

**FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY  
LUTGERT COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FGCU STUDENTS**

Florida Gulf Coast University students have the opportunity to participate in an international student exchange program as a way to enrich their educational experience, broaden their outlook on life, and better understand people from other parts of the world. FGCU students wishing to participate in the student exchange program can currently select from various universities in several countries in a variety of academic programs. For a current list of schools, countries and programs visit <http://www.fgcu.edu/cob/exchange.html>

**WHAT YOU NEED TO DO AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**ONE: Find out what opportunities are open to you in international exchange programs.**

Ideally you will start your inquiry during your freshman or sophomore year. Start by discussing with your academic advisor how participating in a “study abroad” program can enhance your academic experience.

**TWO: Select the school and program you want to attend.**

Meet with the Program Coordinator in the Lutgert College of Business to discuss current international student exchange opportunities available to you. Keep in mind many international schools have different systems of education, grading, attendance, and class participation that may be very different than what you are used to. Their academic calendars are also different. You need to be aware of this when selecting where you want to study in order to minimize its possible impact on your academic schedule at FGCU.

**THREE: Apply to FGCU to participate in an exchange program.**

Prepare and submit a letter that states your name, your college level, what countries and programs you are interested in attending, why you want to go there, what you hope to accomplish, when you plan to go and how long you want to stay. Also include how you hope to finance your trip, if you plan to travel alone or go with other students, and if you have family or friends in the country to plan to attend.

**FOUR: Determine if you meet the entry requirements for the school and program you want to attend.**

Meet with Carol Burnette to determine if you are: academically qualified, meet the language (if courses not taught in English), meet pre-requisites for courses you wish to take, and other requirements specific to the university you wish to attend. Also, determine what courses you will take and get credit for from FGCU. Be sure that you meet both FGCU and the international school's deadline for applying and registering for classes.

- 1. Teaching Methods/Assessment/Attendance:** Often the education systems are different than the U.S. system, students are expected to be more self-motivated and disciplined. Attendance may not be as strictly enforced as it is in the U.S. However, by the time the student takes the final exam he/she is expected to know the material. It is often up to the student to seek help along the way if he/she needs it. Grading is also different so FGCU articulates with the international partner university to determine the best way to transfer credits and grades into the FGCU system.
- 2. Student Support (Tutoring/“Buddy” System/Clubs and Organizations):** Often international partner universities offer tutoring and support to international students to help them succeed in their studies. They might have a “Buddy” System that partners a local student with the international student to assist him/her in integrating into the university and local community. We encourage FGCU students to participate in student clubs and organizations geared to international students offered by the partner university.

**FIVE: Determine if you meet the financial & immigration requirements for the school and country you are going to.**

Prepare a financial statement outlining all the expenses you will incur for travel and during your stay. Check with the FGCU Office of Financial Aid to see if you qualify for a scholarship. Most international schools provide a Cost of Living chart that will help you calculate how much you will need for the period of time you will spend at the school.

1. **TUITION-** As part of the student exchange agreement you will pay your regular FGCU tuition and fees to FGCU prior to departure. Check with the Financial Aid Office at FGCU to see if you qualify for a scholarship.
2. **COST OF LIVING-** When determining the cost of living, be sure to calculate the exchange rate for the currency you will need in the country and city you will be living in. Be sure to cover the following costs in preparing your budget:
  - Housing
  - Meals
  - Public Transportation/Car
  - Electricity
  - Telephone
  - Personal Expenses
  - Textbooks and Supplies
  - Fees
  - Healthcare & Insurance
  - Travel to & from school
  - In-country or international travel
3. **VISAS, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS NEEDED**

Each partner university will provide you with a list of the documents needed for admission. Then check with the FGCU International Office for assistance in determining what documents you will need for the country or countries you will be going to. You might also want to check with the embassy of the country you will be going to, to make sure you have all the necessary documents. Make sure you have a passport that will be good for the entire time you will be out of the country. If you don't already have a passport, make sure you apply early enough so that you receive it in time to apply to the school of your choice. Most international schools require you to submit a copy of your passport along with the application.

**SIX: Complete the application form and any other required documents.**

Complete all sections. PRINT CLEARLY (if your paperwork is illegible it will delay the process or make it possible for errors to be made during your application process). Remember to sign the form- unsigned applications can not be processed. Often international universities require a personal vita, a headshot photograph, and a letter stating why you wish to study at their university and how long you plan to stay (the letter and the vita -each are normally no more than one-page). You can use the information you submitted to FGCU in preparing this document.

**1. DEADLINES**

Make sure you know the deadlines applications for admission (both at FGCU and at the partner university). Some universities have limited housing options for international students so it is wise to know the deadline for housing applications and to submit your paperwork and deposits on time.

**2. HEALTHCARE & HEALTH INSURANCE**

Healthcare and health insurance are treated differently in other countries. Our partner universities are the best contacts for finding and securing medical assistance while in their country. Make sure you have the appropriate insurance for the country you are going to.

**3. ORIENTATION**

All of our partner universities have an orientation program prior to the start of classes. Make sure to take into consideration your mandatory participation in an orientation period when booking your flights.

**SEVEN: Submit your application and wait for your acceptance letter.**

Complete the checklist on the application form and include authorized copies of all supporting documents.

**EIGHT: Processing of applications.**

Each school has a slightly different process for handling applications which may take different amounts of time. It is recommended that you allow approximately one month for this process.

**NINE: Conditions of acceptance.**

Even though you are part of an exchange, each international university reserves the right to decline applications where entry requirements are not met, or courses chosen are not available.

**TEN: Accepting admission.**

Full details on how to accept (or decline) admission from the international university is included in a letter from the university. Information regarding the payment of tuition, fees, and arrangements for accommodation are also normally included with your letter of acceptance.

**ELEVEN: Travel to the university.**

Some universities require that you take a language course before the start of your academic program so plan your arrival dates to include time to find and settle in your accommodations, take the language course, and also to attend orientation (if mandatory).