**Minutes: Academic Senate Standing Committee on Internationalization**

Friday, 4 December 2009

Present: Ball, Li, Mihalopoulos, Orf, Peters, Schmidt, Stunkard, Shevy

Excused: Mowafy, Siles

Absent: Oates

Meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m.

Meeting schedule for the Winter 2010 semester will be Fridays at 11 a.m. on the following dates: 15 Jan, 29 Jan, 12 Feb, 12 Mar, 26 Mar, 9 Apr, 23 Apr. If there is no pressing business in a particular month, a meeting might be dropped.

Agenda approved.

Last meeting’s minutes approved.

**Reports**

**Chair Report**

Orf attended Louise Bourgault’s funeral.

COI voted to have Orf ask the following question of the International Studies Program: Would the International Studies program like to establish a course evaluation/feedback system similar to the Honor Board’s proposal? And if so, how would you envision it?

Comment made: If the International Studies program is satisfied with the nature of their course evaluations and feedback, COI should not get involved.

The proposal for eliminating the foreign languages requirement from the honors program has not yet been sent to Senate.

Orf made the COI presentation at the Academic Senate, and it seemed well received.

Orf won two awards for the international photography contest.

**Secretary Report**

Shevy attended Louise Bourgault’s celebration of life and learned that a Dr. Louise Bourgault International Student scholarship endowment is being established.

Thanks to Mowafy and Stunkard who filled in with COI secretary duties recently.

Orf did a good job with the COI presentation at Academic Senate.

Web site will be updated soon with this semester’s minutes and the COI Senate presentation. Shevy will also update the operating procedures.

**Executive Director of International Programs Report**

No report.

**New Business**

Discussion: It might be a good idea to invite the Northwind to write an article about COI to promote further exposure of our committee to the campus.

**B. Best practices for preparing Freshman International Experience Students**

The concern expressed in the previous meeting was whether freshman students and their professors need extra preparation (e.g., concerning drinking, etc.) before travelling. Orf asked Susan Morgan, who agreed that this might be a special group, but there is a Risk Management group on campus who should be handling it.

**C. Possible Mentoring Program for New International Students**

COI discussed getting various student groups, international students, and international academics to interact and support one another. Privacy issues can be a barrier – student names aren’t released, so it is difficult to contact them.

Mentoring benefits the international student as well as the domestic student.

Schmidt found it very helpful when she studied abroad to have contact with a student before arriving, and then to have a student contact while abroad (more comfortable than being with older administrators/faculty).

Possible ideas: Students can show how to use laptops, professors can make mentoring/working with international students part of a course syllabus, mentors can help deal with homesickness, places to live (e.g., type of community support & transportation), dietary considerations, etc.

**D. Guest Kim Rotundo, Registrar**

If a student passes a pre-approved special topics course that was Pass/Fail in the university abroad, it’s assigned a grade of S/U or “C” if NMU requires a grade. If the course at another university is graded, NMU always uses the grade assigned; the student does not have a say.

If the course is purely satisfactory/unsatisfactory, it does not affect GPA. If NMU assigns a grade to a course where the student earned an “S,” it is assigned a 2 (C).

Most courses taken abroad are counted the same as NMU courses, including the grade assigned. The vast majority of courses taken abroad come in as grades, few are S/U. The credits count toward graduation.

Generally, 296/496 courses do not count toward a major or minor.

An S usually counts toward graduation as a general elective.

Recommendations for students: Find courses of interest. Go to each department and get approval to apply it toward an equivalent NMU course – before they leave.

Registrar problems: If it’s approved as 4 credit NMU course, but it’s a 3 credit course overseas, it cannot be assigned as that NMU course. It needs to be assigned as a Special Topics course for the proper number of credits.

You can only do special topics if the course does not match a course at NMU. The faculty make the decision. Or if the credits don’t match, it can be special topics.

Making a substitution for a course requires approval of the department offering the course, either by the dept. head or the curriculum committee. If course is to count toward Liberal Studies, it needs approval from the Liberal Studies Committee unless it clearly matches a current LS course, then the registrar can make the determination. (Few courses from abroad count toward World Cultures requirement).

Both students and faculty need better education on the processes involved in setting up a study abroad. One recommendation that COI could make is that students go to schools with which NMU has prior history and agreements – the process for making course substitutions will be easier. (Orf: However, these schools may be more expensive than schools students find on their own. Also, since Spanish is spoken in 20 countries, students have many opportunities to find programs that suit their interests. We don’t want to limit them to a smaller number of schools).

Another option is that students do not enroll at NMU for a semester. They can then transfer the credits to NMU. This requires hiring an external credit evaluator who will evaluate the transcript to see how the courses will transfer ($185), which the student would pay for.

The registrar recommends creating a checklist and a timeline for students, administration, and faculty, so they know what they need to do and advise. (COI comments: International Programs may have one, but few students/faculty know about it. It takes about 1.5 years to plan for study abroad).

**VI. Old/Ongoing Business**

Schmidt is talking with people regarding students who will be here over winter break. University apartments and some dorms stay open. She is still following up on this.

Peters: Siles submitted a web portal to the library featuring other campus’ internationalization best practices, including reports on what is and isn’t working on individual campuses. It may be very helpful in developing our own practices. To find it, do a catalog search on campus internationalization.

**VII. Good of the order**

Winter break is around the corner.

Peters turned in his retirement notice; it will be Fall 2010.

The meeting was adjourned at 12: 28.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Shevy, COI secretary**.**