

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2023-2024**

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

Committee Chair: Dr. Matt Oglesby

Submitted to: Dr. Lee Renfroe  
Chair, Shared Governance Executive Committee

Submitted on August 30, 2024

# **UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

### **I. Executive Summary**

Following a record number of Education Abroad participants and scholarship recipients in the 2022-2023 academic year, the International Programs and Offerings (IPO) committee was tasked with revising scholarship criteria to remain within the allotted \$200,000 annual budget. The committee accomplished its objective by implementing two main changes: (1) a reduced individual scholarship amount to accommodate the awarding of scholarships to as many students as possible; and (2) the institution of competitive scholarship criteria including GPA, full-time status, and prior scholarship awards. The committee awarded a total of 140 Education Abroad scholarships, totaling \$194,000.

### **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 October 6, November 10, February 2, and May 3. 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 approved the following:

- 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.

Relative to the third charge, the committee encouraged all colleges to submit a list of all approved Education Abroad programs by mid-September for review in order for the committee to recommend potential collaborations. The committee also supported the development and implementation of a mandatory pre-departure workshop for all Education Abroad participants.

Relative to the fourth charge, the committee promoted and assisted with the annual Education Abroad Poster Session. The committee also approved recommendations to improve UNA's Education Abroad processes (listed above), ensuring fiscal responsibility and fair scholarship distribution.

Relative to the fifth charge, the committee revised the criteria and the scholarship amount for Education Abroad scholarships. The committee reduced the base scholarship amount to \$1000 and implemented the above criteria changes. The committee reviewed 159 scholarship applications and awarded a total of \$194,000 scholarships to 140 students. Due to a decline in scholarship applications, the committee was able to increase the amount given to many students with \$1500 awarded to first-time participants and \$1000 awarded to participants who had received an Education Abroad scholarship previously.

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 August 30, 2024.

#### V. Formal recommendations?

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

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

The major immediate concern for the committee is to review and monitor the Education Abroad criteria changes from the 2023-2024 academic year. Following the record number of scholarship applications in 2022-2023, applications waned in the 2023-2024 year. However, 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. In the coming years, the committee will seek out additional opportunities to support and promote international offerings beyond Education Abroad.

## VII. Committee weaknesses?

Similar to last year's report, meeting attendance and committee make-up are two significant weaknesses. Obviously, it is difficult to arrange monthly meetings at convenient times for representatives from university administration, faculty, staff, and students. Additionally, active committee members tend to be concentrated in one or two colleges.

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.

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 Shared Governance Committee could address the make-up of the IPO committee by ensuring 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.