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Georgia Southern University a Leader in Students Studying Abroad

NOVEMBER 18, 2008



Georgia Southern University is a leader in the record number of University System of Georgia (USG) students studying abroad, according to figures released this week.

As part of International Education Week Nov. 17-21, the USG announced it reached a milestone by sending more than 6,000 students overseas to study last year. During the 2007-08 academic year, 6,076 students from the

System's 35 colleges and universities studied outside the United States a threefold increase from the 1,850 students who studied abroad during 1997-98.

Georgia Southern played a key role in that, sending a record number of students to study abroad in 2007-08. In just five years, the University's number of study-abroad students has surged 191 percent, from 124 in 2003-04 to 361 last year.

'We are seeing increased interest among students in studying abroad and in making that experience an integral part of their degree program,' said Dr. Nancy Shumaker, assistant vice president for International Studies.

According to Georgia Southern's Center for International Studies, the University's most popular summer programs last year took students to Costa Rica, Italy, and Spain and its most popular semester exchange programs sent Georgia Southern students to China, Japan, and Mexico.

'We're certainly happy with the quantity of students we're sending abroad but we're also very proud of the quality of the experiences these students have,' said Jeffrey Palis, coordinator of Georgia Southern's Study Abroad and Exchange Programs. 'Students go abroad not just to earn course credit but also to learn intimately about the people and places they encounter. Our programs offer opportunities for service learning, intensive language study, and extensive field work and excursions that bring the world into the classroom.'

Many students begin early on to explore options for studying overseas, as evidenced by the attendance for study-abroad presentations at SOAR (Southern's Orientation, Advisement, and

Registration). Because of high demand, the Office of Admissions asked the Center for International Studies last year to offer two presentations per SOAR session.

“Prospective students tell us at our recruitment fairs and open houses that they want to come to Georgia Southern because we offer not only many different study abroad opportunities but also because we offer semester and year-long programs in countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea,” Dr. Shumaker said. “These students are very aware of the fact that they need to graduate from the university with first-hand knowledge about the world outside the United States if they are to succeed in their professions and careers.”

For more information on Georgia Southern University’s Center for International Studies, visit <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/international>.

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University, offers more than 110 degree programs serving nearly 18,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. The University, one of Georgia’s largest, is a top choice of Georgia’s HOPE scholars and is recognized for its student-centered approach to education. Visit: www.georgiasouthern.edu.