

MINUTES

**Commission on Outreach and International Affairs
September 18, 2025
3:30-4:30 p.m.
120 Gateway/Zoom**

Present: Jennifer Clevenger (presiding), Tom Archibald (for Elsie Paredes), Guru Ghosh, Amanda Stewart, Susan Whitehead,

Attendance (via Zoom): Diana Bairakatrova, Carol Cash, Carol Haynes, Jeremy Johnson (for Mike Gutter), Charles Lowery, Penny Muelenaer, Lynn Resler, Richard Shryock

Absent with Notice: Francisco Carvallo, Mike Gutter, Abigail Moore, Elsie Paredes, Susan Short

Absent: Eric Bendfelt, Aimeé Surprenant

Guests: Rich Mathieson, April Myers

Welcome and Self-Introductions: The meeting was called to order 3:32 p.m. Jennifer Clevenger welcomed the group. Self-introductions were made; written and visual attendance was taken, and quorum was established. Jennifer discussed the goals for COIA this year.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Jennifer asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented, Tom Archibald moved to adopt the agenda; Susan Whitehead seconded; there was no opposition or abstention; the agenda was adopted as presented.

2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of April 17, 2025

Jennifer noted that the minutes of the April 17, 2025, meeting were sent out electronically for edits and were approved electronically. They are to be sent to the Governance Information System; and can be found on the web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu/>)

3. Election of Vice-Chair

Jennifer made the announcement that a Vice-Chair will need to be selected for this year. The Vice-Chair will step in and serve as a proxy for meetings when the Chair is unable and will become the Chair of COIA for 2026-2027. Kimberly Rhodes went through the listing of all faculty that are eligible to serve as Vice-Chair. Penny Muelenaer indicated she would run for Vice-Chair; Kimberly will also send notice requesting any additional nominees.

4. Acceptance of Constituent Reports and/or Minutes:

A. Chairman's Report on University Council meetings of September 15, 2025:

Jennifer indicated Chairs of Commissions and Committees presented their goals for the Academic Year. University Council minutes will be posted on the University Council website at: <https://governance.vt.edu/BodyDetails/UC>.

B. Engagement Leadership Council Meeting: Susan Short was unable to attend, an update from the June 5, 2025, meeting will be given at a subsequent meeting.

- C. University Committee on International Affairs (UCIA):** Tom Archibald, attending on behalf of Elsie Paredes, gave a brief update from the April 28, 2025, meeting which included Impacts of Federal Actions. He also spoke about the goals that will be discussed at the first meeting to include student well-being; advisor and mentor guidance; student/faculty impacts; study abroad; international week and international student recruitment/enrollment.
- D. Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE):** Jeremy Johnson, attending on behalf of Mike Gutter, updated the commission on the strategic planning document to be shared in the future. He also discussed the fall engagement event to occur next week.

5. Announcements

Rich Mathieson highlighted the Engagement Leadership Consortium Annual Conference October 6-9, 2025, at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center; with 100 presenters and 560 attendees.

Guru Ghosh highlighted some issues that we as a community should be aware of 1) students and faculty that arrive on a specific visa status previously could travel to Mexico and Canada, but now may have to return to their home country 2) students could remain on a status as long as they were earning their degree, but now may only be allowed for a fixed period of time (undergraduate-4 years; graduate 1-2 years) with final determination by the government; 3) H-1B status for instructional/research faculty employment status may be disrupted where higher education were exempt from the 85,000 cap; 4) elimination or revamp of the OPT process which allows students to apply after graduation. The University has lost all of their USAID projects; and other initiatives and partnerships are being explored.

The Study Abroad Fair will occur on the Drillfield, Tuesday, September 23rd from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. (<https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/study-abroad-fair.html>); Study Abroad program administration is being centralized to be housed in the Global Education Office with faculty maintaining oversight of programs.

6. Adjournment

Jennifer asked for a call for a motion to adjourn; Amanda Stewart made the motion to adjourn, Susan W. seconded; there was no opposition; the meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m. A reminder that the next meeting will be held October 16, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Rhodes, Recording Secretary

PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR 2025-2026: (3:30-4:30 p.m.-120 Gateway Center-902 Prices Fork or Zoom)

- October 16, 2025
- November 20, 2025
- December 4, 2025
- NO JANUARY MEETING
- February 19, 2026
- March 19, 2026
- April 16, 2026
- May 7, 2026