NC State University Joins Institute of International Education Coalition to Double Number of Students Who Study Abroad by End of Decade

Raleigh, May 20, 2014—North Carolina State University has pledged to join the Institute of International Education (IIE)’s Generation Study Abroad initiative to double the number of American students who study abroad by the end of the decade. The initiative is also focusing on increasing the diversity of the students who study abroad, ensuring quality, and removing barriers to participation. NC State has committed to increasing the number of students who study abroad 50 percent by 2019.

Multiple strategies will help achieve this goal. In addition to annual fundraising efforts, NC State will seek $1 million in new endowment funds for study abroad scholarships. An expanded Curriculum Integration initiative will help growing numbers of students integrate global experiences into their degree programs and strengthen discipline-specific global competencies. The university’s transfer credit database will be expanded and enhanced, to facilitate the approval of courses taken abroad. NC State will also create new systems through its travel authorization process to better track and support graduate students engaged in credit-bearing research abroad.

To ensure that all NC State students have access to international experiences, the Office of International Affairs and the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity will build on the partnership begun through ACE’s At Home in the World initiative, and increase by 50% the number of racial/ethnic minority students studying abroad. NC State will establish a new scholarship for underrepresented students, engage scholarship recipients in extensive peer outreach, and develop additional highly structured short-term study abroad programs that will be accessible and attractive to students who have limited or no prior international experience.

Two months after the official launch of Generation Study Abroad, the Institute of International Education has announced significant progress in advancing the major goals of the initiative. IIE’s Generation Study Abroad initiative now has over 300 commitment partners -- double the number who had signed on by the March launch date. The 150 new partners who have committed to specific, actionable goals to increase the number of U.S. students studying abroad include colleges and universities of all sizes and types across the country, as well as study abroad organizations, foreign governments, and associations. Noteworthy commitments to action in this round include new scholarships and financial assistance to help students pay for study abroad, and new initiatives to reach out to underserved groups and increase the diversity of the student population that goes abroad.

A total of 308 partners have joined Generation Study Abroad to date. They include: 241 U.S. colleges and universities from 46 states; 9 non-U.S. institutions; 13 education associations; 34 study abroad organizations; 11 U.S. and foreign government entities, including the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Recognizing the importance of an internationally focused workforce, IIE is also actively seeking the participation of corporations and the business community.

“There are few experiences that are as transformative to the development of a student as study abroad. A full immersion in another culture heightens ones cultural sensitivities and opens our minds to the
complexity of the world,” says Chancellor Randy Woodson. “And, if that is not enough, study abroad increases the competitiveness of our students as they seek employment upon graduation.”

At NC State, we are committed to preparing students to meet the grand challenges of our global society. NC State pledges to increase study abroad participation by 50 percent, from a 2011-2012 baseline of 1020 to at least 1530 by 2019. Students can choose from more than 400 NC State programs in 60 countries worldwide. The Study Abroad Office, with support from other campus units and donors, provided more than $220,000 in scholarships to study abroad students in 2013-2014.

“Globalization has changed the way the world works, and employers are increasingly looking for workers who have international skills and expertise,” says Dr. Allan Goodman, President of IIE. “Studying abroad must be viewed as an essential component of a college degree and critical to preparing future leaders.”

IIE is launching Generation Study Abroad because the number and proportion of today’s students who graduate with an educational experience abroad is far too low. Currently, fewer than 10 percent of all U.S. college students study abroad at some point in their academic career. According to the Open Doors Report on International and Educational Exchange released by IIE last November with support from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, 295,000 students studied abroad in 2011/12 in credit-bearing and non-credit programs. Generation Study Abroad aims to grow participation in study abroad so that the annual total reported will reach 600,000 by the end of the decade.

With 2.6 million students graduating with associates or baccalaureate degrees each year, it is clear that major segments of America’s young people are not getting the international experience they will need to advance their careers and participate in the global economy, or to work together across borders to address global issues. Commitment partners are working to ensure that students from all backgrounds and in all fields of study have the opportunity to gain this important experience.

Generation Study Abroad will engage educators at all levels and stakeholders in the public and private sectors to drive meaningful, innovative action to increase the number of U.S. students who have the opportunity to gain international experience through academic study abroad programs, as well as internships, service learning and non-credit educational experiences. Building on its nearly 100-year commitment to study abroad, IIE has committed $2 million of its own funds to this initiative over the next 5 years.

For more information on IIE’s Generation Study Abroad initiative, and a complete list of commitment partners, go to: www.iie.org/generationstudyabroad.

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