**Five Year Review Summary, August 2013**

**Office of International Studies and Programs, UMSL**

**Changes Since Last Review**

The Office of International Studies and Programs (ISP) and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISS) have continued to internationalize the campus and community and much progress has been made in achieving the two goals which are mentioned in the UMSL strategic plan, i.e., recruiting more international students, and increasing participation in study abroad programs.

One change since the last review has been to shift resources to support greater efforts to retain international students currently attending UMSL by providing a more welcoming and hospitable environment. Delivery of services to international students has improved along with efforts to assist the students in getting more involved in campus academic and social life.

Another important change was to develop more short-term, UMSL faculty-led programs during the intersession and the summer. This has helped to both increase student participation and provide an international experience for more faculty members.

Other ISP and ISS services and programs continue our efforts to internationalize the campus and the community to insure that students and citizens develop the international competence they will need to function and work in a world that is increasingly globalized.

However, budget cuts and fee increases have slowed progress and made it more difficult to achieve our mission.

**Budget cuts.** Along with all UMSL units, ISP and ISS have suffered meaningful reductions in university funding in recent years which make it ever more difficult to improve services and achieve our mission. University revenue for the two units reached a peak in FY2009 and by FY2013 had been reduced by nearly 6.8 percent.

The ISP Fellows program, which provides funds to faculty for internationally-related research, was suspended in FY2010 because of UM limitations on the use of funds for travel and because of budget reductions. This program had been supported with University funds since 1968 but those have been lost to budget cuts. The program was resumed in FY2011 but is now supported entirely by funds recovered from grants, including indirect costs.

Other programs which had been supported by University funds also have been eliminated. Included are: ISP financial support for two academic journals housed at UMSL; a post-doctoral fellow in peace and conflict resolution research which was supported by a non-profit organization in St. Louis; and the Visiting International Professor Program that each semester brought a scholar from a foreign partner university to teach two courses and foster research collaboration with our faculty.

**Fee Increases.** From FY2009 to this coming year, tuition and mandatory fees for non-resident undergraduate students taking 15 credits has increased more than 24 percent. This significant increase in costs has makes it more difficult to recruit fee-paying international students, especially undergraduates, since there has not been a corresponding increase in scholarship funds.

In April 2012, the *New York Times* published a study of the “net price” of attending college (undergraduate cost of attending college, including tuition, fees, room, board, books and other expenses less average grants and scholarships awarded). That study showed that, in terms of average “net price” UMSL was the twenty-second most expensive public university in the country. UMSL was more than $1,300 more expensive in “net price” terms than University of California, Berkeley and $2,400 more expensive than Michigan State University.

**Strategies for Improving Program**

Two ISP activities are specifically mentioned in the UMSL strategic plan. One item calls for the recruitment and retention of more non-resident, fee-paying international students and set a target number of 600 for 2013. We have already achieved this goal by hosting 654 visa-holding students in Fall 2012 but increasing this number remains one of our main goals.

**International Students.** To recruit more international students, ISS pursues a multi-faceted strategy that is re-evaluated at least each semester in light of our recruiting success, budgetary constraints, and new opportunities. Our strategies include: participation in college information fairs in selected countries, partnerships with selected foreign universities and high schools, promoting UMSL 2 + 2 programs with partner universities, maintaining a partnership with the ELS language training center on campus, seeking additional scholarship funds for international students, and preparing recruiting materials.

Recently we have requested additional funds to hire a new international student recruiter who would spend time abroad recruiting students and establishing and maintaining relationships with partner institutions. Our current financial resources cannot support greater recruiting efforts abroad.

We are making a concerted effort to improve our services in credential and credit evaluation. We are seeking ways to streamline the process and handle the requests in a more timely manner. Of course, new funds to hire an additional staff member would be another means of reducing processing time.

In recent years we also recognized that retaining current international students is another key element in increasing enrollment. So, we have shifted resources to provide a more welcoming and hospitable environment for international students. This includes greater cooperation with other campus units including Student Life, Center for Student Success, Career Services, Health, Wellness and Counseling, and Residential Life.

**Study Abroad.** The second ISP activity mentioned in the strategic plan is to increase participation in study abroad and exchange programs by 50 percent in the five years of the plan. This remains another of ISP’s main goals. Despite increased costs and insufficient funds for scholarships, progress has been made toward achieving this goal.

To increase participation in study abroad and exchange programs, we have developed more faculty-led short-term programs during the intersession and summer, developed and participated in consortia to cooperate in recruitment of students and to make program costs more affordable, sought and obtained more scholarship funds from private donors, sought funds to award more and larger scholarships, conducted more informational and marketing sessions including a Study Abroad Fair and more classroom visits, utilized study abroad program alumni to speak to students about their experiences, developed an international photo contest to generate interest, and improved cooperation with other campus units including the Honors College, International Business Institute, and Multicultural Relations to promote study abroad among their advisors and students.

**Other Comments**

Over the last forty-five years ISP has accomplished much to better educate students by internationalizing the curriculum and faculty and by developing a solid foundation of strong international programs on campus. ISP also has been successful in cooperating with other units and organizations to more efficiently and effectively combine our resources through partnerships with many ethnic and international organizations in the community that enhance the region’s cultural life and contribute to economic development of the region and the State of Missouri.

In his Five Year Review report, the external reviewer, Dr. Chunsheng Zhang, Vice Provost for International Affairs, University of North Alabama, concluded that the “Office of International Studies and Programs (ISP) at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) has been a dependable anchor and an influential catalyst for nurturing faculty champions in carrying out the internationalization mission of the University through teaching, research, services, training and community outreach. . . . ISP could serve as a national model for engaging and empowering faculty, mobilizing the local ethnic and business communities, and cultivating strategic partnerships locally and globally to advance the University’s internationalization mission, goals and programs.”

In their summary, the campus review committee stated that: “We agree with the outside reviewer Chunsheng Zhang that the International Studies and Programs (ISP) is a strong influence on the campus in carrying out the internationalization mission of the University of Missouri through teaching, research, services, training and community partnerships and outreach.” The committee concluded by saying that: “The ISP’s two stated goals are to increase international student presence on the UMSL campus and to increase the number of study abroad students, and we support both of those, and agree they should be the top goals. We believe ISP is already positioned for growth in both of these areas. We were impressed.”