

International Advisory Board Minutes
December 13, 2012
The Middlesex Meeting House
3:00-4:30 pm

Members in Attendance: Marja-Leena Bailey, Jared Blake, Dona Cady, Mary Anne Dean, Pat Demaras, Ken Dunn, Todd Fry, Lynne Garone, David, Kalivas, Rion Manita

- **Meeting was called to order** at 3:00
- **Introductions**
- **The college Mission Statement and Strategic Plan** were pointed out as driving forces for the international education initiatives, particularly the Multicultural and Global Literacy ISLO.
- **The college's international initiatives and activities** were highlighted by college members:
 - **Marja-Leena Bailey:** The World Language department offers 13 different languages, more than UMass Lowell, and her department is working on articulation agreements (including reverse agreements for some less commonly taught languages). There is a need for students who can speak multiple languages to study and live abroad, so she would like to combine language study with increased study abroad opportunities.
 - **Jared Blake:** His participation in the honors cross-cultural seminars and Habitat for Humanity Khmer Harvest Build reinforced the significance of understanding other cultures and the authenticity of primary source materials and experiences. He stressed the need to give back to the college community once the abroad experience is over as well as the importance of journaling the international experience.
 - **Dona Cady:** The College is involved in multiple grants with the East-West Center/Asian Studies Development Program (EWC/ASDP) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). We are in the second year of a Title VI grant on Chinese Studies that will result in a Chinese Studies Certificate, three new courses, and at least 12 reusable learning modules. MCC is cohort leader for 2 National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) 3 year Bridging Cultures grants - one with the EWC/ASDP which focuses on understanding cultural bridges made in and outside of Asia and the other through AAC&U, which focuses on democracy and nation forming. Some faculty are members of both grants, and there is an effort to combine initiatives, workshops, and curricular activities.
 - **Mary Anne Dean:** Other present and past grants include the partnership between the Parker Foundation, the National Park Service, and MCC to build and sustain the Cambodian smokeless brick kiln, a continuation of interests from 2 past Fulbright grants featuring Cambodia and part of one of the Bridging Cultures grant. Also, the college is in the first year of a 3 year Higher Education Development grant (HED) to promote entrepreneurship and workforce development through capacity building in Morocco.
 - **Pat Demaras:** Since 1992 and the first MCC Foundation funded study abroad program to Russia, MCC has sent students, faculty, and staff to many other countries including China, Ireland, Belize, Cambodia, and Peru. Trips rotate approximately every 2 years with this year Russian and Peru. Russian students will be coming to MCC for 2 weeks this spring with our students visiting Russia early summer.
 - **Lynne Garone** wondered why these particular countries were chosen as there is an apparent randomness to the list: David noted that the Russia trips evolved

through his work with the Russian bankers in the 90s. Mary Anne noted that Ireland connections grew from the work Molly Sheehy did with the Wider Horizons group and the interests of faculty Ray Shea. The Belize trip from the interests of Chemistry professor John Savage and the undergraduate research work on the coral reefs, and the Peru service learning trip from the interests of a Peruvian student who approached a healthcare faculty.

- **Ken Dunn:** He will be working to establish a new higher education law university in Cambodia. A group of Cambodian university students will be visiting MCC in April. MCC's relationships with Cambodian universities have resulted in a building of trust and expansion of connections that he hopes will include MCC offering online training/courses to Cambodian universities.
- **David Kalivas:** Through his past work in the 90s as International Coordinator and his present work as Director of the Commonwealth Honors Program, he stresses in the honors classes that there must be a connection with what we do abroad and the classroom. Honors seminars focus on and emphasize cross cultural and trans-regional themes. He would also like to develop homestay components in future international initiatives.
- **Rion Manita:** Traveling to Belize provided a new perspective on the importance of approaching culturally diverse situations with an open mind, particularly as it has helped him make more informed decisions about his own life and education. Traveling provided him with the opportunity to live outside his comfort zone and the experience to realize his own potential on what is possible – what he *can* do.
- **Industry Needs:** Keeping in mind the Liberal Education & America's Promise (LEAP) concerns and our own initiatives, how do we prepare graduates for a global economy in which change and innovation are constants?
 - **Lynne Garone** advised that one of the first questions to ask is, "What are our strengths?" Then, "Where can we be intentional?" As a community college that has workforce focus, creating a cohort in a particular area of strength, such as STEM is key. Leadership and management skills can be taught to bright, creative people who are problem solvers as has been evidenced at E Ink. And fostering that through internships, seminars, and particularly exposure to other cultures is important for US trained students who need greater cultural sensitivity on how to work together and resolve conflicts within the workplace.
 - **Todd Fry** noted that Higher Ed, while concerned with delivering prepared students, must graduate students who have a passion, care about solving problems, communicate well, and make a difference in providing leadership. The challenges we are facing are so vast and daunting that we need people who can create new pathways towards civic obligations. Education does need to be very careful, though, not to give employers too narrowly what they want as then education will be a subset of the business world, and education should be more than that. Smart, disciplined, motivated, and creative people will always find their employment niche. Study abroad fellowships and globalized curriculum should be a catalyst for this.

- **Recommendations:** What qualities would make our students more marketable?
 - **There should be intentionality and focus to globalization** that plays to the strengths of the college so that we can build out to complement those strengths. Key questions to ask in this process include: What does the college consider success? Is it a once in a lifetime field trip experience? Or a combination of foreign travel opportunities and common core global curricular and co-curricular activities?
 - **Language skills** - There is a definite need for Business Chinese, particularly Mandarin taught in-house at companies. Universities like Harvard Continuing Ed are often more focused on technical linguistic skills rather than understanding the culture and essential language skills that will allow clients to “hit the ground running.” All were pleased to hear that MCC is offering in non-credit Business Chinese in Spring 13.
 - **Technical Fields** – There is a need, particularly in the technical fields, for more American trained scientists and engineers as IP issues arise when foreign scientists and engineers (often from China) return home. Ethics courses should be a core course requirement for all students as well as courses that expose students to the differences between similar cultures (i.e. Taiwan and China).
 - **Glocalization** - Empathy for cross-cultural competency can start locally. There is a great potential for students to become more comfortable in navigating difference by connecting to the culturally diverse resources in Lowell and Boston. Other recommendations include - expand opportunities and connect activities with area colleges and universities - i.e. Northern Essex, UML .
 - **Study Abroad:** Intentional focus on a theme and/or clustering of countries for travel (i.e. China/Taiwan/Cambodia or England/France/Spain or Greece/ Italy) would provide students with a greater sense of cross-cultural interdependence. Travel opportunities and destinations – whether Foundation funded or faculty led/student pay - need to be intentional and look to the next fields of growth or employability. What areas of study or countries are on the cusp of becoming global players? Also, connect to the international and travel opportunities at popular transfer schools.
 - **Study Abroad Outcomes:** When students return from travel, they ask, “What can I do?” And the college needs to ask students returning from travel, “What change agenda do you bring for us?” There needs to be a clearer connection between study abroad and the empowerment of global citizenship. Perhaps this synthesized intelligence could connect to campus-wide opportunities and/or the Sandbox Campus Catalyst grants.

- **Addendum: Phone conversation with Paul Murphy**
 - There are several areas in international business development and trade where companies are looking for employees with specific training.
 - MCC used to have an **International Business Certificate**. Perhaps that could be revisited and updated with frequent feedback from Business on changing needs.
 - Companies are having trouble finding people with appropriate skills on the **international operations** side. There is a need for credit courses that prepare people for certification for the Customs Brokers Exam as well as the Export

Compliance Specialist Exam. There are jobs for certified global specialists. Courses in ethics as well as language and culture are essential. Training on site would also be a plus.

- **Everyone was thanked** for their participation, recommendations, and commitment to international education.
- **Meeting adjourned** at 4:45 pm.
- **Next meeting April 11, 2013** at the UMass Lowell Conference Center

Respectfully submitted,

Dona Cady