
Listserv Summary: Administrative Structures at Institutions without an SIO

January 30, 2014

An inquiry was made to the AIEA Listserv asking for examples of structures at universities without a designated SIO, and where specific Colleges or Schools within the university have international officers and are responsible for that division's internationalization.

Summary of responses:

There were four responses to this inquiry from Senior International Officers and others who have previously or are currently working on similar initiatives. One response referenced ACE's Mapping Internationalization on US Campuses document from 2012, which found that 8% of respondents addressed international engagement and activity in the tenure and promotion project. ACE is currently looking at a sampling of those tenure codes and hope to have findings available Spring of 2014.

One response recommended looking at Michigan State as a model, noting that they have a long-standing commitment to these issues. Carnegie Mellon was also mentioned as a strong model for decentralized internationalization.

One SIO from a large public research university described that guidelines had been adopted in one college at their institution and that they are currently being discussed for campus-wide implementation. A background statement presented to the faculty senate argued that engagement in the world must be valued to be considered a "world class" institution, and that faculty should be rewarded for this engagement without this becoming a "litmus test" in a P&T decision. The SIO described the process of a working group to review policies and procedures for P&T with regard to how they can more intentionally and directly document international activities in packages prepared by candidates for promotion and tenure in a way that describes not just activities but what difference participation in these international activities made in faculty members' career tracks.

The result was that the institution now asks that international engagement is addressed by candidates by including a list of activities appropriately categorized under the key components of the candidate's duties (teaching, research, service, etc.); a statement explaining the candidate's rationale for such international engagement; the candidate's goals relative to international engagement as part of his/her career development and faculty responsibilities; and a thoughtful description of the outcomes and impact of the described international engagement.

An SIO from a large, public research university described that this is now integrated in the forms for applying for promotion or tenure. Examples include asking specifically for international courses taught on campus or abroad, specifically asking about international student advising in the description of academic advising experience, and specifically asking applicants to document international studies and program grants.

Other responses included:

A public research university with around 20,000 students currently has a half-time vice chancellor who serves as an SIO, but international divisions within each school or college report to their own deans and not to this vice-chancellor.

A small, private non-profit institute focusing on undergraduate students has a working group at the institution focused on bringing programs together and fostering dialogue. The school is interested in creating an SIO position in the near future.

A small private college with around 6,000 students is participating in the ACE Internationalization Laboratory, which has influenced how it addresses internationalization. The institution is currently decentralized with low mobility numbers. They have instituted changes with reporting and procedures that have been standardized across the university. This college is currently in transition.

A small private research institution that has six schools and whose internationalization efforts are currently decentralized is recruiting its first SIO—an Associate Provost for Global Engagement. At the moment, each school has its own internationalization plan and the Associate Provost provides guidance and assistance in this process. The school is transitioning from a committee that focused on internationalization towards a formal SIO position.

A small, private, religiously-affiliated university with around 10,000 students does not have an official SIO position, but the Center for Study Abroad is the go-to point on campus for issues relating to policies and best practices in internationalizations. This university attempted to institute college liaisons, but did not have support (release time or stipend), so this was not as successful as hoped, and there are some colleges who have been more successful than others. The issue that this individual mentioned was that though college liaisons is a model that can work, without the SIO, there is a lack of coordination and a duplication of resources and “lots of wonderful pieces but no end product, or ‘fabric,’ if you will.”

One SIO discussed an institution without an SIO where the Associate VP for Business handled approvals of international agreements. The study abroad office was consulted, but generally only for exchange programs. Schools and colleges had internal offices or individuals who worked on internationalization to varying degrees of success. The pros of this set-up were that schools could create partnerships according to discipline needs and include dual degrees. The cons of this

arrangement were that there was no unified vision for internationalization and some duplication of efforts.