

COMMISSION ON RESEARCH

October 21, 2015

325 Burruss Conference Room

3:30pm – 5:00pm

Minutes

Attendee: Randy Wynne (Chair), Benjamin Corl (Vice Chair), Srinath Ekkad, Martin Daniel (for Dennis Dean), Annie Pearce, France Belanger, Jewell Trent, Tammy Trimble (for Myra Blanco), Tom Inzana (for Kurt Zimmerman), Sandra Muse (for Scott Klopfer), Tom Bell, Ben Knapp, Cheryl Carrico, Robert Vogelaar, Nathan Hall, Van Crowder, Kaveh Rahimi and Monica Rich (recorder).

Absent: Barbara Lockee, Sue Teel, Jonah Fogel, Jennifer Irish, Paul Knox, Alan Grant and Stephen Hensell

Guest: Ian Leuschner, Ken Miller, Montasir Abbas, Rami Dalloul, David Tegarden and Peggy Layne.

- I. Approval of the Agenda – A motion was made and the agenda was approved.

- II. Announcements
 - a. Approval of the Minutes of September 9, 2015* – The meeting minutes were approved electronically.
 - b. Update on VPRI Search – F. Belanger reported the third and final candidate will be on campus October 29. One week after the search committee will debrief and hopefully make a selection.

- III. Unfinished Business
 - a. Report of Ongoing Activities
 - i. University Library Committee – N. Hall reported on two new initiatives. First, VTechData, a repository specific to support research data. A beta site is located at <http://data.lib.vt.edu/>. People who are interested in learning more should contact Julie Speer, Associate Dean, University Libraries (jspeer@vt.edu). Second, plans are in the proposal stage for a digital humanities research lab for faculty, along with a new digitization unit. For more information you can contact Amanda French, alfrench@vt.edu, Director of Digital Research and Scholarship.
 - ii. Update from Faculty Senate - B. Corl updated COR on activities of the Faculty Senate deferring discussion of the senate's resolution on governance to be presented later on the agenda.
 - iii. Centers and Institutes Update – S. Ekkad reported Policy 13005 is being reviewed for revisions to address issues not anticipated in the last major revision. Once the review is complete, recommendations will be provided to the Commission in the form of a resolution.

- iv. Research Administration – M. Daniel reported.
 - 1. CREST - Currently having meetings around campus to expose research administrators to the software. Seventeen PI's are working with this new software to determine how they like it. The testing seems to be going well.
 - 2. Research Faculty Promotion Process - Implementing new guidelines for the Research Faculty Promotion process based on the recommendations of the HR Subcommittee. The guidelines cover the ranked research faculty. One change is to change the timing for promotions separating the process from the merit cycle and implementing a process that mirrors what happens with tenure track faculty. The guidelines also emphasize the peer review process.
- b. Committee on Research Challenges – Randy Wynne reported a committee is being formed to continue its work on research challenges. Jennifer Irish is the lead on the committee. She will need volunteers for this committee. The charge is to prepare an executive summary which can be shared broadly, identify items that fall clearly within the COR aegis and begin an action plan, and identify items not in our purview that we can suggest to other commissions.

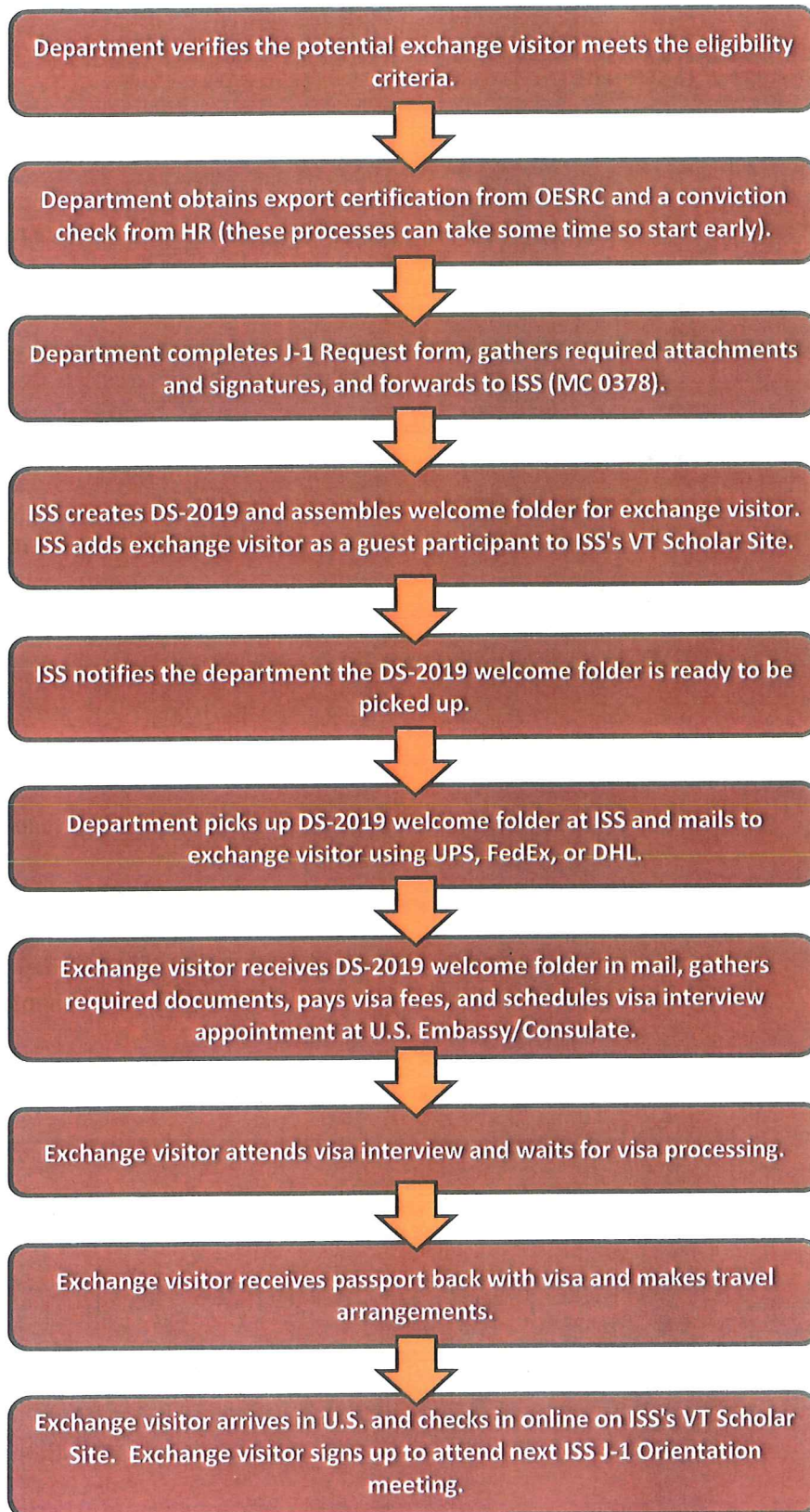
IV. New Business

- a. Process for bringing (long term) International Visiting Scholars to VT – Ian Leuschner, Director of International support services gave an overview of the current process (handout attached). Leuschner specifically noted that visitors cannot come on a B Visa. They have to use a J-1 Visa.
- b. Faculty Senate – M. Abbas gave a presentation on the faculty senate Resolution CFA 2015-16B and requested input. Members of COR were asked by R. Wynne to review the resolution and send comments as to whether we want to endorse this resolution or not to Randy Wynne, Ben Knapp or Sandra Muse by 5:00pm on Thursday in order to meet the Faculty Senate deadline of Friday for their second vote and first reading to University Council on November 2, 2015.

V. Adjournment: 4:58PM

J-1 Scholar and Student Intern Request Process Overview

For more information, visit [ISS's website](#).



Estimated Timeline

Submit requests to ISS at least 3-4 months before intended start date

OESRC Reviews:

1 week

HR Criminal Checks:

2-3 weeks

VT Department Process:

Depends on you!

ISS Process:

5-10 business days from receipt of complete and accurate request form

Mailing:

1-2 weeks depending on mail speed and destination

Getting Visa Appointment:

A few days to several weeks depending on the Embassy/Consulate wait times

Visa Processing:

Up to 6 weeks if subjected to administrative processing

Arrival and Check-In:

Scholar should complete check-in within 10 days of arrival

J-1 CATEGORIES

Short-Term Scholar

A short-term scholar (22 CFR 62.21) is a professor, research scholar, or person with similar education or accomplishments coming to the United States on a short-term visit to lecture, observe, consult, train, or demonstrate special skills at research institutions, museums, libraries, accredited post-secondary educational institutions, or similar organizations. The maximum duration of participation for this category shall not exceed 6 months. No extensions will be permitted. Thus the eligibility requirements for the STS category are:

- Primarily conduct research, lecture, consult, or observe.
- Completed at least a bachelor's degree
- Maximum stay 6 months (including transfers to/from other institutions).
 - If there is any possibility the department or foreign national will need/want to extend past 6 months, use the Research Scholar category. If the short-term scholar category is used and the foreign national needs more time to complete his/her work, the only way to obtain more time is through international travel and re-entry with a new visa, new DS-2019 and new J-1 program which is unnecessarily costly, slow, and inconvenient compared to using the Research Scholar category initially which can simply be extended by ISS while the foreign national remains in the U.S.

Research Scholar

Research scholars (22 CFR 62.20) primarily conduct research, observe, or consult in connection with a research project at research institutions, corporate research facilities, museums, libraries, accredited post-secondary educational institutions, or similar types of institutions. The research scholar may also teach and lecture (unless disallowed by the program sponsor) provided that these activities are incidental and do not extend the period of participation beyond the maximum duration. The maximum duration of participation for this category is not to exceed 5 years. Thus the eligibility requirements for the Research Scholar category are:

- Primarily conduct research; may also teach.
- Completed at least a bachelor's degree (this requirements is based on standard requirements found in the higher education industry; VT policy may require an even higher degree if the individual will occupy a certain position, e.g. postdoc)
- Maximum stay of 5 years.
- 12/24 month bars apply

PROCESSING FEE

There is an internal processing fee of \$100 for all J-1 scholar request (initial, extension, transfer and **subsequent dependent requests**) payable to ISS via a banner budget transfer.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

OPTION 1: Evidence of having obtained a degree from a post-secondary institution whose language of instruction is English (including US institutions).

OPTION 2: Evidence of citizenship of a country whose official language is English.

OPTION 3: Evidence of having obtained the minimum required scores on a recognized English language test.

OPTION 4: Skype Interview with LCI.

EXPORT CONTROL REVIEW

All J-1 Scholars and Student Interns must be reviewed by the Office of Export and Secure Research Compliance (OESRC) before ISS can process the J-1 request. Departments work directly with OESRC to obtain the export control review.

HR CONVICTION CHECKS

Human Resources requires all (paid and unpaid) J-1 Scholars and Student Interns to undergo a criminal background check prior to ISS processing the J-1 case. Departments work directly with HR to process the conviction check. Some international conviction checks may take several weeks, so departments should begin this process early.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Total funding must meet the following minimum requirements:

J-1 Scholar \$1700 per month

J-2 Spouse: \$4000 per year

J-2 Child: \$2000 per year

Multiple funding sources are allowed and all funding sources must be disclosed and documented.

HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All J-1 scholars, student interns, and their J-2 dependents must have health insurance that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements set by the U.S. Department of State during their entire stay in the U.S. The Department of State has recently made changes to the health insurance requirements for J-1 and J-2 exchange visitors. In general the minimum coverage levels have increased. The new insurance requirements are briefly outlined below:

- Major medical benefits per accident or illness: \$100,000
- Medical evacuation: \$50,000
- Repatriation of remains to home country: \$25,000
- Deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness
- Coinsurance not to exceed 25% of the covered benefits per accident or illness

Scholars can choose from a list of recommended plans or work with the vendor to have their existing plan assessed for compliance