

W & M Faculty Assembly
College of Arts & Sciences
Report of the International Studies Committee
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5 February 2002

1. Past: The International Studies Committee (hereafter ISC) met three times during Fall Semester 2001. We began in September by approving a new study abroad program to Adelaide, Australia, but also by declaring our central business item for the year, namely: "redefining the ISC's charge." This has been a subject of growing concern in the last few years, culminating in a formal request for FAC aid last Spring.

For new and uninitiated members, of which there were many, a rough outline of ISC duties and responsibilities -- as we understood them to date -- was proffered. These included, more or less: 1) review of International Studies and International Relations curriculum changes, and 2) review of programs abroad. The second category entailed selection of resident directors for W&M foreign programs and review of new and/or temporary W&M foreign programs (as in the Adelaide case). Following the motion passed by ISC last Spring, it was agreed that the core issues in need of (re)definition were the committee's "mission, duties, and powers," particularly vis-à-vis the Reves Center and Dean of International Studies.

Although that June 2001 motion requested formation of an ad-hoc committee with college-wide faculty and Reves Center representation to redefine ISC's charge, the committee agreed to work toward redefining its own charge -- in close cooperation with Reves staff and Dean Reiss -- in the meanwhile. This seemed a reasonable course of action once we determined that there was *no existing charge* from which to work. Furthermore, much has changed since this committee was formed. It seemed prudent to make use of the memory and experience of veteran committee members, along with Reves personnel, while possible.

Following up on this still rather inchoate set of resolutions, our second meeting (in October) was aimed at something more basic: reopening, or at least expanding, lines of communication between ISC and the Reves Center. Dean Reiss and Ann Marie Stock shared with the ISC the Reves Center's current promotional/educational device, a fairly lengthy but still under-construction Powerpoint presentation. ISC members proffered opinions and suggestions for improving the presentation (e.g., placing more emphasis on international faculty as a resource, etc.), and also generated some wholly new ideas for programs, particularly in the area of community service abroad. This presentation and discussion were followed by business as usual, in this case selection of resident directors for W&M summer and semester programs.

It was in our last meeting of the Fall (in late November) that we agreed to devote Spring Semester to drawing up, revising, and so forth, a coherent charge, constitution, and bylaws. I drafted these for circulation at our first meeting of Spring Semester, February 1 (still in the future as of this writing). Other business included reviewing a report regarding the 2000-2001 Junior Year Abroad program in Montpellier, France, and selecting more resident directors for Summer 2003 programs.

2. Present: At present, the ISC faces a number of pressing items. Paramount among these, of course, is self-definition. Since the November meeting, the FAC has proposed a mediated settlement of this issue, entailing separate reports to the FAC from the Reves Center and ISC. I have responded negatively to this proposal for two reasons: 1) it greatly diverges from the ISC's June 2001 motion (calling for a joint, Reves-ISC ad hoc committee), and 2) it assumes no progress has been made since that motion was drafted.

3. Future: My alternative, or counter-proposal, simply entails allowing the ISC and Reves to go forward as planned to try to hammer out a charge, constitution, and so forth together (as the requested ad-hoc committee would presumably have done). This may well entail some meetings from which Reves staff are excluded, but whatever the precise mechanics, it seems to me this attempt at internal resolution ought to be given a chance. The document resulting from these discussions would then be submitted to FAC for review, revisions, and, presumably, approval. Both the ISC and Reves Center administration have much to learn from one another, as last year's misunderstandings revealed, but my sense is that the most effective and efficient means of rapprochement is already in place.