**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**International Engagement**

**September 22, 2016**

1. **International Engagement**

**a.**      **Background:** It is believed that an audit was initiated within the past few years.

**b.**      **Issue:  The results of the audit are unknown.**

**c.**       **Resolution: The Provost is inquiring…**

Response by International Engagement:

In 2012, International Engagement (IE) received approval from the Provost Office to engage the consulting services of ICS Consulting. This audit was requested to analyze the various compliance requirements of the Department of Homeland Security through the SEVIS System. The audit was completed in June of 2012 with IE receiving an overall Good Rating.

IE undergoes a Recertification process every 2 years through the Department of Homeland Security in regard to F-1 visa students. The most recent Recertification process was approved in May of 2016.

IE is also required to complete an Annual Report to the Department of State regarding any visiting students, professors, or research scholars sponsored by UCA. The report is due every July and IE consistently receives positive responses to this report.

During the Summer of 2016, UCA Internal Audit reviewed IE’s policies and procedures regarding Student Worker timesheet entry and training. Internal Audit recommended that IE improve oversight of student worker time sheet approval and that proper training is provided to students relating to time keeping practices. IE completed a comprehensive review of the internal process, procedures and required training related to student workers. The revised policies and procedures were accepted by Internal Audit.

IE welcomes further discussion regarding the audit or the mandatory reporting required by the Federal Government.

1. **Weekend Study Areas**

Response:

Additional information is requested in order to address this concern.

1. **International Engagement**

a.       **Background:**International application process is not being helped by International Programs office. Lack of communication with students and faculty, lack of advocacy for students, lack of teamwork with students and faculty. Generally poor customer service.

Response:

IE would be happy to address particular concerns with faculty members or departments in order to avoid future frustration by all those involved in the international admission process. We do pride ourselves in our customer service efforts to both students and faculty members who are involved in the international admission process. IE has received positive feedback from both students and faculty, but strives to continually improve our processes.

IE would like to provide additional information as it relates to the International Admissions processes. In this process all international admission documents are reviewed to determine if a student meets the admission requirements set by the university. Specific documents are also required of the student to issue immigration documents in order for the student to apply for a visa. This past Summer and Fall, the number of international applications increased substantially. The number of Summer applications increased from 127 in Summer of 2015 to 269 in Summer 2016. Also, the number of Fall applications increased from 441 in Fall of 2015 to 726 in Fall 2016. Along with this substantial increase in applications, the two (2) International Admission Counselors absorbed additional responsibilities due to the resignation of the two (2) International Student Service staff members during the Spring 2016 semester.

Again, IE would welcome further conversations to improve our processes and communication regarding the admission process.

b.      **Issue:**A number of concerns were expressed about international students and programming through international engagement, including:

 i.     Recent changes to scholarship policy that disallow institutional scholarships being offered to international students is having a negative impact on the diversity in the Honors College

Response:

IE was not involved in the recent changes to the Honors College scholarship policy. However, IE is in support of international students being eligible for membership in the Honor’s College. It is the understanding of IE that the Honor’s College scholarships are no longer available to international students because of the reclassification of this scholarship as an Academic Scholarship rather than a Departmental Scholarship.

IE awards scholarships to international students and will award over $180k this academic year.

 ii.      The current leadership is not effective and the unit is very dysfunctional.  It has experienced nearly 100% staff turnover in the past 4 years and there are significant performance issues related to international student services (the Nepalese students this summer), study abroad, and international student recruitment.

Response: Due to the complexity of this concern, IE will provide a comprehensive response at a later date.

iii.      Various departments, including AAC, Library, and UC need more advanced notice regarding arrival of large groups of international students, especially during the summer.

Response:

Given the recent trends of international students enrolling in University College courses, IE understands the importance of working more closely with the UC. IE will be more active in alerting other departments, specifically those mentioned, to ensure preparations can be made. IE will work with departments on an individual basis to ensure adequate notice is provided. We welcome other departments not listed to contact us directly if they have questions regarding the new groups of international students.

Please note IE maintains ongoing communication with various departments including the Intensive English Program, Housing Department, SHC, Cafeteria, and Student Accounts, among others, to alert the departments of the incoming international students. Also, IE has invited the AAC international student advisor to IE weekly staff meetings for the past 2 years and continues to do so. As preparations begin for the arrival of new international students, meetings are held directly with the AAC and information is continuously shared.

iv.      What is the current strategic plan for recruiting international students? What areas are we recruiting from?  How can we be better prepared to ensure that they are successful here?

Response:

President Courtway assigned IE the goal of having 750 international students enrolled at UCA by Fall 2017. To meet this goal, IE set annual benchmarks for international student enrollment and specified recruitment efforts would focus on three world regions: Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The international student recruitment plan was based on goals established in the University wide Strategic Plan and was approved and published in the Enrollment Management Plan complied by Institutional Research in August 2014.

International Engagement (IE) developed a sustainable international recruitment and retention program. The plan is based on creating and maintaining mutually beneficial trusted partnerships that ensure student success and academic excellence.

Increasing enrollment of international students brings diversity to the classroom and the community at large. In order to effectively attract, enroll, and retain international students, UCA will need to provide a welcoming campus climate. Every member of the UCA community will have a shared role in internationalizing UCA and the community at large. See excerpt below:

INTERNATIONAL student recruitment

From the UCA *Strategic Plan*

**Goal 6**: Promote Diversity in All Areas

**Objective A**: Increase gender and racial diversity as highest priorities, but seek also socioeconomic, ethnic, linguistic, cognitive, intellectual, and age diversity in student, staff, and faculty populations.

UCA’s Office of International Engagement (IE) has introduced a five-year plan to increase international student enrollment in support of the UCA Strategic Plan. This plan is not only focused on increasing international student enrollment but also on diversifying the international student population.

Table 1: Past International Enrollment

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Term** | **International Enrollment** | **Countries Represented** |
| Fall 2009 | 602 | 66 |
| Fall 2010 | 578 | 66 |
| Fall 2011 | 623 | 61 |
| Fall 2012 | 528 | 60 |
| Fall 2013 | 489 | 59 |

IE has established goals for the next five years and identified particular world regions for recruitment. Moving forward, IE will focus on recruitment primarily in three world regions – Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa – in order to accomplish this goal.

Table 2: Goals for International Enrollment

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Total International Enrollment** | **Latin America & Caribbean** | **Asia** | **Africa** |
| Fall 2014 | 550 | 50 | 350 | 100 |
| Fall 2015 | 625 | 95 | 355 | 115 |
| Fall 2016 | 700 | 120 | 385 | 125 |
| Fall 2017 | 750 | 130 | 405 | 135 |
| Fall 2018 |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Updated International Enrollment 2011 to 2016 | | | | | | |
| Term | Total Enrollment | Degree Seeking Students | Total Visiting Students\* | GEP | Exchange | Countries Represented |
| Fall 2016 | 630 | 601 | 29 | 19 | 10 | 73 |
| Fall 2015 | 606 | 553 | 53 | 43 | 10 | 72 |
| Fall 2014 | 575 | 496 | 79 | 63 | 16 | 73 |
| Fall 2013 | 489 | 441 | 48 | 39 | 9 | 59 |
| Fall 2012 | 528 | 446 | 82 | 75 | 7 | 60 |
| Fall 2011 | 623 | 498 | 125 | 117 | 8 | 61 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| \*Visiting Students consist of students participating in the Global Education Project and those associated with Exchange Agreements | | | | | | |

*How can we be better prepared to ensure that they are successful here?*

International students are in a unique situation at UCA: away from their home country, often for the first time, and adapting to a completely different culture and language environment. International Engagement (IE) aims to ease this drastic transition by immersing the students in campus life, ensuring the students feel at home, and fostering adequate preparation for the academic challenges ahead at UCA.

IE begins each semester with an orientation program. Team Global, a volunteer student ambassador program, helps engage international students with current UCA students in various activities during orientation and beyond. Additionally, international students can participate in International Friendship Outreach, which hosts students to provide them with a sense of home. IE works to continually communicate with the students, using social media outlets, such as Facebook, to keep them constantly engaged.

IE works with other university departments to advocate for the unique needs of international students, such a keeping campus housing open during winter break and helping with communication barriers. Although IE aspires to get the graduation rate for international students as high as possible, their initiatives are aimed at all international students (including exchange and visitor), while standard retention and graduation rate only looks at first-time undergraduates; as IE serves a larger population outside this defined group, accurate assessment of success is more difficult. That being said, degree seeking international students have the second highest undergraduate graduation

 v.      There has been discussion on campus about many international students arriving at UCA and testing positive for TB.  What is being done to avoid this? What is being done for the students who are here?  What is being done to prevent spreading of TB to other campus members?

Response:

IE is required to provide a comprehensive Orientation for new international students each semester. IE organizes international students into teams as they go through the different aspects of the Orientation schedule. Along with obtaining student ids, tours of the campus and mandatory immigration and insurance session, all international students are scheduled to receive immunizations and the T-Spot by the Student Health Clinic. Students begin these appointments on the first day of Orientation, but due to the large number of students each semester some are not seen until the second or third day of Orientation.

IE met with the SHC at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester to discuss new trends and how to adjust to these. Below are the notes from the meeting:

1) International students, particularly those from high-risk countries, will visit Student Health on the first day of orientation. International Engagement will require students to complete their Student Health paperwork before arriving at Student Health to expedite the process.

2) Visits at Student Health will start an hour earlier, at 9am, instead of 10am.

3) Student health staff will give clinical screenings along with the T-spot screening. This will take longer per student, but allow for more prevention, as symptoms such as fever would be caught.

4) Holds will still be placed on student accounts as a way to alert them and help get them back into the clinic for follow up.

5) Student Health will provide a list of high and low-risk countries for TB exposure to International Engagement.

6) Student Health will provide a list of students who test positive on the T-spot (and clinical screening if applicable) to IE, so they can get in touch with students to insure follow up.

7) For communication to those concerned: The health system infrastructure is in place in AR to treat people for symptoms, or prophylactically. Also, no students who has been screened and had their test results/X-rays come back has had active TB to date. Only active TB is contagious.

The SHC adheres to the Arkansas Department of Health rules and regulations regarding Tuberculosis screenings. These guidelines can be provided if desired as well as additional meetings with IE and the SHC.

 vi.      We have had outside agencies “certify” academic credits to allow international students to apply to UCA, and they perform badly. Sometimes these students already have a degree in some majors or credentials are otherwise not evaluated properly. Can we ensure that reputable certification firms are used for students coming to UCA? Why are we spending so much effort on international students, when we have a domestic market for potential students?

Response:

IE consulted with the UCA Registrar’s Office in 2013 to identify International Education Evaluations (IEE) as a reputable credential evaluation company that prospective students could use during the admission process. IE strongly recommends that international students with foreign transfer credits use IEE in the review of their foreign transcripts because IEE will perform a UCA course match. Other credential evaluation companies do not provide this service and some are simply not reputable. IE consults with the Registrar’s Office as prospective international students submit evaluations from other companies to determine if they will be approved. WES is a very well-known credential evaluation company that has been accepted, but their evaluations have caused some concern in the last few semesters.

IE is actively working with the Registrar’s Office to improve the credential evaluation and review process.

In regard to the recruitment of international students, IE was charged in the President’s “Framework for the Future” to increase enrollment by 50 students each year to 750 international students.

vii. Wasn't there a recent audit in IE maybe 2 years ago? What was the result?

Response:

This is addressed in I. a. above.

 viii.  I taught in Shanghai this summer under the auspices of UCA's Confucius Institute.  While there I heard disturbing reports of how participants in our exchange program with East China Normal University had been treated by UCA's International Programs director.  I had suffered my own frustration when trying to work with Jane Williams.  Having been sent to India by a previous International Programs director to sign an exchange agreement with the University of Mysore, I was contacted by that campus after the exchange agreement had lapsed to see if it might be renewed.  I explained that I was no longer Director of the Humanities and World Cultures Institute or Coordinator of Asian Studies, but that I would alert Ms. Williams of their interest in reestablishing this connection.  I met for 75 minutes with Ms. Williams and was given her warm assurance that the exchange agreement was very much in UCA's interest and should be renewed, and that she would have a new document prepared for me to carry to Mysore when I went to lecture there for a week during our spring break.  In addition, she would provide me with gifts to bring to the Vice Chancellor and the other university officials with whom I would be meeting.

As the day of my departure I approached, I tried repeatedly to contact Ms. Williams to secure the promised exchange agreement and the gifts for university officials.  She neither answered my e-mail nor returned my phone calls.  I was forced shamefacedly to tell the former Vice Chancellor (our great supporter in Mysore) that I myself did not understand why Ms. Williams's assurances were not being honored.

The University of Mysore was originally seen as a perfect match for UCA.  One of only five federally funded universities in India, it controls a business computer program in Bangalore (the center of American outsourcing to India), has a major program in nursing that includes folk remedies, and is the depository for the largest collection of Sanskrit manuscripts in the world.  I will retire from full time teaching at the end of this year, so am no longer active in international programs.  However, I am exasperated to see the damage done by Ms. Williams to programs that I and others worked so hard to build.

Response:

ECNU exchange students: IE was unaware of ECNU exchange student concerns with the Associate Director or Associate Vice President. Upon receiving this information, IE met with the Director of Confucius Institute and the Deputy Director of Confucius Institute (who is also a faculty member at ECNU). Neither knew of any complaints. ECNU is a valued partner. IE will follow up to learn about the exchange student complaints from the faculty member. IE strives to ensure all international students have rewarding, positive experiences at UCA.

Mysore University: IE is very interested in supporting faculty and their work and interest in international programming, including student and faculty mobility. IE conducted a comprehensive review of partnership agreements beginning in 2013. The review was difficult, because MOUs were found in two laundry baskets in a storage closet, digital copies of MOUS did not exist, and the legal agreements were inconsistent in format and documentation.

IE worked with UCA University Counsel to create a template for the: Global Education Project Agreement, Exchange Agreement, and Framework for Cooperation Agreement. The former Study Abroad coordinator was assigned to work on an updated UCA - Mysore University agreement using the approved template. Unfortunately, the contract was not completed. Jane Ann Williams was at the two-week Baden Wurttemberg Seminar in Germany. She and the other participants did not have internet connectivity for quite some time. Her last correspondence regarding the Mysore contract was by email in May, 2015. Had she been aware of the difficulty, she would have personally resolved the issue. We apologize for the error. We will send a letter of apology to Mysore and follow up on renewing the partnership.

c.       **Resolution:** IE is on the agenda for September 22nd to address questions/concerns. Please have all questions/concerns in at least a week out so they can be prepared to address them.