

## **Report of the Global Structure ad-hoc Sub-Committee**

The following recommendations are made to help improve the existing organizational structure at Boston University to more optimally promote and facilitate opportunities for global engagement for faculty, post-doctoral scholars, and graduate students.

- **Conduct an objective review of the status and productivity of existing centers, institutes and programs at Boston University with global interests.**

We have identified over 50 existing centers, institutes and programs, at Boston University that have either explicitly expressed an interest in or have the potential to become engaged in global issues. These do not strongly link to one another, or to the large number of other centers, institutes and programs that have in expressed interest the international arena. All such entities should be systematically reviewed with the intent of better coordinating the University's global scholarship and research. Specific steps should be taken: a) Establish a review committee of at least 10 faculty members representing different colleges and schools reporting to the Provosts on the CRC and MED campuses; b) Charge the committee with the initial task of identifying mechanisms and criteria for an impartial review, including scholarship, productivity, funding levels, and other criteria deemed necessary in order to evaluate these entities; d) Prepare a report to the Provosts with recommendations for consolidation, continuation or discontinuation of the existing centers, institutes and programs.

- **Establish a central administrative structure under the Provost's Offices on the two campuses to provide coordinated support for the global research mission of the University**

The current locus of coordination for international activities at Boston University is the Office of International Programs (OIP). This well-established office has the major administrative responsibility for promoting, organizing and managing off-campus study abroad programs for undergraduate students. The International Students and Scholar's Office (ISSO) is responsible for helping individuals with visas, work permits, and related issues. While there are clear concerns among faculty regarding the interpretation of government policies, it is equally important to note that there is no parallel structure for the promotion and facilitation of international research activities of faculty, students and post-doctoral fellows. Since this is inherently different from the OIP and ISSO function, there is the need to consider creation of a new administrative position at

the Associate Provost level, in parallel with the Associate Provost for International Programs, who would have primary responsibility for the international research programs involving Boston University faculty. Such an office would be responsible for coordinating, selecting and recruiting international scholars who would conduct collaborative research at Boston University. One of the value-added functions of this office would be to establish and manage a Global Research Committee that could evaluate proposals from prospective graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and research scholars, and help make broader interdisciplinary connections for these research programs. Another important function of this office might be to represent the research mission of the faculty and work with OIP to develop broad-based strategic plan for study abroad and international campuses, insuring that the education and research missions at BU are tightly interwoven and mutually supportive.

- **Identify and evaluate structural and functional barriers at Boston University that limit productive scholarship, teaching and research on global issues.**

A systematic examination of structural barriers to the effective conduct of a global educational and research mission for Boston University is essential. There are a number of existing structural impediments that impede global research. For example, the recent editorial in the journal *Science* with respect to overreaching institutional regulation academic institutional review boards, described as “mission creep,” could describe some of the problems at Boston University. There is an obvious disconnection between the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and investigators on both campuses that is not being resolved by any measure thus far taken. This suggests the need for a systematic university-wide review to improve the oversight of global research, reduce the administrative burden, facilitate research proposal development, and protect subjects (human and animal) from undue risk or exploitation.

A second issue relates to the support provided for international students and scholars to be able to obtain visas to enter the U.S. Admittedly, this is a difficult time, as the “tightening up” of government process has sometimes had a mindless quality to it. It is all too easy for the international offices at the university to act in an overly conservative manner, which impedes the movement of international students and scholars to BU, and thus substantively degrades our efforts to engage globally. There needs to be a careful review of opportunities and limits on pro-active support of the mission. An objective review mechanism, including faculty from the Law School, should be developed and implemented. This group should, as part of its charge, conduct a systematic comparison with other institutions policies with respect to international students and scholars.