

University Senate International Affairs Committee
Minutes from Meeting 12/16/2016

In attendance: Celka Straughn (Chair), Seth Brooks, Alexis Jones, Onobeoghene Oghenekaro, Charlie Bankart (ex officio), Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco (ex officio), and Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno (via Skype)

Excused: Melissa Birch, Kapila Silva

I. Reviewed and approved minutes from 12/09/2016. Motion to approve by Onobeoghene Oghenekaro, seconded by Alexis Jones.

II. Introductions of members and AAP staff present at meeting.

III. Meeting with Amy Neufeld, Managing Director, and Roberta Pokphanh, Academic Director, KU Academic Accelerator Program (KUAAP)

Amy Neufeld led the IAC members through the report that she and Dr. Pokphanh had prepared (will be attached with IAC KUAAP final report). She discussed key aspects and both she and Dr. Pokphanh responded to committee questions as they arose relating to the report.

The AAP developed report begins broad description of the program, including governance and partnership as separate but connected entities. It discusses the benefits of Shorelight for recruiting and their relationships and connections with other countries.

The report then discusses changes over the past year. Two new curricular tracks were developed for AY16-17 to better meet students where they are at with their English proficiency. AAP makes use of UNIV curriculum for AAP3, AAP2, and IAP. There are also new MA graduate tracks for AY16-17; these are opt in by departments/schools and the first cohort begins in spring 2017. There is also a new transfer alliance path for students, the International University Alliance, for transfer credits/articulation agreements with international universities that determine equivalencies (e.g. with American College of Dubai); also includes AP, IB-types credits. The goal of this alliance is to widen the net of students interested in coming to the US to study.

The second part of the report includes various data relating to the program, its students and their progress. The committee asked for a breakdown of CLAS majors, which Dr. Neufeld sent in a subsequent email along with a break-down of students by gender. It was also recommended that in the future to include a chart visualizing the different majors area. Dr. Pokphanh noted that the program is working to get students involved in learning opportunities outside of the classroom and she can share information on students participating in KU experiential learning certificate programs once she has obtained the full numbers.

Examining the overall data, the first two years show a fairly even split with pre-AAP and AAP incoming students. In the future, the goal is that over time enrollment for AAP students will increase with AAP and there will be fewer pre-AAP. There is a decline from Fall 2015 incoming students to Fall 2016. When asked why, the response was uncertain. Some of the decline was attributed to more competition for international recruitment, some to outside/global factors such

as Chinese stock market since most of the current AAP students come from China. It was then noted that this latter factor speaks to the importance of diversity of international origin for students. Historically AAP is strongest with students from China given numbers and financial abilities to study abroad, though AAP tries to make possible for financial assistance.

Drs. Neufeld and Pokphanh explained that the length of time for graduation depends on level of English proficiency when an AAP student arrives; the minimum is four years. It also depends on major requirements. The AAP curriculum is structured to align with the KU Core. They further noted that with the data on the progression of students, the numbers do not adequately capture the nuances of movement across levels as this relates to multiple factors.

The committee asked about the comparison of students recruited through Shorelight and those who are direct KU admits. The data show fairly similar GPAs at 1st and 2nd year levels by both groups of students, though these data are limited by the data collected and its parameter definitions. Students are defined as first-year undergraduates by numbers of credit-hours and there are no data on persistence/retention across the board for international students in part because these data are harder to acquire based on how KU defines first-time full-time first-year undergraduates. AAP and the Office of International Programs (OIP) are working with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) at KU and from Fall 2016 they will have more accurate data. At the moment, AAP is still having to do some of data by hand and this is not scalable. Academic success overall for international students excludes AAP students and students only taking intensive English (including those dual enrolled, e.g. in Engineering). Collecting more robust data on international students appears a barrier for KU to better understand international student success, though it was noted that KU uses methods similar to peers and is more of a national issue. These data challenges lead to bi-furcated reporting. The committee asked if AAP collects its own student data, such as student evaluations or surveys. The AAP has some preliminary results about student achievement based on program goals that were newly implemented for AY16-17. John Dahlstrand, AAP Student Services Advisor, shared these goals and preliminary student learning assessment in subsequent emails (attached to IAC AAP final report). The committee asked if AAP can pull info on individual student success. Again, AAP is working with OIRP to track GPAs and other kinds of data through DEMIS. AAP is working to record data correctly and has a plan for maintaining and tracking data. One of AAP's goals moving forward is to make use of university systems, however, it depends on OIRP priorities and what KU wants to know about the institution, the rationales for deciding on the knowledge obtained (and left out). It was suggested that KU consider a rigorous interrogation about what the institution wants to learn about international students and to obtain and analyze data to have meaningful results. There are ongoing conversations to track data overall for international students and these data are important for DEI discussions to understand impact and to conduct appropriate outreach. It was further noted that it is difficult to track and ascertain the broader benefits of a program like AAP on international students more broadly as well as KU as a whole, but something worth pursuing (for example, AAP requests and work to make email communication through My Success more readable and useful for students).

Drs. Neufeld and Pokphanh concluded comments about the report noting that there is increase in stability with AAP and Shorelight and that AAP works very intentionally not to duplicate what is already happening at KU.

The committee followed up with a few additional questions/issues not covered in the report and subsequent discussion.

1. Issues of equity with regards to other KU international students

It was noted that while this issue arises, AAP does the best it can to embed AAP students into the KU experience as broadly as possible. AAP works closely with International Student Services (e.g. they conduct student pick-up and orientation together). AAP does have additional student service staff, and Dr. Pokphanh compared these additional services as those associated with a thematic learning community. It was further noted that AAP's additional services also provide added-value for other students (e.g. developing the airport pick-up opt in); an institutional benefit of AAP is that it offers a concerted strategic resource investment for international students toward academic outcomes, though this is an area that would need to be studied in order to be determined. AAP staff has not seen that students perceive equity issues.

2. What is the relationship with Shorelight any concerns?

AAP would like better sense of forecasting for recruitment class. It was noted that Shorelight is still quite new in its relationship with KU and that both entities share the common goal of student success. No particular concerns were noted beyond the general issues that arise across different institutions working together and with public-private partnerships.

3. What are you concerns with the AAP program?

Only noted was the functional concern with predicting numbers for student data, including recruitment.

4. With persistence, are you seeing that students transfer to other universities?

No, not seeing this happening.

IV. Preparation of KU AAP report for University Senate.

It was asked if AAP could explain data on Fall 2015 entry and progression to AAP3 more fully as it seems to vary based on the levels at which students entered and this impacts the understanding of the numbers.

IAC Chair Straughn will draft for circulation among committee members over the next week. If possible, depending on the holidays, will submit before the end of the calendar year.