

CISP switches leaders

BY KELLY GEISEL
The Jambar

YSU Provost Tony Atwater said new ideas and leadership are necessary if the Center for International Studies and Programs wants to improve.

Silvia Jimenez Hyre, who was the subject of criticism from professors and international students last year, is no longer in charge of the center. Her title of director will be redefined, Atwater said, and Noah Midamba has been named interim administrator.

"We wanted to improve the efficiency of applications so that it runs parallel to that of domestic students," Atwater said.

Hyre will continue to work with the CISP, Atwater said. He refused to elaborate on the reason for the switch. Hyre also refused to discuss the switch with a Jambar reporter.

The switch comes after a task force last year recommended that the center's administrators improve communication. In February 2000, seven faculty members sent a letter to former provost James Scanlon criticizing Hyre.

"We believe that under Dr. Silvia Hyre's leadership the Center is dysfunctional," the letter said.

Stephen Hanzely, a physics professor who signed the letter, would not comment directly about the switch but offered his help to Midamba.

"My colleagues and I that recommended that two years ago to the provost stand ready to assist the new director in anyway we can to move the university forward to increase diversity and to make the unique students at YSU as positive and productive as possible," Hanzely said. "We were ready before, but regrettably, no assistance was sought in the past."

Atwater said the change was one of three main steps toward improving the CISP. The first was to improve the admissions department and redirect the responsibilities to the university admissions office.

The second step was to make the CISP more a part of the campus community, he said. That means the center will move from the Phelps Building on Lincoln Avenue to Kilcawley Center.

"The current location in Phelps wasn't centralized enough," Atwater said. "We found space in Kilcawley."

Atwater said the third step was to place more emphasis on three areas of the CISP, increase recruitment, enhance Study Abroad participation and facilitate the development

CISP, continued from page 1

of the English Language Institute.

The ELI is a program that gives international students the chance to focus solely on the English language until they become proficient enough to take other classes in their major.

Midamba said his first order of business is moving. He said that moving from Phelps to Kilcawley would give the international students a better feeling of belonging to the campus community.

He said that from talking to staff and students in the center he has gotten "a sense of where we are, and what we need to do."

Recruitment is also high on Midamba's agenda. Earlier this month, Hyre estimated CISP enrollment took a hit after last year's terrorist attacks.

"Recruitment does not just happen," he said. "Recruitment is word of mouth."

Midamba said right now YSU has roughly 200 international students and hopes to serve around 400 within the next three years if there are more programs established.

Midamba said he feels the Mahoning Valley and the City of Youngstown are very economically and culturally depressed.

"Local students need opportunities to study abroad to heighten awareness," he said.

He said a long-time goal is to give every student the opportunity to study abroad.

Midamba was the associate dean of Institutional Diversity at Kent State University before coming to YSU. He received his Ph.D. in

1985 from the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver.

From 1970 to 1975 he was an Executive Youth Officer for the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization where he was responsible for a \$40 million program funded by the United Nations and African governments.

Midamba was born in Kenya in 1949 and said he began traveling around the world when he was 14.

"I want to make a difference and to make a difference you need a challenge," Midamba said. "My focus is to move ahead. One student complaint is one too many."

Jami Boninsegna contributed to this article.

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