

NORTHWEST STUDY ABROAD OFFICE PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHING NEW BILATERAL EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

A bilateral partnership is defined by a commitment between two universities that may include any of the following: exchange of undergraduate or graduate students, exchange of faculty and/or staff, joint research efforts, or other collaborative efforts. However, the main activity that results from a bilateral exchange partnership is the reciprocal exchange of students with an option for Direct Pay enrollment. Bilateral exchange partnerships are set up on the basis of uninterrupted enrollment at the home institution. Each participant continues to pay the home institution's tuition and fees while the same fees are waived at the host institution. The student pays room, board, and transportation at the host institution. As a result, students earn academic credits at the host institution that are counted as the home institution's credits not as transfer credit.

Guidelines

- Northwest strives to identify and secure places for study abroad opportunities that will provide meaningful academic experiences in a safe environment.
- We make every effort to visit our Study Abroad partners to ensure they have the resources to provide the support and safety necessary for our students and to explore ways to make the most out of our partnership opportunities.
- The Study Abroad Office presents students with a wide array of options for international study. It is important to remember that students make the final determination of where he/she will study. This decision is often based on the country they wish to visit and the number and types of courses offered in English.

Procedure

1. The Study Abroad Office or other Northwest university official receives an inquiry from a potential partner or initiates the process to establish a bilateral exchange agreement.
2. The IIC Director communicates with the person responsible for handling exchange programs at the potential partner institution in order to obtain the following information:
 - a. Type of agreement that is being sought
 - i. Agreement between two academic departments
 - ii. Agreement between two colleges
 - iii. University wide agreement
 - b. Cooperative Activities
 - i. Undergraduate and/or graduate student exchange
 - ii. Undergraduate and/or graduate student Direct Pay enrollment (short-term study at a partner discount)
 - iii. Faculty/staff exchange to engage in teaching and/or research
 - iv. Online course communication
 - v. Custom-designed training programs
 - vi. Ability to host short-term programs
 - vii. Cooperative and exchange lectures, conferences, seminars, congresses, symposia, etc.
 - c. Academic
 - i. Curriculum – areas of study
 - ii. Language instruction (availability of courses in English)

- iii. Class size, faculty-student ratios
 - iv. Contact hours and hours for assessing student learning (exam, papers, oral presentations, etc.)
 - v. On-site academic support
 - vi. Academic calendar
- d. Services available to exchange students
 - i. Availability of an international programs office or study abroad office
 - ii. On-site orientation
 - iii. Extracurricular activities
 - iv. Opportunities for integration into host culture
 - v. Psychological/health care access and services
 - vi. Emergency plans and procedures
 - vii. Accessibility
 - viii. Diversity and support for student service needs (gender, sexuality, race, religion issues, etc.)
 - e. Type of accommodations and cost of living
 - f. Location
3. Potential partnership agreements are evaluated on:
- a. Number of courses taught in English. There needs to be a sufficient number of courses offered in English to attract students from different majors and to allow students to build a schedule that will include sufficient courses to count towards their degree.
 - b. Number of current exchange partners in the same country or city.
 - c. Student demand (examine amount of current participation with other existing partnerships in the country, including a review of current balances).
 - d. Identification of unique program offerings by the potential partner.
 - e. On-site support system.
4. Based on the program evaluation, the IIC Director an exchange agreement is drafted in collaboration with the partner institution.
5. Final agreement is submitted for official Northwest signature and to Partner university for counter-signing.