2009-2010

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES COUNCIL

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During the academic year of 2009-2010, the International Studies Council (ISC), in close cooperation with the International Programs Office (IPO), continued its evaluation and approval of several agreements with universities in other countries, discussed and approved proposals for courses which included an international study component, reviewed its mission, formulated initiatives concerning Haiti and the international features of the university’s planning. This report will present only some of the highlights of the various activities of the Council during 2009-2010.

The Council discussed, evaluated, and approved semester- or year-long academic exchange programs and/or courses which involve international collaboration. Among the former, for example, the council reviewed and approved an agreement on Education and Research exchanges with Hokkaido University of Education; the University of Massachusetts system-wide agreement with Tsinghua University in Beijing; an Exchange Agreement with the Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany; an agreement with the Technische Universität Berlin; an agreement with the University of Toulouse, France. In the latter category, the ISC endorsed a Winter Session course in Amazonian Shamanic Medicine; a Spring Break course in Tropical Field Biology in Costa Rica and Panama; a Winter Session program to study business and culture in India.

The Council reviewed its mission which included a special meeting with the Provost concerning the University and its International reach. The Council also continued to serve as a site for the coordination of international programs and research activities on campus. Several reports were given throughout the year on various research teams and projects across the campus. The Council researched, reviewed, and discussed repeatedly the “umbrella” program for Joint and Dual degree programs on our campus.

The Council discussed, supported, and/or was involved in hosting delegations from the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore; the University of Copenhagen; the Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies; and the Hacettepe University, Turkey.

The Council created a document concerning the campus and Five College activities in response to the earthquake in Haiti. The document was sent to the Chancellor, the Provost, and the Secretary of the Faculty Senate. This included the general resolution: That the University of Massachusetts Amherst make immediate and direct efforts to augment our existing support for people-in-need from Haiti; and the particular Action Items: (1) that as the leading research university of the Five Colleges that UMASS Amherst take the lead in developing future programs of research about reconstructing Haiti; (2) that UMASS Amherst facilitate bringing to campus students-in-need from Haiti (as we did for some students displaced by Hurricane Katrina) as full-time students, graduate or undergraduate, and/or as participants in our summer programs; (3) that UMASS Amherst facilitate bringing Haitian faculty to campus for purposes of education, teaching, and research; (4) that the Provost’s Office and the Graduate School of UMASS Amherst encourage academic departments to make available a TA-ship or RA-ship in their MA and/or PHD programs for academically qualified candidates from Haiti; and (5) that the University and the Five Colleges select one faculty member and one student from each campus to form an Action Team for Haiti to create and coordinate activities on, and among the campuses.

The Council’s International Education Week Subcommittee helped coordinate and publicize events for that week. Similar committee work was done to help address issues concerning recruitment and admissions of international undergraduate students to campus and to explore ways in which the undergraduate admissions process might be improved for international students; the International Studies Council also reviewed its bylaws.

The Council proposed to the Faculty Senate the establishment of two ad hoc committees: One to examine health insurance issues pertaining to our exchange programs; the other to explore faculty development pertaining to the influx of international undergraduate students.

The Council looks forward to continuing its efforts in internationalizing the campus, its members, and programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Donal Carbaugh, Chair, International Studies Council