

Study Abroad Sub-Committee (Virtual Meeting)

System Council on International Education

Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2022

Attendance: Lorie Johns Paulez (Georgia Tech), Eric Spears (Columbus State), Katherine Grego (Augusta State), Irina McClellan (Valdosta State), Ivan Nikolov (Valdosta State), Yana Cornish (UGA), Liz Havey (Georgia College), Farrah Bernardino (Georgia State), Erin Rasche (KSU), Daniela Martinez (UNG), Kristin Kasting Karam (Georgia Southern), Erinn Bentley (Columbus State), Nadine Jones (KSU), Brooke Quarterman (CSU), Fernando Garcia (Dalton State), Laura Boudon (GSU), Joshua Hudson (Georgia State), Funwi Ayuninjam (GGC), Judy Orton Grissett (GSW), Tammy Rosner (USG), Ralista Akins (University of West Georgia), Tara McDuffie (KSU), Jarris Lanham (GCSU), Sasha Cokuslu (Clayton State), Christy Flatt (Gordon State College), Anne Gaquerre Parker (UWG), Tara McDuffie (KSU), Cassie Deneke (GGG office), Jym Lynch (GA Coastal), Brennan Gonzales, Sheila Schulte (UNG).

1. Meeting called to order by Lorie Johns Paulez at 11:01 am
2. Review of minutes from September 24, 2021.
 - i. Dr. Ivan Nikolov motioned to approve the minutes. Lorie Paulez seconded.
3. Minutes were approved at 11:06 with addition of Sasha Cokuslu to the attendance roster for the September 24, 2021 meeting.
4. COVID guidelines. Considerations for faculty –led programs.

Lorie Paulez initiated the discussion about the study abroad plans for the summer and pointed that NAFSA and Forum on Education abroad have some useful resources.

Anne Gaquere Parker (UWG) shared the document that they share with their students who plan to study abroad in summer 2022. [2022 Specific Considerations - Google Docs](#)

Yana Cornish (UGA) shared UGA's document titled "Operating Study Abroad During COVID-19: Best Practices" [ct FileRetrieve.cfm \(uga.edu\)](#)

All the speakers stressed that planning and preparation are critical during COVID times and that all the programs should assume that someone on the program is going to get COVID and each program should plan accordingly. Yana Cornish mentioned that UGA is planning a virtual panel of SA faculty who led programs in in the Fall during COVID. UGA is also planning the risk management training in March.

Irina McClellan (VSU) asked if other USG institutions were sending students to the State Department Level 3 and 4 countries. Lorie Paulez replied that GT is sending students to level 3 and 4 countries. Anne Gaquere Parker mentioned that UWG has 4 programs planning to go to Europe this summer.

Dr. Nikolov (VSU) asked if the list of USG institutions that send students to level 3 and 4 countries could be shared/ made available. Lorie Paulez stated that institutions are hesitant to provide such a list. She reiterated that the decision to send students abroad during covid or to send students to level 3 and 4 countries is very individual and should be made on a case by case basis. After all, each institution is unique.

Yana Cornish said that UGA has revised its travel policy in light of the COVID and constantly changing Travel Advisories and CDC guidance. Yana shared the “Office of Global Engagement (OGE) Policy on International Travel to Countries/Areas under Travel Warnings” document [ct_FileRetrieve.cfm \(uga.edu\)](#) which outlines

Irina McClellan (VSU) asked about Gilman funding. Eric Spears shared CSU’s students’ experiences from study abroad during COVID. Yana Cornish and Lorie Paulez mentioned that UGA and GT students only had mild cases of covid abroad. Funwi Ayuininjam (GGC) shared an experience of a prospective student from Mexico who was planning to come to GGC but did not due to covid concerns. Fernando Garcia (Dalton State) talked about positive virtual study abroad experiences of Dalton State Students in Peru, Argentina, and Brazil. Sheila Shulte (UNG) expressed concern that COVID preparedness measures might make studying abroad even more expensive and unattainable for students of lower socio-economic backgrounds.

5. Tammy Rosner (USG International Office) provided an update from USG:

Tammy shared that the System International Office unsuccessfully attempted to secure COVID test kits to all the USG students going on study abroad programs. Eric Spears (CSU) shared his experience trying to obtain covid test kits for CSU’s program going to the Bahamas.

Tammy also shared that the system will be submitting a new RFP for Health Insurance for study abroad next year. More information will be provided over the summer. She also mentioned that she will soon send information regarding the workshop for Campus Christy Health.

6. Lorie brought up the issue of current tensions between Ukraine and Russia and its implications for study abroad in the area. GT cancelled the exchange program in Russia this semester. UNG and CSU also cancelled programs that were planned in Russia. UGA cancelled the program to Russia due to vaccination requirement and encouraged students to pivot to the program to Latvia. GSU changed its program in Ukraine to virtual modality. Funwi Ayuininjam (GGC) mentioned that GGC is considering a program to Lithuania.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 am.