



Volume 3 / Issue 3

May 11, 2020

WHAT DOES THE GLOBAL OFFICE DO IN A PANDEMIC?

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First, the College 360 students cancelled their weeklong, most anticipated visit. Next, the international travel for Northeast students was put on hold. Then many of the international students hurried home while there were still flights --- and open borders --- left. And, while faculty certainly experienced global instruction via Zoom and newly-developed online classes, this was NOT the time to ask how they were going to globalize their curriculum.

So, what does the Center for Global Engagement do without travel and students? Well, actually, that's when Pam and Sara ramp up! Here's what we're doing during these crazy days of COVID-19. We hope you find it interesting.

TRAVELS ---

Remember how we bragged about our record numbers of student travelers in our December newsletter? Well, pride does indeed come before the fall. We hung on and tried to keep a positive message out there for student travelers and our faculty leaders. But when the Trump Administration closed travel to the United Kingdom and Ireland, that was it --- the proverbial plug was pulled.

Making travel arrangements for 57 students is challenging; cancelling those arrangements can be downright grueling. Timing is important since notice needs to be made to -- and recorded by --- the companies before the next payment is due or the deposits are lost. For the next few weeks after the travels were cancelled, we were on the phone and sending emails to the travel companies and host institutions to be certain they were notified and that we could recoup some, if not all, of our payments. Student travelers were disappointed but understood and were appreciative of our decision to refund 100% of what they paid. Thanks to Deb Dreher and others in the Business Office for their assistance in getting those refunds to the students in a timely fashion. Also, thank you to our faculty leaders -- Brandon Keller, Sarah Sellin, and Gary Timm -- for their hard work and understanding when their best-laid travel plans were cancelled.

Since July 2019, we have been planning for College 360's third annual visit -- hotel rooms for faculty were reserved, spaces in the dorms were allocated, busses and tours were finalized. In fact, we had just secured a great tour at the HUDL headquarters in Lincoln when COVID struck Denmark and our friends terminated their travels. Hotel rooms, bus transportation, all the off-campus tours, facilities and food service on-campus, and all the great faculty who had planned to host College 360 students in their classes ----- all notified, all disappointed, all cancelled. But there's always next year! So the global staff will be back at it in July, laying plans and making preliminary contacts with a positive outlook that all will be well for a visit from College 360 students in March 2021.

GLOBAL OFFICE (continued from page 1)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ---

As of Winter Break in March, Northeast had 60 international students --- 58 studying in our classrooms and two on both coasts participating in practical training. Approximately two weeks later until the present, Northeast STILL has 60 international students but they are all across the globe, logging in online and via Zoom. To understand how the Center for Global Engagement staff continues their work with these students, you need to know the following:

In a non-COVID-19 world (remember then?), international students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits and only 1 of their classes can be an online course. International students are required to establish “evidence of presence,” meaning they need to be physically in the classroom.

After the pandemic forced students home, or at least out of the classrooms and into an online format, this rule was suspended. BUT, international students are still required to be enrolled full-time AND continue active participation in their classes. So that means, we are required to monitor them --- wherever they are.

Through communication – usually via email correspondence --- we check on international students’ studies. At times, that requires connecting them with the Northeast Service Center if they report to their instructors or us that they are having connectivity issues. We also keep an eye on their credit hours to make sure students don’t drop a class that they need to graduate or to stay full-time. If that happens, it’s an all-out scramble, working closely with the advisors, Registrar, and students to get them BACK into the class where possible.

At times, it’s just nice to check in on our students to see if they are staying well and if they and their families are safe (I’m pleased to say that, for those students who have responded, all seems well).

Even before we ever knew about COVID-19, the Center for Global Engagement staff spent many hours at the semester’s conclusion working with international students and their future plans. Are they graduating? Are they transferring? Do they qualify for practical training? Are they taking another degree with Northeast? Pandemic or not, we need to proceed with these same duties, which are complicated by the fact that most of these students are thousands of miles away. Sara and I coordinate – and often overlap --- communications with these students to make sure they are aware of, and hopefully beat, deadlines that affect their ability to remain students in U.S. colleges and universities.

The fact of the matter is, if Sara or I drop the ball, it could affect these students’ ability to study in the United States. While we do have fun, we take our jobs very seriously.

That’s our current students. We are still receiving applications from new students. We are cautiously optimistic that these students will join us – in some way, shape or form --- in fall. So we welcome, and process, those new applicants with fingers crossed for successful visa appointments at U.S. embassies worldwide.

We’d be remiss if we didn’t thank the faculty for their help in keeping international students engaged and participating, and for reporting to us if there was a concern. We were able to quickly address situations that might have meant trouble for that student thanks to YOU!

Whew! I hope you enjoyed this behind-the-scenes peek at what the Global Office does and how we are adapting to the “new normal.” We look forward to seeing all of you in the hallways outside our offices in Maclay. And hey! Our offices are small, so there is no worry about exceeding the 10-person limit.



A group of international students enjoy the Student Activities Council's "Day at the Park" event at Skyview Lake in August.

PANDEMIC DOESN'T STOP INTERNATIONAL GRADS

Even with a global crisis, our Northeast international students successfully completed, or will complete by summer's end, their studies. Their names will be included in Northeast's virtual commencement broadcast on May 16th at 10 am.

The following are the international students who will complete their 2-year degrees from Northeast:

Federico Boscolo Anzoletti, Italy, health/PE

Laura Lucia Duque Novoa, Colombia, pre-nursing

Macphinley Dzanja, Malawi, pre-professional nursing

Emina Hadzhisejnovic, Croatia, business administration

Abdoul Rachid Nana, Burkina Faso, pre-professional engineering

Jimmy Ndipo, Malawi, pre-medicine

Vinh Pham, Vietnam, auto technology

Ricardo Pinheiro Goldner Mohn, Brazil, exercise science

Tamandani Sawerengera, Malawi, pre-professional nursing

Taurayizwenyu Sawerengera, Malawi, pre-professional nursing

Asher Ryan Scavella, Bahamas, physical education

If faculty have any of these students in their classes, they are encouraged to congratulate them on a job well done!



CAN YOU NAME THE COUNTRY WHERE THESE FAMOUS "AMERICAN" ICONS WERE BORN?

Pam is putting together a unique prize experience for the first lucky person who replies to this email with the correct answers!

1. Arnold Schwarzenegger
2. Albert Einstein
3. Charlie Chaplin
4. Audrey Hepburn
5. Rupert Murdoch
6. Anthony Hopkins
7. Henry Kissinger
8. Andrew Carnegie
9. Peter Jennings
10. apple pie

