

Advisory Committee on International Studies
October 27, 2006

In attendance: Marie Alice Arnold, Cori Filson, Deb Hall, Kate Leavitt, Leslie Mechem, Rajesh Nagarajan, Mary Beth O'Brien, Patricia Rubio

Agenda items:

1. Additional Petitions

OIP brought another petition to the committee. The new program is actually better suited to the student. The committee approved the program. The committee also recommended that OIP only bring to the committee petitions that are problematic or questionable in some regard.

Again the course approval process was discussed. Students should meet with advisor to see if they can graduate, chair can only tell them what course will count for toward major. Students must attach the course description and syllabus if possible. Otherwise chair cannot determine approval.

2. National Student Exchange

The committee had a number of recommendations to make regarding the development of the program here on campus. It felt that a number of programs would benefit from the flexibility the program would offer their majors. It recommended that OIP discuss with each department ways that the program supports or benefits the academic area. What goals could be accomplished. They would like to see the program less specific than the approved programs. Could Muriel discuss this at the Chairs retreat in December?

The committee did have a number of points that need further researching with NSE. There may be some institutions that are more specialized in an area, with pre-requisites for courses that don't fit well with what the Skidmore department offers. For example there may be an area at Skidmore where we only have one or two classes and at the NSE institution students have been taking specialized courses since their first year. The equivalencies may not translate easily. This could be a let down for the Skidmore student who might find themselves in courses not really appropriate for juniors. OIP is recommending a similar pre-approval process as that for study abroad. OIP sees that some institutions will fit better with different departments here at Skidmore. Experience and working with those institutions early on will facilitate credit transfer and approvals. Options will be limited through advising not through another process.

The committee also recommended that OIP allow departments to choose if they want to develop a list of compatible institutions and programs preemptively or work with students on an individual basis to assess a program for that student. There are probably departments that want to work either way.

While students interested in the self-determined major might really be assisted through the program it could also cause problems for students upon their return. There might not be sufficient support at Skidmore for the type of work done as the NSE institution. This should be alleviated through working with the student's advisor.

There was another concern that having so many program options may allow Skidmore to choose to not develop particular programs. Some thought it might have the adverse affect as well, through introducing students to program areas with little depth at Skidmore.

Since there is no data out there that give us an idea of student interest. The committee felt OIP should revise the expectations on numbers.

The committee also felt not enough was done to address the lack of peer institutions on the NSE list. More should be included on why that is. It should be clearer as to why that is considered a benefit of the program. There are a lot of good institutions that isn't the trouble but why the lack of some institutions.

If projected student number hold, the committee thought it was a lot of work for so few. They wondered there was a way to develop it as a Pilot program for a specified period of time at which point it would be reviewed. If successful in meeting stated goals, then it would be instated as a program. If not it could go away.

Committee members thought that the cost of the program (Skidmore tuition) would prohibit participation? Students are not currently taking academic leaves to pursue these types of opportunities. Some need for it to be an organized program. A program would lessen the ambiguity of how it will fit into academic plan at Skidmore. Students could still petition to go outside the NSE

exchange for financial reasons. Also in-state vs. out-of-state tuition lessens financial impact. As is an exchange paying for student coming here, there is no financial gain to college.

This would count towards one of a student's two study away semesters covered by financial aid.

The committee also wondered if there was any way to try to foster some closer ties to some of the NSE institutions through faculty exchange or visits? OIP thought we could arrange things one on one. Cori felt she had enough to re-draft the proposal to CEPP.

3. Program Integration/Pre-departure/Re-entry

Mary Beth had reviewed Doug Reilly's web resources on study abroad. She thought there were a number of ideas that looked good: Global Ambassador program, linking study abroad students with international students, Away Café/Abroad View – a space for students to share experiences, and promoting more work with Academic Festival. Mary Beth noted that there was a Union College connection that we should explore.

Cori will be away for the next scheduled meeting. The committee agreed that unless there was pressing business the committee will not meet November 10.