

USG Committee of International Students and Scholars
Minutes of January 20, 2006 Meeting
Macon State College

Meeting convened at 10 AM

Attendance

Present: David Adewuyi (Albany), Jeanette Luster (Atlanta Metro), Gina Thurman (Augusta), Jean Myers (Clayton), Sherry Brinson (Columbus), Aya Ogawa (Darton), Libby Davis (Georgia College), Charlene Graham (Georgia Highlands), Sheila Schulte (Georgia Tech), Julio España (Kennesaw), Liz Travis (Middle Georgia), Ann Tallant (North Georgia), Mary Ann Kelly (UGA), Irina McClellan (Valdosta), Caesar Perkowski (East Georgia), Sylvia Shortt (West Georgia), Jim Anderson (Armstrong), Ivan Nikolov (Valdosta), Joan Stalcup (Georgia Southern), Debra Denzer (Georgia Perimeter), Beverly Y.M. Tarver (Medical College), Gerald McIntosh (Fort Valley), Judd Jones, Jalana Robinson (Columbus), Sue Watson (USG OIE), Akanmu Adebayo (chair; Kennesaw)

Welcome and Self-Introduction

Adebayo thanked Richard Beaubien for his prompt submission of last meeting's minutes. Libby Davis volunteered to take minutes for this meeting. Members introduced themselves.

News from Campuses

Adebayo asked if there were any news/announcements from the various campuses that attendees would like to share. He reminded members of upcoming conferences in February: the **Georgia Association of International Educators Conference** in St. Simons, Feb 8-10, 2006, which includes a NAFSA PDP F-1 Basics workshop on Feb 8, and the **Georgia International Leadership Conference** at Rock Eagle 4-H Camp in Eatonton on Feb 24-26, 2006. More information is available at the GAIE website at <http://www.gaie.org/>.

Sylvia Shortt announced that Susan Geary, Director of SEVP, will be at the GAIE conference. She and Sylvia will be doing a session on Thursday morning at 8:45. Also in attendance will be Lloyd Swift (Atlanta CIS) and Kevin Furline (ICE) for the US Immigration Q&A on Friday. A discussion followed about the difficulty in getting US government officials to attend NAFSA conferences, in particular officials from the Department of State. Mary Ann Kelly shared information about ACIP (American Council of International Personnel): www.acip.org. She said this organization is an excellent resource on immigration issues. She attended one of their conferences and said many government officials attended, including Sally Lawrence from the State Department.

Sheila Schulte announced that Georgia Tech was launching a new International Plan to internationalize the curriculum, and that there will be a session about it at GAIE.

Approval of Minutes

Ivan Nikolov moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting, and Mary Ann Kelly seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Update on health insurance:** Adebayo read an email from Doug Podoll dated 1/17/06. He said no contract had been signed yet, and seven bids were made in response to the RFP. The cost proposals have been reviewed, and they're waiting for negotiations to be done and a contract to be signed. Until that point, Doug and other Task Force members cannot legally reveal any information about the bids. Sue explained that the DOAS makes the final decision based on cost and recommendations from the committee. She also warned that even if the premiums turn out to be reasonable right now, they could easily increase in future years.

Sheila Schulte asked what does "mandatory" mean with regards to this new policy, and a discussion followed about concerns of this proposed plan and the effect it would have on international student populations. Questions remained about whether or not students and campuses could be exempted from this plan with proof of other coverage. Adebayo said he would ask Rick Sutton and Doug if they know how "mandatory" is defined by the USG Health Insurance Taskforce. Jim Anderson asked if the committee should forward concerns to the SCIE with instructions that the SCIE should forward them to the chancellor. Adebayo explained that action had already been done following the September 2005 CISS meeting, and the concerns were already received by the USG Health Insurance Taskforce. Several committee members felt it was important to communicate the committee's concerns again, especially as a new chancellor will soon arrive, and to be prepared with a plan of action once the outcome of the bid process becomes known.

ACTION DECIDED: Adebayo would circulate a draft letter over the listserv that committee members could comment on. Then after any contract announcement is made, the response letter could be tailored to the specific situation and sent forth to SCIE and the chancellor's office.

Ivan asked if it would be a good idea to get the student body involved. Adebayo suggested that campuses go ahead and alert their international students that a new insurance policy could be in place by fall with significantly higher premiums.

- b. **News and updates from the USG:** Sue Watson said that the new chancellor should begin February 6.
- c. **Workshops:** Adebayo informed members that this item will be taken along with the collaborative training grant discussion.
- d. **Quick Updates**
 - i. **Board of Regents Policy Manual on in-state tuition classification and tuition waivers for non-citizens:** The policy is currently being revised to clarify and simplify the process and to be parallel with federal financial aid guidelines and HOPE requirements. Once the residency manual has been revised, there will be training workshops. The question came up about which

office on campuses is responsible for determining residency and updating Banner with residency information. Sue explained that every campus handles Banner coding differently and that it is up to each institution to determine that.

- ii. **ESL Report:** Joan Stalcup reported that the report is still in progress.
- iii. **Undocumented student issues:** Adebayo mentioned if institutions are experiencing problems in this area, that they should inform Sue Watson.
- iv. **Global Partnerships and Best Practices competitions:** Applications are currently under review, and award announcements should be made soon. Sue expressed disappointment that there were so few submissions this year and asked for feedback on why that was the case, explaining that the grant program could be discontinued if it appears there is no need or interest in the funding. Jim Anderson said that he knew of a department on his campus that was interested but that they felt they needed more time to prepare and hoped to submit next year. Ivan mentioned that he had encouraged one of the schools at Valdosta University to submit by “nominating” them—a strategy that may be adopted where on-campus responses seem slow or not forthcoming.
- v. **Requested data on retention, progression and graduation of international students:** Sue said that only three institutions had sent her graduation statistics since the last meeting. Discussion followed about the need for some parameters and a specific request from the BOR office. Adebayo said he would work with Sue on sending out a request. Sue explained that she realized different campuses may have different means of measuring the data, but she said any type of data that members could send would be beneficial.
- vi. **Mini-grants for collaborative programming with visiting scholars:** Adebayo explained that the SCIE Study Abroad Committee and this committee were each being given a total of \$1,500 in mini-grant money (up to \$250 per request) that could be used to cover travel costs and accommodation for visiting scholars to visit different institutions. The Study Abroad Committee has already developed an application form and proposal guidelines for their mini-grants. Adebayo explained he would use those as templates and revise for this committee’s purpose and then send out to the listserv for comments.

NEW BUSINESS

NAFSA Collaborative Training Grant: Adebayo requested that the committee apply for a NAFSA Collaborative Training Grant. **Deadline to apply is May 31, 2006**. Guidelines available at: http://www.nafsa.org/about.sec/institutional_grants/collaborative_training_2
The committee divided into four small groups to discuss and brainstorm proposal ideas:

Notes from Small Group Discussion on Collaborative Training Grant

I. What issues are facing international student and scholar services on our campuses?

1. Tuition classification: residency issues/change of status
2. Limited resources (come up with student/advisor ratio)
3. Health insurance
4. Financial aid/scholarships for international students
5. Employment authorization/immigration restrictions; work: what is available, and what are parameters for getting a job; plus budget management
6. H1B issues: processes, regulations
7. Social security/DMV, etc
8. Mental health issues: initial adjustment, cultural perspectives regarding mental health, pre and post-departure stress
9. Diversity: helping faculty and staff understand international students, informing them of the requirements (all statuses), training of the campus in cultural adjustment/intercultural communication
10. Tax Issues
11. Academic advising
12. Community involvement / cultural assimilation
13. Evaluation of student credit or transcript evaluations on individual campuses
14. General programming/services for international students
15. Networking/communication among international students

II. On these issues, do you know who to call for expert advice?

One of the small groups addressed this question and listed the following:

- Taxes—Doug Podoll
- Orientation—Irina McClellan

III. Which of these issues do you think we need collaborative, state-wide training about?

- Taxes
- Diversity training for faculty and staff to learn how to deal with international students and scholars—all areas are important
- Orientation for international students
- Orientation for international scholars
- Mental health: network training for counselors using experts in field already in GA to help with state training; inviting counselors to GAIE; ask Sylvia Shortt for guidance

IV. What “how to” documents do we need?

- Share some orientation documents so other schools can borrow

- Good idea to have some sample documents for all areas online so that schools can share.

V. What suggestions do you have for the CTG?

- Use GAIE winter 2007 conference, organize several training sessions

A general discussion followed these small group discussions. Gerald McIntosh suggested having a subcommittee to explore and develop which grant ideas would be best to pursue. Adebayo asked for volunteers for the subcommittee. Sheila Shulte, Gerald McIntosh, Libby Davis, Ivan Nikolov, and Aya Ogawa volunteered. They will meet with Adebayo and Sue at the upcoming GAIE conference to discuss the grant proposal.

Date of Next Meeting

Friday, March 24, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Macon State College. Room TBA.

Other Announcements

Jim Anderson announced that the SCIE Study Abroad committee will be holding two identical **study abroad workshops** dealing with problems of transient students. The first will be held on Feb 27 at Clayton State University and the second on March 1 in the southern part of the state, most likely at Albany State University. Jim will send an announcement over the listserv.

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Training sessions will be held at GA State University on Feb 3 (beginner's workshop) and Feb 17 (advanced workshop). More information should be forthcoming.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Libby Davis