Annual Report, Foreign Programs Subcommittee

The subcommittee met four times during the 2007-8 academic year, on October 10 and December 4, 2007 and March 10 and April 28, 2008. The October meeting was chaired by Rebecca New (Child Studies), who stepped down explaining that she was leaving Tufts at the end of the semester, and Gary Leupp (History) was elected as the next chair.

Routine business included the presentation and discussion of reports concerning numbers of participants in Tufts-sponsored programs, and consideration of petitions for approval of non-Tufts programs for credit.

The subcommittee also discussed the issue of institutional receipt of commissions or kickbacks from foreign colleges and universities; Tufts’ relationship to the National Security Education Program; and the impact of a strike in relation to the Tufts in Paris program.

It revisited the issue of a program in Arabic language at a university in an Arab country; received a report of a site visit to Barcelona; and received a report on the Tufts in Tübingen program.

The number of participants in Tufts programs aboard in 2006-7 was the among the highest in recent years and the figure for 2007-8 was slightly higher, despite the falling value of the dollar.

The committee ruled on 15 petitions from students wishing to enroll in non-Tufts programs, rejecting 7, mostly because they did not meet Tufts requirements for semester length, and approving 8.

On Oct. 10 Tufts Programs Abroad director Sheila Bayne gave the subcommittee a presentation on the issue of colleges receiving money from study abroad providers that had been documented in a New York Times article on August 13. She noted that Tufts does not receive commissions or kickbacks of any sort from study abroad providers, and had decided to take an even stronger stance than it has in the past by not accepting paid familiarization trips. Tufts will pay for all trips taken by Tufts Programs Abroad staff for site visits and familiarization tours. This policy by Tufts was documented by the Chronicle of Higher Education bringing positive press to the University.

In the December 4 meeting the subcommittee received reports from Bayne about staff changes, the Ghana and Paris programs and her office’s relationship to the National Security Education Program.

She explained that Melanie Armstrong had been promoted to Program Specialist and will now both recruits students and provide pre-departure orientation and safety information.
She further reported on that effects of the then ten-day old strike occurring in Paris, affecting our program at Paris III, explaining how Monique Fecteau, Tufts in Paris Resident Director, had made sure tutors were available for the students whose classes were not meeting.

The committee discussed the issue of the National Security Education Program, which provides scholarships to students interested in studying less frequently taught languages with the requirement that upon obtaining their degrees they work for a U.S. intelligence agency for at least one year. Bayne indicated that information about the program was posted on the studyabroadfunding.org website Tufts’ linked to the Tufts Programs Abroad website and that this was available to any interested Tufts student. She asked for instruction from the subcommittee concerning promotion of the program by her office and it was decided that that office will not actively recruit for it but would support the applications of students who chose to apply.

Foreign Study Adviser Sally O’Leary reported on a visit to Barcelona to study conditions in five institutions which the subcommittee has approved for Tufts students in past years. She reported that at one of them Tufts students seemed not to feel challenged; the subcommittee voted to discontinue approval for the program.

The subcommittee revisited the issue of a program in an Arab country and Professor Amira El-Zein, who will be attending a program at the University of Qatar in May 2008, said that she would do research and make a report in the fall semester about the possibility of a summer program at that university.

In the March meeting, Tufts-in-Tübingen program Resident Director Ute Link while visiting Tufts gave a report on the program and indicated the possibility that as the German education system changes its calendar to more closely match that of the American academic year calendar, Tufts will be able to institute a fall semester program in Tübingen.

Subcommittee chair, Gary P. Leupp (Professor, History)