Minutes from the Council for International Education

3:00 PM, Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Stipes Hall 207 and the Quad Cities via video conference

In attendance: Chandra Amaravadi (chair), Davison Bideshi, Christina Davis, Jeffrey Hancks (*ex officio*), Michael Murray, Rafael Obregon, Yong Tang and Carol Webb (via video conference).

I. Motion to approve CIE Minutes from February 1, 2017.

a. Motion seconded. Minutes approved.

II. Discpline Specific GI (DSGI) vs. General Education GI (GEGI).

a. Dr. Amaravadi informed the Council that item III was moved to second position on the agenda. The Council considered a request submitted by the Dietetics, Fashion Merchandising and Hospitality department, asking if it would be acceptable for their course ATM 375 (formerly FCS 375) to be changed from a DSGI course to GEGI. After brief discussion, by acclamation the request was approved.

b. The Council then considered a broader issue concerning the difference between DSGI and GEGI courses, specifically whether there should be a difference between DSGI and GEGI courses. Dr. Amaravadi suggested that the answer should be yes, based on the premise that GEGI courses would have a broader content and focus than DSGI courses. After brief discussion, the Council agreed and approved a wording change for the definitions of GE and DS GI courses. General Education GI courses would be described as those that “engage in critical study” of a topical area, whereas DS GI courses would “engage in in-depth critical study” of a topical area.

III. GI Course Procedures and Policies; Evaluation Forms.

a. Dr. Amaravadi distributed the latest revisions of the CIE Procedures & Policies and Course Evaluation forms. First, the Council considered the numbered items on the GI Course Evaluation form. For item no. 1, Dr. Bideshi suggested the term “VR experience” be added, as students in some classes now do virtual reality projects as assignments. The Council added the words “List countries” to item no. 2. Item no. 3 was unchanged. Items nos. 4 and 5 were slightly edited, and in item no. 5, wording was added to clarify that there must be a critical perspective in a GI course. Item no. 6 was changed to say that it applied only to DSGI courses. Items nos. 7 and 8 were unchanged. Suggestions for item no. 9, which asked how students demonstrated skills in dealing with global issues, included “Journal,” “A/V project,” and “Oral Exam.” For item no. 10, the term “significant” caused some concern due to its vagueness. Dr. Bideshi suggested that 60% of a course being dedicated to global issues would be “significant.” The Council also considered whether “significant” should be defined by hours spent on assignments, or if it should be stated in some percentage of course grade. Dr. Amaravadi suggested the Council return to these questions at a later date.

b. The Council then considered the GI Review Form and the procedures for using this form. Dr. Amaravadi said that the final review form would be used only if a course did not exhibit satisfactory compliance with the GI goals and objectives. Dr. Bideshi asked whether a department chair and the faculty member teaching the course would be notified if a GI class successfully met the GI goals and objectives. At this point, Dr. Hancks arrived and the discussion of the GI Review Form was laid aside to provide time for him to speak to the Council.

IV. Campus Internationalization.

a. Dr. Hancks passed out several documents outlining international partnerships the WIU shared with foreign schools and some of the international activities held here on campus. He also discussed relevant student services and activities, and academic and recruiting activities such as the Acirema International simulation, various food-related events, and the International Bazaar. Academic activities included the President’s International String Quartet, which recruits four international students to participate while they earn a master’s degree, hosting international scholars, various short-term programs within WESL, and the GIS program that hosts 75-90 Chinese students. Recruiting activites included the use of recruiting agents in foreign countries who receive around $3000 for each student who is accepted.

b. Dr. Hancks observed that the population of international students currently at the university is heavily skewed toward graduate students (70%), with Computer Science being the leader in this area. Dr. Bideshi commented that the number of students coming to the US from the Middle East, and particularly Saudi Arabia, is down now, and Dr. Hancks confirmed this, noting that the WESL population was down to around 20 students from a former high of around 100. Dr. Hancks noted that the number of Chinese students here was considerable but nowhere near where it could be.

c. Concerning the international partnerships list, Dr. Amaravadi asked which of the partnerships were still active, to which Dr. Hancks responded that Pedro Bidegaray would be better able to answer that; Dr. Hancks said he thought many of the partnerships were now dormant due to a lack of cash coming from WIU. Dr. Bideshi asked which of the campus international activities were most successful, to which Dr. Hancks responded that the cultural cafes tended to be popular, while cultural connection events tended to be less so.

d. *General discussion.* Dr. Webb asked what other universities do in terms of international activities and recruitment. Dr. Hancks responded that often, international activities and recruitment are handled by individual colleges within larger universities; here at WIU, we have let our International Studies department handle it, although this has been less successful. Dr. Webb stated that, for funding and other resources, local businesses ought to help out, citing John Deere in the Quad Cities as an example. Concerning the use of international alumni as a resource, Dr. Hancks noted that the Alumni Association does not do mailings outside of the US, so the university does not know where our international alumni are. Dr. Tang asked how internationalized our campus is compared to others. Dr. Hancks said that 1.2% of our students go on Study Abroad programs, compared to 20% of students at the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Davis stated that students often expressed interest in Study Abroad programs, but frequently could not afford them. Dr. Hancks added that we have not been very good about scheduling Study Abroad programs strategically, and that he would like to see the university set up a three-year cycle where various departments could offer Study Abroad programs in rotation. Dr. Bideshi stated that a Study Abroad program could be established as a requirement for graduation, but Dr. Tang cautioned that doing so might scare off some students. Mr. Murray asked if anyone had approached NTN-Bower as a possible source of financial and logistical assistance for students interested Study Abroad, noting that, as a Japanese company, it would be in an excellent position to help students do Study Abroad programs in Japan. To this Dr. Obergon added that we have students who do internships at NTN-Bower and that some of their people teach here as adjuncts occasionally. At this point, discussion concluded due to time running out.

VI. Motion to adjourn.

a. Motion seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at 3:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Michael Murray.