



Supporting Students to be Competitive for International Opportunities

HACU Annual Conference | October 29, 2017



Session Goals and Objectives

To provide participants with a clearer understanding of how to make the case for international opportunities to their students (e.g., on-time graduation, post-graduation opportunities); and

To offer a practical strategies and resources that help prepare students to be competitive for such programs (e.g., translating skills, crafting strong applications).



Making the Case / Why International Experiences?

Student Benefits

- Set themselves apart
- Personal & professional growth
- This is the time
- Explore international aspects of their major
- Launch their career
- Become a global citizen
- Embrace unique skillset they already possess

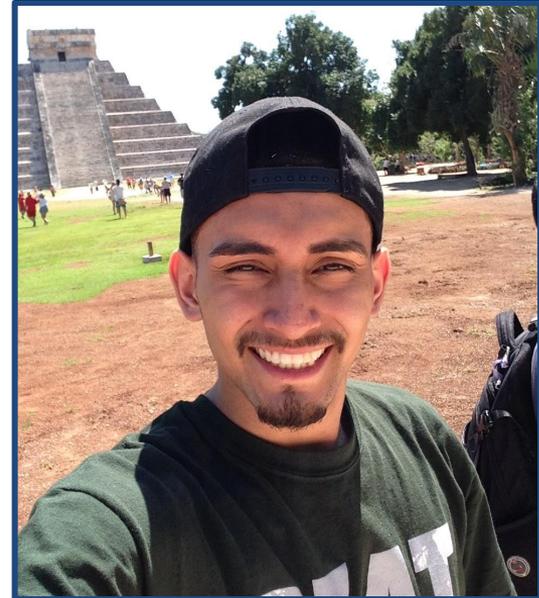
Institutional Benefits

- Retention
- Reputation/Institutional Profile
- Globalized Curriculum
- Students graduate on time

Making the Case / Why International Experiences?

Skills Developed/Enhanced Abroad:

- Communication Skills
 - Language fluency
 - Cross-cultural understanding
 - More open-minded
- Personal Growth
 - Independence
 - Adaptability
 - Taking initiative and risks
- Problem Solving Skills
 - Strategic thinking
 - Creativity



What percentage of U.S. college students go abroad before graduating?

UNDERGRADUATE PARTICIPATION IN U.S. STUDY ABROAD



1 in 10 U.S. undergraduates studies abroad before graduating.



Of the 10% of students that go abroad, what percentage do you think are students of color? What percentage are Hispanic/Latino students?

RACE/ETHNICITY OF U.S. STUDENTS ABROAD	2004/05	2009/10	2014/15
White	83.0	78.7	72.9
Hispanic or Latino(a)	5.6	6.4	8.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	6.3	7.9	8.1
Black or African-American	3.5	4.7	5.6
Multiracial	1.2	1.9	4.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.4	0.5	0.5
TOTAL U.S. STUDENTS ABROAD	205,983	270,604	313,415

"The fact is, with every friendship you make, and every bond of trust you establish, **you are shaping the image of America projected to the rest of the world.** That is so important. So when you study abroad, you're actually helping to make America stronger."

First Lady Michelle Obama



International experiences are for **EVERYONE**



- Academic major
- Race/ethnicity
- Class/Financial status
- Gender/Sexual Orientation
- Campus involvement
- Physical/Mental/Learning Disability
- Citizenship status

Challenge stereotypes and expectations of who International Opportunities are for

Meet Austin!

Fall 2016 Diversity Abroad
Overseas Ambassador

- African American male
- Studied at an HBCU
- Engineering major
- Class president
- Studied abroad in Thailand
- Studied abroad in his senior year





Nationally Competitive Awards

- National awards vary in their focus, requirements for application, but often have similarities like:
 - Specific target population
 - GPA requirements
 - Multiple rounds of selections (e.g., application, phone/video interview, in-person interview)
 - Letters of recommendation
- Well known awards include: Goldwater, Marshall, Truman, Gates Cambridge, Udall, NSF, Rhodes Scholarships, and Fulbright
 - Awards such as these often require applicants to submit institutional nominations
- Fellowships and scholarships differ primarily in their service requirements
- Selection processes are competitive with acceptance rates that are often lower than 10%.
- Institutions of higher education have increased their efforts to have students and alumni apply to such programs with many identifying points of contact or developing offices centered on providing students and alumni support in applying to such programs

Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program

Prepares individuals for careers in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Department of State.

Program elements include:

- Award of up to \$95,000 over two years, for tuition, fees, living expenses, summer internships.
- An orientation to the Program and the Foreign Service.
- An 10-week internship on Capitol Hill the first summer.
- A 10-week overseas internship in a U.S. Embassy or Consulate the second summer.
- Mentoring from a Foreign Service Officer.
- Employment in the State Department Foreign Service for those who successfully complete the program and meet Foreign Service entry requirements, in accordance with applicable law and State Department policy.





Selection Process for Rangel Fellowship

Application Materials

A panel of three reviewers reads and scores applicant materials (e.g., personal statement, letters of recommendation)



In-Person Interview

60 finalists are invited to interview in Washington, DC in mid-November



Writing Exercise

Finalists participate in a timed writing exercise during their interview date

Rangel Fellowship Review Process

The review process considers multiple factors when reviewing and ultimately selecting Rangel Fellows. The process is divided into two phases considers the applicant's initial application, performance during the panel interview, and performance on a timed writing exercise. Panelists are retired Foreign Services Officers, graduate school admissions directors, and international affairs career advisors.



Developing Competitive Applications

- Ensuring a “match” with the student/young person and the program
 - Does the program fit with the student’s career, academic, and personal aspirations? Does the student meet the basic eligibility requirements? What strengths does the applicant bring with her/him to the program?
- Crafting a compelling narrative
 - Does the applicant tie their career, academic, and personal aspirations to the goals of the program? Do the letters of recommendation support the student’s narrative? Does the applicant’s academic record support their potential to succeed in the program (especially the programs with an academic component)? Do the applicant’s experiences demonstrate their interest in the goals of the program?
- Enlisting the support of their “village”
 - Successful applicants generally have multiple advocates helping them during the process including multiple reviews of their application material and mock interviews. They have also found ways to get buy-in from their family.



Supporting Students on Campus

- Provide support to students in translating their experiences and including hands on help with writing and the application process.
- Making it clear that students are capable and able to apply and be competitive for national awards.
- Coaching students to envision themselves receiving the fellowship and succeeding as a fellow
- What happens in the advising seat especially with limited time with the students?



Supporting Students on Campus

How does your institutions provide support and guidance regarding fellowships?

- UC San Diego: <https://grad.ucsd.edu/financial/fellowships/index.html>
- UC San Diego National Competitive Scholarship: <https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-aid/types/scholarships/natl-competitive/index.html>
- UC: <http://graduate.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/paying-for-uc/fellowships/index.html>
- UCLA GRAPES: <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/>

How does your institution provide support for writing?

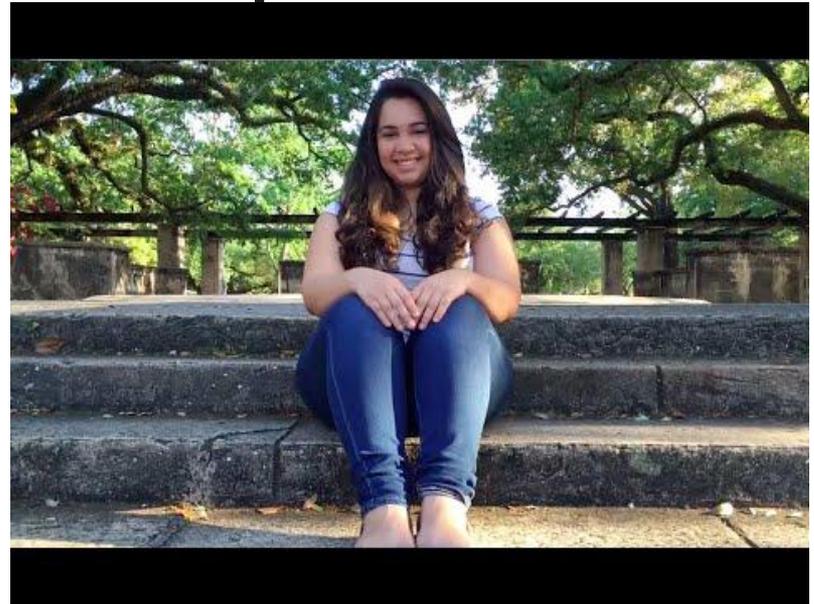
- UC San Diego Writing Hub: <http://commons.ucsd.edu/students/writing/index.html>

Where do interested students seek support and guidance in applying for a fellowship? Is it centralized or across many offices and with different staff and faculty advisors?

Small Group Exercise



Student Video Application Examples





Why do these student applications stand out?

- Applicants answer the question prompt clearly
 - References program destination and area of study back to personal and academic goals. Why this country? Why this program?
 - Responses also tie in mission and work of Diversity Abroad
 - Why should you be awarded *this* scholarship?
- Follows instructions (submitted on time, video time limit, etc.)
- Get a sense of each applicant's personalities and interests
- Took their time to answer the question thoughtfully (prepared script, edited content)

Student Video Application Examples



- Only 30 seconds long
- Doesn't answer the application question at all
- We don't learn anything about her
 - Why does she want to go abroad? Why is she choosing to go on this program specifically? Why she should be selected for this scholarship?



Tips for Creating Strong Application Materials

- Utilize on campus or online resources to support you in the application process
- Identify trusted mentors or advisors to give honest critiques (and be open to constructive criticism)
- Try contacting previous scholarship recipients and applicants - can you view their video or essay as a reference?
- Start early, and give yourself time to make multiple drafts
- Understand the goal of the scholarship, and how it fits you personally, academically, professionally
- Don't be afraid to tell your (a) story
- Know your audience



Benefits of Creating Video Applications

- Accessible to different learning types and levels
- Tap into student creativity and personality
 - ideal for scholarship programs like the Diversity Abroad Overseas Ambassador Scholarship, which challenges stereotypes of who has access to global programs
- Shorter review process for scholarship review committee
- Disrupt existing perceptions of who competitive scholarships are for, and create space for different learners to be successful

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