

2018-2019 Faculty Development Committee (FDC)

Appendix A

GEO's effectiveness in supporting DOC faculty leaders at various program stages:

#	Field	Not effective at all	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	Total
1	Preparation of initial proposal	13.04% 6	23.91% 11	23.91% 11	21.74% 10	17.39% 8	46
2	Proposal submission	6.52% 3	15.22% 7	32.61% 15	28.26% 13	17.39% 8	46
3	Recruiting students	17.39% 8	26.09% 12	28.26% 13	19.57% 9	8.70% 4	46
4	Program promotion	17.39% 8	26.09% 12	32.61% 15	8.70% 4	15.22% 7	46
5	Management of student applications	13.04% 6	15.22% 7	28.26% 13	23.91% 11	19.57% 9	46
6	Recruiting program assistants	37.50% 15	15.00% 6	35.00% 14	7.50% 3	5.00% 2	40
7	Training program assistants	21.43% 9	16.67% 7	21.43% 9	28.57% 12	11.90% 5	42
8	Pre-departure preparation for faculty	8.70% 4	26.09% 12	21.74% 10	28.26% 13	15.22% 7	46
9	Pre-departure preparation for students	11.36% 5	18.18% 8	31.82% 14	25.00% 11	13.64% 6	44
10	During the program (while abroad)	13.64% 6	11.36% 5	31.82% 14	20.45% 9	22.73% 10	44
11	During emergencies (abroad)	4.76% 2	19.05% 8	28.57% 12	19.05% 8	28.57% 12	42
12	Post-program debrief	30.95% 13	14.29% 6	33.33% 14	11.90% 5	9.52% 4	42

Summary of the findings based on open-ended survey questions:

Suggestions for GEO to improve understanding of applicable policies and procedures that allow faculty to provide input in a timely fashion:

Respondents throughout the survey stated that they would like a formal Faculty Advisory Committee (or Board) to be established to meet regularly with GEO and the Provost office to discuss changes that directly affect DOC procedures/policies to improve communication and interactions between DOC faculty leaders and GEO. It was suggested that this board should be open to all DOC faculty and that policies that directly affect faculty should be voted on by the faculty and passed with a majority vote, where applicable. They felt decisions and policy changes happen with little to no discussion or faculty involvement, and that GEO and the Provost office do not defer to faculty expertise or experience when making decisions. "I believe GEO needs to trust the DOC leader's knowledge of the destination (when applicable). Not all counties are created equal, not all cultures behave the same. To require faculty to go along certain rules and procedure when said faculty tells you it is impractical or ineffective, goes against the ideals of GEO as a whole." Having a Faculty Advisory Committee (or Board) would allow faculty to discuss, and if need be debate policy and procedural changes.

Respondents also stated they would like to have better and consistent communication between GEO and faculty members in order to receive information about policy changes in a timely manner. As quoted; "When policy changes are made GEO must inform faculty - clearly, concisely, and in person (e.g., during meaningful workshops) - about changes well in advance of the roll-out of such policies/procedures. GEO also must inform its numerous staff members, who

are the primary contact with Dialogue faculty. Quite often, different GEO staff have insufficient and sometimes just incorrect understanding of their own office policies - and they communicate those to faculty, who have little recourse to finding out the correct information.” This can have a negative impact on new faculty in particular.

There were concerns that the GEO office needs more staffing to better organize and facilitate information. Faculty felt that the GEO staff have way too much on their plate and though helpful, are sometimes unable to respond to them in a timely manner, and with the rapid increase in dialogues offered each year this continues to be an issue. Dialogue leaders would like to have more meaningful conversations with GEO in hopes to share their experiences and make the connections between Dialogue leaders and their representatives in GEO stronger. Faculty would like more individualized help and would like GEO coordinators to obtain knowledge on the ground by connecting with faculty, alums and agencies at the locations of interest and/or US persons with experience in the locations. Some faculty would prefer coordinators only have a logistical role, such as budgeting and visas to help shoulder more of the paperwork and have a lesser role in the day to day planning of their programs.

It was suggested that a faculty mentorship program may be helpful, and by pairing experienced faculty and new faculty - either by region or discipline - may help to facilitate information. As quoted: “I would rather meet with other faculty who have actual experience. Maybe a support team (3 members) approach for faculty.”

Faculty were asked which aspects of the GEO policies and procedures related to proposing, preparing and leading DOC’s they would like Faculty Development Committee to address:

Insurance and Liability policies. Budgeting. Compensation and Recognition. Supporting faculty travel with their families and developing family-aware policies.

Hold focus groups with "seasoned/experienced" faculty leaders to share best practices. Faculty would like to help design and implement pre-departure sessions, give recruitment advice, mentor, and assess the proposal process.

Faculty did voice concerns in creating a new Faculty Advisory Board, citing it may create additional overhead work, and fear comments/concerns would not be taken seriously (as was the case when the Faculty Advisory Committee met in the past and was mostly used for announcements).

Suggestions for GEO to improve faculty experience when proposing DOC programs:

Faculty stated that they would like GEO to create a system for projecting demand and not simply adding more dialogues without data to support demand for more dialogues. Northeastern encourages as many faculty as possible to create DOC programs without an effective process for forecasting program enrollment. “More programs does not = better programs.” Over the past two years some dialogues did not run due to increased number of offerings. Faculty who invest up to

a year of work developing a program will then in some cases bear the burden and disruption of a cancelled program because the university failed to accurately forecast student demand. Faculty felt if a program is endorsed by the college or university every effort needs to be made to make the program succeed and faculty compensation must be guaranteed. The current system does not compensate faculty if a program does not run due to low enrollments.

Faculty would like to see data detailing why students sign up for certain programs (location, courses, NU path attributes, etc.), how many students sign up, historical trends, etc. so they may develop programs that meet those needs and interests. A suggestion would be to survey student interest and program locations and try to prevent overlap on programs.

Some faculty raised concerns about the approval process where GEO and the College Deans may be crossing the line when it comes to faculty freedom of speech and syllabus autonomy. Proposals are scrutinized for content, as well as for budgetary line items.

Seasoned faculty felt there should be a system in place to allow programs that have been consistently run for "X" years to "roll over" from year to year, much as we do for classes on campus.

Suggestions for GEO that faculty believe may improve their experience recruiting and selecting students:

Across the board faculty thought that the approval timeline for 2019 programs was far too late. The final Phase II proposal approval at the Dean level happened early November and as a result the Dialogue Fair was much too late in the semester for sufficient recruitment efforts to be made. They suggest that the date be moved to the start of the Fall Semester, so the DOC fair and general promotion of the Dialogues can begin earlier. Faculty would also like to have more organized opportunities to meet with students to discuss their programs.

Many faculty would like to see the priority deadline in December reestablished to allow for early program acceptance. They would also like to add more questions to the student application portal that specifically focus on their individual programs.

Suggestions for GEO to improve faculty experience arranging international flights for students:

Faculty would like the ability to choose how/who they work with to book flights. The overall feeling is that they should be able to make flight decision on their individual programs based on individual program logistics. Faculty find that a lot of the travel agencies Northeastern currently works with charge too much for flights and the fees to change flights are quite high, so having the ability to shop around will lower the costs.

Compensation for DOC-related administrative duties:

Of the choices provided; 38% (17) would like to keep the per-student fee, 23% (10) would prefer a common administrative stipend that does not depend on # of students in the program, 16% (7) would prefer several tiers (high, medium, low) based on the size of student enrollment, and 23% (10) selected 'other' or no answer. Of those who selected 'other', they felt that compensation should be determined by a variety of aspects including size of student enrollment, complexity of the program, amount of travel, length of program, amount of extracurricular content, etc. Others felt that the per-student fee should be raised, based on the increase of cost of living from 2007 (around the time when the DOC programs started) to 2019 (i.e. if cost of living has risen 10% in 12 years, so should the per-student fee).

Problems with the student stipend arise when programs do not fill to capacity and faculty are asked to forgo their student stipend to balance the budget. "Whatever the compensation model is - faculty should not be put into a position to decide if the program runs or they get fully compensated. Faculty don't want to disappoint students - but also shouldn't have to feel exploited by not receiving pay."

Additionally, the reimbursement process needs to be examined, many faculty waited months after their programs ended to be paid their per-student stipends in 2018.

Compensation for teaching DOC courses:

What also came up was the issues of course compensation, many faculty mentioned a substantial discrepancy in their pay. Many faculty are being underpaid and, in many cases, paid considerably less for teaching two courses abroad than they would on the Boston campus. Specifically, the current model pays faculty 1/8th of their salary for teaching one course and 1/6th for teaching two courses on a DOC. However, when teaching on campus, some faculty are paid 1/6th of their salary per (one) course (or a set part-time adjunct fee, determined by college). Some faculty mentioned that the pay gap between faculty leaders needs to be closed and one flat (fair) salary needs to be set, designated by academic rank and college.

Recognition faculty would like to receive from their college, or Northeastern at large:

Faculty would like to be acknowledged for their efforts in their annual merit review and would like for more weight to be given for running a program during the promotion process. Many would like to see their salary or student stipend raise for their efforts or a course release. Some would love an invitation to brief President Aoun and the Board of Trustees. They would love to be honored at College events, or through awards, such as Outstanding International Teaching award per college, and one for the University. They would like more recognition of the Dialogue programs through social media, exhibits, news stories, etc. Some feel there is "No need for formal "recognition;" the important thing is that people recognize that it's valuable for our students, and therefore a valuable contribution to the program."

Suggestions for GEO to improve the value and fairness of feedback provided by students:

Faculty felt that questions on the student evaluations could be better tailored to the specific DOC programs where faculty leaders can add questions that are program specific.

They would like for GEO to give faculty more control over when surveys are open to students (like with TRACE). Programs end at different times and response rates tend to be low due to student travel when programs end, which means results don't always represent the typical student on the program. Faculty felt students have a difficult time compartmentalizing the faculty role throughout a program since they wear many hats. Due to the experiential aspect of the programs, learning objectives are achieved through cultural experiences rather than traditional lecturing, therefore students are sometimes unable to constructively evaluate faculty teaching based on their preconceived notions/perceptions of a traditional teaching environment. Additionally, they cannot evaluate the work that goes into designing, proposing, implementing, and otherwise managing a Dialogue, therefore additional evaluations may be needed for a more objective assessment.

Faculty would also like to have ability to respond or ask for a redaction of comments (like with TRACE). Currently, faculty have no way to counter false or misleading statements made by students.

Faculty found that the most useful feedback came from focus groups conducted months after the program finished. One option would be to send out evaluation forms at the beginning of the Fall semester when students have had some time to reflect on their experiences.

There should be a system in place to weed out low quality dialogues. "Low-quality programs hurt the entire model. Although some faculty can be coached to improve their programs, others don't have the disposition/drive to run a program well. Continuing to allow low-quality programs to run, is bad for students, DOC faculty and the university as a whole. Faculty need to be closely vetted and possess a proven track record of providing high-quality experience domestically before being tasked with taking groups of students abroad."

Faculty experience during a GEO staff site visit and feedback they received that was beneficial to the development and success of their program:

Over the years GEO staff have visited many programs on the ground and for the most part faculty felt that site visits were positive, however they found that the visits were brief and did not necessarily add value. Some faculty felt the visits were unethical and misleading since they were not told the purpose of the site visit, and they sometimes disrupted program activities and their control over the students. In both instances, positive or negative, faculty did not formally receive constructive feedback, nor did they know what was reported back to GEO.