

January 24, 2013

RALPH J. HEXTER

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

RE: Davis Division Response: International Advisory Committee Report

The proposal was forwarded to all Davis Division of the Academic Senate standing committees and Faculty Executive Committees with the schools and colleges for comment. Detailed responses were received from Committee on Planning and Budget, Graduate Council: Academic Planning and Development Committee, Graduate Council: Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Welfare Committee, the Preparatory Education Committee, as well as the Faculty Executive Committee from the College of Letters and Science.

The Division supports the International Advisory Committee's report and many of the recommendations for successfully internationalizing the UC Davis campus. Outlined below are summaries of the detailed responses the committees submitted in response to the report.

Primary Areas of Agreement with the Report

Sufficient Resources and Infrastructure

- Every effort should be made to integrate international students into the campus community. Internationalizing UC Davis must include the necessary infrastructure and resources that help international students feel welcome, safe and a part of the campus community, and that lead them to academic success. These services include language development, diverse forms of counseling, academic advising, teaching assistant trainings, and developing current "buddy" programs (such as the PAL program in Linguistics).
- A credit-bearing summer orientation program will benefit the campus and international students. This orientation will allow international students a valuable opportunity to settle down before the academic year begins by taking ESL courses, resolving visa issues, and covering cultural issues.
- If the administration cannot invest sufficient resources into recruiting international students and developing the necessary infrastructure associated with internationalization, then efforts should be put on hold. This includes resources and trainings for staff, councilors, advisors, faculty, and international and domestic students, as well as programs for international students that help integrate them into the campus culture, improve English-language proficiency, and transition smoothly into the academic year.

Faculty Projects

- Faculty projects and efforts to internationalize the campus should be encouraged and even incentivized, and current obstacles preventing faculty from internationalizing the campus should be lifted.

Recommendations

English Language Instruction

- Most of the Division's discussion relates to English language proficiency and services. There must be a commitment to high quality, on-campus language instruction and support services. This includes special attention for providing international students ESL and English Language Development courses that are more tailored to their needs than the ESL classes currently designed for immigrant students.
- Since integrating international students into the fabric of the campus should be a primary goal, the University should seriously consider hosting all orientation, special courses and events on campus; these services should not be outsourced to community colleges or even the UC Davis Extension. Every effort should be made to have these services run and taught by UC Davis faculty, students and staff. The Preparatory Education Committee noted that "outsourcing, even to Extension, would have the tendency to isolate rather than to integrate." In addition, the concern to maintain high academic standards is easier to ensure if all classes are held on campus and taught by UC Davis faculty and graduate students.

Graduate Students

- International Graduate students received particular attention throughout the Divisional responses. Two Graduate Council subcommittees, the Academic Planning and Development Committee and the Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Welfare Committee, both highly stressed the debilitating impact of NRST on total graduate student welfare, and even faculty morale. Both committees suggested eliminating NRST if financially possible, or developing methods for greatly reducing its effects. APD recommended waiving NRST for academic non-resident Ph.D. students, charging only one year of NRST, or waiving non-resident tuition for students employed on campus as GSRs or TAs.
- GSPSW recommends waiving non-resident supplemental tuition for terminal master's programs, not just for academic international Ph.D. students (see page 19, item #5 of report).
- In addition, Planning & Budget recommended that UC Davis's financial incentives for international graduate students be competitive with peer institutions. P&B recommends researching the incentives peer institutions offer international graduate students, since the incentive offered at other universities might not be financial. Additionally, P&B noted that the international Ph.D. student population plummeted when the campus eliminated a large number of the Nonresident Student Tuition Fee Waivers available. Therefore, the committee recommends investing in these waivers for outstanding graduate student prospects.

- International Graduate students should have adequate English skills if they are to be employed as a TA, and TA trainings should be made available, for both international graduate students who intend to TA, and domestic students who will be teaching international undergraduates.
- APD and GSPSW are eager to see a plan that enriches the experience of domestic graduate students whose research requires international work and teaching exchanges.
- GSPSW recommends an international center with resources for graduate students, postdoctoral students, and international visiting scholars that supports them as they move into Davis, connects them with the rest of campus, helps negotiate mentor relationships (for postdoctoral students), and helps them find employment if necessary after their fellowship ends.

Domestic Students

- Domestic students should be educated about the benefits of having an international experience. This includes the benefits of having an international TA, interacting with international students at campus events (forums, workshops, symposiums, etc.), and traveling abroad.
- Foreign language programs that teach languages not currently offered should be developed to enhance study abroad opportunities for our undergraduates. Language instruction is part of the internationalization process, as learning a new language provides insights into other cultures and perspectives. The languages offered should be sufficiently broad and pertinent to all parts of the world. Language courses should also meet student demand.
- Many international students have some valuable knowledge we can benefit from and should therefore be provided with opportunities to share their experience and culture with our campus.

Recruitment and Outreach

- Many international students come here to pursue the inherent benefit of learning English while studying at UC Davis; this works as an inherent form of recruitment. By offering extensive programs that help international students to improve their English, UC Davis will easily be able to recruit more students.
- By investing in programs that help our international students to succeed in all academic aspects, we can assure a satisfied international experience, which leads to better recruiting internationally (through word of mouth), and a more satisfied and engaged international alumni.

Transparency and Tracking

- All international activities should be tracked in a central format to facilitate information sharing and to gauge progress to meet internationalization goals. First, there is a

recommendation that the administration via the registrar's office measure the dismissal rates, time to degree, and number of international students subject to disqualification annually to determine whether international students are progressing at the same rates as domestic students. The information should be reported to the appropriate senate committees annually. In addition, there is already well-funded and prestigious international activity at UC Davis in teaching and research that isn't adequately captured in the VC for Outreach's database; this is more an issue of administrative oversight than of lack of resources.

- PEC has noticed information on internationalization efforts is not adequately provided to faculty and "sees a need for more transparency on the part of the administration about international admissions, plans for funding ESL, etc. More transparency would make for better planning and a better educational experience for international students."

Concerns and Disagreements

- Issues of unwelcoming graffiti in a chemistry building bathroom were cited as a concern. Our domestic students' global literacy needs to include tolerance of other cultures and linguistic abilities.
- Several committees feel that efforts to support internationalization, in particular specializing ESL classes to fit international students' needs, should not put the needs of California-resident students' on suspension, especially for immigrant students who should be a priority for ESL courses.

Maintaining UC Davis Academic Standards

- Adequate screenings of the academic skill level of international students, as well as English proficiency or ability to improve English-language skills upon arrival, need to be maintained and improved upon. Several committees expressed concern that internationalization efforts should not turn into attempts to attract more paying international students. Particular attention must be paid to maintaining admission standards.
- The Preparatory Education Committee and the College of Letters and Science Executive Committee felt that TOEFL scores are insufficient standards for judging language proficiency. Concerns were raised about TOEFL fraud, artificial TOEFL score inflation from intensive test-preparation classes, and the fact that the scores themselves are not adequate enough to assess reading, writing, and test-taking capabilities. PEC therefore recommends international students be tested by UCD personnel soon after arrival to determine the level of English language instruction that is appropriate for them.

Budget

- Budget is a major issue covered in the committee responses. Some committees feel that the full cost of implementing the recommendations is unreasonable. To reiterate, there is agreement among committees that if sufficient funds cannot be dedicated to all crucial

aspects of internationalization, especially language instruction, advising, and counseling services, then attempts to internationalize the campus should be put on hold.

- Planning and Budget noted that while some of the recommendations are desirable, they are unrealistic in light of current budget constraints, and previously established funding priority areas that are unlikely to change. P&B highlighted the report's goal of 50% of our undergraduate body traveling abroad, or having an international experience on campus. They thought this an ambitious goal that would at the very least require additional funding for more staff advisers in the Education Abroad Center.
- For international graduate students, the financial and time costs associated with dissertation mentoring is a major issue, since faculty are unlikely to admit international graduate students if the cost is too high.
- The cost to UC Davis of supporting government sponsored students should not fall unduly on individual departments and labs in the agreements made with international universities.
- A minority of PEC feels the university should "charge international students 'more for extra services, if the market will bear it,' while prioritizing the needs of California resident students."

These budget issues in mind, P&B noted that some recommendations made in the report would require minimal funding and are therefore more readily supported as financially feasible.

Finally, as discussed with you on January 17, 2013, the Division seeks more thought and discussion on Appendix 5 of the final IAC Report that proposes amendments to the UC Davis Academic Personnel Manual in sections regarding merit increases.

The International Advisory Committee's Report offers several distinct insights into the value of internationalizing our campus, as well as reasonable cautions the administration should consider. While the Division is interested in internationalizing the UC Davis campus, the university must distinguish between genuine engagements with other cultures vs. mere "tongue service" to the concepts of internationalization and diversity. To this end, the Division would like to see the administration expand internationalization efforts without compromising budget, academic standards, and support services for international students on campus.

Sincerely,



Bruno Nachtergaele, Chair
Davis Division of the Academic Senate
Professor: Mathematics