

Advisory Committee on International Study (ACIS)
Annual Report 2007-08

The membership of the Advisory Committee on International Study (ACIS) for the 2007-08 academic year consisted of the following individuals:

Erica Bastress-Dukehart, History, Chair and CEPP representative
Sylvia Franke, Biology
Leslie Mechem, Classics
Paty Rubio, Foreign Languages & Literatures
Cori Filson, Director, OCSE
Marie Alice Arnold, Senior Program Coordinator, OCSE
Tina Breakell, Program Coordinator, OCSE

The committee met 6 times this year.

OCSE MISSION STATEMENT:

In 2007-2008 the Office of International Programs changed its name to the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, and thus, adjusted its Mission Statement to more accurately reflect the changing nature of the office and the launch of domestic exchange initiatives. A new OCSE Mission Statement was created, reported to CEPP, approved, and has since been instated. Additionally, in light of the Mission Statement change, the ACIS charge and name as it pertains to domestic and international study was reviewed. The name was still deemed accurate by ACIS, and it was determined that no adjustments were necessary and the charge stands as CEPP had originally created, with the exception of the name change from "Office of International Programs" to "Off-Campus Study & Exchanges."

DOMESTIC OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

During 2007-2008 OCSE broadened its portfolio of domestic programs. With the addition of programs, ACIS's advisory role to OCSE also increased.

Last spring OCSE began to administer the National Student Exchange (NSE) program. (NSE is a 3-year pilot program that will be brought to CEPP at the end of the three-year term to determine if the program should be formalized or terminated.) This year ACIS continued to review this program as it developed, and also to offer advice regarding potential future agreements between Skidmore and other domestic institutions, including Spelman College and Howard University.

In addition, OCSE added two other domestic off-campus study programs to its portfolio: the Washington Semester and Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory. Historically, the Dean of Studies has administered these programs. This structure existed before OIP/OCSE was established. With the creation of OIP/OCSE and the subsequent expansion of OCSE's portfolio to include domestic programs, shifting these two programs to OCSE made sense. Administratively OCSE is better prepared to support the departments and the students interested in applying to these programs. There was also discussion of OCSE administering the Dartmouth 3-2 program. However, upon further discussion with the Dean of Studies and faculty from Physics and Math, it was determined that this is truly a degree program (not an off-campus study program) and should remain under the Dean of Studies umbrella.

As ACIS chair, Erica Bastress-Dukehart will bring further NSE and domestic initiatives to CEPP this summer, including the recommendation that ACIS maintain its advisory role regarding domestic initiatives.

APPROVED PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Initially, ACIS and OCSE hoped to have 15 sites evaluated each year. This could include several sites evaluated by the same faculty member on one site visit. However, throughout the process it has become clear that this number is unrealistic. There were several site visits for which ACIS received no nominations – this even after OCSE solicited nominations from specific chairs and program directors. Overall, faculty seemed interested but unable to commit the time needed to conduct these evaluations. OCSE continued to stress the importance of faculty involvement and participation on these evaluations, as they are critical to the success of the approved program structure.

ACIS discussed this struggle and the fact that programs need to be evaluated to maintain the kind of quality control necessary for the approved programs structure. Recommendations included having ACIS members conduct the evaluations as part of their service to the committee; having OCSE staff conduct evaluations that faculty are not willing/able to conduct; moving the faculty training workshop to the beginning of the school year (when faculty are nominated) to allow OCSE to educate faculty of the seriousness of the commitment they are making when agreeing to conduct a site evaluation; allowing departments and academic programs to nominate programs they are interested in rather than assigning programs each year; having Cori Filson approach the chairs of the departments to encourage nominations; having Cori talk with chairs and program directors to determine how they would like to utilize the evaluations (visits and subsequent reports); having Erica and Cori present issue to chairs and directors at an Academic Staff Meeting to stress the importance of the initiative and to get feedback.

This issue is still under discussion and will be continued in the fall.

SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS

ACIS reviewed several issues regarding short-term faculty-led programs. This year the amount of time taken for faculty short-term program proposal review was problematic. It took three months to review two proposals for the 2008/2009 Academic Year. The current process is cumbersome and ineffective causing many problems within OCSE and with faculty.

OCSE proposed that in the future, ACIS take over the responsibility of short-term program proposal review, and include with the Director of Summer Programs, Jim Chansky, to ensure that there is no summer/semester program overlap. OCSE recommended that 1) ACIS and the Director of Summer Programs review proposals and report approvals of expressions of intent to the Associate Dean of Faculty; the Associate Dean of the Faculty would review them with an eye toward any institutional curricular and resource issues; 3) ACIS and the Director of Summer Programs review final proposals; 4) ACIS forward approved proposals to the Associate Dean of the Faculty for final review; 5) the Associate Dean forward final proposals to curriculum committee for final approval.

ACIS continually discussed, and was updated on the New York State Attorney General's inquiry into study abroad practices at US accredited colleges and universities. The subject of the

Dublin:

NYU Tisch School of Arts, Dublin, Ireland (Elissa Nadworny, '10)

London:

Laban School of Dance, London, England- AY 2008-2009 (Jesse Kovarsky, '10)

Merida:

University of Minnesota in Merida,

