

International Education Council

Minutes of 20 February 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate International Education Council was called to order at 3:07 p.m. on 20 February 2025, via Webex video conferencing by Bradford Dennis, chair.

Members in Attendance: Bradford Dennis, Dyanne Foskey, Tarun Gupta, Lucius Hallett, Elena Lisovskaya, Shannon McMorrow, Michelle Metro-Roland, Joseph Milostan, Tamba Momoh, Anna Popkova, Yuanliang Sun, Abby Wang

Members Absent: Eric Archer, John Cooper, Anne Kairu, Reetha Raveendran, Ying Zeng

Ex Officio in Attendance: Janet Hahn

Guest: Dr. Brian Childs, Senior Director, International Student and Scholar Services, Haenicke Institute for Global Education; Susan Freeman, Associate Professor, Gender and Women's Studies

Quorum

A quorum was present with 13 members in attendance, of the nine needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

The agenda was amended to add Susan Freeman as a guest.

[MOTION] It was moved by Milostan, seconded by Wang, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

Correction made to Dr. Gregory's title to Associate Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion.

[MOTION] It was moved by Gupta, seconded by Milostan, to approve the 16 January 2025 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Dennis postponed the report until the IEC presents committee reports.

Ex Officio Hahn reported a brief update on the Undergraduate Studies Council discussion on Experience-Driven Learning, including study abroad. Memorandum of Actions needs to be submitted to the Faculty Senate Office by 17 March, though this probably doesn't affect IEC. Ex Officio Hahn reported on the progress of the process of developing a definition of Experience-Driven Learning by Milostan.

Reports of University Representatives

Milostan announced the Asian Initiative Gala Event at Miller Auditorium on 22 March, beginning at 6 p.m.

Metro-Roland announced the Fulbright reception at Richmond Center on 21 February.

Momoh reported that Brian Childs and other representatives from different departments attended a Graduate Student Association (GSA) meeting. GSA is planning an end-of-the-year gala for graduate students and preparing to complete the constitutional review by the end of the spring semester.

There was no representative from the Western Student Association to provide a report.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Gupta reported that the College of Engineering committee met on 13 February 2025. There were discussions on transportation and health insurance. Despite ongoing discussions, no progress has been made. Enrollment was also a topic of discussion. Chair Dennis plans to discuss global rankings with the provost if the interim provost can attend the April IEC meeting.

Wang reported that the College of Business (COB) committee met on 14 February to discuss short-term study abroad programs. Many countries are on the list.

Popkova reported that the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) committee met and discussed requirements, eligibility, and review process for the International Study Abroad Scholarship to make recommendations for improvements.

McMorrow reported that the College of Health and Human Services committee (CHHS) met with the CHHS dean and discussed collaboration opportunities for study abroad programs. Study abroad will be showcased in March.

No other college-level committees provided reports.

Committee reports postponed to the March meeting to accommodate guests and have enough time for discussion.

Speakers

Childs introduced and discussed the Office of International Student Services functions. Gupta asked why the process for arranging volunteer positions for the students who are searching for jobs has become so complicated. Childs explained the process but also stated that this specific issue has not been a priority recently and promised to look more into it and provide more details.

Freeman discussed efforts by WMU faculty and the Kalamazoo Immigrant Solidarity Coalition group to protect students who are threatened by the current political development in the US. Freeman shared links to upcoming meetings of various advocacy groups, a link to the letter signed by many WMU faculty and allies expressing solidarity with students and committing to supporting them, and links to various helpful resources on knowing one's rights in the current political environment. Freeman's remarks were followed by a discussion on how to support students, including international students, in the current political environment, what is the role of faculty, staff, and university administration in all this, how and where to look for reliable information, and how to coordinate efforts. Childs mentioned an upcoming town hall for international students where many of the questions that students are currently concerned about will be addressed. Metro-Roland also brought up the issue of many international students possibly not going back home this coming summer because of the fear of not being able to re-enter the US despite having legal status; this potentially creates the need for additional financial support to them over the summer.

New Business

Wang shared insights from international student enrollment data for the last 10 years. Wang gathered all data in an Excel spreadsheet and reviewed it with IEC through the key insights on enrollment trends. The data is available on the IEC Teams folder along with the presentation shared by Wang.

Announcements

McMorrow announced an event on a community conversation about refugee women will be held on 27 March at Swain Library at Sangren Hall beginning at 3:30 p.m.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Wang, seconded by Milostan, to adjourn the meeting at 5 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The International Education Council will meet next on 20 March 2025 at 3 p.m. via Webex conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by Anna Popkova, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 20 March 2025.