

## **A History of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS)**

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The establishment of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS) has been a long journey, one that was not without bumps and barriers. While it took over 20 years to get IASAS from the germ of an idea to its current stage, it has proven to be well worth the struggle. IASAS serves as a platform that promotes and allows discussion of issues and best practices in our field: higher education student affairs and services. No matter that there are great differences in delivery methods, breadth of service, views of the student, and sometimes conceptual underpinnings, because when focusing on the student, all these differences are celebrated in the context of common values and make for interesting discussions by practitioners from over 80 countries.

In the early 1990s a small number of student affairs and services practitioners began to take notice of how the practice of serving tertiary education students differed from one country to another. These pioneer globalists began to think about ways to connect these practitioners and scholars for the purposes of sharing and assisting each other in this worthwhile of endeavors.

In 1994, while speaking to an audience of French and German student services providers at their annual conference in Bordeaux, Roger Ludeman of the United States proposed the creation of a virtual global network of student affairs and services providers that would encourage sharing, cooperation, joint study tours and research, exchanges, and attendance at each other's conferences. The response was very positive and almost immediately new alliances were formed between the German Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW), French Centre National Des Œuvres Universitaires Et Scolaires (CNOUS), and the United States National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

During the years 1995-1998 the awareness of and interest in global relationships in higher education increased steadily with Asia, Europe, and North America leading the way with conferences, symposia, and exchanges on a global basis. In Europe, the Erasmus program (established in 1987) evolved into the Socrates program in 1994, leading to the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 1999 through the Bologna Declaration, in which students from participating countries can study anywhere within the EHEA with common credit equivalencies and reciprocal fees. Paralleling this effort was the creation in 1999 of the European Committee (now Council) on Student Affairs (ECStA) that has promoted social welfare and addressed infrastructure issues created by the open and “free” study across borders throughout the European Union.

Higher education student services leaders in countries of the Asia Pacific region created the Asia Pacific Student Services Association (APSSA) in 1988. APSSA has effectively served the needs of the Asia Pacific region through conferences, institutes, student leadership experiences, and written documents all designed to keep practitioners abreast of the new trends in serving students. In the United States, NASPA initiated an International Symposium and international exchanges in 1996. All of these initiatives in Europe, the Asia Pacific region, and the United States were and continue to be very successful in bringing student services practitioners together to discuss common interests.

In response to a challenge by Mary Louise Kearney of UNESCO in 1998, Roger Ludeman formed a group called I-Seven for the purposes of drafting a proposal to form a global association of student affairs and services. I-Seven membership included Allen Barlow (Australia), David Ball (United Kingdom), Danielle Baret (France), Cecil Bodibe (South Africa), Enrique Iglesias (Spain), Michel Leduc (Canada), Carlos Mijaris (Mexico), and Ludeman (United States) serving as chair. After eight months of online deliberation, I-Seven completed a draft of its proposal and sought out national and regional organizations that could agree in principle to support the idea of organizing globally. Those agreeing in principle included the Association of Managers of

Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE) of the UK, the Australian-New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA), the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS), The Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) of South Africa, Consejo de Colegios Mayores Universitarios de España (CCMU), the Hong Kong Student Services Association (HKSSA), and Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) of Mexico. The revised proposal was also sent for further consideration to the APPSA, CNOUS of France, DSW of Germany, EcStA, and NASPA of the United States.

From 2000 to 2005 members of the I-Seven group presented the proposal to various national and regional groups around the world. The response was mixed at best. Support was evident in Europe and Africa with little support from Asia and North America. The resistance involved two main objections. First, some national and regional groups felt that they were already doing their own international work and didn't see a need for another layer at the global level with accompanying costs. Others felt that it was needless competition for their national groups. Most members of I-Seven understood the rationale for this resistance to forming a new group at the global level and, at the same time, found it very frustrating because of their strong belief in internationalization and the need to link national and regional groups at the global level. The result of this apparent lack of universal support meant that this effort would be placed on hold for several years.

Ludeman began a yearlong Fulbright grant to teach and do research in student affairs at the University of Natal (now KwaZulu Natal) in Durban, South Africa in 2001. During that year he kept the idea of the formation of a global student affairs and services group alive, all informally. More specifically, while in South Africa, Ludeman consulted with leaders there on the formation of the South Africa Association of Student Affairs Professionals (SAASAP) and with the National Association of Student Development (NASDEV), delivering papers at several of their conferences.

Also during the first decade of the new millennium, Ludeman continued to promote the idea of a global organization, beginning to call it IASAS. He provided services whenever the opportunity presented itself including assisting staff members around the world who wanted to work in another country, a relatively new phenomenon at the time. In 2002, the first edition of the UNESCO/IASAS book on student affairs worldwide was published giving credit to IASAS that still existed only informally. There were numerous online opportunities to assist potential graduate students in finding programs that included strong international components. He spoke in over 10 countries on the internationalization of student affairs and services and the need to organize worldwide. He also gave conference presentations on the potential partnership that should be forged between student affairs staff and the staff in cross border education and international student offices.

In 2009, UNESCO published the second edition of the UNESCO/IASAS book, “Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education: Global Foundations, Issues and Best Practices,” which included an entire section of individual country reports from 52 countries showcasing how student affairs and services are delivered in each of those countries. This new publication described how student affairs and services were delivered in countries around the world. It was distributed widely including a copy going to each participant at the Second World Conference on Higher Education in Paris in 2009. UNESCO also created a PDF file of the book that could be shared easily. This gave IASAS considerable visibility around the world.

Finally, after the idea of forming a global organization had been placed on hold for several years, Ludeman decided it was time to try once more to raise that subject and do so in a different way. This time he invited 25 people from 19 countries to serve in an advisory capacity to begin discussions about creating a global organization. Out of this group, 15 came to a two-day meeting held before the 2009 NASPA Conference in Seattle, Washington (U.S.), with the intention of developing a set of principles and purposes, and a vision and mission for a new global association in student affairs and services. The persons in attendance at the Seattle meeting (IASAS-Seattle '09) can be found in Appendix A.

In the weeks following the marathon weekend session at the 2009 NASPA Conference in Seattle, these active participants drafted the central documents that served as the initial section of a constitution for the IASAS. Throughout the next year several theme-based subgroups met virtually to flesh-out the dynamics and priorities of this new organization. Finally, on March 1, 2010, the inaugural IASAS constitution was approved by 25 charter members. IASAS had finally achieved a more formal status as the first and only global association in higher education student affairs and services.

The first IASAS officers were elected in 2010. They included Damian Medina, Vice President; Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo, Secretary; Annie Andrews, Treasurer; and Roger Ludeman, President. That same year saw development of the first IASAS website created by a group of graduate students from the University of Utah under the leadership of Mary Skorheim, University of Utah, and managed by Damian Medina. IASAS also created its logo as a result of a global contest with submissions by students. The winner of the logo contest was Anna C. Maia who at the time was a master's student at the University of Maryland in College Park.

In 2010 in Venice, Italy, Ludeman met with officials of the European University College Association (EUCA) to discuss common interests. This has resulted in EUCA partnering with IASAS to secure the IASAS charter with the European Union in Belgium in 2013 and the sharing of EUCA offices in Brussels. The official chartering ceremony was held that year in the Brussels offices of EUCA. It was attended by friends and supporters from around the world.

In 2014, IASAS was asked to serve as evaluator of the Higher Education and Leadership Program (HELP) in Haiti. This assessment of their academic advising and support programs for Haitian high school students who were aspiring to attend tertiary education was carried out under the leadership of then IASAS President, Rob Shea, along with team members Richard Zereik of Canada and Vivienne Felix, a Haitian native. This project serves as a model of the kind of assistance IASAS can provide to institutions around the world. Also in 2014, IASAS undertook a strategic planning process in partnership with Keeling & Associates. The

following year, the IASAS website was given a major facelift guided by Andrew West and his staff from the University of Sheffield (U.K.).

From its beginnings with 25 members in 2010, IASAS has grown to nearly 1,200 members from over 80 countries in 2016. In addition to the UNESCO-IASAS book, IASAS mainly provides a platform for sharing among its members and member organizations. In 2012, along with NASPA (U.S.), IASAS sponsored the first Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services bringing together leaders from around the world to discuss issues and practices in student services. This was an important milestone for IASAS as it was its first major event. EUCA hosted the 2014 Global Summit in Rome, Italy, and Stellenbosch University in South Africa hosted the third Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services.

IASAS also serves as an incubator for countries wishing to establish a national association in student affairs and services. Contacts have been made with China, Ecuador, Lebanon, Lithuania, Peru, and Turkey to offer assistance in creating such an organization. IASAS has assisted several national organizations in the United States that wanted to “go global” including ACUHO-I, National Association of Campus Activities (NACA), and National Intramural, Recreation and Sports Association (NIRSA). In South Africa, IASAS assisted in developing the Financial Aid Practitioners of South Africa (FAPSA) and the South African Chapter of ACUHO-I, an organization for residence life practitioners. In 2015, Ludeman led an IASAS team, including John Schuh (U.S.) and Birgit Schreiber (South Africa) to Ankara, Turkey to keynote its first ever Turkish international conference of student affairs and services leaders and to help Turkey begin the process of building a national association and provide more visibility for student affairs and services in higher education in the region.

IASAS has firmly established itself as a new global force in higher education. Over the last year or so under the leadership of President Achim Meyer auf der Heyde (Germany), IASAS has developed other partnerships including a book project with NASPA, entitled “Supporting Students Globally in Higher

Education: Trends and Perspectives for Student Affairs and Service.” The publication will be unveiled at the 2017 NASPA conference. The vision for this book is to share the research, practices, and networking and collaboration that are happening in student affairs and services around the world to better serve students.

A team of editors was chosen by the IASAS Board to serve as the leadership team for an IASAS special edition of the Journal of Student Affairs Africa (JSAA). In this issue of the JSAA, IASAS guest editors sought to create a space for authors from around the world to submit well-researched articles on student services and student affairs programs in tertiary education in different regions of the world. The emphasis will be on issues and challenges within the author’s own country. Additionally, the author will expand on models, frameworks, and theories of student affairs governance structure and provide context for their country and region as well as any insight they may have to help solve any issues or challenges. Issues and challenges will range depending on country and region, some examples include (but are not limited to) access, funding, mental health, mobility, and internationalization.

Eva-Marie Seeto (Australia) led an effort consisting of a pilot global mentoring project. The pilot lasted several months and included 40 participants from Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Egypt, England, Greece, Kuwait, Liberia, Lithuania, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, and the United States.

IASAS partnered with College Students International Educators (ACPA) and Lead365 to host a student leader global summit in 2016. There were 24 undergraduate student leaders from 10 different countries at the first summit. Students who attended the Summit noted how their perspective on leadership and tertiary education was expanded exponentially and that they had created a rich network of college leaders from around the world.

The regional coordinators and board continued to present at various conferences around the world sharing research and best practices for the field. In 2016, international conversations took place on student

activism and our response at the NASPA, ACPA, & CACUSS conferences. IASAS leaders also presented programs at the 2016 APSSA conference in the Philippines.

There is considerable optimism that IASAS will be involved with even more global activity in the future as there seems to be increasing interest in the internationalization of student affairs and services and how it translates into enhanced student learning and success among the students that IASAS members serve around the world.



## Appendix A. IASAS Founding Members

Sven Engel (Germany); Melanie Humphreys (United States and Lithuania); Manuel Tejido (Philippines); Greg Roberts (USA); Enrique Ramos (Mexico); Michael Sachs (USA); Enrique Iglesias (Spain); Jose Calvo (Spain); Michael Smallis (USA); Brian Gormley (Ireland); Maureen Powers (USA); Robert Shea (Canada); Shernell Smith (USA); Ben Lewis (UK); Kathy Pendleton (USA); and Roger Ludeman, Convener (USA). Others who could not attend the Seattle meeting but provided online input (IASAS-Online '09) over the weeks following Seattle included: Annie Andrews (Australia); Ken Osfield (USA); Lydia Krise (Bulgaria); Howard Wang (USA); Dennis Gregory (USA); Thelora Reynolds (Jamaica); Mohanalakshmi Rajakumar (Qatar); Wadad El-Husseiny (Lebanon); Jane Fried (USA); Emily Yates (Qatar); Damian Medina (Kuwait); Andrew West (UK); Carol Black (Kuwait); Eric Sebokedi (South Africa); Mark Rainer (New Zealand); Cathy Stone (Australia); Chandar Gupta Supersad (Trinidad and Tobago); Jorge Lozano (Mexico); Jane Irungu (USA); Tom Jackson (USA); Tom Finnigan (UK); Florence Hamrick (USA); Colleen Doyle (Ireland); Mary Skorheim (USA); Virginia Schaffer (USA); J. Duffy (USA); Christopher Silva (Qatar); Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo (USA); Brett Perozzi (USA); Julie Wood (New Zealand); and Joann Halpern (USA).

## Appendix B. IASAS Past Leadership

### Presidents of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS)

Roger B. Ludeman (USA)	2010 – 2012
Robert Shea (Canada)	2012 – 2015
Achim Meyer auf der Heyde (Germany)	2015 –Present

### Vice Presidents of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS)

Damian Medina (USA)	2010-2012
Wadad Youssef El Housseini (Qatar)	2012-2015
Howard Wang (China)	2015-Present