

International Programs

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Office of International Programs

The Office of International Programs (<http://neiu.edu/academics/international-programs/>) (OIP) was established in 1996 as a reflection of Northeastern Illinois University's (NEIU) commitment to the comprehensive internationalization of its campus and curriculum. OIP initiates and maintains NEIU's partnerships with universities around the world and serves various groups: (1) international students coming to NEIU to earn a degree and/or study English; (2) exchange students from NEIU's international partner universities (IPUs) who come to NEIU for one or two semesters; (3) NEIU students who wish to study abroad, thereby preparing themselves to function effectively in the interconnected 21st Century world; (4) NEIU faculty seeking to internationalize their teaching and/or research; and (5) visiting scholars. OIP has received numerous grants and other recognition. In 2004, it was awarded the prestigious Institute of International Education (IIE) Andrew Heiskell Award for Internationalizing the campus. In 2018 OIP was awarded a 100,000 Strong in the Americas grant by the Partners of the Americas Foundation, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State (DOS) and the Association of International Educators, NAFSA to expand two-way international student mobility with Colombia. In 2019 OIP was awarded both an IDEAS Capacity Building Program Grant by the U.S. DOS's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and World Learning, and a Harnessing Innovation through Virtual Exchange (HIVE) grant from the Stevens Initiative of the Aspen Institute and IIE, to expand collaborative online learning (COIL) initiatives. Since 2021 IIE and Fulbright have selected NEIU to run their annual pre-departure orientation for all Fulbright scholars going to Sub Saharan Africa. In 2023 IIE awarded OIP an American Passport Project grant to assist NEIU students to obtain their first passport. OIP is a member of the American International Recruitment Council (AIRC), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), International Educators of Illinois (IEI), IIE, NAFSA, and Study Illinois. For more information view the OIP website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/#:~:text=General%20questions%20should%20be%20directed,%2Dprograms%40neiu.edu>), and/or contact OIP by email at International-Programs@neiu.edu, or by phone at +1-773-442-4796.

International & Exchange Students

Northeastern welcomes students from other countries as degree-seeking bachelor's and master's students; as exchange students who come for a semester or year-long experience; and those who come to study English as a second Language. All International students are eligible to live on campus in NEIU's residence hall, The Nest.

All students coming from outside the U.S. may arrive up to thirty (30) days before the start of their academic program. They are encouraged to do so, to secure housing and get properly settled. OIP will issue all international students either a Form I-20 or DS-2019 to enable them to apply for an F1 or J1 visa. Upon arriving in the US all students must report to OIP before classes start to submit copies of their passport, visa, I-94 form, local address, and course registration, as well as their original Financial Form(s) and bank statement(s), etc.

All new students coming from outside the U.S. are required to attend the new international student orientation day conducted by OIP staff. The orientation occurs a few days before classes begin. Participation in orientation helps to ensure new international students understand both the university and the laws that could have an impact on their international student status. To maintain international student status, all international students must meet USCIS enrollment requirements and may not work off campus without authorization. The orientation dates and times are provided in a letter included in the admission packet.

Degree-Seeking International Students with a F-1 Visa

NEIU welcomes international students from around the world who wish to earn a degree from NEIU. To be admitted to a degree program, international students apply online (<https://admissions.neiu.edu/international-applicants/>).

Degree-Seeking International Transfer Students with a F-1 Visa

International students transferring to Northeastern from another U.S. school must report to OIP before classes start to submit copies of their passport, visa, I-94, local address and phone number, and course registration, as well as their original Financial Form(s) and bank statement(s), etc. They may choose to attend either NEIU's general orientation session, or OIP's orientation for new international students. The latter occurs during the week before the first day of classes in any academic semester. Students changing their visa status to an F-1 are required to attend the new international student orientation prior to their term of admission, even if their change of status has not yet been granted.

Students Coming to Learn English

NEIU welcomes non-native English speakers who wish to just improve their English language proficiency or to do so before entering a degree program. Students wishing to do intensive English language study should apply to NEIU's School for the Advancement of English Language and Learning (SAELL) (<http://neiu.edu/academics/international-programs/intensive-english-program/saell-program/>). Students interested in SAELL can direct their questions to the Director of SAELL by emailing esl@neiu.edu.

International students attending SAELL must follow the rules that apply to all students coming from outside the U.S., or transferring from another U.S. school, or changing their visa status. The new international student orientation dates and times will be included in a letter from the SAELL director. OIP will advise students about whether to get an F1 or J1 visa.

Exchange Students Coming from Partner Universities

Each year NEIU welcomes dozens of exchange students from our international partner universities (IPUs) (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/exchange-j-1-students/international-partner-universities-ipus/>). Exchange students come on a J-1 visa and enroll in NEIU classes for one or two semesters. All international exchange students must meet program requirements based on the agreement between Northeastern and their home university. Students interested in coming on an exchange program should begin by contacting the international office at their home university. They can also contact NEIU's Coordinator of International Partnerships in the Office of International Programs (OIP), to learn about how to get nominated and apply, about visas and other questions. For more information view the OIP website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/exchange-j-1-students/>), and/or contact OIP by email at International-Programs@neiu.edu, or by phone at +1-773-442-4796.

NEIU Students Wanting to Study Abroad

Semester- and Year-Long Exchange Opportunities

Northeastern has established formal partnerships with over forty universities in twenty countries around the world. Through these partnerships, both undergraduate and graduate students have opportunities to study for one or two semesters at an international partner university (IPU) (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/exchange-j-1-students/international-partner-universities-ipus/>) to enhance their understanding of other cultures and ecosystems, to deepen their grasp of global and international affairs, and to engage in intensive language study, etc. International students enrolled at NEIU on a F-1 visa can also participate in these exchange opportunities. During their time abroad at an IPU as exchange students, NEIU students remain registered, and pay their tuition and fees to NEIU. For this reason, federal financial aid may still be used to cover these costs. In addition, NEIU students regularly qualify for special study abroad scholarships: e.g., HACU Scholarship; IIE Midwest, Gilman, Borman, Freeman Asia, Organization of American States, etc. For more information about studying abroad and about NEIU's IPUs, visit the OIP website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/#:~:text=General%20questions%20should%20be%20directed,%2Dprograms%40neiu.edu>), or contact OIP at International-Programs@neiu.edu, or by phone at +1-773-442-4796.

Summer and Winter Session Programs

Domestic NEIU students and F1 degree-seeking students can also participate in the shorter programs offered during summer and winter terms by our IPUs. These programs, which last from one to six weeks, offer 3-6 credit hours and typically include an intensive language component plus historical and cultural activities. Some Programs are tailored to specific majors (i.e., in business and STEM fields). For more information visit the OIP website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/#:~:text=General%20questions%20should%20be%20directed,%2Dprograms%40neiu.edu>), or contact OIP directly at International-Programs@neiu.edu, by phone at +1-773-442-4796.

Short, NEIU Faculty-Led Study Tours

Northeastern faculty offer another type of study abroad experience through short study tours that they lead each year. On these trips, which last 5-21 days, students are able to enhance their understanding of other cultures and habitats, deepen their cultural sensitivity, learn history on location, and increase their intercultural competencies while earning credit. Recent tours have taken students to Belize, Burundi, China, Colombia, France, Ghana, India, Italy, Japan and Switzerland. For more information consult OIP's website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/study-abroad/faculty-led-tours/>), or contact OIP at International-Programs@neiu.edu, or +1-773-442-4796.

NEIU Faculty

The Office of International Programs (OIP) assists NEIU faculty to internationalize their teaching and research in a variety of ways. In addition to working with faculty to design and implement short-term study tours (see above), OIP helps faculty get engaged in Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) by offering COIL training workshops, helping faculty find international teaching partners with whom to collaborate, and by writing grants to help support COIL collaborations as well as other internationalization efforts. OIP seeks out opportunities for faculty to travel and teach abroad (e.g., Erasmus+ opportunities), and works closely with NEIU's Fulbright program coordinator, Dr. Richard Hallett (r-hallett@neiu.edu). OIP also helps faculty to invite visiting scholars. To learn more about such opportunities, or to find out how to become an OIP Faculty Ambassador, visit the OIP website (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/faculty-resources/>), or contact OIP's director, Dr. Cris Toffolo at c-toffolo@neiu.edu or +1-773-442-5493.

Visiting Scholars

NEIU welcomes visiting scholars who wish to be in residence at Northeastern to do research, attend seminars, provide guest lectures and audit classes (but they may not teach full courses). Interested scholars should send, to the chair of the department they wish to work with, a copy of their curriculum vitae and an official letter outlining both what they want to do while in residence at NEIU, and how they will engage cross-culturally. The Office of International Programs (OIP) will work with the relevant academic department and other offices to review the request. Illinois state law requires visiting

scholars, like all university staff and faculty, to submit to a background check. Learn more here (<https://www.neiu.edu/academics/our-centers-and-programs/international-programs/visiting-scholars/>) or contact OIP's director, Dr. Cris Toffolo at c-toffolo@neiu.edu or by phone at +1-773-442-5493.