

The Forum on Education Abroad

Third Annual Meeting Minutes

2004 Business Meeting

May 27, 2004

Baltimore, MD

I. Introductions, Annual Report and Approval of Minutes

Kathleen Sideli, President of the Forum, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and commented that it was an honor to preside once again over the annual meeting. She pointed out that there seems to be a greater focus on education abroad today at various levels, citing recent initiatives of ACE, IIE, NAFSA, Harvard and Congress' Lincoln Commission. While the Forum cannot take credit for this burgeoning interest, it can take pride in the fact that the organization is serving as a recognized voice in promoting high quality and high standards as well as academically-focused perspectives and demonstrable outcomes. She pointed out that the Forum is accomplishing a lot with few resources, including a small support staff of one. She recognized the efforts of Geoffrey Bannister, the Forum's Executive Director, and complimented him for the leadership he has provided to date while heading up the Forum's numerous projects.

She recognized the Board and Advisors Council members who were present as well as Mark Shay and his staff at EDU for their Web support, and Brian Whalen, editor of Frontiers, for their strategic partnership.

Given the long agenda, Sideli asked the membership to look over the annual report in the packet for an update on Forum activities and to read about these projects and other Forum activities on the Web site.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Sideli asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the 2003 annual meeting. Nancy Stubbs moved acceptance and Steven Ferst seconded the motion. The 2003 minutes were accepted by the membership.

II. Report from The Treasurer

David Larsen referred the membership to the balance sheet in the packet which shows that as of July 1, 2003 (our last completed fiscal year) Forum assets totaled \$218,902.05. Our two-year cycle (July 1, 2001 - June 30, 2003) saw an income of \$235,744.39 and expenses totaling \$130,742.88.

III. Governance and Annual Report on the Membership

Geoffrey Bannister gave a brief report on some of the activities of the office, including The Forum's involvement with the Lincoln Fellowships Commission. Half of the members of the Commission have now been appointed, with the remainder expected in short order. The Commission's formation is currently being assisted by an Advisory Council of eleven, including Dr. Bannister. The Advisory Council and its committees represent a fine example of inter-institutional cooperation in education abroad. The Commission timetable is running later than hoped and it is likely that the original action plan may have to be extended.

Dr. Bannister met with Senator Simon in October, at the invitation of Dr. John Yopp of ETS who is acting as Project Coordinator for the Advisory Council. Senator Simon expressed support for The Forum's position that the provision of scholarships represented a necessary but not sufficient condition for expanding quality opportunities for students, and that attention to outcomes assessment, data, advocacy, curriculum integration, safety and program integrity would also be necessary.

He outlined two other areas of development for The Forum - the Communications Plan and the first Annual Conference to be held in Santa Fe, November 12th and 13th. Finally, he reported on steady growth in the membership. As of March 2003, The Forum's membership totaled 162, while today the membership is 236 (including 81 Associate members and special members who are participating in the Advisory Council committees.) Institutional members number 151 (compared to 119 last year), with 117 universities in that total (compared to 87 last year). Fastest growth over the twelve months has been in the independent college sector and in overseas universities.

While a concrete estimate of Forum members' service provision to students must await further detail from "Open Doors" and other sources, provisional reports from our partners at IIE indicate Forum members' totals in "Open Doors" increased by around 30% over last year. Counting "Providers," it may be confidently predicted that The Forum's members today cater to between 50% and 55% of all credit-seeking education abroad students from the United States.

IV. Report from Advisory Council

Peter Wollitzer, Chair of the Advisory Council, explained that the AC comprises 15 hardworking individuals divided into 5 working groups based on the five goal areas: Standards, Outcomes, Curriculum, Data and Advocacy. The full transition from Board leadership to AC leadership of these committees took place in April of 2003. He expressed appreciation for the hard work of all committee members during this past year, especially the chairs.

The priorities of the AC in the past year have been standards, outcomes assessment, and curriculum issues, although the Data group has also made good progress redefining a working relationship with IIE and Open Doors, and a July meeting is planned to carry this work forward.

Curriculum: A Forum survey on curricular integration was conducted on-line and will be used to establish baseline knowledge of current policies and practices including loci of control and influence on CI, extent of CI activity in education abroad, the various forms CI takes and various definitions that are in use, etc. There was a presentation of the preliminary findings at the Minnesota conference in April and the complete findings will be published and presented at the Forum meeting in Santa Fe in November.

Outcomes assessment. The most important activity this year was the Forum Student Research Awards competition. It generated 60 outstanding examples of high quality student research during education abroad, covering a wide range of disciplines/fields, countries, methodologies, and outcomes. Two students will be invited to Santa Fe to have their work showcased at a plenary session and 8-10 more will be published in a special issue of *Frontiers*. The submissions

demonstrate some of the highest caliber achievement that we can expect from education abroad, and they set a standard for future participants to strive to meet.

Standards. The top AC priority this past year went into developing an approach to help all members approach continuous quality assessment, regardless of institutional type, size, or specific mission. This effort has resulted in a draft document, Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad that is being distributed now. While it has a polished look, the booklet is only a draft that is being offered to the field for comment, critique, and improvement. It is meant to start (and not end) a major international discussion of standards and how best to meet them. He turned the podium over for further discussion the standards.

V. Standards of Good Practice

Bannister announced that the packets contained a monograph which represents the draft of standards of good practice which the Board began and an Advisory Council committee just completed with the assistance of an outside consultant. They were designed with the knowledge that the field is diverse enough that 'one size does not fit all.' The Forum urges the membership to hold their own programs up to the draft standards to see what changes need to be made in order for these to work well for self-evaluation. There will also be a pilot study this summer so that preliminary results are available at the November conference. This is a major step in the field and all Forum members are invited to contribute their comments and suggestions to the Advisory Council. The members of the Standards Committee are listed in the monograph and they can be reached through the Forum Web site. Formal discussions about the standards will take place through the Forum's discussion boards in the coming months.

VI. Forum's Communication Plans

Given the proximity of the conference to the Camden Yard stadium, Bill Hoffa gave a creative baseball analogy for the Forum's new Communications boards. 'Build it and they will come.' It is the leadership's hope that the membership will, in fact, join the rest of the Forum 'players' and enthusiastically participate in the new electronic bulletin boards so that we can share ideas among us, not only during moments of crisis, but also to expand our knowledge in the field. Everyone has been subscribed and discussion groups will be organized in the coming weeks. A chart outlining the new communication system was included in the packet.

VII. Proposed Changes to the By-Laws

Sideli explained that the original by-laws were written by the founding board members. Since they set them up to serve the initial needs of the organization, it is not surprising that they need to be fine-tuned as the organization evolves. Three changes have been proposed in the past year, one from the Advisory Council and two from the Board's Nominating Committee. The Board of Directors unanimously approved them in January and they have since been reviewed by legal counsel. Since the by-laws call for a majority vote of the Members, she outlined the three proposed changes and called for a vote on each.

Proposed Change #1:

Rationale: To change the function of the Nominating Committee to allow the Advisory Council to exercise more control over its own nominating process.

The change allows for separate nominations committees for the Board and Advisory Council, with overlapping membership through appointment of the Board's Vice-Chair to the Advisory Council Nominating Committee, and the appointment of the Advisory Council Vice-Chair to the Board's Nominating Committee.

Recommended Actions:

1. To approve the addition of Section 9.05 (below) to the By-Laws:
"Section 9.05 Nominating Committee. In the Spring of each year, and before the Annual Meeting, a Nominating Committee of not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members of the Advisory Council appointed by the Chair of the Advisory Council, together with the Chair of the Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors, shall prepare a slate of nominees for election to the Advisory Council by the Voting Members. The Advisory Council Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations and volunteers from the membership, ensuring that an appropriate balance of interests and talents are available in the slate to ensure the proper functioning of the Goals Committees."
 2. To add the following to Section 12.01 (A) of the By-Laws, following the first sentence.
"One of these shall be the Vice-Chair of the Advisory Council."
 3. To delete the semi-colon and to add the following word in Section 12.01 (A) after the words, "Éto be elected by the Governing members" "and"
 4. To delete from section 12.01 (A) of the By-Laws the last eleven words, namely, and
Advisory Council members to be elected by the Voting Members.
 5. To replace Section 12.01 (B) by the following:
"The Nominating Committee shall nominate one candidate for each office (Board and its officers) to be elected at the annual meeting of the Board, and shall notify the Secretary of their selection not later than twenty days prior to the annual meeting."
- ***ACTION ITEM:*** There was a motion by Leann Grace to accept the change, seconded by Geoffrey Gee. The vote carried unanimously.

Proposed Change #2:

Rationale: *To allow more flexibility for building the strength of the Board, to allow for the appointment of more new directors and to allow for greater continuity in the initial years.*

Recommended Actions:

1. In Section 8.02, to replace the words "Four (4)" at the end of the fourth sentence, after the words, "Éthe number of successor directors in each Class shall be reduced to" by the words, "Six (6)."
2. In Section 8.02, to replace the words, "or Class B" by "and no more than Four (4) from Class B,"

- **ACTION ITEM:** *There was a motion by Carl Herrin to accept the change, seconded by Les McCabe. The vote carried unanimously.*

Proposed Change #3:

Rationale: *To clarify that the Board has made its transition from an initial "working board" and to provide a clearer sense of where the policy-making (Board) and executive authority (Management) lie.*

Recommended Actions:

To change the titles of the two principal volunteer officers from President and Vice-President to Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

1. *In Section 11.01, to replace the word "President", at each occurrence, by, "Chair."*
2. *In Section 11.02, to replace the words "Vice President", at each occurrence, by, "Vice Chair".*
3. *To change all other sections of the By-Laws to maintain consistency with the new definitions of 11.01 and 11.02.*

- **ACTION ITEM:** *There was a motion by John Perry to accept the change, seconded by Carol Dickerman. The vote carried by a majority.*

VIII. Election of Advisory Council Members

Jane Edwards, Vice Chair of the Advisory Council and Chair of the Nominating Committee, explained that the committee, which included Peter Wollitzer, Chair of the AC, Carol Dickerman and Mary Dwyer (ex-officio), had organized the nominations for new AC members to replace the five who are rotating off on June 30. They sought nominees by the vacancies left on the AC committees, that is, individuals who would bring necessary skills to the committees on Advocacy, Standards and Data. They decided that a contested slate did not serve these needs since there would be no guarantee that the elected individuals would provide the balance needed (i.e. new faces, etc.) as well as the requisite skills. The five nominees listed on the slate and whose biographies were included on the ballots were: Lynn Anderson (U Minnesota) for Advocacy, Vija Mendelson (Academic Programs International) and Stephen Hall (Bowdoin College) for Data and Anders Uhrskov (DIS) and Joan Raducha (U Wisconsin) for Standards.

Bannister conducted the election, first asking if there were any nominees from the floor for each of the positions. There being none, he requested that voting members complete the ballot contained in the packets and submit them. The ballots were counted at the conclusion of the meeting, and the five nominees were thereby elected by the membership.

IX. Report from the Board Nominating Committee

Mary Dwyer, Vice-President of The Forum and chair of the Nominating Committee which

includes Madeleine Green, Mick VandeBerg, Jane Edwards (ex-officio), reported that they had focused their attention on rebalancing the Board composition to reflect the type of memberships that one would see in Higher Education not-for-profits. They looked for new members to replace those rotating off the Board who had certain skill sets-financial acumen, board development expertise, leadership and organizational management expertise, international reputation, etc. They also focused on introducing members from outside the education abroad field while also achieving a more diverse board. Last year the Board added Madeleine Green (ACE) and Jim Langridge (University of Wollongong). This year the committee identified six potential candidates and their top two choices accepted and were elected by the Board at the January meeting to begin their terms on July 1, 2004:

- ***Judy Irwin** is the Director of International Programs and Services at the American Association of Community Colleges. She has 25 years of executive management experience in higher education, membership association and business environments.*
- ***MaryLou Merkt** is the Vice President for Business Affairs at Furman University. She had been the VP for Finance and Administration at Sweet Briar College. She has an extensive list of impressive appointments and national committee assignments with a very strong financial management background.*

X. Appreciation of Board and Advisory Council Members

Sideli expressed appreciation to each of the individuals whose terms on the Board or Advisory Council had ended. She recognized those who were not present (Todd Davis-Board, Ben DeWinter and Susan Brick--Advisory Council) and invited those in attendance to receive special plaques for their services: Carl Herrin--Board, Lilli Engle, Joan Raducha and Michael Steinberg-Advisory Council.

XI. New Business

No items of new business were introduced. Sideli invited everyone to attend the Forum's first conference on Nov. 12-13, in conjunction with the CIEE conference in Santa Fe. She pointed out that the Forum hopes to achieve the same successful concentrated focus that many of the field had enjoyed at the Curriculum Integration conference at the University of Minnesota in April.

She also mentioned that the leadership would be asking the membership to comment on whether we should continue to have the annual meeting in conjunction with the NAFSA conference since it has proven difficult to get the appropriate venue-the best day and time, an adequately sized room and a reasonable distance from other conference activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Approved by Al Balkcum, Secretary