

**University Senate International Affairs Committee (IAC)
FY 2018 Final Report**

The following document provides a final report on the FY2018 activities in response to the five standing charges given to the International Affairs Committee. There were no specific charges for FY2018. Recommendations relating to the charges are included within the report and listed at the end along with additional recommendations. The report was prepared by IAC Chair Celka Straughn with assistance from committee members Paola Alor, Melissa Birch, Seth Brooks, Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno, Farah Salsabila, Kapila Silva, and Charles Bankart (ex officio).

Standing charges:

1. Promote all appropriate means of communication with International Students, Faculty and Staff, with special emphasis on seeking information from them about their needs and concerns.

During fall 2017 the IAC was in contact via email with approximately 50 units, including academic departments, schools, and numerous campus units specifically with regard to Charge 2. The committee received responses from well over 30 units that included information also relevant to Charges 1 and 3. While the fall email solicitation extended to international student organizations, none responded. In spring 2018, the IAC further contacted international students through ISS and direct emails to officers representing international student organizations, inviting them to two possible open meetings, however, no students participated in these meetings. This invitation did result in a meeting with the Chair and Secretary of the Student Senate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (formerly Multicultural Affairs Committee), who shared concerns they had received from international students.

Based on the responses received, academic departments for the most part do not employ specific strategies for communicating with international students. International students are included in departments' general information stream (emails primarily, as well as social media posts, website, and flyers). A few units participate in international student orientation, which they found perhaps most effective when combined with the other methods. As some departments noted, they did not have any evidence that these communications were ineffective, however, most had not made a conscious effort to gauge the effectiveness of their communications.

Some departments/units noted they were interested to receive guidance from International Student Services (ISS) for more effective communication. There is an opportunity for academic and other campus units to collaborate with ISS to develop lists for direct outreach. ISS keeps updated lists (and distinguishes international and undocumented); collaboration with ISS can open additional possibilities and saves departments/units from additional work and would add the value of staff professionally trained in intercultural competency. The IAC recommends that academic and other campus units engage with ISS to develop tailored communications. This would create clear, usable, and manageable workflow that builds on ISS comprehensive data and communication structures. Furthermore, collaboration with ISS would provide the mechanism for ISS to work through tailored groups that make the most sense for communications with a particular unit, and ISS can work with units to create unit-autonomous communication.

As OIP, and particularly ISS, serve as significant points of contact for international students, it is important that students can comfortably and adequately voice questions and concerns. For example, the federal travel ban has affected international students in financial ways, such as making wire

transfers difficult, which creates challenges for timely tuition payments. Some students have found it difficult to communicate these challenges to University officials and seek solutions, often getting the run around from various University offices, including ISS. One of the student challenges with ISS can be student staff who lack cultural competence (for example, in conversations relating to family; working with students from countries affected by the travel ban). As student staff often work at the front desk and may serve as the first point of contact and personal interaction with the office international students, this may hinder further communication with ISS staff. This is an area that OIP is working to address through recently launched KU student-hourly staff intercultural skill building workshop based on an existing KU staff series (part of formal HR workshop training series) that offers specifically unit-tailored intercultural competency workshops both on and off campus. OIP leadership is working to ensure that student staff in OIP offices (and other KU units) participate. OIP has hosted one workshop and will regularly offer workshops each semester.

The IAC noted that many academic and other campus units seem to rely on the Office of International Programs (OIP), primarily delegating international student issues to OIP. If this is the case, the IAC recommends increased support for OIP as an important institutional investment given the widespread and increasingly significant reliance on OIP. Moreover, it is also important that OIP serve in a role for greater campus internationalization (e.g. initiatives like orientation that serves domestic and international students together). OIP can play a role in adding volume and nuance, create sensitivity, and enhance what KU does for international engagement; KU can enhance OIP's role by supporting core services. Currently, OIP is overwhelmingly supported by tuition revenues and fees generated by international students and study abroad, and these revenues also serve to support international scholars, and international faculty, among other areas. The IAC further encourages campus units to develop inclusion strategies that also incorporate a direct commitment to the international community and for institutional strategies to involve OIP.

While email appears to serve as the predominant, and possibly most convenient, method of communication with international students (and presumably also for faculty and staff), it is for the most part not effective for students. This posed a challenge for the IAC to hear international student concerns beyond those conveyed through the Student Senate DEI Committee. In-person approaches could offer more success and perhaps the IAC could work more closely with Student Senate and individual departmental units to engage student organizations (university-wide and, most importantly, within disciplines/departments) for more effective, localized, in-person communication. For example, the Student Senate DEI Committee adopts a more informal outreach approach to connect with international students, such as hosting pizza socials and the Office of Multicultural Affairs as a way of sharing what DEI Committee can do. They also promote with Facebook events and through ISS and AAP. The Student Senate DEI Committee is willing to be an ally to the IAC as growing international student outreach is a priority for Student Senate. International students expressed to the DEI Committee that they felt dismissed by and dissatisfied with Student Senate. The DEI Committee and Student Senate more broadly will be working to renew and improve relationships with international undergraduate students.

A recommendation for the IAC in FY2019 is to work with the Student Senate DEI Committee, beginning with an early fall 2019 meeting to exchange ideas and plan for coordinated outreach and effective communication with international students. Also encouraged would be working with Student Senate, the president of the KU International Student Association, and ISS to develop relationships with the leadership of international student organizations as well as international student senators.

2. Report on and give recommendations on how International Students are made aware of various polices, such as Conceal and Carry. Report submitted November 14, 2017.

In response to a query sent to deans, directors, and chairs, the IAC received responses from four additional units after the report was submitted. In March, IAC chair Straughn spoke with officers of the Student Senate Student Senate DEI Committee who provided further comments. Additional information learned has been included in the response to Charge 3, which was modified to also focus on “weapons on-campus type issues.”

3. Report on and make recommendations on how the University may better accommodate access of International Student’s to supportive services. February 15, 2018. – change requested and shifted to same date as final IAC report on April 13, 2018

Additional info on charge from University Senate President on 12/4/17: “SenEx’s particular interest was in support related to weapons on-campus type issues – learning about the law and KU’s policy, what this means for international students, where they can go if they have concerns, etcetera.”

Based on the responses sent to the IAC by campus units as well as the conversation with officers from the Student Senate DEI committee, concealed carry remains an issue for international faculty and students, who noted the disparity between domestic US and international students and faculty. International students have expressed a sense of fear, distrust and feeling uncomfortable in the classroom. International students also felt they were not receiving communication and training for dealing with concealed carry, including a lack of information about who to call if there is an incident or concerns. Further, some feel they cannot communicate these feelings because the law will not change, and they further feel there is a sense of complacency by the University. Thus, many international students feel at a loss. The Student Senate DEI Committee will be developing a question about concealed carry specifically for international students as part of Student Senate survey.

A number of campus units employ multiple approaches for conveying information to students, including international students, noting that (not surprisingly) students are more likely to use their resources once they are aware of them. Legal Services for Students communicates specifically with international students about tax issues. At Watkins Health Center, students are made aware of their services on arrival, and Watkins has materials in Chinese and Arabic as well as a system to use an interpreter. While all IOA materials are available to be translated into other languages and the office seeks to make use of a broad range of outreach, traditionally international students do not tend to use IOA directly with reports of harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence; the office relies on the cooperation of academic advisors, housing staff and other campus partners.

It was also shared with the committee that there is a lack of research opportunities for international undergraduate and graduate students, and particularly funded opportunities as many grants are often limited to U.S. citizens. It may be helpful for academic units as well as Graduate Studies and the Office of Undergraduate Research to develop more tailored communication about research opportunities for international students. The developing orientation programs for undergraduates and graduate students may serve as one possibility for this communication.

The AEC, ISS, CTE and Graduate Studies are collaborating on a new all-graduate student orientation and GTA training. This program will include aspects like research skills in the US graduate context, mentoring programs through academic units, and concealed carry.

First-Year Experience (FYE) and International Programs are engaged in a significant project to integrate domestic and international orientation programs as part of the university's DEI plan; the first integrated orientation program launches in summer 2018. Concealed carry will continue to be covered during the parent and guest session that occurs each day; this is a joint presentation with Student Affairs, SAPEC, and KU PSO. Public Safety covers concealed carry during their presentation. However, this is an opportunity likely missed by many international students, among others, whose family/guests may not be able to join them for orientation. In addition to this session, both students and family/guests receive concealed carry policy information in the Orientation Field Guide. Students learn more about campus safety and wellness during Jayhawk Jumpstart, which occurs the Friday before the start of classes in August. This is a required program for all new undergraduate students. The content broadly covers cultivating physical, social, and community well-being. While concealed carry isn't specifically addressed during the formal presentation, KU PSO and others have informational tables for students during the program that includes information about concealed carry. Currently FYE is in the process of reevaluating how it delivers information to all incoming domestic and international students to promote a shared experience and ensure greater consistency.

Similar to recommendations made relating to Charge 1, the IAC recommends that academic departments and other campus units work with the Office of International Programs to develop more effective communications. Additionally, when major policy changes occur at the university level, such as concealed carry, the University could further prepare each academic unit in advance in how to communicate the policy change and impact to its constituents, including international students. Last year the committee learned of videos being developed by CLAS DEI, and it may be useful to follow up to learn of their use and effectiveness, in addition to other materials (digital and print) are used.

4. Hear reports on strategic planning and activities from IP units, suggest changes or new directions, and facilitate collaboration among faculty and administrative units.

International recruitment/admissions and study abroad are two main areas for current strategic planning.

International Recruitment and Undergraduate Admissions (IRUA) will try to increase international student enrollment by 5%, from 2,182 students in fall 2017 to 2,291 students in fall 2018. Pursuant to this goal, IRUA will focus on: Prospect Development; Regional Representation (India and Latin America); Domestic Market Development; Graduate Recruitment; Policy Changes; Counselor Relationship Building; and Alumni Networking. Strategic activities include:

- Investing the 5% increase for 2018 in India, Costa Rica, Paraguay. A next step will be to focus on China with an in-country representative.
- Reducing hurdles for international students (e.g. with English proficiency retesting and accepting official test scores enter with and developed different kinds of AEC language curricula to support enrolled students).
- Attending to graduate recruitment, which has included partnering with eight different graduate departments for facilitated yield calls with new graduate admits so that staff can better answer questions for newly admitted international students. OIP also worked with Graduate Studies for a name-buy with TOEFL to recruit students and this has yielded an increase in applications and subsequent commitment to enroll. Both strategies have been very successful and are expected to continue.

Study Abroad is focusing on two main goals:

1. Achieve a 30% undergraduate participation rate in study abroad through strategic and inclusive engagement with campus units and external partners. Part of this goal includes: engaging further academic units; enhancing outreach, engagement, programmatic and financial support for students traditionally underrepresented in Study Abroad (to include demographic, socio-economic, and disciplinary diversity), such that the population of study abroad participants mirrors the domestic undergraduate population on the Lawrence campus; and collaborating with selected academic units and/or campus partners to design and develop structured and supported international programs for freshmen students.
2. Develop assessments to measure the impact of the study abroad experience at the individual and institutional level. Efforts toward this goal include: capitalizing on the potential of study abroad as a high-impact practice to support KU's efforts in improving student retention and time to degree through faculty-led study abroad programming for freshmen students; ensuring alignment of student learning on study abroad with the stated outcomes of Core goal 4.2; and, incorporating alignment of student learning on study abroad with the stated outcomes of Core goal 4.2.

Additional international program activities to note include:

- AEC enrollment was down in 2017-18, but applications are up for 2018-19 and the short-term programs are at capacity for AEC this summer. AEC leadership and ownership for curriculum remains intact and strong; its curriculum and direction are fully managed by the University.
- The shift to bringing the Accelerator program into OIP has been established and the integration with OIP and more fully with KU has gone well.
- The Graduate Accelerator/Shorelight programs have closed down and the current focus is entirely on undergraduate students.
- KU is launching the first pre-academic training program for all incoming international graduate students (non-compulsory), modeled on the program KU does for incoming Fulbright scholars. The cost for this new program is minimal with the main cost covered by the required International Student Orientation Fee at KU. The cost of curriculum delivery is almost entirely covered by the Deans of the admitting schools for the students and OIP has worked with KU Student Housing to offer several affordable housing and dining options to participants. Housing and dining is free to incoming students who will be living on campus over the academic year.
- OIP and the KU area studies centers are working more closely together.
- OIP is working toward developing a form of the undergraduate Global Awareness Program for KU staff that focuses on intercultural skill building as part of professional development.
- In the November 2017 IIE Open Doors report, KU surged in the rankings; 28.9% of KU students participate undergraduate study abroad which ranks KU at 18th among public doctoral universities, and 45th in the U.S. among all university types.

As a way for IAC members to learn more about IP activities, it may be helpful for IAC members to meet with members of the IP advisory board during the fall 2018 board meeting. Members can meet with to share connections with students, faculty, staff and relation to governance.

5. Review and provide input on new policies that relate to international research and teaching.

No new policies relating to international research and teaching were shared with the IAC. After email correspondence with University Governance, the IAC recommends the following revision to this particular standing charge: “As needed review and provide input on new policies that relate to international studies, research and teaching, received from SenEx.”

6. Identify concerns or issues for discussion and action related to KU’s international affairs from students, faculty, and staff.

In discussion among IAC members one further issues arose as a concern for international students in particular, but also international faculty and staff as well as low-income students. Transportation in Lawrence and the region is challenging for those without access to a car, especially with limited bus service on weekends and during the summer term (which includes orientation). Challenges include everyday issues like groceries, but this goes beyond a convenience issue to a safety issue. The IAC would encourage Parking and Transit to look into running weekend shuttles from several campus locations to major shopping areas (downtown and South Iowa) to accommodate the needs of these students.

The IAC member from the Business School reported there is concern that changes in Federal policy necessitate an adjustment in KU admissions policy for graduate students in the professional schools. One of the challenges U.S. graduate programs now face is related to the student visa document requirements as updated by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). The final rule that came out in fall (October 28th) 2016 indicated clearly that students could not receive an I-20 for provisional admission to U.S. programs. Students can only receive an I-20 for a program in which the student meets the full requirements for regular admission. This does not impact undergraduates since KU does not have a language proficiency **level** requirement for admission. For graduate admission, however, KU does have a specific level requirement (<http://graduate.ku.edu/english-proficiency-requirements>). Provisional admission is still fine for domestic students and international students who do not need F-1 visa sponsorship – but for the main group of international admits, provisional admission is not an option. Students would have to start with an AEC or a pathway / bridge I-20 from KU to obtain a visa and gain entry to the U.S. A result of these Federal and subsequent KU policy changes is that graduate admissions to professional schools may suffer. These changes to visa document requirements and graduate admissions to professional schools are an area the IAC could explore further in FY2019. Moreover, the IAC suggests that University Senate encourage KU administration to work with our congressional delegation.

Recommendations:

With regard to the standing charges, the following recommendations have already been noted throughout the report and are summarized here for convenience.

Charge 1:

- The IAC recommends that academic and other campus units engage with ISS to develop tailored communications.
- The IAC recommends increased support for OIP as an important institutional investment given the widespread and increasingly significant reliance on OIP. Moreover, it is also important that OIP serve in a role for greater campus internationalization (e.g. initiatives like orientation that serves domestic and international students together).

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- The IAC further encourages campus units to develop inclusion strategies that also incorporate a direct commitment to the international community and for institutional strategies to involve OIP.
- A recommendation for the IAC in FY2019 is to work with the Student Senate DEI Committee, beginning with an early fall 2019 meeting to exchange ideas and plan for coordinated outreach and effective communication with international students. Also encouraged would be working with Student Senate, the president of the KU International Student Association, and ISS to develop relationships with the leadership of international student organizations as well as international student senators.

Charge 2 (from report submitted 11/14/2018):

Based on a preliminary analysis of the responses received, the IAC made the following recommendations:

- employ multiple forms of communication;
- include information and discussion sessions of policy issues as part of undergraduate and graduate orientations, and when applicable, departmental orientations;
- develop model inclusive communication strategies that make messages broadly accessible, perhaps working with unit DEI offices and/or with the KU Office of Diversity and Equity;
- for major issues and policies like concealed carry:
 - develop shared and inclusive communication strategies that can be employed across units;
 - provide preparation for units in advance with appropriate strategies for communication regarding the policy and its impact on diverse constituents, including international students;
 - work with student organizations to further disseminate information;
 - work with the Applied English Center (AEC) to develop communication strategies for students not actively pursuing degree programs due to language proficiency.

Charge 3:

- Similar to recommendations made relating to Charge 1, the IAC recommends that academic departments and other support units work with the Office of International Programs to develop more effective communications. Additionally, when major policy changes occur at the university level, such as concealed carry, the University could further prepare each academic unit in advance in how to communicate the policy change and impact to its constituents, including international students.

Charge 4:

- As a way for IAC members to learn more about IP activities, it may be helpful for IAC members to meet with members of the IP advisory board during the fall 2018 board meeting. Members can meet with to share connections with students, faculty, staff and relation to governance.

Charge 5:

- The IAC recommends the following revision to this particular standing charge: "As needed review and provide input on new policies that relate to international studies, research and teaching, received from SenEx."

Charge 6:

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- Federal changes to visa document requirements and graduate admissions to professional schools are an area the IAC could explore further in FY2019. Furthermore, the IAC suggests that University Senate encourage KU administration to work with our congressional delegation.

Additionally, the IAC recommends to governance that IP quarterly board reports to be sent to the deans, directors and chairs list to raise awareness and facilitate greater collaboration. The IAC would like to stress the importance of its role in advocacy and collaboration with OIP. Moreover, the search for a new provost and the Chancellor's strategic planning process both provide opportunities for international issues to emerge and for an international focus to be an important factor/dimension of KU and part of academic mission.