
International Education Council

Minutes of 18 November 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate International Education Council was called to order at 3 p.m. on 18 November 2021, virtually via Webex video conferencing by D. Eric Archer, chair.

Members in Attendance: D. Eric Archer, Ellen Breakfield-Glick, Joan Conway, Bradford Dennis, David Huffman, Shannon McMorrow, Michelle Metro-Roland, Ann Miles, Anna Popkova, Xiaodan (Abby) Wang, Jim Whittles, Hanny Wuysang, Paulo Zagalo-Melo

Members Absent: Griffin Baginski, Dyanne Foskey, Jun-Seok Oh

Ex Officio in Attendance: Matthew Mingus

Guests: Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Jennifer Harrison, Director, Social Work

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Mingus, seconded by Dennis, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by McMorrow, seconded by Want, to approve the minutes of 14 October 2021 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Archer introduced new council member Joan Conway, CELSIS. He provided an update with a presentation including data from participation in the November ACE Internationalization Lab 2.0 workshop.¹ Discussion items included mobility updates and government relations. The *Open Doors 2021 Report on International Educational Exchange* (for academic year 2020-2021) was released on 16 November 2021.² There were approximately 1 million international students in the USA in 2020-21, a decrease of 15% from the previous year. Country-specific decreases include China, India, South Korea, Canada, and Saudi Arabia. Declines by region included 15% from Europe/Middle East, 15% from Asia, and 15% from North America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the *Open Doors 2021 Report* snapshot indicated that international student enrollments rebounded during the current academic semester. Eighty percent of U.S. universities participating in the survey reported increases in international student enrollment in fall 2021 with an overall increase of 64% relative to fall 2020. Three hundred fourteen thousand student visas were issued for far in fall 2021, 20,000 more compared to the same time last year. Another important issue to be aware of is new fees proposed for student visas (\$250) and applications for optional practical training (OPT) (\$500) in the *Build Back Better Plan* currently being debated by Congress.

Chair Archer stated that the council will discuss resources for international student inclusion at the 9 December meeting, particularly focusing on the needs of Afghan students, and the recently released *Compact for International Student Inclusion and Success*³ (American Council on Education report).

¹ <https://www.acenet.edu/News-Room/Pages/Transformation-Lab-Participants-Meet-Challenges.aspx>

² <https://opendoorsdata.org/>

³ <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Intl-Students-Monograph.pdf>

A question was raised regarding the increase in international student visas and OPT fees. Archer stated that his understanding is that the fees were included to cover aspects of the costs related to the *Build Back Better* legislation. Mingus noted that public policy experts have argued that the new fees may violate laws related to the process by which the U.S. State Department sets its fees (e.g., the visa fees must recoup the cost of issuing services).

Ex Officio Mingus reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Board is discussing the possibility of a visit from Board of Trustees Chair Lynn Chen-Zhang at an upcoming IEC meeting. The University Strategic Planning internationalization workgroup has been formed, and the planning process continues to progress. Several members of IEC were appointed to the internationalization workgroup.

Reports of University Representatives

Zagalo-Melo provided the Haenicke Institute for Global Education report. He stated that the search for a study abroad specialist is underway. HIGE has a liaison from university advancement as part of the capital campaign that will help build a narrative around internationalization and advancement. The goal is to add a global narrative into the college-level campaigns. HIGE is working on several important potential partnerships with several countries. If the yield is as expected, enrollments will be similar to the Haworth College of Business program with Taiwan and mainland China. These programs are difficult to negotiate, but they lead to important connections and collaborations. The requested partnerships began with partner universities seeking greater collaboration with WMU.

Metro-Roland provided an update on Afghan students who have been offered doctoral admission to WMU. She stated that several alumni have contacted Congressman Fred Upton's office. However, the U.S. Embassy has not been prioritizing student visas for Afghans. Two of the students were able to cross the Afghan border into Pakistan and obtained appointments for visa interviews. It is anticipated that they will arrive on campus in January.

Zagalo-Melo shared the difficulty of international transfer students obtaining honors recognition due to the minimum number of hours that must be completed at WMU. He asked for the council's support of a proposal to the provost that will address this issue. Chair Archer suggested this topic be discussed with Provost Bott later in the meeting.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Chair Archer provided an update on the American Council on Education Internationalization Lab 2.0 process. The leadership team attended the 16 November meeting and will continue with monthly workshops and meetings. Meetings have been scheduled with the leadership team and their ACE mentor to discuss deliverables that will result from the process.

Zagalo-Melo provided a University Strategic Planning internationalization workgroup report. He stated that the workgroup has yet to hold its first meeting. The workgroup will coordinate with the ACE Internationalization Lab 2.0 process. IEC is represented on the internationalization workgroup by council members Huffman, Dennis, McMorrow, Archer, and Mingus. Zagalo-Melo will co-chair the workgroup with Lee Honors Dean Irma Lopez. Zagalo-Melo asked for monthly updates regarding the internationalization workgroup to be added to future IEC agendas.

McMorrow, Popkova, and Wang provided the Boston College Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) Summer Professional Development Workshop report. There were five individuals, including McMorrow, Popkova, Wang, and Archer, in attendance at the July event. HIGE provided the funding for the tuition of the four WMU participants. Wang commented that participants were given several readings to respond to over a week. Readings addressed internationalization of the formal curriculum, the informal curriculum, and the hidden curriculum. The formal curriculum addressed components related to internationalization in the classroom. The informal curriculum addressed student experiences with internationalization outside of the classroom (the co-curriculum). Finally, the hidden curriculum addressed activities, such as international student orientation, interactions with faculty and staff, etc., that may send messages, either intended or unintended, to domestic students that separate them from

internationalization on campus. Popkova shared the workshop agenda that emphasized both local and global connections to domestic diversity and justice. McMorrow reflected on connections to initiatives in public health and shared resources. Questions included sharing the resources and where to house them so that others could benefit. It was suggested to use Elearning or Microsoft Teams.

New Business

Chair Archer suggested that the council discuss the upcoming 9 December meeting with Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion Candy McCorkle. The council hopes to capitalize on synergy with efforts by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion specifically related to inclusion for international students and scholars. Several topics for discussion were proposed.

1. Chair Archer welcomed Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott and proceeded to provide a presentation about current progress and plans related to internationalization initiatives at WMU. Topics included:
2. Challenges related to international transfer students receiving honors recognition. Bott supported IEC working with the Faculty Senate to develop a Memorandum of Action that will propose solutions to the issue.
3. Bott discussed the important synergy between the ACE Internationalization Lab 2.0 and the internationalization workgroup for University Strategic Planning. She mentioned the Strategic Planning Town Hall meetings and encouraged council members to attend. Bott reported a comment that was made at a previous Town Hall meeting that internationalization was aspirational and not an integral part of WMU. However, Bott would like to work with the IEC to help advance the narrative that internationalization is very much an integral part of WMU's past and ongoing success. Every classroom course can have an international element, and Bott asked the council to help all faculty at the institution to understand this concept.

Questions included:

1. The need to emphasize internationalization in the tenure and promotion process. Bott deferred to the importance of Departmental Policy Statements (DPS) in guiding decisions about tenure and promotion at the department level.
2. It was asked if Academic Forum could be a venue to stress the importance of internationalization as integral to the academic mission of the institution, to which Bott was supportive.
3. Logistical barriers and University procedures for the value of visiting scholars. Bott acknowledged the issue and asked the council to present its recommendations for action. Zagalo-Melo added that WMU has had 300 visiting scholars during the pandemic. Chair Archer applauded this and suggested that more could be done to make WMU an attractive institution for even more visiting scholars.
4. It was asked how the aspirational comment mentioned above by Bott could be addressed. Bott suggested building curriculum around internationalization.

Announcements

Mingus stated that the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is still accepting applications for the Director of the Global and International Studies program.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Whittles, seconded by McMorrow, to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The International Education Council meets next on 9 December 2021 via Webex video conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by David Huffman, Secretary

Minutes approved on 19 December 2021.