

COST Virtual Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2021, 11:00 EST

Present: Angela Shirley (Auburn), Rebecca Parillo (Ashland), Laura Kanney (Ashland), Tammy Brown (UA), Melinda Alsobrook (UA), Stephen Lucas (EIU), Sherie Klee (GVSU), Marty Lash (Kent State), Rose Onders (Kent State), Tiffany Dellard (MTSU), Anne Perry (NKU), Frans Doppen (Ohio), Anna Hiers (UGA), Sharon Brennan (UKY), Ellie Holliday (UKY), Anne Sylvest (USM), Donielle Stephens (USM), Jessica Burnales (USM), Kelsey McLean (UWRF), Michael Miller (UWRF), Kate Welsh (UWYO), Leslie Rush (UWYO), Jayann Johnston (YSU).

Absent: UNR

Welcome & Introductions

New coordinators – We welcomed **Tiffany Dellard** as new coordinator for MTSU; **Ellie Holliday** has assumed Julie Cleary’s role at UKY and will be taking over for Sharon Brennan upon retirement;

Donielle Stephens will be taking over the coordinator position at USM upon Anne Sylvest’s retirement.

Fall 2021 Placement Updates

- All receiving sites currently working on fall placements have confirmed that they are ready and anticipating the arrival of students for placements beginning in October. As far as COST as a placement organization – all Fall 2021 placements are confirmed and going.
- However, we recognize that nearly all of the placement locations we have secured are now under a US Department of State Level 4 Travel Advisory, which in the past has been a determining factor for institutions whether a student can go abroad or not. We have asked each sending institution to follow up with their international offices to determine if any new policies or procedures have been put in place for appealing and reviewing the travel of students to countries with a level 4 advisory.
- If institutions determine that a student is not allowed to participate in COST, students will receive a full refund of their application fee (This would total no more than \$3,000 from the COST budget).
- If an institution allows for the student to travel and participate but the student decides to withdraw, they will be charged a \$250 withdraw fee (we will not be following the stages of withdrawal to charge \$750 at this time). However, students are always given the option to appeal the withdraw fee, and COST will decide on a case-by-case basis.
- Because the placements are all confirmed at this point, and overseas coordinators have done the bulk of the coordinating work, COST will pay each receiving site \$250 per student who withdraws before departure (this would not exceed \$3,750 of the COST budget if it were to apply to every placement).
- We are asking coordinators to be very diligent in the next few weeks to communicate with their institutions, the receiving site coordinator(s) assigned to their student(s), and their students about requirements and placement feasibility for their unique needs.

Please copy COST on communication and notify us immediately of any reasons for withdrawal or cancellation. Likewise, let us know if things look promising and your students are preparing for departure.

- Anna will send out official confirmation letters that students should carry with them when traveling as evidence of purpose for travel.

Spring 2022 Placements

- We have 40 applicants for spring 2022!
- Unfortunately, we have a reduced pool of receiving sites that can coordinate placements this spring. Australia, New Zealand, and Italy are not able to accept students. At the same time, many students listed both Australia and New Zealand or all three as sites.
- We will be contacting each coordinator with a list of students we will need to revise the list of countries they would be willing to accept placement in. Please send us a quick email with any updates as they come in from students.
- If a student decides to withdraw instead of provide additional sites, we will refund the application fee.
- We are also requesting that all coordinators send a scanned copy of each spring applicant's signed covid addendum just as we requested for fall placements. If a student is not willing to sign the addendum, they must withdraw, and we will refund their application fee.
- The withdrawal policy will remain in place for spring 2022, and it was clarified that the placement confirmation email that students receive for spring 2022 placements will be treated as an official confirmation of placement in that location with the understanding that details of school, housing, etc. could be delayed or change before departure.

Addition of Berlin Cosmopolitan School for Spring 2022

- Sherie asked for consideration that the site development protocol to send a COST member representative to a site before signing them on be waived for the addition of Berlin Cosmopolitan School in Berlin, Germany.
- At our spring 2021 meeting, Justine DeFrancesco provided a detailed video tour and presentation of BCS for our consideration, and it was agreed that Sherie would try to organize a visit in December to bring BCS on as a receiving site. That visit has been cancelled.
- Considering the connection Ms. DeFrancesco has with the COST program, her detailed presentation of the school and community, and our previous experience with placement in Berlin, Sherie proposed we bring BCS on as a receiving site for a spring 2022 pilot.
- Sharon Brennan recommended we pilot with two students if possible.
- An MOA will be sought from BCS and Ms. DeFrancesco for a spring 2022 pilot.
 - All present (14) voted in favor of bringing BCS on without the official site visit.

Finances

- Fall invoices which include the annual membership fee will be sent closer to October to account for the unknowns still surrounding fall 2021 placements.
- An additional financial decision was made to cancel the 2022 international meeting (a \$12,000 budget item) and host a domestic meeting at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan instead.

Annual Meeting Spring 2022

- The 2022 meeting will be a two-day, in person meeting in **Grand Rapids, Michigan** held on Thursday-Friday, **April 28-29, 2022**.

Meeting was recorded. A link to the recording will be available on the Coordinator Portal.

Meeting adjourned – 12:23pm