

IEC- Meeting Minutes

Nov. 28, 2023; 1PM - 3PM

Meeting Modality → Zoom

{*Action items in red}

I. Welcome – S. Jimmy Gandhi, Associate Dean, Tseng College

Attendees: S. Jimmy Gandhi, Jane Rosenthal Dieken, W. Gabriel Selassie I, Khanum Shaikh, Jing Li, Nancy Young, Joong-won Lee, Andrew Surmani, Anastasiia Timmer, Kim Diez, Shadi Mahjoob, Qais Amarkhil, Carrie Pullen, Donal B. O’Sullivan, Timothy Matthews, Kah Chun Lau, Silvia Carpitella, Christine M., Jenna Delgado, Kathie Masaglia, Vickie Yu, Daniela Gerson, Douglas McLaughlin, Ellie Kazemi, Jodi Brown, Lee Ann, Leily Kamali Farrokhvar, Alejandra Pereda, Aaron Lindberg, Drake Langford, Talin K. Bakalian, Geraldine E. Sare

II. Meeting Discussion

- Jimmy introduced himself and said he would go over a short slideshow of the meeting’s agenda and topics of discussion for the meeting.
- The charge of the International Education Council (IEC) was discussed and the purpose is to promote globalization of academic research and to promote innovative programs at CSUN. The council monitors trends in globalization in higher education and make recommendations to the IEC to advance the university’s global education.
- A survey was conducted and targeted to students and faculty about challenges and what worked.
- Jimmy will talk about the results and findings of the student survey and possible recommendations that could be made.
- There will be usually 1-2 meetings per semester. IEC college level representatives and liaisons will communicate to the various departments.

IEC Student Survey Findings:

- Compared to the Fall 2022 survey that had 55 responses, this survey of Spring 2023 had 520 responses, out of which 306 were completed responses
- Most responses are from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (65), followed by College of Engineering (50), and then College of Health and Human Development (43).

Respondent Demographics:

- 55% came to CSUN as freshman
- 62% identify as women
- 48.3% identify as Latinx

Findings:

- Strong interests in study abroad programs

Major Barriers

- Lack of financial support
- Lack of knowledge and awareness/lack of clarity on offerings
- Lack of administrative support (obtaining course credit)
- Most popular option of duration of study abroad is one semester
- Most popular program type is to study abroad at a CSUN partner university (198 responses)
- The Term/Semester preference for when the students would like to participate in a study abroad program is Spring/Summer (tied)
- The class level at time of participation that is most preferred: (in descending order of responses)
 - Senior -> Junior -> Graduate -> Sophomore
- Setting most preferred: (in descending order of responses)
 - Urban -> Suburban -> Rural
- Housing type preferred: (in descending order of responses)
 - Dorm -> Hotel/Hostel -> Homestay

Geographical Location preferred: (In descending order of preference based on # of responses)

- ⇒ 159 prefer United Kingdom
- ⇒ 155 prefer Italy
- ⇒ 143 prefer Japan

Which of the following resources were you aware of before beginning this survey?
(Check all that apply question)

- ⇒ Available study abroad and exchange experience is most popular (158 responses)
- ⇒ Study abroad workshops and information sessions (97 responses)
- ⇒ Study abroad fairs and events (89 responses)
- ⇒ Faculty-led trips (62 responses)
- ⇒ Study abroad informative videos (62 responses)
- ⇒ Resources for international students (43 responses)
- ⇒ International Student Association (32 responses)
- ⇒ Involvement opportunities for international and exchange students (25 responses)
- ⇒ Involvement opportunities with international and exchange students for the campus community (14 responses)
- ⇒ Student panels for an international curriculum and education (9 responses)

Where student received information regarding international education opportunities: (In descending order of responses)

- ⇒ On campus and virtual events
- ⇒ IESC
- ⇒ Professor
- ⇒ Friend
- ⇒ Research
- ⇒ Other

Future communication preferences for information on international education opportunities: (In descending order of preference based on # of responses)

- ⇒ Email (245 responses) -> CSUN portal -> Virtual/In-person Information Session
- > Text messages

How much do you know about the process of applying for international education experiences?

- ⇒ Students do not know where to start (173 responses) – thereby telling us that the majority of students did not have any idea of where they should start the process of applying for international education experiences.

How important is it for you to receive financial aid to support part of or all of your trip?

- ⇒ 171 responses show that it is very important to receive financial aid – thus showing the importance of receiving financial aid to support the student's trip.

Are foreign language offerings at CSUN sufficient to support you in your international education endeavors? (In descending order of responses)

- ⇒ 97 responses said they don't know
- ⇒ 43 responses said yes
- ⇒ 16 responses said not applicable
- ⇒ 10 responses said no

Interest in participating in a 1-day workshop focused on international education?

- ⇒ 153 responses said yes and 90 responses said not sure – which shows the students might not aware of what international education entails.

Interest in virtual exchange opportunities as part of internalization?

- ⇒ 136 responses said yes, 91 said not sure, 73 said no
- Jimmy asks if internationalization could be incorporated into classes. Classes could be more meaningful and the internalization experience could be less of a strain on the student, college, or department financially.

Conclusion:

- Strong interest but several barriers with lack of financial support
- Strong interest in studying at CSUN partner universities for credit

- Varied locations of interest but none are standing out (United Kingdom, Italy, and Japan were popular)
 - Spring and Summer are the most popular times
 - Severe lack of awareness of the application process
 - Lack of awareness about foreign language offerings at CSUN and participation in workshops or virtual exchange opportunities
- Geraldine Sare asks if students need to have at least 30 units completed to qualify for studying abroad/student exchange opportunities.
 - New students are very interested in these opportunities.

Jimmy says survey was focused to upperclassman.

- Geraldine Sare says that Kim Henige, who coordinates U100, is a great resource to introduce freshman to the idea of studying abroad/exchange student opportunities.
 - ⇒ Jimmy says another reason why it is lack of administrative support (obtaining course credit), which could represent the newer students that are academically not able to study abroad. It is likely that students do not know what a virtual exchange is.
- Drake asks if there is a possibility that the current level of the students could have influenced their answers.
 - ⇒ Jimmy says that Intro classes that typically freshman/sophomore take should introduce the idea of study abroad
- Jimmy agrees with Geraldine Sare and says that announcements should not just be via email and through other entities.
- Drake mentions that CSUN is doing a great job compared to other CSU campuses.
 - ⇒ Jimmy mentions other universities implement requirements to study abroad.
- Geraldine Sare mentions that freshmen are already bombarded with messages about degree completion - which could discourage students to study abroad.
- Aaron mentions that SDSU made it a requirement for students of certain majors to study abroad.
 - Specifically, the College of Sciences and International Business major requires students to complete one or two semesters of international study and ensured credit will be earned.
 - SDSU works with third parties.

- ⇒ Jimmy says that third parties would have to be looked at closely because of risk management and it is not easy to get campus support of a particular third-party vendor.
- Geraldine Sare says that Kim Henige is expanding some of the U100 courses to be more specific, like black scholars.
 - Have an awareness of opportunities for black scholars and transfer students.
 - Kim will be a valuable member to the IEC committee.
 - Jimmy says that we will talk about that with Kathy Dabbour and Kim Henige to collaborate.
 - Jimmy talked about Al Buraimi University College (BUC) in Oman.
 - CSUN has had a partnership since 2003 (20 years)
 - CSUN has helped BUC to start up and the school currently has 2,500 students
 - Jimmy asks if there are any GE classes that could be offered at BUC to boost the international experience to help your students.
 - Drake asks if CSUN has sent any students to BUC.
 - ⇒ Jimmy says only interaction has been between faculty which is why BUC wants to have interaction at the student level.
 - Drake asks if we are working on a student exchange agreement with BUC.
 - ⇒ Jimmy says not at the moment but he wants to start with something small and virtual.
 - Drake says that Arabic courses are offered at CSUN and students studying Arabic would possibly have an interest virtually and physically. He suggests that the college could potentially have critical language study grants since most students do not have the funding. Doing something online would be relatively easy for students to participate with that.
 - ⇒ Jimmy says for the international partner institutions faculty can have conversations with their contacts about this discussion.
 - Next meeting can be about the use of AI at international partner institutions because it would be interesting to learn since there is so much conversation about this new technology at CSUN.

ACTION: Jimmy will send out an email reminder so in Spring time the conversation will start within your department to give time to gather information.