

**International Student Advisory Board
The Reves Center for International Studies**

Date: October 19, 2014

Time: 2-3:35pm

Location: Reves Room

In attendance

Angel Zhang

Ashley Deng

Yi Hua

David Ji

Adela Roa-Voran

Eva Wong

1. ISSP Reports to ISAB

a. [Fall 2014 International Student Statistics.](#)

- Eva: We currently have 667 intl. student on campus. An increase of 83 students from last year. We have the largest group of intl. students coming in this Fall which provided some challenges in terms of coordinating orientation. There have been a consistent increase in the numbers of undergraduate students every year.
- Adela: We have some international students at VIMS that looks like they might not be captured in the statistics.
- Eva: The numbers only reflect students who are on F-1 and J-1 visas. They do not include students who are on other visa categories (e.g., A4, H4) or students with an international background (e.g., dual citizens, permanent residents, etc.). ISSP is primarily responsible for serving F-1 and J-1 students at W&M but we will also serve other student populations when the needs arises. For example, we allow students in other visa categories, permanent residents, etc. to attend our new student orientation.
- Angel: We have a huge representation of students from China and very small numbers from other countries.
- Eva: That is the trend for most US universities because China is the no.1 country sending out students to study in the US. W&M might be also losing diverse student pools to other universities because we have very limited scholarships to offer to incoming international students.

b. [Sunapsis](#) software rollout

- ISSP purchased this new software to increase efficiency, improve data accuracy and to convert our office to be a paperless one.
- This software will link Banner to SEVIS and thus increase the accuracy of data entry and required reporting.
- Most paper forms and request will eventually be submitted online and ISSP have been creating electronic forms.

- The new changes will take place in stages with a soft rollout in November (e.g., making some e-forms available).
- ISAB will be invited to serve a focus group for the new processes.
- c. Meeting with the Office of Academic Advising
 - Eva provided a presentation on international students to the Office of Academic Advising. Both offices discuss future collaborations to better serve international students.

2. ISAB Updates

- a. Updates from members (e.g., information and/or questions that Reves should know/that are important to international students)
 - Adela: Spoke to the VIMS international students and had the following questions/request:
 - An update on scholarships available for continuing international students. (Eva: Steve Sechrist mentioned that the terms of those two scholarships are still being renegotiated and will check with Steve to see if they are any updates).
 - An intro to taxes (Eva: Emily will work on securing a professor/professional to do an intro workshop for students in the Spring).
 - Suggested an event to introduce international cultures to the W&M community (e.g. intl. potluck). (Angel: The Undergraduate Student Assembly held "World Expo" which was "a gathering of cultural, international, and other campus organizations to highlight the fusion of traditional cultural practices and modern social issues" as part of "I am WM" week last spring. However, this was more targeted towards undergraduate students. If Student Assembly plans to do this event again, Reves and international students can be more involved).
 - Creation of an Intl. Student Association at VIMS to raise money for grants. (Eva – W&M does not have an umbrella Intl. Student Association. Angel: There are many cultural groups on campus (e.g., CCSA, CUSA, etc.) and can send the information to Adela).
 - Connection with American students/community members (Eva: Our [Global Friends Program](#) connects W&M students with local community members. The [Virtual Conversation Partner Program](#) matches incoming international students with domestic students for skype conversations).
 - ESL classes/research writing class for graduate students (Eva: The [Arts & Sciences Graduate Center](#) offers English classes but priority is given to A&S graduate students. At this point, there are no dedicated ESL/basic writing classes at W&M but the Reves Center's ESL Initiative is exploring offering such classes in the future).
- b. Progress report on outreach interviews

- Most of the ISAB members had already contacted their students but encountered the challenge of the students not responding to them. Members can contact Eva for new names if needed.

c. Checking-in on members' goals (fulfilling ISAB's mission)

- David and Angel hosted the 1st Homecoming Alumni Career Panel. There were 6 panelists and about 30 students attended the event. The panelists provided valuable information and the attendees were very engaged. The panelists stayed back to talk to individual attendees after the session. The Reves Center provided pizza and drinks.
- Angel has created the forms for a freshmen mentoring program and will meet with Eva to discuss the development of the program.
- Yi spoke to the SOE office manager and was told that the SOE does not have funds for international activities since there is only a small group of international students at the SOE.
- Ashley thought of doing a career info session for undergraduate students who are interested in law. Yi said that she could possibly collaborate with Ashley on a joint law-education career info session.

3. Discussion

a. [U of Richmond's ISAB](#) joining us on November 16, 2pm

- Discussed the agenda and objectives of the meeting.
- David: Each group can do a brief presentation. We can also share a summary of our outreach interviews.
- Eva: Will check with U of Richmond and also provide food for the meeting.
- The group felt that it was not necessary to meet without advisors present.

b. Academic Advising resources on campus

- Due to time, we decided to postpone this topic to a future meeting.

c. Sex and gender-based discrimination and violence

- Perceptions of sex and gender-based discrimination and violence in the US
 - What is the law? What is acceptable/not acceptable?
- Members felt that it was important to education intl. students on this topic.
- Information and resources can included in the handouts given to new students.
- Since this topic will be included in the New Intl. Student Orientation, we decided that we will pick discuss this topic again during a Spring meeting.
- Adela: Have some kind of mandatory online training for the students.

d. Change of ISAB meeting time to a weekday beginning Spring 2015

a. Fridays 3pm

- Members were fine with the new change.

4. Summarization and Future Goals

a. Set goals and agenda topics for the next meeting

U of Richmond visit

Will send out spring meeting dates

- b. Group photo
- c. Next meeting:
Sunday, November 16 at 2pm