussed in the October 3rd meeting.

Rick mentions concern about international student recruitment to committee.

The BOR Strategic Plan calls for a significant increase in international student enrollments in USG institutions.

An increase of 10% or more is preferred (meaning 8000 international students within the next 5 years).

USG OIE has asked for strategic planning funding, but they are not able to get it now----maybe later?

Each institution needs to have a valid objective set for international admissions.

Having strategic plan for recruitment works best, so institutions should have one.

What defines an “international student” for admissions purposes?

Bottom line answer: Anyone who is not a US citizen can be considered an international student for admissions purposes. Meaning that Permanent Residents can count just as much as an F-1 student in terms of number of international students.

11:36

Jason Wynn presents a news article from the Chronicle:

Article outlines the use of recruitment agents to bring students to US schools.

Other nations have increased their international enrollment while the US is down in recent years.

Recruitment agencies can be useful, but the disadvantage to them is that you don't know the quality of the students that you're getting, and recruitment agents are very costly.

Upside to agencies: Can bring about a high increase in international admissions quickly.

A viable option for recruitment without spending as much money as with a recruiter is to use Education USA Centers because they are paid for by the US government.

Some recruiters can be hold I-20 documents until the student pays extra money (another arguent against the use of recruiters).

Result of the discussion of this article: Recruiters are difficult to justify due to uneven quality and high cost. USG schools almost never use recruiters to get international students. Jean suggests that we recruit Permanent Residents to boost our numbers as it would be less costly and still count as international student admission numbers.

11:45

Doing What's Right Hotline discussed:

Hotline was implemented this summer to report problems not resolved at the campus level. BOR wants to continue with hotline and create a “best practices” list.

Hotline is seen as a “safety net” or a last resort in helping to resolve student issues.

Volume of calls has been modest so far.

Hotline has a lot of potential benefit, but need to still work some things out.

Protocol for how complaints are covered to the hotline is also discussed.

Hotline is meant for faculty and staff to report unethical practices or issues.

Probably not a good idea to push for international students to call directly to hotline.

11:55

Training and Workshop discussion:

Sheila Schulte not present for her presentation.

Other mini-topics to explore for workshops?

International recruitment on the cheap

Maybe a good idea to set aside part of CISS meetings for mini-workshops to be more efficient with time—suggestion by Jean.

12:00

Other Business:

Sheila tells us that Lisa Ayala is no longer spearheading efforts to improve the driver's license situation. Sheila is now taken that over.

There is case of an international scholar suing the Department of Driver Services because he cannot get a driver's license for his spouse.

If an international scholar has no SSN, then how can he or she receive a paycheck? A scholar at Albany has been told he cannot get paid until he has a social security number. How do campuses work around this problem?

Dummy SSN?

Use receipt # for application of SSN in place of the SSN.

Students and scholars must wait 10-40 days after arriving in US to apply for a SSN

Maybe scholars can substitute employee campus ID# for SSN?

Next CISS meeting?

All want to do it on the same day as the Study Abroad Committee meeting, so must coordinate and it will be determined at a later date.

Reminder of GAIE conference on Feb 19-20, 2009 at the Mulberry Inn in Savannah.

Adjourned 12:05