Minutes from the Council for International Education

1:00 PM, Monday, May 7, 2018

Horrabin Hall 60 & the Quad Cities Campus via videoconference

In attendance: Davison Bideshi (chair), Pedro Bidegaray (ex officio), Jesse Caverly (student representative), Boh Young Lee, Michael Murray, Miguel Narvaez (new member), Mandeep Singh (via teleconference), and John Stierman.

I. Introductory announcements & introduction of new members.

 a. Dr. Bideshi thanked the members of the Council, especially noting the contributions of Drs. Singh and Webb, who met via videoconference from the Quad Cities campus. Dr. Bideshi said this would be his last meeting as chair of the CIE, and noted that the Council will elect a new chair during the first meeting in Fall 2018.

 b. Dr. Bideshi introduced the new members of the Council, who will begin service starting in academic year 2018-19: Dr. Shankar Ghimire from Economics/Decision Sciences, Dr. Miguel Narvaez from Kinesiology, and Dr. Richard Cangro from the School of Music. These three members will replace Dr. Bideshi, Mr. Murray and Mr. Stierman, all of whom are rotating off the Council at the end of this academic year. As Dr. Narvaez was in attendance, he introduced himself and briefly described his background. Dr. Bideshi also noted that Christina Norton from Sociology will be returning to the Council in the Fall.

II. Approval of minutes.

 a. Motion made by Mr. Stierman to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2018 meeting of the Council, seconded by Dr. Lee. Minutes approved as written.

III. Update: Metric working group.

 a. Dr. Lee said she sent out e-mails to public universities to see what they use to measure assess diversity within their curricula, but had not heard back from very many of them. Dr. Lee also sent out e-mails to several private universities, and said she will collate data about metrics from these other schools as soon as she has enough meaningful data to work with. Dr. Lee said that the schools she’s heard back from (Eastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University and the University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana) use general ideas for evaluating courses and curricula. They tend not to have a specific measurement tool for assessment.

IV. Definitions working group.

 a. Dr. Bideshi displayed the definitions document on the viewscreen and the Council reviewed the document as it currently stands. As per the document, the umbrella term of “culture” breaks down into three basic definitions: 1) a process of individual enrichment, 2) a group’s particular way of life, and 3) an activity pursued by means of attending cultural events, such as concerts, plays and the like. “Multicultural” follows from second of the previous definitions, being defined as a cultural pluralism in which people identify with one or more cultures, or collaborate and dialog with members of another culture, and do so without sacrificing cultural identities. This definition was commonly referred to as a “salad bowl” of culture, or a “cultural mosaic.” Dr. Bideshi asked the Council for its ideas about these definitions, or any comments, additions, or subtractions it might have.

 b. Dr. Bidegaray asked if the Council could include a “state (i.e., of being)” within in a multicultural society or environment, distinguishing this from “cross-cultural.” “Cross-cultural” describes an individual’s ability to cross over into a different cultural state without sacrificing one’s own identity, and temporarily, whereas “multicultural” society exists independently of any particular individual. Dr. Bideshi asked if the work group could supply the references from which it had drawn the definitions, as this would give us more credibility. Mr. Stierman said he

 culled the definitions from various locations and that he would look for the original references.

 c. Dr. Narvaez asked what was the purpose of the definitions document. Drs. Bideshi and Bidegaray both noted that it was the result of a long-standing effort to define cross-cultural and multicultural effectively, and stated that currently the Council still does not have a clear document spelling out these definitions.

 d. Dr. Bideshi asked the Council to consider the definition for intercultural and cross- cultural. Dr. Bidegaray suggested that cross-cultural or intercultural should have some aspect of comparison between two or more different cultures or cultural areas. Dr. Bideshi asked if the Council wished to make additions to the cross-cultural and intercultural definition. After some discussion, the Council decided to amend the definition its current wording (see most recent version of document).

 e. The Council considered the definition of Global Issue, as stated in the definitions document. Dr. Bideshi said that the term Global Issue had a negative connotation, and asked if this was a problem. Dr. Singh responded that if a global issue were not negative, in effect it would then become a global *non-issue*. Mr. Stierman suggested adding a “possibly negative” qualifying clause to the definition because it could be, but it doesn’t have to be catastrophic. Dr. Bideshi added the term problematic (as a noun) to the definition, and added a qualifying statement: “rooted in a problem-solving approach,” which acknowledged a positive interpretation for “global issue.” Dr. Bideshi asked Mr. Caverly what his thoughts were about the definition from a student’s perspective. Mr. Caverly responded that indeed, “global issue” seemed to relate to a negative or adverse problem situation, and he thought the revised wording was better.

 f. The Council considered the definition of International Education. Dr. Bideshi began by removing the bullets and turning the definition into a paragraph. After discussion, several clauses were added, including “to enhance understanding of cultures,” among others. Dr. Bidegaray asked why the Council needed to be concerned with a specific culture, citing a situation in which a professor of a given course might respond to the CIE definition by saying that “concern is not what my course is about, I am teaching facts.” Dr. Singh said it makes little difference what we do insofar as, when the definitions document goes to the Faculty Senate, they will have numerous suggestions for changing the definition. At this point, Dr. Bideshi said that we had come up with a good start for the revised document, and that it will be up to next year’s Council to continue the work we started today.

V. Motion to adjourn (Stierman), seconded (Murray and Singh). Meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Next meeting will take place in Fall 2018, the exact date and time to be determined.

Minutes submitted by Michael Murray.