

MISSION STATEMENT

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Mission

Our complex global situation requires a citizenry that understands international politics, cultures, languages and history. We promote international study through on-campus programming, support for faculty research and teaching, and operation of off-campus programs that allow students to study for a year or a semester in a culture quite different from their own.

Goals and Objectives: Integrating On-campus and Off-campus Learning

The global nature of all enterprises today - education, business, politics- mandates an international, intercultural dimension to the liberal education that is integral to the University of Notre Dame. The Office of International Studies coordinates the University's efforts in a number of ways, on-campus and off-campus. On-campus, we help promote research and teaching initiatives of faculty in the various colleges (Arts and Letters, Science, Engineering, Business, Architecture, and Law) and the University's international institutes (Keough Institute for Irish Studies, Kellogg Institute for European Studies), and the Center for Asian Studies. We co-sponsor cultural events and guest lectures on campus, and facilitate students' access to analogous programming overseas. We help coordinate some student service projects sponsored by the Center for Social Concerns. We operate study abroad programs in more than seventeen countries worldwide. Our focus is thus on international study both on-campus and off-campus.

Off-campus: Why Study Abroad?

The University of Notre Dame is committed to providing students with opportunities to enlarge their understanding and vision beyond the borders of this campus and this country. Our off-campus programs aim to offer high-quality courses in a variety of fields, including some specialized curricula in engineering, the sciences, architecture, business and law. Given the great student demand for these programs each year, they are extremely competitive. Far from the whirlwind of the home campus, study-abroad participants have the opportunity to pursue more independent intellectual endeavors.

- *Area studies curriculum*

The best study abroad experience combines a dynamic faculty with curricular strengths in "area studies." This means that students on-site have access to courses focused specifically on the country in which they are living, in myriad academic fields. So for instance, students in Puebla, Mexico have access to courses on Mexican history, politics, archeology, literature, and the arts, as well as language instruction in Spanish.

- *Foreign language competence and integration*

International study is the best way to become fluent in a foreign language. Through daily contact

with host families, roommates, teachers, and classmates, students are able to experience the challenge of immersion in a lively, foreign language and culture. Language skills are crucial not only to study, but also to the many kinds of volunteer work our students are involved in. They routinely work as volunteer teachers in local schools and provide aid to a variety of social service agencies, thus becoming an integral part of communities worldwide.

- *New ways of learning*

Pedagogical practices vary widely from country to country. Some professors teach through in-class discussion, others expect students to form their own study circles and to explore the class curricula through more independent readings. Exposure to new modes of teaching enriches the students' education and makes them develop new strategies to succeed.

- *Intellectual independence*

Study abroad is a natural launching point for projects both academic and professional. Notre Dame is uniquely suited to support students' intellectual curiosity through on-site opportunities for internships, fieldwork, and research. Grants are available to fund undergraduate research from our home campus.

Internships and Fieldwork

Some internships and fieldwork opportunities are for-credit, integrated into coursework; others are more informal arrangements that develop in an ad hoc manner through student initiative.

Recent students have held internships at sites such as the Shanghai American Chamber of Commerce, Shanghai, China; the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy in Athens, Greece; and the Office of International Relations at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers, France. In Spain, students served as interns at the Museo de Santa Cruz, the Cruz Roja, the local newspapers, radio and television stations in Toledo; and the Regional Parliament in Castilla-La Mancha. In Puebla, Mexico, students have been interns for the Museo Ampara of anthropological history, a legal aid agency, and various medical facilities—a social security hospital, a private hospital, and a rural clinic. Business students found opportunities at a computer company and a consulting firm in Puebla, as well. In Ireland, students interned at the Irish Parliament and the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin, and at an engineering firm in Cork. In London, students held internships at Warner Brothers Studios, the British House of Commons, and the Orange Tree Theatre.

Fieldwork has been done at sites such as the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece; la Clinique vétérinaire des Plantes and Le Manoir de Versillé (a veterinary clinic, and a vineyard in Angers, France); and Rectory Paddock, a school for disabled children outside of London, England. Special opportunities for engineers include fieldwork with the St. Ives Gold Mining Co. in Perth, Australia, as well as a fieldwork component of a for-credit course offered to EG students at UWA/Perth, which sends students to do fieldwork in sites such as the Kalgoorlie and Kambalda gold fields.

Undergraduate Research

With the strong support of faculty on our home campus and at our sites abroad, international study students are well placed to develop independent projects for undergraduate research. Such projects may be undertaken during the school year or in the summer. Our home campus offers numerous grants to fund research for undergraduates through the College of Arts and Letters' UROP program, the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, and the Kellogg Institute for International Studies. In recent years, students have used such funding to pursue projects in Belgium, Brazil, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Russia, and Spain. In addition, Psychology majors who study at the London program may participate in a psychology research project at the University of Cardiff, Wales.

Additional opportunities exist through faculty with research projects throughout the world. Students are routinely involved in anthropological fieldwork in the Middle East and Latin America.

Such projects are not only exciting and intellectually challenging, they may also open doors to other opportunities in the future, such as Fulbright, Marshall, Rhodes Scholarships, graduate school admission, or employment in an international firm or foreign service.

Since our programs fulfill requirements or electives for the usual number of credit hours earned at the home campus (15 credits per semester), a student progresses toward graduation on time while enlarging his/her worldview in a powerful way. Notre Dame graduates now successfully employed in international journalism, education, diplomacy, and business have found the undergraduate overseas experience to be a distinct asset in their career development.