

International Programs

The University of North Carolina, in fulfilling its mission in research, teaching, and service to the people of North Carolina, recognizes the existence of common global concerns and acknowledges the interdependence of nations and peoples throughout the world. The degree to which America's destiny is now being shaped by external forces has never been greater. The University has a responsibility to provide its students with the knowledge, skills and understanding to become productive citizens of the state, the nation and the world. The universality of the educational enterprise is affirmed in the appellation "university", and the University's commitment to the free exchange of ideas must not be limited by national or regional boundaries. Moreover, the University believes that international education serves to advance understanding and peace.

The rationale for an explicit policy in regard to international programs may be expressed in terms of economic, cultural, social and political benefits and service to University and world interests.

Economic Benefits. The interdependence of the United States and the rest of the world and the impact of world events on the United States have increased dramatically in the last few decades. Within this context, North Carolina and its leaders, including the University system, have promoted international involvement. The state's economic life is increasingly dependent on the international movement of capital, goods and technology.

Cultural - Social Benefits. Historically, the University has served as a primary center for education, outreach, and public service in many communities. The exposure of North Carolina's citizenry to the traditions and thought of other races, religions, and nationalities enhances communications and understanding. When people are living and learning in close proximity, as in the University setting, the opportunity to discover commonalities, and negotiate differences is most likely to be realized.

Political Benefits. At a time of complicated global negotiations, the acceleration of change, and the unprecedented instant communications, international exchange programs are critical to the security and competence of the United States in world affairs. They establish constructive means by which people may communicate to solve political problems and demonstrate a national and statewide willingness to contribute to a peaceful future.

University and World Interests Served. The University as an educational institution realizes direct benefits from international activity. Foreign scholars coming to our campuses bring fresh viewpoints to our departments and broaden the horizons of faculty and students. Both the faculty and students who work or study abroad return to the University with greater understanding of global inter-relatedness and new perspectives of their professional fields. Such exchange of ideas is a cornerstone of the University system and represents a most significant, though not readily quantifiable, gain for the institution.

The University supports the efforts of its sixteen constituent institutions to apply capital and human resources to worthwhile programs that are international in character. Without suggesting priorities or exclusions, the University recognizes the following dimensions of international education and programs as essential to its mission:

- **Offering courses of study at all academic levels** — undergraduate, graduate and professional — to involve participants in a variety of cultures and to inform them of the contributions of their people to human development; to present forums for the discussion of world issues; and to introduce an international dimension into general education courses.
- **Maintaining vigorous foreign language programs** to train students to communicate more effectively in other cultures and to enhance their understanding of other nations' values.
- **Providing opportunities for students to have direct contact with other cultures** in overseas study and travel programs (study abroad and student exchange programs)

sponsored by the University to give these students broadened personal experience as well as special academic training.

- **Enrolling qualified students from other countries** at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels in sufficient numbers and geographic diversity to inspire in all students an appreciation for differences among cultures; providing support services to meet the special needs of international students; and integrating them into the life and academic processes of our institutions so as to gain maximum benefit from their presence on campus.
- **Presenting a broad range of intercultural programs on campus**, such as festivals, film and lecture series and performing arts events, to highlight the values and contributions of other cultures.
- **Encouraging and supporting the development of an international dimension to the teaching - research - service functions of the faculty** by incorporating the recognition of such activities in the regular reward systems of the University and through the allocation of resources whenever feasible; establishing faculty exchange and collaborative arrangements with overseas institutions.
- **Operating overseas programs** that draw upon the expertise and international experience of faculty to help other countries address critical educational needs.
- **Recognizing and reaffirming that international education, like other forms of learning, is a lifelong process** that takes place outside the University as well as within, and that the University has a special obligation to make its expertise available to state agencies, public schools and diverse segments of the North Carolina public in promoting greater understanding of global issues and events.

The University Council on International Programs (UCIP) was established to help advance the international agenda across the University system. It consists of international programs administrators from the 16 constituent UNC institutions. The mission of UCIP is to advise the President (through the Associate Vice President for Research) on international matters, and coordinate the University's diverse international efforts to meet the growing needs for international education, research, and service. Specific goals include:

- **Interinstitutional Programs**

The UCIP will promote and support collaborative efforts in international studies such as cooperative academic programming, co-curricular academic activities, study abroad and exchanges, distance learning, and joint proposals of an international nature involving the UNC institutions.

- **Policies**

The UCIP will serve as an advisory body regarding UNC and governmental policies and practices influencing the support and conduct of international programs and exchanges, and serve as a conduit for cooperative actions.

- **Outreach**

The UCIP will stimulate interactions between UNC and other international organizations and activities in North Carolina, and will promote new international linkages involving UNC institutions and state, regional, national, and international entities.

- **Communications**

The UCIP will enhance cooperative efforts between UNC institutions by means of improved electronic communications and information exchanges.

A major initiative of UCIP has been the development of University-wide cooperation in student exchange programs. In 1997, the Board of Governors established the UNC-Exchange Program (UNC-EP) under the leadership of UCIP. The policies and procedures for UNC-EP are embodied in 400.1.4 and 400.1.4.1[R]. Some 40 countries are already available to UNC students under this University program. Related UCIP activities have involved the development of system-wide cooperation to enhance health insurance coverage and to address various safety and liability issues associated with student, faculty, and staff involvement in international programs.

Another international organization at the University system level is the North Carolina Center for International Understanding (NCCIU) that reports to the Associate Vice President for Research. Established in 1979, the NCCIU helps to educate citizens, educators, and students to function more effectively in the global community through international educational exchanges, resources, and programs.

The office of the Associate Vice President for Research also works to develop cooperative research programs at the international level. For example, a joint research program between North Carolina and Israeli universities was established in 1999, funded in part by matching appropriations from the North Carolina General Assembly and the Israel Ministry of Finance. The emphasis is on the seed funding of exploratory workshops and pilot projects that will stimulate larger research programs of societal importance to both states.