February 3rd ISAB Meeting Minutes

ISAB Meeting Agenda – February 3, 2017
Reves Conference Room, 2nd floor of Reves Center

In attendance:
Eva Wong
Elkie Vandenbeemt
Hannah Song
Jennifer Beckensteiner
Lopa Das
Terry Ayuk-Takor
Yi Hao
Yiying Liu
Kun Tian

Introductions

1. ISSP Reports to ISAB
   a. Spring 2017 International Orientation
      ● 42 new students (20 students in Spring 2016)
      ● Big jump - doubled numbers
   b. Advocacy Day - March
      ● Lopa, Terry and Allison Esquen-Roca (ugrad student)
      ● Association of International Educators host Advocacy Day where they provide opportunities for higher education students/administrators to go to Capitol Hill to meet with legislators
      ● Can advocate on issues important to international students
      ● Increased attendance this year
      ● Association will release briefs on topics most relevant to the field currently - have not released these yet for this year
   c. W&M VPN provided to all enrolled students from China. Other students can contact IT for access
      ● A lot of W&M online services is firewalled in China, so this is very helpful
      ● Any other students who need this access can also get it for free, just need to contact IT
      ● Kun -- China is potentially increasing restriction on VPN - keep an eye on this to stay up to date on any changes that needed to be made
   d. Follow up to Outreach Interviews
      ● Meeting with Sodexo (Dining Services) about dining options
      ● Want to know more about what they offer for students
      ● Will be meeting with Sodexo
If you are interested in attending the meeting, contact Eva to express interest.

e. International Student Leadership Conference
   - March 24-25 (leaving W&M on March 24 and returning on March 26).
   - Reves will cover cost of ISAB students interested in attending
   - If you are interested, save the date - Elkie to lead the trip
   - Previous students have enjoyed the conference in the past

f. Writing Resource Center - now offering dedicated graduate student help
   - Graduate students can now request graduate students for help when they make an appointment
   - Unsure of whether they represent all fields of study or only select fields

2. ISAB Updates and Discussion

   a. Undergraduate Honor Council and meeting with the President?

      - No ISAB members participated in this

   b. Meeting with U of Richmond ISAB on Fri, March 3

      - U of R has its own ISAB
      - We have established an exchange between our board and theirs
      - Last year, their board visited us - now, they have invited us to visit them in Richmond
      - Reves will provide transportation
      - Day before Spring Break begins
      - ISAB members to email Eva if they are interested

   c. Thoughts and concerns regarding new administration’s actions related to immigration.

      - New executive orders have come out quickly since new administration has been established
      - Want to hear ISAB member’s thoughts and observations are regarding these orders, and the climate on campus as a result
      - Jennifer - new visa interview order
         - If you are here on a student visa, you can remain in the country (even if from seven restricted countries)
         - If student visa has expired, you can still legally stay in US
If visa expires and you leave, you have to apply for a new visa to come back in
Now, you must go into an interview every time you apply for a visa
Now must plan in advance if your visa has expired and you are leaving the country
  - Longer processing times - might impact students trying to get back into the country

Yiying - still safe to come and go from the country?
  - Yes - but administration might be extending restriction to additional countries in the future
  - If you have traveled to the seven restricted countries, you could be subject to extra questioning when trying to get in and out of the country

Hannah - how is OPT affected?
  - No changes to benefits right now

Yi - Do we have students from these seven countries
  - W&M has five here on student visas
  - Could be others as permanent residents, etc.
  - Reves has reached out to all of them

Kun - if OPT/H1B changes in the future, will students be informed?
  - ISSP is working to respond to everything that is happening right now but also what is coming in the future

Jennifer - One incident of racism at VIMS by Gloucester Point community member immediately after inauguration
ISSP has been heavily contacted with support since executive orders - people wanting to help and wanting to know how they can help

Study abroad advisors at Reves - understand that international students might be feeling anxious; provided some suggestions
  - 1. Postcards to mail to international students
  - 2. Video as part of #YouAreWelcome campaign (JMU video)
  - 3. Cardboard cutout
  - 4. Big banner that could be posted in a prominent place on campus
  - Video - benefits are that it’s easily sharable and accessible
    - Hashtag is unifying and can be used on a lot of different platforms
  - Cardboard cutout that utilizes the #YouAreWelcome
  - ISAB members hopefully offering their time to be part of any campaign that we move forward with
d. Updates from members (e.g., information and/or questions that Reves should know/that are important to international students)

- Yiying - has witnessed discrimination from W&M professor - will meet with Eva about this on a later date
- Kun - new rule regarding fire alarms at GradPlex - if you cause fire alarm more than twice, you are held liable for a fine; but potentially, there is a difference in sensitivity of fire alarms
- Jennifer - VIMS does international potluck; is GEA having a similar event?
- Yi - can we ask creative services to focus on any campaign we do in support of international students?
  - Working with Kate Hoving and creative services
  - My.wm.edu home page doesn’t feature many international students currently
- Terry - First Asian sorority at W&M just started
  - Terry to email his contact with the sorority to Eva

3. Future Meetings

Friday, March 3, 3pm
Friday, April 7, 3pm