Meeting Notes

COAH Study Abroad Committee
April 11, 2016
COSM Dean’s Conference Room

In attendance: Pauline Gagnon (Dean, COAH), Robert Kilpatrick (Tours Program, FLL, Chair of Committee), Chad Davidson (Spoleto Program, English), Kevin Shun (Art Study Abroad), Anne Gaquere (Guest from COSM, Program Director of the Art Study Abroad Program), John Blair (Oldenburg Program, FLL), Steve Goodson (Co-Director, Strasbourg Program, History, voting member), Charles Lipp (Co-Director, Strasbourg Program, History, non-voting member), Molly McCullers (Liaison with the Office of Education Abroad Director’s Advisory Committee), Julia Farmer (Costa Rica Program, FLL).

• Chair Kilpatrick called the meeting to order at 1:06PM.

I. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

• The review and approval process will take place via e-mail following this meeting.

II. COAH Support for Study Abroad and Internationalization Efforts

• Committee Chair Kilpatrick reminded the committee that COAH had contributed $10,000 towards Study Abroad. $5000 went straight to students. $5000 was placed within an account to potentially build an endowment, as per committee recommendation.

• Dean Gagnon stated that she had identified a special agency account to serve as a place to attract donations. Her aim was to allow the fund to be for more than just scholarships. In other words, she stated, her aim was to afford flexibility. The account would serve as a general study abroad account to fund various efforts as needed.

• Dr. Blair asked about endowments. Dean Gagnon responded that the principle for an endowment has to be over $20,000 and has to remain untouched for several years. She stated that she hoped in time the COAH could solicit funds for an endowment and suggested committee members talk to alumni. She stated that she envisioned use of funds for Study Abroad in a broad sense. She informed the committee about her discussions with the Art Department regarding the potential creation of a sabbatical location abroad for faculty. She stated that funds might be used to finance due-diligence trips similar to the recently completed trip by Drs. Goodson and Lipp to Strasbourg, France. She also stated that the $5000 she contributed was what she could spare this time, as the past few years have been a “scramble” for the COAH.

• The committee then turned to discussion issues of matching monies and other support for Study Abroad. In response to a question from Dr. Kilpatrick, Dean Gagnon informed the committee that she would try to find the full $10,000 for matching funds. Dr. Kilpatrick then asked about fund raising efforts. Dean Gagnon told him that the COAH is developing a case statement that includes language on Study Abroad.
• Discussion then turned to the support offered for Study Abroad by other Colleges within the university, particularly from the College of Social Sciences. Dr. Davidson, who had requested support for COSS students participating on the Spoleto Program, also informed the committee that he has requested and received financial support for students from the Honors’ College. Dean Gagnon suggested that next year the Study Abroad Committee should contact other colleges.

III. COAH Guiding Principles and Procedures Revisions – Study Abroad Committee

• Chair Kilpatrick had circulated the following document to committee members as Meeting Agenda, Appendix A:

Appendix A

Section 5. Study Abroad Advisory Committee

A. Composition. The committee shall include a representative of each Study Abroad Program (SAP) chosen by those involved in the SAP (with no voting members from outside the college), and for each department without a SAP that desires representation on the committee.

B. Role. In order to foster and advocate for study abroad programs, the Study Abroad Advisory committee shall:

1. advise and inform the Dean’s Office in matters of Study Abroad;

2. work with directors and the Dean to improve college and other SAP processes;

3. consult with and orient new program directors;

4. facilitate communication with groups having special interest in Study Abroad: FLL, Global Studies, and International Economics;

5. represent college SAP funding and scholarship interests;

6. communicate college needs and policies regarding SAP to other colleges, Study Abroad Office, etc.;

7. formulate ideas about SA policies and priorities for college-wide discussion

• Chair Kilpatrick raised the following points: 1) should committee consist of departmental representatives or directors of that year’s Study Abroad programs? 2) should language about
voting be included – indicating that in cases of co-directors, one shall be designated the voting member and one shall be designated the non-voting member.

• Discussion was minimal.

IV. COAH response to Directors Guidelines and Procedures put in place in Summer/Fall 2015

• Chair Kilpatrick stated the following on the Meeting Agenda: “Throughout this year we have expressed concern about several policies contained within the new guidelines, and this is our opportunity to send forward a list of specific concerns/recommendations to our Dean and to the Director of Education Abroad. Our objective during this meeting will to be discuss various items and finalize a list that can be sent forward. I have included a list of items to get the discussion started, and we can change it and add explanations during our meeting.” He provided the following list of discussion items as Meeting Agenda, Appendix B:

Appendix B

1) Requirement to make airfare deposits out of agency accounts
2) two professor requirement
3) reduction (in most cases) of director stipends
4) policy on program reserves
5) Terradotta (its expense, its usefulness)
6) Programs being charged for credit card payments

• An extensive discussion ensued in which the 2015 guidelines and procedures were evaluated in light of past practice. Particular stressed was placed on the need to compensate program directors for their on-campus efforts and for the Provost’s Office to support stipends. Dean Gagnon urged the committee to develop a recommendation, supporting the suggestion that perhaps stipends be based on numbers of students participating. Chair Kilpatrick suggested the formation of a sub-committee to develop a list of recommendations responding to the points outlined above. Committee members Davidson, Blair, and Goodson expressed interest in serving. Dean Gagnon instructed the sub-committee to pass recommendations to her first, at which point she would begin a conversation with COAH department chairs.

[note: at this point, Committee member Lipp had to leave the meeting because of teaching duties. Committee Member Goodson took over the note-taking tasks.]
Reserves: Several committee members stated that a 5% maximum program reserve is too low, and that this new requirement represents a U-turn from previous administrative encouragement to increase reserves. Dr. Blair stated that 5% wouldn’t even be enough to cover possible currency fluctuations. Several members urged that this guideline be rejected and that reserves should aim for the 20% level.

Terra Dotta: Several committee members were very critical of the Terra Dotta system, pointing out that program directors as well as students “hate it.” It was noted that the system costs $18,000 a year in funds from the Provost, and that such funds would be better employed in paying program director stipends.

Dr. Goodson suggested that a more useful discussion of these issues might take place if Dr. Maria Doyle, Director of Education Abroad, could be present. After discussion it was determined that a written response to the new Education Abroad guidelines would be sent to Dr. Doyle, and that the COAH Study Abroad Committee would then seek to meet with her as early as possible in fall semester. It was noted that this would give Dr. Doyle the summer to consider the committee’s recommendations and to develop her responses to them.

Dr. Goodson also suggested that the committee seek a meeting with Provost Micheal Crafton to make the recommendation that funding of program director stipends once again become the responsibility of the Provost’s Office. A subcommittee made up of Dr. Blair, Dr. Shunn, and Dr. Goodson was formed to draft such a recommendation, and it was agreed that the committee would seek to meet with Dr. Crafton for this purpose.

This funding recommendation as well as the written response to the new Education Abroad guidelines will be submitted to Dean Gagnon, who will then submit it to the COAH Department Chairs before they go on to Dr. Doyle and Dr. Crafton.

The meeting adjourned at 1:59.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Lipp and Steve Goodson