Minutes - ISC meeting December 7, 2009 (submitted by Sherry Bohonowicz)

Attended by: Frank Hugus, Don Gjertson, Nigar Khan, Steve Forrest, Irena Bozin, Elizabeth Schumacher, Todd Crosset, Yariv Levy, Nate Therien; Guests: Regine John, Michael Zink

1) The chair of the Council, Donal Carbaugh, was absent from the meeting; Donald Gjertson volunteered to chair the meeting.

2) Approval of the November 2, 2009 minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the November 2nd meeting; it was seconded, and the minutes were approved.

3) Action Item
A motion was made to review the proposed winter break Faculty-Led Program in India. Donald Gjertson informed the Council that COPE had already vetted the proposal.

Professor Todd Crossett from SOM explained that this 3-credit SOM course combines readings and lectures with a two-week journey to Southern India to study business and culture in the world’s largest democracy and the only predominant Hindu culture on earth. While in India, students will meet with Indian college students, business leaders, and will tour business facilities and cultural sites, attend lectures, and immerse themselves in the culture of South India. Classroom seminars for participating students start at the beginning of November and continue through December. Following the trip there will be 4-6 lectures and the students will complete a research paper.

4) Discussion followed:
Questions were raised about the student to faculty ratio. There will be 6 adults to 13 students. All safety concerns were adequately addressed. Comments were made that this program looked more like a tour rather than an academic course. Professor Crosset responded that many marketing and sports marketing majors will be attending this course, and the content is indeed very pertinent to their major. The airfare and the stipend for the directors of this program are paid by student fees.

5) Approval
A motion was made to approve the program; it was seconded and voted unanimously.

6) Action Item
A motion was made to review the proposed Exchange Agreement with the Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany. The purpose of this agreement is to revive an academic exchange of undergraduate and graduate students between the Technical University of Darmstadt and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Other forms of collaboration and exchange, including exchanges of faculty, doctoral students, administrators, and business leaders from both countries are also encouraged.

The student exchange will be limited to up to 2 Engineering and Computer Science majors from each university per year. For outgoing UMA students a minimum GPA of 3.0 is required, but knowledge of German is necessary. The TUD’s International Research Experience Program work is conducted entirely in English. UMA students will receive 6-9 US credits for the supervised research project. TUD does offer courses taught in English, and students will take one
or more additional courses taught in English for their major. Engineering students are encouraged to take a pre-semester German language course. There is scholarship money available from Darmstadt. A UMass Civil Engineering student is going to participate spring 2010.

7) Discussion:
The discussion was very brief, and all ISC members present agreed this was a solid academic program that has a lot of potential for other STEM majors in the future.

8) Approval:
A motion was made to approve the program; it was seconded and voted unanimously.

9) Report on Dual /Joint Degree Programs:
Nigar Kahn stated that the Dual degree program is still under discussion. Frank and Donal attended a meeting with Nigar. There was discussion about the transfer of credit by the academic standard committee.

10) Report by Director of IPO:
• Frank Hugus will attend an IRAC meeting in Boston on Thursday, December 10.
• The Spring 2010 ISC meetings will be held on the first Monday of each month at 4:00 PM.
• The Boren Scholarship deadline is approaching, and Frank is looking for faculty members to review the applications.
• International Education week was very successful and included a faculty international research panel, a panel by Afghan students, and a faculty workshop for short-term programs.
• Still needed: members for a “Recruitment and Admissions Policy Sub-committee” of ISC. Now that the Admissions Office is under the Provost, and an enrollment manager is being hired, the sub-committee could work with this person to help increase international enrollment.

11) Other business

• Frank spoke with Secretary of the Faculty Senate, Ernest May about the Tsinghua University agreement. Secretary May felt that the President’s office shouldn’t have pushed the agreement through as it did. A meeting should be held between Provost Staros and Vice President Marcie Williams to discuss how all the campuses can work together on this and other international issues.

• Regine John reported that UMass Amherst was among the top five universities nationwide for students receiving the Gilman awards for study abroad. To receive this award the student must be Pell Grant recipients, have a high GPA, write an essay, and perform community service upon return

12) Meeting adjourned at 5:10PM