Western Connecticut State University International Center (W.I.C.)

2014-2015 Annual Report

Prepared & Submitted by

A Ben Oumlil, Ph.D.
WIC Coordinator

April 24, 2015
Western Connecticut State University International Center (W.I.C.)
2014-2015 Annual Report

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Western Connecticut State University International Center (W.I.C.)

2014-2015 Annual Report

I. Part One: An Overview

1. Name:

The name of the organization shall be the Western Connecticut State University International Center (W.I.C.).

2. Purpose:

a. The W.I.C. shall seek in various ways to increase the awareness of student, faculty, staff, secondary school instructors and pupils, and the community in international affairs, international culture, and international problems.

By international affairs is meant contemporary interests and difficulties among nations, by international culture is meant why people act and think differently from our own culture, their religious beliefs, philosophy of life, arts (e.g., music, dance, painting, sculpture, etc.), education, manner of conducting business, etc.; by international problems is meant global concerns not easily fitting into the previous two categories (e.g., food distribution, desertification, energy, etc.)

b. The W.I.C. shall assist in making the University community more aware of opportunities afforded by grants, student and faculty international exchanges, foreign travel with and without academic credit, international education and such other opportunities which may be of benefit and aid in fostering international understanding.
II. Part Two: The 2014-2015 Academic Year’s Activities

1. Introduction

The 2014-2015 academic year was highly productive and successful in the Western International Center (WIC), in light of transitional leadership. With well-experienced committee members, we initiated new campus programs and events, recruited in several new committee members for the WIC.

The WIC has 12 committee members representing all academic units and administrative offices. In addition, the WIC Committee also includes a student representative. The committee members are responsible for everything regarding promoting international education and awareness on our WCSU campuses. (for a list of the WIC Committee members 2014-2015, see Appendix A).

As educators and administrators, we continue our effort to promote the internationalization and intercultural experiences for WCSU students and professional colleagues and supporting the WCSU vision of responsible engagement with the local, national and global communities.

The WCSU students on ISEP numbers keep growing. During the Fall term 2014, there were 6 students studying in the countries of Germany, Morocco, Spain, and Sweden. Additionally, there were 6 ISEP Exchange Students studying at WCSU representing the countries of Australia, France, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, and South Korea. For Spring term 2015, there are 8 WCSU students on ISEP studying in the countries of Australia, Costa Rica, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Sweden. There are 5 ISEP Exchange Students studying at WCSU from the countries of Australia, France, Italy, and Netherlands.

The international students’ population keeps also growing. In Fall 2014, there were 14 International Students on F-1 Visa representing the countries of: Brazil, China, Chile, Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Pakistan, and Taiwan. For Spring 2015, there are 13 International Students on F-1 Visa from the countries of Brazil, China, Chile, Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, India, Jamaica, Kenya, and Pakistan.

The International Services staff continues to develop partnerships with schools overseas and recruit more students from abroad.
2. The International Education Week 2014 (November 17 – 21, 2014)

International Education Week (IEW) is a university-wide celebration of international education endeavors organized by the WIC Committee*. The main aim of IEW is to promote and celebrate international programs and to encourage participation in them.

Students, faculty, and staff at the University engage in a variety of activities across the campus. All of these activities result in an international and cross-cultural knowledge exchange that enriches the WCSU community.

The 2014 IEW showcased international activities at the University through a series of events throughout the week of November 16th.

A big thank you to all of our sponsors: Office of the Provost for Academic Affairs and staff, Dean of Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences and staff, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Office and staff, International Services Office and staff, WCSU Bookstore, and Food Services.

For information on the WIC International Education Week 2014, see International Education Week Schedule of Events listed in Appendix B.

3. The International Film Festival 2015 (April 6-9)

As in the past, the International Film Festival 2015 was organized by the WIC Committee during the week of April 6-9.

The International Film Festival has its beginning in showing films with an African-American perspective. However, this year, the WIC Committee’s decision was to expand the 2015 International Film Festival’s focus on a more international and cross-cultural perspectives. This shift is more in line with the WIC mission and in support of the University effort to promote internationalization on our campus. In other words, the purpose of the International Film Festival is to bridge cultural understanding and encourage artistic development and excellence by provoking thought through film. By bringing the best of world cinema to WCSU and Danbury, the Festival presents the city and the film industry with a singular platform that fosters creative and technical talent from an international and cross-cultural perspective.

The Festival has shown a diverse group of well-known and classic international films including Casablanca, Les Misérables, Bend it Like Beckham, and Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon. For information, see the 2015 International Film Festival Calendar listed in Appendix C.
4. **International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) Reception 2015**

In an effort to welcome international students and to integrate them, the WIC committee organized a reception for them. Refreshments and cookies/snacks were provided by the WIC. Students shared their experience at WCSU and in the U.S. WCSU international students will also continue to be invited to WIC meetings.

5. **Meeting with The Delegation, Xinyang Normal University, Henan Province, China**

The WIC was presented by the WIC Coordinator, Dr. Ben Oumlil. He was among the representatives from Western who are participating in the meeting with the Delegation from Xinyang Normal University. The meeting’ main aim is to facilitate development of a variety of academic exchange programs with Xinyang Normal University of Henan Province, China. The visit to WCSU by Delegation form Xinyang Normal University was on Tuesday, November 18, 2014.

The Western International Center (WIC) is committed to support of activities organized by WCSU faculty members/departments/organizations. During the academic year 2014-15, the WIC Committee allocated funds to fully/partially support these efforts. A summary is listed below.

a. History Department Talk

The History Department is organizing a talk by Professor Ivan Small (Economic Anthropology, CCSU) on transnational remittance flows to and from Vietnam. Financial assistance was provided by the WIC to support this event. The talk was held on April 16.

b. Information Session for Spain 2015

The WIC provided financial support for catering services during the Information Session for Study Abroad Program – Spain 2015. The sessions took place on November 12 & November 18th, 2014.

c. Spanish Majors Study Trip to MOMA and Repertorio Español 2014

Financial support was provided by WIC to ‘Spanish majors' study trip to MOMA in NYC on November 22. Students explored works by Spanish and Latin American surrealists at the MOMA and attended a production based on Don Quijote at Repertorio Español.’

d. Founding Board Director of the United Nation's Working Group

The WIC sponsored a presentation by Ms. Beth Adamson, Founding Board Director of the United Nation's Working Group on Girls, and Ameesha, Girl Advocate. The presentation’s aim was to make our campus community and our local community ‘aware of the many opportunities the United Nations provides for aiding global issues: human rights, social justice, environmental needs, etc. 86 member The Organizations who sit with ECOSOC status and support the rights, needs, and protection of girls. The presentation also included WGG Girl Advocate – an area high school girl who will speak about what SHE has learned re: human rights, particularly as they relate to the girl child. A video was shown to give a flavor of Girl Delegates experiences from around the Globe.’ The event date was on Tuesday, November 18, 2014 (i.e., a part of the WIC International Education Week 2014).
e. **International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) Reception 2015**

In an effort to welcome international students and to integrate them, the WIC committee organized a reception for them. Refreshments and cookies/snacks were provided by the WIC. Students shared their experience at WCSU and in the U.S. WCSU international students will also continue to be invited to WIC meetings.

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<th>IV. Part Four: The Establishment of the WIC International Film Library</th>
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The committee discussed the WIC International Film Event/Festival held from April 6 to April 9. The committee also implemented additional strategies to create more awareness of this event on campus. The consensus was also to purchase foreign films and build a WIC international film collection/library. Members submitted film recommendations to Dr. Oumilil (WIC Coordinator) to be purchased for WIC Film Library for future use/upcoming International Film Festivals. The WIC ordered several international DVDs during the month of April 2015. The WIC will continue the effort to acquire additional international films in the coming years. The WIC will also continue bringing the best of world cinema to WCSU and Danbury, the Festival presents the city and the film industry with a singular platform that fosters creative and technical talent from an international and cross-cultural perspective. During this academic year, the following international films/DVDs were purchased by the WIC.

- a. **The Wind and the Lion**
- b. **MANDELA: Long Walk to Freedom**
- c. **The Best Exotic MARIGOLD Hotel**
- d. **The LUNCHBOX**
- e. **All Men Are Brothers: Blood of Leopard**
- f. **A World Without Thieves**
V. Part Five: Budget

The 2014-15 WIC’s operating budget is $2500. The formal WIC FY16 Budget Proposal was prepared by the WIC Coordinator. This was done with consultation with the WIC Committee members. The format budget proposal was submitted on February 2015 for a review by the Office of the Provost/Dean of Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences. In the academic year 2014-2015, the committee used the funds in various ways to increase the awareness of student, faculty, staff, secondary school instructors and pupils, and the community in international affairs, international culture, and international problems.
VI. Part Six: Challenges & Future Directions

1. Budgetary Challenge:

The core fiscal challenge for the WIC is budgetary pressures created by the fiscal challenge to fulfill all received financial requests. As stated, the WIC FY16 Budget was submitted in February 2015. The received feedback is that this is the first time a formal budget was formally prepared and submitted. This was done for better fiscal planning for the Academic Year 2015-16 and to establish a more formal accounting/budgetary system to manage the WIC fiscal affairs.

Additionally, there is a need to prioritize and/or to curb spending and/or for the WIC to encourage its committee members to consider/to seek outside funding sources to fully/partially funds to support future international oriented activities (e.g., to provide supplementary financial assistance to support study abroad initiatives, to support more study trip and other classroom international activities, to organize international education workshops [e.g., Fulbright Workshop for faculty and students], to organize presentations by speakers/scholars in the international area, etc.). In other words, the ‘W.I.C. shall assist in making the University community more aware of opportunities afforded by grants, student and faculty international exchanges, foreign travel with and without academic credit, international education and such other opportunities which may be of benefit and aid in fostering international understanding.’ These efforts are in line with our mission and organizational goals. Furthermore, these efforts need to be coordinated with The Office of Sponsored Research and Administrative Services at our institution.

2. To Increase Participations/Engagements/Interest in WIC Activities & Updating WIC Bylaws:

The WIC International Education Week was a great success. However, the WIC International Film Festival experienced a low attendance. During our last committee meeting on April 10th, the committee discussed additional strategies to create more awareness of this event on campus. The consensus was to implement strategies to encourage more attendance/engagement by our students (e.g., to explore the option to make the event as a part of course’s assignment, to create co-sponsoring/partnerships with other committee[s] on campus [e.g. the Center for the Study of Culture and Values committee], etc.).
Furthermore, there are plans by the WIC Committee to develop a **WIC Website** in efforts to create more awareness by our University community and local community(ies) regarding the WIC and its international activities and events.

During our WIC Committee Meeting on April 10th, the consensus was also to explore strategies to encourage more participation and meeting attendance by some committee members (i.e., **representation by participation**) in the upcoming academic year(s).

As WIC continues to grow and new WIC Committee members join and others leave, organizational change happens (i.e., how WIC conducts its affairs). Specifically, things that worked in the past might not work in the future. Moreover, as things change, the **WIC Bylaws should be reviewed**. During our last committee meeting on April 10th, suggestions were made by WIC Coordinator (Dr. Oumlil) for members to reexamining the WIC Committee’s bylaws and to have suggestions and recommendations regarding needed updates during Fall 2015. Additionally, every committee member will be given an opportunity to have an input and to have a say on a change(s) so the rights of all WIC Committee members continue to be preserved.
Appendix A

The WIC Committee Members 2014-2015*

*WIC Committee Members 2014-2015:

A. Ben Oumil (Coordinator), Ann Atkinson, Renate Ludanyi, Ree Gunter, Zuohong Pan, Marjorie Callaghan, Gary Skiba, Galina Bakhtiarova, Wynn Gadkar-Wilcox, Divya Sharma, Sal Trapani, Daryle Dennis, Robin James, William Trotta (Student Representative).
Appendix B

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK
Organized by Western International Center Committee Members*
Monday November 17 – Friday November 21, 2014

Schedule of Events

➢ Monday, November 17, 2014

- Event Title: ISEP Information Table
  Time: 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
  Facilitator: Donna Warner
  Location: Student Center, Midtown Campus

- Event Title: Get your Name in Hindi and Chinese!
  Time: 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
  Facilitators: Divya Sharma, Xiaomei Gong, and Zuohong Pan
  Location: CC L Lob 1 (Lobby Area), Westside Campus
• Event Title: *International Trivia Contest*
  Time: 6:00 p.m.
  Facilitators: Sal Trapani & Divya Sharma
  Location: Campus Center (Dining Area), Westside Campus

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**Schedule of Events**

› **Tuesday, November 18, 2014**

• Event Title: *International Trivia Contest*
  Time: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
  Facilitators: Sal Trapani & Daryle J. Dennis
  Location: Student Center (Dining Hall), Midtown Campus

• Event Title: *ISEP Information Table*
  Time: 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
  Facilitator: Donna Warner
  Location: Student Center, Midtown Campus

• Event Title: *How Do I Pay For My Study Abroad Experience?*
  Time: 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
  Facilitator: Robin James
  Location: Student Center (Lobby), Midtown campus

• Event Title: *Information: Session Study Abroad in Spain, Summer 2015*
  Time: 12:30 p.m.
  Facilitator: Galina Bakhtiarova
  Location: Warner Hall 103, Midtown campus
• **Event Title:** *Is the United Nations Relevant?*
  **Speakers:** Beth Adamson, Director of the Working Group on Girls, United Nations and Ameesha, Teen Girl Activist
  **Time:** 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
  **Facilitator:** Marjorie Callaghan
  **Location:** SC Theater, Midtown Campus

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**Schedule of Events**

- **Wednesday, November 19, 2014**

  • **Event Title:** *ISEP Information Table*
    **Time:** 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
    **Facilitator:** Donna Warner
    **Location:** Student Center, Midtown Campus

  • **Event Title:** German Studies Center Presents the film - *Good Bye Lenin*, a 2003 tragicomedy film
    **Director:** Wolfgang Becker
    **Nominated Best Film Not in English**
    **Time:** 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
    **Facilitators:** Renate Ludanyi & Michael Nolan (History). He will introduce the film's content in connection with the Fall of the Berlin Wall.
    **Location:** SC Theater, Midtown Campus
Schedule of Events

➢ Thursday, November 20, 2014

• Event Title: Guest Lecture: *International Business Etiquettes And Culture: DOs & TABOOS*
  Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. International Education Week
  Speaker: Dawn Reshen-Doty, President Benay Enterprises, Inc.
  Facilitator: Ben Oumlil
  Location: CC Ballroom N (Conference/Meeting Room), Westside Campus

• Event Title: *Unpacking your ISEP Experience*
  Time: 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  Facilitators: Lisa Temkin & Donna Warner
  Location: Career Development Center (Room 207, Midtown Student Center)

• Event Title: *ISEP Information Table*
  Time: 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
  Facilitator: Donna Warner
  Location: Student Center (Lobby), Midtown Campus

• Event Title: *Spotlight on Cuba*
  Time: 12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
  Presenter: David Aguado
  Facilitator: Robin James
  Location: Student Center (room 201-B), Midtown Campus

Schedule of Events

➢ Friday, November 21, 2014

• Event Title: *Ewe Drumming from the Volta Region of Ghana*
  Time: 10:15 a.m.
  Presenter: Dirck Westervelt
  Facilitator: Marjorie Callaghan
  Location: Room 108, Visual and Performing Arts Center, Westside Campus
Appendix C

The Western International Center Committee (WIC) extends an invitation to our campus community to attend the WCSU International Film Festival, April 6 through April 9, 2015. The detailed schedule of events is attached below.

CHANGE YOUR LATITUDE

International Films Festival
2015

April 6-9

Come Enjoy Great Movies & Free Refreshments & Snacks!

- Monday, April 6, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm,
  Movie: *Bend It like Beckham*. Moderator: Divya Sharma
  Location: SC Theater, Midtown Campus

- Tuesday, April 7, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm,
  Movie: *Les Misérables*. Moderator: Ben Oumilil
  Location: Ballroom North, Westside Campus
➢ Wednesday, April 8, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm,
   Movie: *Casablanca*. Moderator: Ben Oumlil
   Location: SC Theater, Midtown Campus

➢ Thursday, April 9, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm,
   Movie: *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*. Moderator: Zuohong Pan
   Location: Ballroom North, Westside Campus

All events are open to the campus community and sponsored by the Western International Center and support the academic mission and educational purpose of the center.