

Comprehensive Internationalization at Middle Georgia State University

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Rationale

- Our students' education and eventual careers take place in a global context: multinational corporations, international co-workers, and daily life in a connected world.
- Internationalization is part of MGA's 2015–2018 strategic plan, which lists “Advance international educational experiences and partnerships abroad” under strategic priority #1, “Quality and distinctiveness of student success.”
- Our mission and vision demand that we transform our community through engagement and adaptability, two values that internationalization enhances by placing students and faculty in environments that encourage the development of those characteristics.
- International experiences—especially study abroad—can serve as incentives to drive retention and progression.
- The culture of a university includes internationalization in multiple forms: international student admissions, study abroad opportunities, and international research and teaching, among others.

Background

The University System of Georgia's Strategic Imperative 2 directs USG institutions to “Make a commitment to International Education: The USG is committed to increasing international education opportunities through student and faculty exchanges and to ensuring that all students in the system graduate as active and aware participants in the global economy and society.” We have an opportunity to build our internationalization efforts alongside the renewed efforts of the Board of Regents. MGA can thus take advantage of greater visibility for our programs and opportunities to shape system-wide policies by becoming “early adopters” as the system's new version of internationalization is created.

MGA Office of International Programs strategic goal

Comprehensive internationalization: making an international experience available to every student such that internationalization creates and sustains engagement and helps make MGA a destination institution. Internationalization thus becomes an integral part of the student experience, not an add-on or extracurricular activity.

Tactics to implement comprehensive internationalization

- Grow study abroad capacity
 - Develop new international partnerships
 - Pursue grants such as the Partners of the Americas grant
 - Maximize MGA Foundation support through Office of International Programs involvement in capital campaigns
 - Build community among study abroad returnees to professionalize the study abroad experience

- Offer international opportunities to faculty
 - Support teaching and research abroad such that faculty are incentivized to participate
 - Train faculty on study abroad program development and administration
 - Publicize international scholarship opportunities such as Fulbright
 - Provide faculty development to prepare for applying to Fulbright and other programs
 - Build in expectation of extension/sharing post-return
- Improve international student services
 - Provide dedicated orientation
 - Ensure appropriate record-keeping
 - Implement intrusive advising
 - Collaborate with faculty, students, and community for better integration into MGA life
 - Progress to dedicated international student recruitment
- Increase international opportunities on our campuses
 - EU Studies certificate program
 - International Studies concentration in the Interdisciplinary Studies major
 - Coordinated international-themed events for the U.S. Department of Education's International Education Week each November
 - Presentations by faculty and students about their international experiences