

Report of the International Studies Advisory Committee Bylaws Committee
Appendix to the May 3, 2011, Minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

To: The Faculty Affairs Committee, Faculty of Arts & Sciences, College of William & Mary

From: The International Studies Advisory Committee Bylaws Committee, Berhanu Abegaz, Tuska Benes, John Griffin, Bill Hutton (chair), Teresa Longo, Chris MacGowan, Deborah Morse, Ron St. Onge, Paula Pickering, Silvia Tandeciarz

Re: Final Report of the Committee

Date: March 28, 2011

Our committee was charged to review the reports and the draft bylaws produced in 2010 by the ad hoc committee for the prospective International Studies Advisory Committee (ISAC) and to consider what procedures and mechanisms were needed to further the strategic goals of the faculty in the area of international studies.

As a result of our deliberations, and on the basis of the work of our predecessors on the ad hoc committee, we have produced a new constitution and by-laws for the prospective ISAC. In our opinion, however, the strategic goals of the faculty cannot be achieved by this measure alone. Many of the changes that need to be introduced take us beyond the competency of an Arts & Sciences committee in that they involve other units and authorities on campus. We describe some of the issues below and provide recommendations that we urge the faculty and the dean pursue in cooperation with the provost, the Reves Center, the International Advisory Committee, and other entities on campus. Unless these problems are addressed by those who have the authority to address them, the effectiveness of any committee charged to deal with initiatives in international studies will remain limited.

I. PROBLEM: Faculty are engaging with students in many initiatives abroad with no oversight and no notification of responsible personnel on campus. While the committee does not want to discourage the faculty from developing new and innovative international initiatives, such programs expose the College and the faculty to huge liability risks. There are also problems of curricular coherence and inefficiencies in the use of resources that could be alleviated by greater coordination and faculty-wide awareness of international activities.

RECOMMENDATION: The ISAC, as we envision it, will act as a clearinghouse for information about the international activities of A&S faculty, the purpose being not to control or hamper faculty initiatives but to offer advice and coordination. We urge the dean to make clear to all faculty, prominently and repeatedly, that they have certain responsibilities when taking students abroad or

when mentoring students on projects that take them abroad. Among those responsibilities are the following:

- Faculty leading or mentoring students going abroad must inform ISAC prior to doing so. The committee's role will be not to hinder or control the initiative, but to gather information and assist the faculty in whatever way it can.
- Faculty must consult with the appropriate agencies on following proper risk management and liability control protocols. The ISAC will provide advice and assistance on this topic.
- If A&S credit is being offered for a course involving experiences abroad, the course must be brought to ISAC for approval, and then to EPC.

The dean and the faculty should also urge the provost, IAC, and Reves to formulate coherent College-wide risk-management protocols, and to disseminate information about them to the College community as thoroughly and as frequently as possible.

II. PROBLEM: Although the administrative services of the Reves Center/GEO have been invaluable in running A&S study-abroad programs, there have been a number of cases where faculty have felt that the decision-making processes of Reves could have benefited from more faculty input on matters of curriculum, finances, compensation, etc. Currently, while consultation between Reves and A&S faculty does occur, there is no institutional mechanism mandating consultation or providing a regular forum for faculty input. The committee notes that other units at the College manage their own study-abroad programs and have full control of their finances and administration. That Arts and Sciences does not have such control, when it provides the initiative, academic personnel, and curriculum for the vast majority of international programs at the college, presents a serious equity issue. Moreover, one reason that so many A&S international initiatives do not avail themselves of the services of Reves is the general sense among faculty that turning to Reves will result in a loss of control over their programs.

RECOMMENDATION: We urge the dean to negotiate, as soon as possible, a new framework agreement with the Reves Center that at the very least calls on Reves to make regular and timely reports to the dean or his designated representatives (such as the ISAC) on issues affecting A&S program administration and maintenance, including program finances. The suggestion has been made that IAC would be the proper forum for such reporting and consultation between Reves and A&S, but since IAC is not an A&S committee and includes non-A&S personnel, it cannot, by itself, represent A&S in this sphere. Adding IAC to the consultation protocol between Reves and A&S would introduce unnecessary delay, possibly hampering the smooth operation of programs for which decisions need to be made in a very limited time frame.

III. PROBLEM: Many international programs are also interdisciplinary in nature and thus face additional challenges. There is a serious gap between the purported mission of internationalization and the current academic infrastructure of interdisciplinary programs. This leads to a number of related problems, particularly in the staffing, funding, and long-term maintenance of interdisciplinary international programs.

RECOMMENDATION: The new draft of the bylaws specifies that one function of the ISAC is to act as advocate for interdisciplinary international programs, but the ISAC cannot act alone to create the conditions in which such programs can survive. We urge the faculty as a whole to support a more sustainable infrastructure for interdisciplinary initiatives.

IV. PROBLEM: Faculty who want to offer a course abroad frequently do not know what procedure to follow or whom to contact first.

RECOMMENDATION: The faculty should work with other entities across campus that deal with international studies, including the office of the VPIA, Reves Center, the Charles Center, the OCES, IAC, etc. to develop a standardized checklist that the directors and heads of those entities can hand out to anyone who approaches them with an idea for a study abroad program. To fulfill the needs of A&S, some items on this checklist might include the following:

- If this is an Arts & Sciences program, have you informed ISAC?
- Have you discussed risk management and liability control with the Reves Center (or other appropriate authority that may be designated)?
- If A&S credit is to be offered for this program, has it been vetted by ISAC and EPC?

With its campus-wide representation, the IAC, or an ad-hoc committee it appoints, may be the best body to develop such a checklist.

V. PROBLEM: The number of international initiatives is increasing so rapidly that it would be difficult for any committee to keep track of them.

RECOMMENDATION: The faculty should work with the registrar, the EPC and other interested entities to introduce a system of assigning attributes in the digital course listings to courses with an international field component. Courses to be designated in this way would include sections of courses regularly offered on campus when they are re-tooled for offering as part of study-abroad programs. This would allow easy monitoring and analysis of courses offered abroad. We have discussed this idea with the EPC and they are very supportive of it.

VI. PROBLEM: The committee notes that existing policy guidelines dealing with the creation and evaluation of study abroad programs are in many respects inconsistent with

current practice and will be even more inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws of the new ISAC.

RECOMMENDATION: among the first responsibilities undertaken by the new ISAC should be the revision of existing study-abroad guidelines for establishing new programs and for managing existing programs so that they are consistent with both current practice and the constitution and bylaws of the new committee.