

Global Education Committee - 2022-23 Report

Committee Charge

Charge 1: Whereas the faculty senate has received faculty concerns regarding current policies and procedures regarding global education, particularly with Dialogues of Civilizations, the Global Education Committee shall:

1. Review available existing Global Experience Office (GEO) faculty and student data from the past 3 years
2. Survey faculty related to their experiences concerning global education policies and procedures, global learning goals, curriculum, planning, and strategy, etc.
3. Provide recommendations to maintain and strengthen the global learning experience for the Northeastern community

Background

The Global Education Committee (GEC) met during the 2022-2023 academic year to evaluate current policies and procedures regarding global education. During the fall semester, the committee designed and distributed a survey to the faculty. The survey was administered to faculty members who proposed a Dialogue of Civilizations (DOC) in 2018-22. We have received 64 responses (46% response rate) from faculty across seven colleges proposing programs in seven different world regions; of those respondents, 25% (16) are seasoned faculty who led 7-10+ Programs, 48.4% (31) have led 2-6 programs and 26.6% (17) have led just one program. The Committee met to review the findings and identify several key issues that would strengthen the DOC programs.

Quantitative results of Faculty Survey:

Findings: While DOC faculty leaders mostly agree that they have a clear understanding of Northeastern and GEO policies and procedures that govern their involvement in DOC programs (3.42 on a 5-point scale; for comparison, the mean was 3.77 in 2019, the most recent pre-pandemic survey), they split on their perceived ability to learn about changes in policies and procedures through communication from GEO in a timely fashion (2.91; 3.11), and strongly disagree that they have sufficient opportunities to provide input on DOC-related policies and procedures (2.27; 2.26). When it comes to assessing GEO's effectiveness in supporting DOC faculty leaders, the ratings vary from 2.69 to 3.61 (2.27 to 3.48) across twelve different program stages, from preparing the initial proposal to post-program debriefing.

Specific Issues

Following a review of responses obtained from the survey respondents, several areas were identified that coalesce around fairness in decision-making and faculty compensation. In an effort to address these thematic concerns, the GEC puts forth:

1. The GEC found that faculty were greatly concerned about compensation for the effort that goes into producing a quality DOC experience. In particular, it was felt that the effort required to propose and plan a DOC should be more fairly compensated.

DOC Faculty leaders report a relatively high number of hours spent on leading the DOC program on the ground, outside of class time (34% spent 120+ hours; 33%). Relatedly, faculty strongly disagree that they are fairly compensated for the time spent on DOC programs (2.73; 2.24) and disagree that the amount of administrative stipend (currently set at \$4500) is adequate to compensate for the program-related administrative duties as a DOC leader (2.50; 2.40). They also do not believe that they receive appropriate recognition (from college or University) for their efforts as a DOC faculty leader (2.56; 2.34).

Many DOC leaders feel the current administrative stipend is no longer commensurate with the progressive expansion of expectations for DOC leaders. The GEC recommends increasing the average stipend to \$6,000, with several tiers (high, medium, low) based on the size of student enrollment.

A DOC leader whose trip has to be canceled after student applications have been reviewed and accepted presently receives no compensation for the extensive planning work. The GEC suggests that a \$1,500 stipend be provided by the GEO to pay for the effort in proposing and recruiting for the Dialogue, in the event a trip needs to be canceled.

We recommend that GEO considers re-designing the current compensation model and including it in the GEO Faculty-Led Programs Handbook, in advance of the DOCs delivered in 2024, to more fully reflect the full scope of the activities associated with DOC program; preparation, development, leadership, administrative tasks and educational activities. We also recommend that faculty who design, plan, and recruit for programs with insufficient enrollments receive a \$1500 stipend for their planning efforts.

Charge 2: In collaboration with Global Experience Office and based on survey results, the GEC has identified global education topics that are recommended for Faculty Senate consideration: Identify key stakeholders, departments, committees, etc. that should be involved in the future.

The GEC consulted with GEO and determined that a focus area of the GEC including all Northeastern faculty at any location in the network (aside from non-US universities) and faculty at NU partner institutions leading Dialogues be established.

Resolution: BE IT RESOLVED, that the Global Education Committee becomes a standing Faculty Senate committee and the composition of that group includes representation from all colleges and units.

Recommendation: The Global Educator Award was recommended to be a university-recognized award that would be derived from college-level recommendations. Based on communications with GEO, the committee learned that nominations had been received from 56% of the college deans and the GEO leadership had plans to review the candidates for a finalist to be selected in early March. This news is a positive step in recognizing faculty contributions to university global experiences. However, improvements to the process should be considered as this initiative moves into its second year. We recommend Colleges, in consultation with Global Education Committee and GEO should establish a transparent process for evaluating and approving DOCs including a community of globally engaged faculty who will assist with the review process and make recommendations to associate deans.

Resolution: BE IT RESOLVED, that the Global Education Committee in consultation with GEO engage in a review of DOC faculty recognition nominees in each college to assist in the selection of the university finalist candidate. In instances when a Committee member is nominated, that individual will recuse themselves from the review process.

Charge 3: In collaboration with the Global Experience Office and the Faculty Handbook Committee, review the global experience office handbook for faculty, and, if necessary, recommend any additions to the university faculty handbook related to global education.

Findings:

The GEC notes that communications from GEO related to faculty roles and responsibilities are not provided in advance. Qualitative findings indicate frustration about the way that new or revised policies are developed and communicated to faculty. For example, the new policy eliminating the ability to schedule two consecutive un-programmed days was particularly difficult for faculty to understand. Including faculty in the process of designing or modifying GEO policies would promote a greater understanding of the rationale behind the policy and help generating solutions to meet those aims.

GEO policy has for many years been that payment of the administrative stipend to a DOC faculty is withheld until the DOC budget has been fully reconciled and approved. There are complaints that this approval process occasionally takes months. This approval process should be expedited to avoid payment delays.

Faculty-led Dialogues sponsored by the GEO offer an important opportunity for students to learn in ways that complement on-campus coursework and Co-op. Although some faculty might teach in this program as part of their regular department- or program-assigned teaching duties, most faculty participate as an extra-compensation arrangement. As leaders of groups of students on month-long study trips, the roles of faculty leaders are in some ways similar and in other ways go well beyond the expectations for faculty teaching courses on campus. Faculty develop a proposal that includes course and study plans, a trip itinerary, a budget, and a safety/security contingency plan appropriate to the region that is approved in two stages within GEO and by the department chair or program head, the dean of the college, the

provost's office, and the chancellor's office. Faculty leaders decide which students to accept in the program, and once on site are responsible for day-to-day learning as well as overseeing and responding to student health and student behavior situations should these arise. A student's learning experience, and a faculty member's teaching experience, in on-campus courses is far more predictable (and for a faculty member, far more limited) than on a DOC, which operates in a more fluid environment influenced by a range of factors including weather or natural disasters, local political or social unrest, and in recent years, global health (pandemic) that can affect members of the study group on-site, in addition to managing the day-to-day issues that can arise with any group. In addition to operating in an externally fluid environment, campus-based policies and expectations for DOC management can evolve, sometimes during the course of a DOC, as GEO and the university's Global Safety Office responds to evolving management challenges either within a specific DOC, or across the spectrum of all DOC's in a given term.

Dismissal policy: Occasionally a situation may arise that makes it necessary to recall a DOC leader from an active DOC, or upon review of student or GEO or Global Safety Office concerns following completion of a DOC, to disqualify a faculty member from leading future DOCs. In the Faculty Handbook, there is an extensive outline of procedures to be followed when the university concludes it is necessary to dismiss a full-time faculty member.

Recommendations:

We recommend that DOC leaders who are put into a "no-longer-employable-for-DOCs" list go through a Faculty Handbook procedure that follows a clear policy statement that involves an opportunity for a faculty member to appeal an impending decision. University Counsel's input would likely be needed on specific language. Given the structure of the approval chain for a DOC proposal, which includes the name of a specific DOC leader, it seems appropriate that the decision to disqualify a faculty member from future DOC leadership opportunities also go through each level of the program-approval chain before a final decision is reached. At present, the policy for a faculty member who has been disqualified from leading a DOC, says that the faculty member cannot re-apply to lead another DOC for at least three years. This could imply that whatever the issues were that led to the decision, were ones that would simply go away with the passage of time, but it seems more likely that in order to approve a renewed application for a future DOC, the university should see evidence of some kind of change, or completion of some activities, before considering that DOC leader again.