



COLLEGE OF INFORMATION

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2025 – 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Location: Edward St. John Learning & Teaching Center, Room 2204

AGENDA

Preliminaries

- Call to order

Quorum recognized

- Review and approval of minutes from February

Minutes approved without correction

- Review and approval of this agenda

Agenda approved without correction

Assembly Items

- Dean's Update [Keith Marzullo]

Short update today - the first thing is a reminder that we are having a lab opening ceremony at 12:15pm. This is a celebration of Stephanie Valencia Valencia's lab, please come by. The 2nd thing is a reminder. We are seeing grants being frozen, stop-work orders, this has been happening in ARLIS. Many of our colleagues in other places are looking at the money that they have been granted and asking "is it time to accelerate the spending of that money?" You as a PI can decide to accelerate the spending of this grant. You can go to your business manager and have this conversation. We like to bring in funds and squirrel them away for a rainy day, but we don't know if squirreled away money will remain squirreled away. If you are in this situation, I recommend that you talk to your business manager and see what you might want to do.

Question: Do you think the Universities or anyone else might be successfully pushing back on these attempts to roll back these congressionally-appropriated funds?

Answer: There are lawsuits in place that are trying to force funding that has already been allocated to be disbursed. There have been some successes so far, but there might not be complete successes everywhere.

Question: Long ago, when the college was a smaller place, there were mechanisms for taking money out of grants to bank things in the college - say hypothetically I want to take a course buyout in the fall, but I don't know if my money is going to be there, so you're going to pay me for a course buyout now and then you promise I'll have that in the fall - are there structures in the college to be able to take some of that money out now for things later?

Answer: The short answer is no, but we're always open to creative solutions. The problem is everything is so uncertain - take fund balance for example, in other colleges where they're able to make a surplus each year, they are being told that "any extra money colleges have the University might take back". It's dangerous banking

money across fiscal years - if we were to pay something this year, it's not a guarantee that it'll exist next fiscal year.

Question: Has President Pines, on behalf of this campus, approached the UMaryland greater system to write to or appeal to the Maryland AG to join one of these lawsuits? It feels better to be proactive than to just sit and take it.

Answer: This is above my paygrade but I can tell you the Office of General Counsel works closely with the Maryland AG. But I don't know the answer to this as I haven't been briefed.

Comment: Just a reminder, Susan & Polly do not automatically get notified of stop-work orders from funders, so please forward these things to Susan (sjwinter@umd.edu) & Polly (porourke@umd.edu) so that they can keep the University informed of what's going on.

- Education Abroad [Zhana Welch & Julia Xia]

INFO is the only college that has no study abroad opportunities for our students (INFO students can participate in other programs, though). Instructors can invite the Study Abroad office to do a quick presentation to their class - this presentation will be an overview.

20% of UMD students study abroad, which is 3x the national average. Lots of students have hesitations because of COVID and other factors, but there were still over 1,600 UMD students who studied abroad in the 23-24 year. In 23-24 they had approx. 850,000 dollars in scholarships available. Students can study abroad during the fall, spring, summer, winter semesters, for the full year, or over spring break.

Different kinds of Study Abroad programs:

- Maryland In
 - Live and learn in a global context with the support of a UMD community
 - Specific course offerings for each program; enroll in Resident Courses to seamlessly fulfill degree requirements
 - Build professional skills through an internship during your semester abroad
 - Program fee varies by location
- Exchange
 - Immersive and independent experience
 - Live and learn with students from the host country at one of UMD's partner universities
 - Academic variety and flexibility - take any coursework offered in English
 - Pay your UMD tuition rate - one of the most affordable study abroad options!
- Faculty-Led Short Term
 - Join a UMD faculty member and other Terps on an intensive, 2-3 week program
 - Your host city is your classroom! Explore your program topic through site visits, guest speakers, and research projects
- Affiliate & Other Approved
 - Approved programs (outside of UMD) that you can enroll in
 - Additional flexibility in finding a program that meets your goals and needs
 - Some programs have themes that align with academic or professional areas of interest
 - Cost and course offerings vary

Question: Do you have any opportunities for graduate students? Every now & then we get questions from grad students about it.

Answer: Typically our office works with undergrad students, our semester-long programs are for undergrads but graduate students are welcome to apply for short-term opportunities. One of the other concerns is that the short-term programs offer 200- or 300- level courses which grad students can't take, but we do have a handful of those that offer 400- or 600- level courses. We do have a small number of programs just for grad students.

Questions: If a faculty member wanted to design a semester-long study abroad program, how do we do that?

Answer: We accept program proposals on a yearly basis, currently accepting proposals for 2026. Course proposal process is similar to the regular course proposal process - done through Courseleaf (Course Inventory Management - "Course Type = Education Abroad Course"). You develop a syllabus, learning objectives, etc. INFO students want to go abroad. There currently are not any programs for them, the last one was in 2019. You could take a course or multiple courses that are already approved, and translate them to a study-abroad context. Libraries are a great idea - we thought about having a library sciences program for graduate students. We want more graduate program opportunities, so if you have any ideas, they are very welcome. INFO students make up maybe 1-2% of students that go abroad - we want to increase that number.

Question: Do you have any demographic information on people who typically do study abroad? We have a lot of first-gen students in INFO, people who have to work to make rent, keep their families together, and these could be limiting factors instead of the fact that there aren't any programs for INFO - what can we do to make these opportunities more accessible?

Answer: We do a lot of work to keep costs low and affordable for students, and we have a lot of scholarships. We do have a lot of first-gen students. We do a lot of strategic work with the faculty member of each program to keep costs down.

Question: There are no info-specific programs for study abroad, but can you confirm that students can sign up for other programs?

Answer: Yes, INFO students can go on any program they want to go on, but it's just a question of what credit they want towards their degree- mostly for INFO students it's elective credit.

Question: Do you serve as a clearing-house for professional programs? Are these things that are useful to see what else might be beneficial?

Answer: Yes - if you think there are programs that might benefit your students, please please share this with us. We have a long list of partnerships and we always want more.

Announcements

- Reminder for Assembly Leadership elections in May.
 - Jacob wants to run again and welcomes any challengers.
- For Faculty: APT will be at Juan Ramon Jimenez Hall, Room 0220
- For Staff: In place of a staff meeting, each unit should refer to their leadership for what they'll be doing
- AIM is holding a distinguished lecture series on April 1 and May 1. We'll have funders there to talk about the funding landscape and talks from INFO faculty.
- For everyone who is an instructor - if your TA or grader is not meeting expectations, PLEASE let Jeff Waters, Chris Beatty, and Tetyana Bezbabna know.
- Amelia wants to talk to everyone about a study abroad MLIS program. Talk to Jeff/Amelia if you have ideas/questions.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn. Accepted.