

**International Education Committee**  
**Thursday, May 8, 2025**  
**Minutes**  
**3:30 - 5:00 PM**

Welcome and Introductions

Review/Approval of Past Minutes - [February 13, 2025 Minutes](#)

- The minutes from the February 13, 2025 meeting were approved.

Pan African Virtual College - Guest, Ed Bush, President of Cosumnes River College

- President Ed Bush was invited by Chancellor Sonya Christian to join a delegation of California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office staff on a visit to Ghana from March 8-14, with the purpose of strengthening international educational partnerships and developing a framework for organizing support services to community colleges that provide international education opportunities to students.
- President Bush discussed the potential opportunities for Los Rios and other community college districts in California through a system-wide effort for international education. He highlighted the creation of a virtual college as a model to lower barriers for international education and global education for students, both domestically and globally. President Bush mentioned meeting with five universities, with four agreeing to the concept. He introduced the Pan African Virtual College, a pilot project aiming to create a network connecting California community colleges and Ghanaian higher education institutions. The college aims to facilitate cultural cross-continental exchange, offer lower division and career technical education courses, and create a platform for students to continue their education despite physical disruptions. He also emphasized the importance of faculty and student exchange programs and the potential for on-ground study abroad programs. He mentioned the initial areas of focus, including cutting across the board and focusing on African-centered and relevant courses.
- President Bush discussed the progress of the Pan African Virtual College project, highlighting the interest of universities and the Korean embassy in partnering with the project. He mentioned the appointment of members for a design team and the support of the State Chancellor's office. He also discussed the need for consortium agreements with California community colleges and the potential use of the California Virtual College's backbone infrastructure. He expressed hope for Los Rios and La City College to be the first to join the consortium and indicated a desire for the group to serve as a sounding board and thought partner as the project grows.
- President Bush proposed the idea of building momentum with districts and moving it to the College Senate. He also suggested sharing the idea with the administration of all four colleges. Richard expressed his support for the idea and emphasized the need to clear hurdles for international education. President Bush proposed the idea of categorizing classes and experiences under the California Virtual College, which has already been vetted. Lauren suggested taking the idea to the DAS and ask Paula to put

it on the agenda. The group also discussed the importance of making international education an essential educational experience for students.

#### Overview of College International Programs - Guest, Kim Goff, Director of Admissions & Records and Tammi Driver, Supervisor of Admissions & Records

- Tammi discussed the complexities of the international student program at American River College. She explained the role of the Designated School Official (DSO) in managing student visas and ensuring compliance with government regulations. Tammi highlighted the challenges faced by international students, including the high cost of the program, the need for a sponsor or self-sponsor, and the strict requirements for maintaining a full-time status and academic progress. She also mentioned the potential for termination if students fail to meet these requirements or change their address without notifying the college. Tammi noted the decline in the international program over the past 20 years due to limited staff, lack of dedicated spaces for international students, and the absence of specialized counselors. She emphasized the need for ongoing support and orientation for international students to help them navigate the program and avoid termination.
- Tammi discussed the goal of sending students to either transfer or get an AA, with a low termination rate. She also shared a graph showing a decline in student numbers starting in 2018-2019, which she attributed to the pandemic. Kim added that the decline was not due to lack of capacity, but rather changes in regulations and student preferences. She also mentioned that international students often struggle financially, and the \$43,000 requirement for some students is a significant burden. Kamau shared his experience of high denial rates for F1 visas in his travels and suggested that the college could explore international recruitment.
- In the meeting, Kim, Tammi, Dennis, Frank, Riad, and Kamau discussed the challenges and future directions of international student recruitment. They noted that the program is expensive and currently only has 143 students. They also discussed the issue of housing costs for international students, which has become a significant factor. Riad mentioned the high rejection rate of student visas from African countries, which could be a contributing factor to the decline in international student numbers. Richard suggested that the relative cost of Los Rios compared to other districts might be a factor, but Tammi pointed out that there is a difference in the number of international students between Los Rios and Solano. The team also clarified that they only accept F-1 visas and are not currently set up for J-1 or M-1 visas.

#### Updates: College Study Abroad

- Frank then moved on to updates from college study abroad, mentioning that Leah is waiting for a contract for the Ireland program in summer 2026. Christina reported working with a student from Arizona State who has been successfully accepted to study in London. Kamau shared his observations about the trend of people moving abroad for study. Lauren and Richard provided updates on their respective programs, with Lauren mentioning her conversation with Trang about a potential Vietnam program. Riad shared

the progress of preparing students to leave for Ghana on June 6th, highlighting the cultural programming and a Pan-African fashion show.

Updates: District Study Abroad

- Programmatic Updates

International Education LRCCD Regulations Update - [R-7151](#)

- Frank and Richard discussed the approval of the regulations they had been working on for two years.

[Instructor-Led Study Abroad Roadmap](#)

- Frank and Richard also shared an instructor-led study abroad roadmap that Richard had put together, which outlines the process of setting up such a program. The group agreed to read the roadmap and provide feedback in the next meeting. They also discussed the possibility of creating a bundle of documents, including samples of contracts and insurance requirements, to help interested faculty understand the process better.

Future Meetings:

- Meeting Schedule: 2nd Thursday (every other month October through May)