

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2024-2025**

**International Programs and Offerings Committee  
University of North Alabama  
Florence, Alabama**

Committee Chair: Dr. Vicki Koslin Howell

Submitted to: Dr. Rebecca Smith  
Chair, Shared Governance Executive Committee

Submitted on April 24, 2025

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

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### I. Executive Summary

Following a record number of Education Abroad participants and scholarship recipients in the 2023-2024 academic year with 157 applications, the International Programs and Offerings (IPO) committee was tasked with reviewing scholarship criteria to remain within the allotted \$200,000 annual budget, paired with the increase of anticipated applicants due to recruitment efforts and creating a Study-Aboard Fair to encourage participation. The committee accomplished its objective by implementing these changes: (1) streamlining applications with SLATE, (2) meeting additional times to vote on unusual and extenuating student circumstances, and (3) the creation of a Study Abroad Fair in November. The committee awarded a total of 187 Education Abroad scholarships, totaling \$199,500.00.

### II. The Committee's Charge

1. To serve as an advisory committee to international programs/offerings on campus;
2. To assist the Office of International Affairs with information related to international programs/offerings on campus;
3. To provide a mechanism for coordinating all programs/offerings within various colleges as well as other areas on campus;
4. To serve as a mechanism for international offerings/program development;
5. To appraise and approve the education abroad scholarship applications;
6. To handle any proposals the committee may make affecting university policy according to section C.2 "Shared Governance Procedure for Policy Change Recommendations";
7. To submit a final written report electronically by the first day of the fall semester to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs with a copy sent to the Chair of the SGEC.

### III. Meetings

The committee met on September 13, 2024, October 10, 2024, November 22, 2024, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and again on February 25, 2025. The committee conducted e-business in December and March/April.

### IV. Committee Actions and Accomplishments Relative to Each Item of its Charge

Relative to the first charge, the committee kept the following criteria:

- Competitive criteria have been established for consideration of Education Abroad scholarships. To receive an Education Abroad scholarship, students must be full-time, degree-seeking, and have a 3.0 institutional GPA.
- Preference will be given to first-time education abroad students.

- Consideration will be given to students whose education abroad program falls outside the typical application deadline. The committee will review these cases on an individual basis as they occur. No more than 10% of the scholarship budget may be allocated outside of the normal application deadline.

Relative to the second charge, the committee provided direction to the Assistant Vice Provost for International Affairs regarding the Education Abroad Scholarship process and partnered with them to create a Study Abroad Fair to disseminate information.

Relative to the third charge, the committee encouraged all colleges to submit a list of all approved Education Abroad programs by mid-October for review in order for the committee to recommend potential collaborations.

Relative to the fourth charge, the committee also approved recommendations to improve UNA's Education Abroad processes using SLATE, ensuring fiscal responsibility and fair scholarship distribution, as well as streamlining information, such as GPA.

Relative to the fifth charge, the committee kept the previous criteria and the scholarship amount for Education Abroad scholarships. The committee reviewed 205 scholarship applications and awarded a total of \$199,500.00 scholarships to 187 students. There were a few extenuating student circumstances that were evaluated by the committee, and voted upon, to further equitably consider some applications.

Relative to the sixth charge, the committee did not submit any formal proposals for Shared Governance consideration.

Relative to the seventh charge, this final report was submitted to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a copy sent to the Chair of the SGEC, on April 24, 2025.

#### V. Formal recommendations?

This committee did not make any formal recommendations to Shared Governance this year.

#### VI. Plans for the Upcoming Academic Year

Applications to the Study Abroad program have increased 30% in the last year. This year, out of 205 students, the committee found 187 eligible for scholarship. Should this number continue or increase, additional criteria may need to be considered to allow for more equitable dissemination of funds. For example, there were many repeat-abroad students who received a scholarship, but the committee may want to consider a third tier of scholarship funding options if the numbers grow. With increased focus on experiential learning with the university's Quality Enhancement Plan, demand for Education Abroad scholarships may increase. The committee will need to review and monitor the recent criteria change to continue to ensure fiscal responsibility.

In previous years, the main focus of the committee has been on the Education Abroad scholarship process and awards. However, Education Abroad is only one element of the charge of the committee. This year, the committee's additional priority was to create a Study Abroad Fair at the request of the Office of International Affairs. In the coming years, the committee will seek out additional opportunities to support and promote international offerings beyond Education Abroad.

#### VII. Committee weaknesses?

In comparison to last year's report, meeting attendance and committee make-up have greatly improved. Meetings have been attended well by almost all colleges, as well as members of the Office of International Affairs.

An additional weakness stems from an almost-exclusive focus on the Education Abroad program. This focus is unavoidable as the awarding of scholarships is a time-intensive project. However, the committee needs to allot additional time to focus on international offerings beyond Education Abroad. While accomplishing one more task this year, it needs to be expanded where possible to address more of the charge.

With the committee working closely with the Office of International Affairs, the committee benefits from stability within the leadership and roles in OIA. Position and leadership changes disrupt the continuity and effectiveness of the committee. Multiple changes in OIA over the last several years have presented challenges; however, the committee has adjusted well. The continuity of members is an asset to this committee.

The Shared Governance Committee could address the make-up of the IPO committee by continuing to ensure a balance of participation from the Colleges. Additional appointments could be made with faculty or staff with experience in International Offerings outside of Education Abroad.

#### VIII. Comments

The IPO Committee fulfilled its duties as required by UNA Shared Governance.