To be received and placed on file:

It has been a busy year for the Chair, less so for the Committee. Aside from my normal obligations to attend U.C. International Education Committee meetings in Oakland each quarter, and occasional subcommittee meetings in Santa Barbara, I have also served as a member of the EVC’s International Advisory Committee. That committee has been charged with devising a vision statement, mission and plan for making UCR a more internationalized university in its teaching, service and research. We have been at work on it all year, and the Chair, Joseph DiGregorio, has drafted the final report for our review at a June meeting.

The main challenge for my committee in 05-06 was to respond rather quickly to a budget crisis which developed this past Fall within the U.C.-wide Education Abroad Program. Without warning, the leadership of the UCEAP issued a proposal to make drastic cuts in the program over the next few years in order to address current and projected deficits in their budget. The UOEAP felt themselves under pressure to get these budget cutting measures approved in a hurry, before students began to sign up for various programs for Fall 2006, some of which may disappear under the new guidelines. Approval required concurrence of the UC wide International Education Committee, which in turn required my consultation with UCR’s IEC. These measures, which among other things would have wiped out nearly all EAP summer programs, end or curtail certain cultural/language programs in Rome, Paris and London, end any EAP program with insufficient student enrollment and high costs, eliminate course release funding for EAP campus faculty directors, and exact a $200 non-refundable fee for all student applicants, had serious academic repercussions, and especially for our campus. Many of the programs slated for the chopping block were among the favorites of our students, such as the Siena Winter and Spring Programs in Italy and the Sussex Summer Program in England. We at UCR would have real difficulty diverting our summer EAP students into non-EAP programs; attendance would surely drop.

With pressure from UOEAP to respond, and with time running out before the quarter’s end my committee via email unanimously endorsed the following resolution:

The U.C.R. Committee on International Education has learned that the leadership of the U.C. Education Abroad Program has recently issued a proposal to make drastic cuts in the EAP program over the next few years in order to address current and projected deficits in their budget. While there may be some justification for trimming the program, we believe that it would be better advised to postpone such cuts for next year, pending a full discussion of the academic and financial issues among all the relevant stakeholders.

What transpired then were UCIE teleconference calls on December 16th and January 4 which succeeded in saving some of the programs through cost-cutting endeavors (the Great Cities programs in London Fall, Rome and Paris Fall) softening the blow on others (kept part of the Sienna program alive) and delaying cuts in still other programs. Yet, serious cuts could not be avoided for the EAP program as a whole. The UOEAP leadership stood firm in its desire to eliminate all summer programs except those with special language focus. That meant Sussex and Pembroke would go. I made a personal pitch to save Sussex, and urged the UCIEC to go along. In the end, we got approved a motion to hold on to Sussex and Pembroke for this year, and thereafter find another UC entity (some campus summer program) to take over their administration and management. I also made a pitch to salvage some course release funding for all campus EAP directors and scrap the $200 non-refundable fee for all student applicants. I am pleased to report that we struck a compromise with UOEAP and will retain funding for a one course reduction for campus EAP directors to be matched by a second course reduction funded by the campuses. We also got the UOEAP to eliminate the $200 student application fee. That is especially good news for UCR students, who are more financially burdened than students at most other UCs.
In the end, one of the most important accomplishments was procedural. Initially, neither the International Education Committee nor the Campus EAP Directors or Campus Administrative Directors had any input into the budget-cutting decisions. Those were made by budget administrators, behind closed doors, with no input from any of the other relevant parties. We succeeded in impressing upon the EAP leadership the importance of consulting with the faculty reps from the campuses on decisions which after all, would have great academic repercussions. I feel more confident that in the future, UOEAP will look toward us for feedback and guidance on all key matters pertaining to this program.

This is a time of transition for UCR. There are a number of exciting initiatives underway which, if brought to fruition, could launch the campus on a path toward much greater visibility and recognition as a globally focused university. A Global Studies Major is being designed and is scheduled to commence in the Fall. Latin American Studies has completed its search for a new chair (I was a member of that search committee) and hopefully the offer will be accepted. The Chancellor has, for the first time, publicly committed UCR to becoming a “top-ranked, global research university.” And she along with the EVC will soon have on their desks copies of the report from the International Advisory Committee which provides recommendations for achieving the Chancellor’s goal. One of those recommendations, which I in particular pushed hard for, is the creation of a new position of Vice Provost for International Initiatives. I and the other committee members believe that if the campus is to succeed at internationalizing itself, it must hire an individual with academic credentials, stature and credibility who can bring visibility to our efforts. He/she must also be provided with all the funding, staff and other resources needed to succeed. With the right commitment and pledge of resources from the top, and a harnessing of faculty talent and energies from below, UCR has the potential to become a first rate, globally focused university.

A. Blay
D. E. Crowley
S. B. Hammer
S-H. Lee
V. Parpura
R. W. Patch
R. Stouhamer
L. S. Bell
J. F. Azzaretto
S. D. Dwight
D. E. Elton
D. Pion-Berlin, Chair