

**Committee on International Students and Scholars
Minutes February 2, 2007 Macon State College**

Attending: Akanmu Adebayo (KSU), Sue Watson (USG OIE), Charlene Graham (GA Highlands), Todd Jones (GA Highlands), Amy Nyland (Columbus), Sherry Brinson (Columbus), Joachim Michels (AASU), Jim Anderson (AASU), Jason Wynn (GCSU), Libby Davis (GCSU), Doug Podoll (GSU), Jeanette Luster (Atlanta Metro), Sheila Schulte (GA Tech), Caesar Perkowski (E GA), Liz Travis (Middle GA), Jean Myers (Clayton), Ann Tallant (NGCSU), Aya Ogawa (Darton), Sabrina Stewart (Atlanta Metro), Nancy Shumaker (GA Southern), Adrienne Langston (GPC), Debra Denzer (GPC), David Adewuyi (Albany State), Julio Espana (KSU), Beverly Tarver (Augusta), Angela Cooley (GPC), Ivan Nikolov (VSU)

Collaborative Training Grant on Intercultural Communication: Sheila Schulte distributed brochures describing the “Trainer the Trainer” Intercultural Communication Initiative. Sheila went on to describe that the purpose of the grant and the workshops is to create two “campus trainers” from each of the USG schools to help compile a training manual for use throughout the USG and to, in turn, train staff and faculty on their own campuses in intercultural communications. The goal is to build better communication skills, train staff and faculty in how to deal with international students and staff, and build understandings of cultural diversity.

Two people from each campus would be eligible for a grant to attend the workshops and in turn conduct training programs on their own campuses prior to Sept. 30, 2007 when the grant cycle runs out.

“Campus Trainers” should read Milton Bennett’s *Handbook for Intercultural Training* prior to the workshop. Campus trainers will be provided with a manual at the workshops and may use this and the “master trainers” from the three workshops as support in their own training efforts.

USG Info website has information about the workshops, applications may be found at USG Training. Workshops will run from 10am to 3pm in the following locations: Atlanta, Valdosta and Macon.

Sheila opened the floor to questions and answers. VPs of academic affairs, registrars, departments of housing and admissions were informed via email of the workshops, and brochures were also sent to these individuals. Concerns were raised that the time given to the campuses to find representatives to attend the workshops was insufficient.

Sheila explained that the cost of attendance for two reps from each school would be covered by the grant but more reps could attend, space permitting. Reimbursements would be awarded with the understanding that two representatives from each campus would carpool. The attendance target is a maximum of 70 attendees between the three workshops. One of the features of the workshop would focus on understanding Arabic-speaking cultures.

House Bill 72: Dr. Adebayo asked the committee members to consider ways in which to respond to the proposed state bill. One committee member stated that the campus legislative liaison from Georgia Tech thinks that the bill may not go forward and that there is no great concern that the bill will pass. One committee member expressed concerns with how schools would be expected to take attendance with graduate students. (???)

A committee member explained that the bill, which originated in the Homeland Security Committee, is currently assigned to the Education Committee. The speaker of the committee is trying to keep the bill “off the floor” (in committee) in the belief that if the bill hits the floor that it could pass.

The committee expressed a concern that the bill would produce an unrealistic workload for universities. All campuses were asked to respond discreetly and with a quick bullet list of their key issues and concerns. The committee position seems to be that any debate about HB72 is best kept quiet and out of the public eye to avoid forcing the issue to a vote in the house. Dr. Adebayo recommended that committee members talk to their campus legislative liaisons. It was suggested that committee members look to local law enforcement for support as the bill would create an unrealistic workload for them as well. Some committee members did not support this suggestion.

International Student Recruitment: Dr. Adebayo reported that the USG has terminated its contract with Hobson’s. Several schools have registered with i-studentadvisor.com. i-student advisor’s services are reportedly the same price as Hobson’s but i-studentadvisor offers better capabilities for tracking visitors, and has a better on-line presentation. Georgia State reports that they have a listing with Thompson Peterson’s. It was suggested that committee members take view books along on trips to campuses abroad. The committee member from Valdosta State recommended that smaller schools not project an image they cannot live up to and that some schools may place too much emphasis on recruitment numbers and not enough on accommodating the needs of incoming international students effectively.

Board of Regents Updates: Sue Watson Radics announced that NGCSU received the Internationalizing the Campus Grant and that GCSU received the planning grant. She suggested that the grant proposals from the two schools be used as models for other campus’ internationalization efforts. It was suggested that the finalist’s proposals, at least the abstracts, be made available on-line for other schools to view. The deadline for the next cycle should be about the same time next year; the budget is currently being discussed.

March 16 is the Georgia Consortium for International Studies conference to discuss way in which to infuse international content into the curriculum. Information on the conference is available online at www.gacis.org

February 12 is the date for the BOR meeting to discuss insurance.

Reminder- The tax workshop will be held February 9 in Atlanta, beginning at 9am.

Another tax workshop will be held from 9am to 4pm February 28 as part of the GAIE conference in Chattanooga. There is a separate fee for the tax workshop. There will be an Institutional Tax Compliance workshop Thursday March 1 from 8:30 to 10:30.

February 6 is the last day for the room rate guarantee at the Chattanooga Marriott for the GAIE conference.

Insurance Update: Committee was asked to look over the wording of the Statement of Fact draft and make recommendations. It was suggested that the options to move forward at this point included either a renegotiation of rates or a new bid. It was further suggested that a new bid had been delayed too long and was no longer a possibility and that the sub-committee had decided to renegotiate.

The committee resolved to gather more data prior to opening debate. It was stated that 70% of international students were dissatisfied with the current insurance plan.

Sue Watson suggested that it is not too late for a re-bid and that presenting the Statement of Fact would force a decision on the part of the BOR insurance committee. Sue asked all members to read the draft, scan for inconsistencies and wording needing modification. A committee member asked if Pearce and Pearce could provide a separate policy just for international students and whether it was feasible to lump them in with the rest of the student body.

One committee member stated that the purpose of pooling international students with graduate students was to lower the cost of the graduate policy. It was stated that there have been complaints of poor customer service levied against Pearce and Pearce. One committee member raised concerns that Pearce and Pearce do not take them seriously as student representatives but view them rather as disgruntled faculty. Concern was expressed that student opinions were not being heard. Concern was expressed that failure to provide good service to international students could cause a drop in the international population, causing colleges to lose income.

It was suggested that the third paragraph of the draft be amended to reflect a comparison between services offered by Pearce and Pearce and HTH.

It was stated that the Pearce and Pearce policy is unclear. A committee member asked if the 0% deductible is correct. One committee member explained that Pearce and Pearce has a \$250 annual deductible and never pay better than 80% on claims. It was recommended that the third paragraph be changed to reflect Pearce and Pearce's costs and payout policies.

It was recommended that the wording in paragraph one be changed from F-1 visa and J-1 visa to resident status and non-resident status.

It was recommended that paragraph two should include some discussion of F-1 and J-1. The question was raised that the wording in the final sentence of the paragraph may be construed as opinion rather than fact. It was suggested the draft include a paragraph showing the growth in enrollment with the system plan as evidence of fact. It was suggested that insurance, if not this particular plan, be mandatory for international students.

It was suggested that figures from other plans (TW Lord) be collected and included in the draft charts.

It was recommended that the word “exceptional” in paragraph four be replaced with “four-month delay.” It was suggested to add that there has been a two-week turnaround with other plans.

Chart two should state that only the premium has changed.

Further suggestions to revise the draft should be sent via the listserv.

The committee resolved to change “visa” to “status” in the draft to avoid confusion. Sue tabled a vote for the draft. Final version needs to be completed by February 9.

Doug moved to vote in favor of the resolution; motion is seconded and passed unanimously.

Committee agreed to adjourn until April 20, 2007.