

Michael J. Farrell, Esq.
Chair



Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Ph.D.
Chancellor

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

1018 Kanawha Boulevard East, Suite 700 • Charleston, West Virginia 25301

(304) 558-2101 phone • (304) 558-1011 fax

www.wvhepc.edu

July 20, 2020

U.S. Department of State
2200 C Street NW
ECA/EC/D/AG, SA-44
Washington, D.C. 20522-0505

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) consortium of member schools, please accept the following narrative for this year's annual report.

Summary of Program Effectiveness & Trends/Changes of the Consortium

While the number of exchange visitors in the student categories decreased over the last reporting period, we slightly increased the number of exchange visitors in professor, research scholar and short-term scholar categories. This reflects the consortium members' sustained interest in internationalization that compelled us to apply for initial designation five years ago and may also be a sign of increased interest in teaching and research exchange.

Consortium members continue to pursue partnerships with foreign colleges and universities with the intent of supporting student and faculty exchange, research collaborations, and other academic areas within the field of international education. Our consortium member institutions added nine new agreements during this reporting period. Since our consortium was established five years ago, we have increased the total number of active partnership agreements from zero to 38 with each of our consortium members maintaining regular communication and various levels of engagement with their partner institutions located in over 20 countries.

Seven exchange visitors were hosted directly by consortium members during this reporting period. An additional 16 were hosted by third party organizations. All of these visitors play a vital role in helping internationalize our campuses and local communities. Their involvement in teaching, classes, student organizations and community events afford our domestic students and staff the opportunity to engage in dialogue about different perspectives, customs and ways of being. The positive effects of their time among us cannot be understated.

Summary of New Initiatives of the Consortium

- Our "Exchange Visitor Handbook" is currently being revised and updated and made available to our exchange visitors at <http://www.globalwv.org/evp/>. The handbook provides much of the same information given at orientation and serves as an additional orientation/resource. The handbook also satisfies the pre-arrival information requirement set forth in the regulations.
- Our orientation procedures and processes are being reviewed and improved. All WVHEPC

member institutions who host exchange visitors hold an orientation. All new exchange visitors are informed of DoS regulations they are expected to follow, resources at the university/college available to them, life and customs in the United States, community resources, etc. Attendance is taken to verify all exchange visitors participate.

- Documents and forms used to administer the exchange visitor program are being reviewed and updated.
- We are planning to offer our annual online training workshop in the fall which is an all-day event providing refresher training and updates.

Staff Used to Administer the Consortium EVP

- There are a total of seven (7) staff used in the administration of our exchange visitor program consortium. Each of our seven consortium members has appointed an employee to serve as an ARO. An employee of the WVHEPC serves as the RO to oversee the consortium.

The pages that follow include summaries of each consortium member's exchange visitor program, organized as follows: **1) Reciprocity (Exchange Visitors & Agreements); 2) Cross-Cultural Activities; 3) Difficulties & Challenges; and 4) New Initiatives & Future Plans.** The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission is appreciative for the Department of State's ongoing support in this very important work of promoting partnerships, mutual understanding and peace.

Sincerely,



Dr. Clark Egnor, Ed.D.

Coordinator of International Programs
RO WVHEPC J-1 Consortium

RECIPROCITY & EXCHANGE VISITORS

Bluefield State College

- 1 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange participant from Germany
- 4 Fulbright Scholars in Residence at other US host institutions visited BSC with funding support from the IIE-CIES Outreach Lecturing Fund and a local donor.

Concord University

- 5 non-degree students from its partner universities in Korea
- 1 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange visiting students from Germany

Fairmont State University

- 1 research scholar

Glenville State College

- 1 visiting scholar via Japanese Outreach Initiative (JOI)

Shepherd University

- 1 visiting undergraduate student from Japan
- 1 visiting students via IREX

West Liberty University

- 1 professor from South Korea (visiting faculty from Hanbat National University working with the WLU College of Arts and Communication.
- 1 short-term scholar from Poland (through the institutional agreement with Wyższa Szkoła Techniczna University (WSTU) in Katowice, Poland. The J-1 scholar has taught printmaking classes at West Liberty University during Spring 2020 semester.
- 8 visiting students via Global Undergraduate Exchange Program, YEAR Program and CBYX of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the US Dept. of State, who attended WLU on DS-2019s issued by third party (IREX, World Learning, Cultural Vistas and American Councils)

RECIPROCITY & AGREEMENTS:

Bluefield State College extended three of its existing agreements and added one new agreement, bringing its total number of active agreements to eleven:

1. National Ilan University, Taiwan (NIU) (2015; extended to 2021)
2. William V. S. Tubman University, Liberia (TU) (2015; extended to 2021)
3. Kazan National Research Technological University, Kazan, Russia (KNRTU) (2015; extended to 2021)
4. Universidad Autonoma de Santa Ana (UNASA), El Salvador (since 2017)
5. Universidad de Oriente (UNIVO), San Miguel, El Salvador (since 2017)
6. Ilia State University (ISU), Tbilisi, Georgia (2017)
7. UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DO CENTRO-OESTE (UNICENTRO), Brazil (since 2017)
8. University of Oran No.2 (UO2), Algeria (since 2018)
9. European University of Rome, Italy (signed in fall 2018)
10. Alexander Dubcek University of Trencin, Slovakia (signed in spring 2019)
11. Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey (new)
12. Varna University of Management, Hungary (new)

Concord University maintains six agreements, including five (#1-5 below) that were established in 2018-19:

1. Andong University
2. Kyungpook National University
3. Deagu University
4. Deagu Catholic University
5. Deagu Haany University
6. Kangwon National University

Fairmont State University maintained six active agreements:

1. University of Calabria (UNICAL) in Italy
2. Woosong University (WSU) in Korea
3. The American Campus in Mauritius, Africa
4. Aichi Bunkyo University (ABU) in Japan
5. Tokyo Denki University (TDU) in Japan
6. TENRI University in Japan (pending)
7. University of Pecs in Hungary (pending)
8. University of Gyor in Hungary (pending)
9. University of Szeged in Hungary (pending)
10. Dongseo University (DSU) in Korea (pending)
11. Paraguay CPK (in negotiation)

Glenville State College added one new agreement to raise the total number of its active agreements to three:

1. Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, Malaysia (signed April 2019)
2. Anáhuac University, Mexico (signed July 2019)
3. Southern Luzon State University, Lucban, Quezon Philippines (new)

Shepherd University did not add new agreements but remains actively engaged with several of its seven international partner institutions. Specifically,

1. Osaka University of Commerce, Japan (for student exchange)
2. Nanhua University, Taiwan (one Shepherd faculty member taught at Nanhua in Fall 2019)

West Liberty University has added two new agreements during this academic year and has active agreements with the following institutions that facilitate student, staff and faculty exchanges:

1. Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland (2020)
2. Pukyong National University, South Korea (2019)
3. University of Wurzburg (UW), Germany (2017)
4. Hanbat National University, South Korea (2016)
5. Wyższa Szkoła Techniczna University (WSTU), Katowice, Poland (2015)

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

Bluefield State College

- August-December 2019: Posted flyers campus wide and on office's Facebook page about 2019 study abroad programs being planned (Russia, Argentina) but the Russia program had to be postponed and the Argentina trip, with the Solar Eclipse as its focus, may be cancelled.
- September: Welcome reception for international students attended by BSC staff, faculty, and administrators

- October 24, 2019: United Nations Day: BSC's international students set up displays about their countries.
- October-January 2019: Campus wide flyers and Facebook announcements to encourage students to register for 20 free passports slated for February 21, 2020
- October 2019: Dr. Victoria Bam of Ghana, based out of Millikin University, Decatur, IL, delivered presentations on "Public Health Challenges of Ghana" and "Ghana's Customs and Cultures" to students at BSC, Riverview and Mt. View High Schools in McDowell County.
- November 2019: Dr. Jakob Nimrod Keyan of Israel, a visiting neuroscientist research scholar at Stanford University's School of Medicine in California, delivered presentations to students of BSC and Wyoming East and Westside High Schools in Wyoming County on "Israel's' Customs and Cultures" and "The effect of stress on the brain and brain-computer interfaces for treatment of stress related psychopathology."
- December 2019: Dr. Murat Culdüz of Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey, and Fulbright Scholar in Residence at Tennessee State University, delivered presentations on "Turkey's Customs and Cultures" and "Why English is learned in Turkey" to students at BSC and Montcalm and Princeton Senior High Schools in Mercer County. Also, during his visit, Dr. Culdüz was authorized by the Rector of Istanbul Medipol University to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with BSC to support student and faculty exchanges, collaborative faculty research, and information exchange.
- December 6: BSC's Annual Humanities Challenge, which promotes the study of literatures and cultures from around the world attended by students of BSC and area high schools ~ VA: (Bland, Giles, Graham, Narrows, Tazewell, Richlands; WV: Montcalm, Princeton Senior, Wyoming East and Westside High Schools)
- In fall 2019, BSC students were invited to become members of newly formed student organizations: Future Teachers without Borders; Rural Healthcare Services Students without Borders, the BSC Chapter of Engineers without Borders, Rotaract, and Business Students without Borders.
- January and February 2020: Six BSC faculty—Colin Cavell, Debjani Chakrabarti, Bill Bennett, Phillip Imel, Tara Mullins, and Sudhakar R Jamkhandi—enrolled in the IDEAS workshops hosted by the US Department of State and World Learning to help build the study abroad capacities of higher education institutions. [Bill Bennett and Vincent Mateescu have enrolled in summer 2020 webinars on the same subject offered by these entities.]
- February 23, 2020: Dr. Asif Kalinder Shaik of India, Fulbright Scholar at Texas A & M-College Station in Texas, delivered presentations about "India's Customs and Cultures" to students at Bluefield High School in Mercer County. He also delivered presentations to BSC students and Bluefield's Rotary International about "India's fascination with Mathematics."
- February 21: In collaboration with US Postal Service, held Passport to the World when 10 passports were issued to BSC students.
- March 6: International Student Organization celebrated International Women's Day by presenting roses to BSC's female staff, faculty, and administrators
- Beginning March 16, the spring 2020 semester was transitioned to online learning/teaching because of COVID-19. Several on campus activities were cancelled, including all 2020 summer study abroad program.
- 10 BSC International students opted to stay in Bluefield and 10 opted to return to their homelands. Dr. Jamkhandi has communicated with current international students on a weekly basis to ensure their completion of coursework for spring 2020 and pre-registration for fall 2020 classes.
- April 15 ~ BSC's 7th Annual Agora, A Celebration of Creative Expression: In anticipation of not being able to convene on campus, beginning in late February, Agora Coordinator Dr. Sudhakar R

Jamkhandi reached out to West Virginia creative artists and writers, BSC alumni who were past Agora participants, area high school students, and Fulbright artists who had visited BSC in the past to share video recordings. The response was tremendous as evidenced in the virtual Agora which may be viewed at <https://www.bluefieldstate.edu/agora/virtual-agora-2020>

Concord University

- One J-1 exchange visitor at Concord during the 2019-2020 period who came on a DS-2019 issued by Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals (Cultural Vistas). This German student took classes here during the fall semester and participated in an internship with the Princeton Rescue Squad for the spring semester. She returned to Germany on March 15th.
- International Student Orientation
- Hiking at the Cascades near Pembroke VA
- Zip Lining, water park and picnic at Pipestem Resort State Park
- Homecoming the International Students Club placed first in the competition and our candidate, Amaka Obijuru from Nigeria, was crowned queen.
- Dinner at a Korean host family's home to honor the first students completing the Korean exchange program.
- CU football Game-International Tailgate Party
- Bowling-pizza night
- "On the first Saturday of the academic year, we provided a day-long orientation program for our new students. Students were divided in to three groups and moved between three sessions. The first session was on academic success and discussed the supports available to students, time management, and how to avoid plagiarism. The second session discussed campus safety/Title IX, and the third how to maintain your visa status, living/working in the United States, and services available for international students. Following the three sessions, students were treated to a lunch buffet at the India Garden Restaurant and shopping at the New River Valley Mall and the Oasis World Market. "

Fairmont State University

- Zhang Peng, a visiting scholar from China, was hosted by the Department of Language and Literature. He taught a class on Mandarin during the spring 2020 semester, and he also participated in research endeavors. His wife and young daughter accompanied him. Dr. Peng gave a presentation to students at a local high school about his country (as did a handful of other international students).
- "Most of the activities we had planned for campus-wide engagement of international and domestic students were scheduled for spring 2020 (i.e., international food events, international culture events, and international education Q&A sessions), but we were not able to proceed with these as planned."
- Cross-Cultural Activities:
 - Trolley tour of Historical Fairmont
 - Taste of the World (suspended due to COVID)
 - Fundraiser for Australian brushfire (suspended due to COVID)
 - Saudi Arabia National Day
 - Creation of Conversation Table (delayed due to COVID)
 - International student presentations to local high schools
 - Falcon soccer on campus (weekly soccer gathering for all)
 - Creation of Rotaract Club
 - Rotaract Club meetings and scheduled activities (suspended due to COVID)

Glenville State College:

- Japanese Outreach Coordinator organized several international/cultural activities throughout the year. These events were free and open to the college campus and local community members.
- International Education Week included the following activities:
- Faculty were asked to steer content toward an international topic. For instance, the business faculty focused on international business during the week's curriculum discussion. Language and Literature focused on an international piece of literature.
- Along with the discussion in the classroom, Glenville State College partnered with the campus food service provider to offer international food options throughout the week.
- International Faculty members also offered passport across the world program. Each International Faculty, who participated, offered artifacts and food from their native country for the students to stop by and experience. Student's received a make-shift passport where they had the opportunity to have their passport stamped for visiting that country.

Shepherd University

- Sponsored students with host families, English language writing tutoring, lunch time language activities, Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, our annual International Cook-Off, a Chinese New Year celebration, trips to Washington, DC, and New York City, in addition to round table discussions on various topics.
- "We host an international orientation day one full day prior to domestic student orientation. Our international day is to inform our incoming students about campus and area services. We help them to set up bank accounts and take them on their first grocery shopping trip. When students arrive on our campus, we share with them information on medical insurance packages that are available to them. At Shepherd, students are responsible for providing their own medical insurance, so we have researched options and have information available to them to help them select the best coverage for their stay."

West Liberty University

During the 2019-20 academic year, West Liberty University offered two international student orientations, a transfer student orientation, a month long TopperFest Opening Orientation program to help connect the students with each other and the campus community, as well as various cross-cultural activities for our international students and different cross-cultural awareness programs for our campus community. Below is a list of some of the international programming offered by WLU during the past academic year:

- International Student Welcome Picnic. This networking picnic is open to all members of the campus who have an interest in our international students. It is the official welcome to our new international students and everyone returning.
- Culture Fair is an annual fair where all of our international students are encouraged to make a display about their country and dress in traditional clothes (if available). The event helps the students connect with the campus and promotes cultural awareness. "This past year we had 15 countries represented and the event was additionally attended by fourth and fifth grade students from local schools."
- It's International Teatime: an annual event that opens the International month programming. "We offer teas from around the world along with a selection of international desserts. Our international students volunteer to serve the food and teas."
- A Taste of Home: A monthly event organized for the WLU international community to network and socialize over a home cooked meal with an international flare. The last event was hosted mid-

February, before the impact of COVID-19.

- Global Fair: Study Abroad and International Initiatives. The event helped promote internationalization efforts at WLU through exhibits made by faculty and students.
- In addition to these campus events, the International Center at WLU has organized throughout the academic year, different educational and fun events that provide students with opportunities to learn more about the culture in the area, make friends and network, travel and explore more of the USA. Some of the events were: Halloween in the community, Christmas with host families, learn popular sports (football, baseball etc), explore the local artistic life, attend theater plays and Broadway shows at the Wheeling Capitol Theater or in Pittsburgh, shopping Trips, museums or other destinations of interest etc. “Our international students have also visited and gave presentations at different middle schools and high schools in the area until the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. “

DIFFICULTIES & CHALLENGES:

Bluefield State College:

- No issues arose pertaining to the J-1 Exchange Scholar Program because BSC has yet to take advantage of this opportunity.
- Identifying English-speaking faculty from partner institutions in non-English speaking countries who can spend up to an entire academic year at BSC.
- Foreign partner institutions have the same challenge faced by US institutions, namely, releasing full-time faculty to go abroad for scholarly activities and finding substitute (adjunct) faculty who will teach their courses in their absence. Reciprocal exchanges will be a rare occurrence.
- Appropriate housing for exchange scholars along with the cost of such housing (i.e., who will cover rental costs?)
- How can substitute (adjunct) faculty salaries be paid/justified and from what funding source?
- Partner institutions’ students: No incentive for partner institutions’ students to study at BSC if they do not have English and if they have to pay non-resident tuition and fees. Unfortunately, our state institutions are not geared to handle reciprocal exchanges nor is the state willing to charge in-state tuition for students from partner institutions. Only short-term cultural immersion trips are possible for partner institutions’ students.
- Absence of financial support from WV HEPC to support salaries for exchange scholars from partner institutions (within BSC budget allocation) or to engage in two-way student mobility with international partner institutions.

Concord University faced challenges with exchange students who, after completing their J-1 non-degree student exchange program, wanted to return to Concord on an F-1 visa to pursue degree study. “Our first group of Korean exchange students liked Concord so much that four of them wanted to transfer to Concord and complete their degrees. Despite the students getting a transcript evaluation from ECE, students in some programs had to translate course descriptions from Korean to English. Faculty members had difficulty in deciding what were the equivalent classes at Concord. This was time consuming for the students and the faculty. In the end, the four students were able to transfer to Concord. They will be able to complete their degrees in a time frame that is satisfactory for them.”

Fairmont State University faced the following challenges:

- Domestic students have limited interest in going to international partner universities (fear of foreign language and foreign lifestyle); this is further complicated by the limited number of faculty and staff who have studied or traveled abroad.
- Community engagement is difficult to nurture, grow, fuel, and develop; there is interest, but it seems there is lack of direction about how to engage.
- Scholarships for prospective international students are limited.
- Very little funding for international graduate students.

Glenville State College did not report any challenges.

Shepherd University did not report any challenges.

West Liberty University

- “Our J-1 professor and short-term scholar has arrived not long before the COVID-19 pandemic started in the United States. This posed challenges and altered the work and projects established to be implemented. These challenges will be continuing into the new academic year, as institutions are responding to COVID-19, travel restrictions and bans are still in place, Visa cancellations and delays etc.”

NEW INITIATIVES & FUTURE PLANS:

Bluefield State College:

- Existing and future Agreements: Design study abroad curricula in different fields for students of partner institutions for customized short-term study at BSC.
- Sustain cross-cultural activities indicated above.
- Custom design BSC faculty led study abroad for BSC students at partner institutions.
- New Agreements: The latest MoU was signed in December 2019 with Istanbul Medipol University in Turkey. A few have been inactive and hence they have been terminated- Sisian State College, Armenia, Holy Cross College, India, and Yunan College of Mechanical and Electronic Engineering Technology, China.
- In June 2020, with the support of the US Department of Commerce and the WV HEPC International Education Director, two new MoU's have resulted to promote student mobility, collaborative faculty research, and information exchange have evolved with Varna University of Management in Bulgaria and FUNDAÇÃO ESCOLA DE COMERCIO ALVARES PENTEADO (FECAP).
- Approved for AY 2020-21: 2 male Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange will study and intern at BSC in 2021 (January-June) with the Feuchtenbergers, Kitt and Gary McCarthy, and Gino Russo as host families.
- Third party Exchange scholars/professors (in collaboration with CIES/IIE Outreach Lecturing Fund: This activity may take place in person and/or virtually.
- BSC has been selected to host a Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant for Portuguese in AY 2020-21.
- Passport to the World: If funded by local foundations/civic organizations and/or a WV based corporation, 20 free passports will be issued in February 2021 in collaboration with the US Postal Service.
- J-1 Exchange Scholars: BSC will make every effort to host exchange scholars from at least two

partner institutions to teach at BSC for one or two semesters in AY 2020-21.

- J-1 Exchange students: BSC will encourage partner institutions' students to enroll in the English for International Students program, participate in semester or yearlong programs that include paid internships, and/or short-term cultural immersion study tours.
- Partner with BSC's international partner institutions UNASA (El Salvador) and UNICENTRO (Brazil) to provide online/synchronous foreign language tutoring for BSC students in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively, beginning in AY 2020-21.

Concord University:

- Begin exchange programs with universities in Mexico.
- Begin an online ESL program for students interested in pursuing a master's degree at Concord.
- Begin hosting groups of teachers in 2021 for short-term exchange programs.

Fairmont State University reported the following future plans:

- Further grow and develop cross-cultural activities so as to include all of campus (faculty, staff, and students) as well as the local community;
- Invite international students from other universities in WV to create an "International Celebration" that encompasses all of the international representation from the state;
- Create interdisciplinary academic focus that incorporates international students into courses that focus on/include international, global, or multicultural components to the curriculum (i.e., international business, world geography, international communication, multiculturalism in the USA, etc.);
- Establish COIL courses at the university;
- Work with local high schools (namely NMHS) to incorporate COIL into the classroom;
- Develop multicultural and international sensitivity workshops for the campus community as well as the local community;
- Collaborate more with the community to synergize and engage domestic and international populations in the area.

Glenville State College:

- The International Task Force will be presenting COIL training as an opening session for members of the Faculty at Glenville State College. The goal being to increase COIL participation across the curriculum.
- The International Task Force is also working on a 3-year strategic plan for Study Abroad. The goal is to integrate this into courses and allow the students to broaden their understanding of the world through Study Abroad.
- The International Task Force will be presenting a recommendation for implementation of a J-1 program scholar. The premise is that Glenville State College would partner with institutions abroad to exchange faculty for a semester or year. This would allow the institution to diversify teaching methods and concepts while expanding the knowledge and understanding of the faculty and students.
- Glenville State College has applied for a COIL grant through HEPC. If the college received the funding, we hope to host a COIL summit on campus, inviting our COIL partners across the state. The guests would be members of the Anahuac University team who have participated in COIL with Dr. Melody Wise for the past several years. This would give those members an opportunity to visit Glenville State College and for us to host a lunch and learn session for how to enhance our COIL program statewide.

- “With the change of personnel in the position of Director of International Affairs, we are working to re-establish relationships with institutions after a period of little to no communication. As we develop our relationships with embassies in West Africa, we hope to add to our institutional agreements.”

Shepherd University

- Will continue to work with IREX and our signed partner institutions. “We already have accepted another student from Osaka University for the upcoming academic year. In addition, we applied for IREX Pakistan and Tunisia and are waiting on a response.”

West Liberty University

- Will continue to develop and improve relationships with its existing partners, building upon successes in the last two years.
- WLU is in the process of finalizing an addendum to the existing MOU between West Liberty University and University of Wurzburg (UW) that will facilitate more student and faculty exchanges between the universities. Through this addendum, we are expecting for two students from University of Wurzburg to attend WLU starting with Fall 2021 but is depended on how the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to impact our institutions.