
Members Absent: Breana Bayraktar, Aida Brhane, Preston Davis, Pamela Johnson, Maria Nieto-Shahsavarian, Steve Rakoff, Linda Rodriguez, Kimberly Rutledge, Mel Schiavelli and Kristy Yarnell.

Alternates: Katie Aimone for Preston Davis.


College Recorder: Norie Flowers

Welcome

Chair Dr. Molly Lynch welcomed members and guests and called for introductions.

Approval of 10-17-14 minutes

A motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to approve the October 17, 2014, minutes.

Presentation on Veterans Issues - Dr. Delores Scott and Dr. Michael Turner

Deans of Students Delores Scott and Michael Turner and Assistant Director of Military Services Ms. Takesha McMiller presented an overview of the assistance provided by NOVA to military Veterans and NOVA’s retention efforts to ensure that Veterans succeed.

Benefits are dispersed differently by each military branch and from state to state and this can be a negative factor in retention and student success. As military benefits change the Veterans office helps Veteran students understand the new guidelines and helps ensure students do not exhaust their benefits before they graduate. The office works closely with the business office, particularly on Do Not Drop issues, to keep military students in class. Those Veterans not eligible for government aid are referred to the financial aid office to see what other services might be available to them. The college now has Wounded Warrior Counselors to assist those in need of specific help.
NOVA’s Veteran population totals 7000 and NOVA’s Veterans must balance multiple priorities with academics. They have to understand state regulations and NOVA policies, navigate the college culture, and overcome stereotyping as well as deal with personal issues connected with military service in dangerous environments.

A Veteran’s Retention Task Force is being proposed that would identify best practices and barriers at NOVA, collect data for decision making, conduct an environmental scan, formulate an action plan highlighting long-term strategic objectives, assess outcomes and make recommendations.

Veterans Ronnie Romero and Joseph Limm provided snapshots of their experiences at NOVA which were positive overall and explained that NOVA has helped them understand and navigate college policies and the educational environment. They commented that Veterans don’t necessarily understand how to pilot the system and perhaps better initial advising would be helpful. NOVA’s website does not have information on initial advising for Veterans but it was noted that it could be improved.

As Veterans often come to NOVA with prior course credits, and are therefore not eligible for first-year advisor assistance, ISSC Committee members suggested this population could benefit from being placed with the first-year advisor or in their own program upon arrival and then identify the appropriate faculty advisors. They felt it was important that NOVA have an advising plan targeted specifically to Veterans. Better degree plan advising would also prevent out-of-pocket expenses with courses taken outside a program and therefore not covered by benefits.

The Alexandria campus offers peer counseling to help Vets with their course scheduling, and there are faculty advisors who possess specializations (i.e., general studies) that could be helpful to military students. The Annandale and Woodbridge campuses offer SDV courses specifically for Veterans only at nearby military bases.

Committee members suggested that it was important to take full advantage of the SAILS electronic program as well as collecting the right kinds of data to improve the overall process for Veterans.

The Deans of Students recommended that a Veteran Task Force be developed.

A motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to show ISSC support for the formation of a Veterans Task Force.

**International Travel Policy - Dr. Paul McVeigh**

Dr. Paul McVeigh brought a proposal forward to ask that the Instructional and Student Services Committee review and approve revised policies and procedures regarding international travel previously presented and discussed with each Provost and with the Academic Deans Council. NOVA is trying to achieve first-class study abroad programs that match other institutions with good programs. In an attempt to reach that goal, a task force was formed.
For the past several years, the existing International Travel Policy (Faculty Handbook, Appendix iii) has been felt to be in need of revision. It was initially intended to strengthen the alignment of the college’s mission and goals with the purposes behind international travel. As stated in its opening paragraph, “The college … views travel outside the United States as a necessary component to broadening perspectives and deepening knowledge among students, faculty and staff, which will in turn improve global teaching and learning.” To this end, more relevant documentation to justify the purpose and expenditure and to record results of the experiences, whether for individual faculty travel or for study abroad with students, has been required.

Over time, however, concerns have arisen, not around travel as an individual so much as travel with students. It has become evident, for examples, that approvals have been too automatic and not considered, that some faculty decide for themselves what is and is not associated with the college (exposing the institution to liabilities), and that “back-door” credit has been awarded for some students in programs promoted as non-credit. These and other activities have led the International Office to revise the policy and protect the college where it is exposed. A stronger policy will address:

- the potential accusation that state funds are being used for “academic travel” rather than genuine study abroad,
- concerns related to the Clery Act, and
- issues deriving from SACS criteria.

The proposed revision has been the result of the central oversight of international travel by the International office, where the goal is to develop study abroad opportunities for students through first-rate college-wide programming that takes advantage of the national conversation on best practices and standards. Two years ago Dr. McVeigh formed a Faculty Peer Review Committee on Study Abroad made up of select experienced faculty program leaders to begin to engage in this conversation and to ensure that the programs under NOVA’s name measure up to national standards.

All courses and programs are linked with the college and as such, the college has a responsibility to ensure that programs, particularly credit courses, are credit worthy. All proposals for study abroad programs must first be reviewed by the Faculty Peer Review Committee for Study Abroad.

All courses must be SACS compliant as the course funding goes to the institution and the institution is therefore accountable. As important, there is now a Clery responsibility to ensure that all measures are taken for the safety and security of NOVA students.

Committee members discussed the fact that students are often not aware that they can take advantage of potential programs generated by a campus instructor offering a course of study abroad at any campus. They also felt that Student Life was a good marketing tool to advertise study abroad options as well as adding study abroad information to student orientations and SDV courses and then providing the same information to faculty.

A motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to accept the proposal as written and submitted on the changes to NOVA’s international travel policies.
Follow-up on college calendar

Dr. Lynch will follow up on whether future calendar changes are negotiable and report the response to Committee members for possible future action.

Topics for Future Meetings:

Adjunct faculty survey
Information literacy
SDV redesign including how plagiarism is presented in that course
Update on Developmental English
Parking
Update about implementation of student success policy changes
Hobson's CRM and QEP update
VA etranscript

Future Meeting Dates:

Friday January 16
Friday February 21
Friday March 20 (may be moved to a conflict with the Student Services Day of Learning)
Friday April 17

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. with the next ISSC meeting scheduled for Friday, January 16, at 9:30 a.m. in large boardroom of the Pender Administrative Complex.