

Student Exchange Policy

Approved by the University Council on March 18, 2016

Approved by the Board of Trustees on May 9, 2016

Preamble

Notre Dame University–Louaize (NDU) is mindful of the trend toward ‘internationalization’ of education. Only through building bridges for our students will they further develop their professional and cultural potential, and be able to take advantage of the many opportunities that the world of higher education has to offer. Through this rich exposure, they will be able to become more competitive candidates for career opportunities in the Middle East and the world at large. This *Policy* serves as an attractive option for enhancing student exchange (mobility) between NDU and other universities around the world.

Definition

An exchange program is a unique feature of international universities wherein a student may apply for a site transfer in any of the universities with which NDU shares an academic collaboration or exchange agreement. The student exchange program is a program coordinated by the Office of International Relations (OIR), a unit that reports to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).

Objective

The objective of the student exchange program is to promote international attentiveness and construct effective partnerships with established universities and educational institutions. A student exchange program will provide academic and intellectual benefit through the exchange of students between NDU and respective institutions that are party to a formal Exchange Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation.

General Considerations

1. The OIR, in consultation with NDU academic and administrative units, will establish and maintain a register of all Exchange Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding/Cooperation. This Office will be the central resource for information on agreements, memoranda, and the files of participating students.
2. Institution to Institution Exchange Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding/Cooperation are normally authorized and approved by the President of the University, and such exchanges are available to all eligible NDU students who wish to participate in a student exchange program.
3. Special Exchange Agreements (Presidential Scholarship or the like) are nonetheless authorized and approved by the President of NDU, and are normally available to students selected, as per high achievement and merit.
4. A formal Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation or an Exchange Agreement must be in place before a student may apply to participate in a student exchange program at a Host Institution.
5. Approval for a student to undertake a student exchange program will be granted subject to the selection criteria detailed in the procedures below, and the availability of places.
6. The OIR will work in the direction of making the number of exchanged students equal between NDU and the partner institution.

7. In addition to securing the consent of the Dean of Faculty, the Admissions Office, and the Registrar's Office, the proposed field of study to be undertaken by any student during a student exchange program has to be approved by the Director of International Relations.
8. NDU policies and procedures include grievance procedures if students have objections to the decisions arising from this policy.

Outgoing Exchange Students

NDU exchange students will be considered as 'outgoing students.' This does not mean, however, that they are no longer NDU students. No matter how long the exchange program may be, Outgoing Students will not receive a degree from the Host Institution; they have to come back to NDU to receive their degree. That being said, Outgoing Students must fulfill a set of requirements and complete an application to make their participation in the student exchange program a reality.

Eligibility Requirements

In order for the applicant to be eligible for the student exchange program, the following criteria have to be met:

- a) The applicant has to have:
 - A current enrolment at NDU;
 - Successfully completed at least 15 credits of study;
 - No record of failing a course in the program in which the applicant is enrolled;
 - A minimum GPA of 2.5/4.00 (undergraduate) and 3.00/4.00 (graduate);
 - Provided an academic recommendation from an appropriate faculty member, and a statement of purpose;
 - A proven record that he/she is socially, psychologically, and intellectually fit for an exchange program;
 - A proper conduct; and
 - No outstanding financial record.
- b) The student is expected to be in good health.
- c) The applicant has to agree to:
 - Be responsible for meeting all costs of the student exchange program such as travel, accommodation and insurance, and pay all administration fees to NDU by the due dates;
 - Enroll at the Host Institution for no more than two semesters and one summer, unless specific circumstances require other arrangements to be made; and
 - Abide by the rules and regulations of the Host Institution.
- d) Where there are more applicants than places available for a given institution, eligible students will be ranked according to academic merit and may be offered a student exchange program at their second or third preferred institution.

Application Process

Students who wish to participate in a student exchange program are required to:

- a) Complete and lodge an application form with the OIR by the date specified on the application form.
- b) Agree in writing to the terms and conditions set out in the student exchange program.
- c) Be aware that the attainment of the transcript of grades from the Host Institution is the student's responsibility.

Registration Requirements

- a) The NDU Registrar will register a student for courses if the student presents a properly signed form listing the course(s) to be taken at the Host Institution (*see the attached form*).
- b) The student must have completed all course prerequisites.
- c) All credits earned will be considered as resident credits at NDU for degree purposes.
- d) At the end of the period of study at Host Institution, no official diploma or certificate whatsoever will be delivered to the student, but an official transcript of records will be issued for the exclusive purpose of transfer to the Home Institution.
- e) An exchange student is entitled to an enrolment statement from NDU.

Incoming Exchange Students

Eligibility Requirements

Student exchange programs at NDU are short-term programs that enable international students to study for up to two academic semesters and a summer session (one academic year, not renewable) in any of the NDU campuses.

Who can be an Incoming Exchange Student?

- Someone who wishes to study part of his/her degree at NDU and take all credits achieved to his/her Home Institution; and
- Any student registered in a university that has a formal agreement with NDU in such respect.

Prospective Study Program

The student will have many opportunities to explore his/her interests and talents, and he/she will be able to negotiate a study program, which may include:

- a) Courses that accommodate international perspectives.
- b) Opportunities to learn about the Lebanese culture and traditions.

Admission Requirements

- a) Exchange Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding/Cooperation will assume that students coming to NDU from an approved international exchange partner, and taking courses at NDU will complete no more than one academic year (two semesters + one summer) at NDU.
- b) At the conclusion of the initial year, the students should either return to the Home Institution to complete their degree, or formally enroll at NDU provided they:
 - (1) Secure an approval from their Home Institution.
 - (2) Fulfill NDU admission requirements.
- c) Students applying for exchange programs will complete a special exchange program form approved by the OIR, which will include a letter of approved participation by the Home Institution detailing the dates of participation.
- d) No exchange applicant will be accepted without proof of qualified English proficiency. All applicants to the Exchange Program must meet the English language requirement for their program of study. Typically this will be a minimum score on the TOEFL or on the writing

section in SAT I (*please refer to NDU Admissions Guide*). The OIR must approve special exceptions to this rule.

Credit Transfer

The OIR at NDU will work with the student to negotiate a suitable program, with credit transferable to his/her Home Institution. The student will need to work hard on this part of the process at his/her Home Institution, but should not expect to have it completely finished until he/she is here at NDU.

When the student finishes his/her study in the student exchange program at NDU, he/she will be issued an official transcript of the courses he/she has completed and the grades achieved. It is, however, the student's responsibility to obtain his/her transcript. Therefore, follow-up on the attainment of the transcript of grades is the student's responsibility.

Registration Requirements

The NDU Registrar will register a student for courses if the student:

- a) Presents a properly signed form listing the course(s) to be taken.
- b) Has completed all prerequisites of the courses to be taken.

All credits earned shall be considered as resident credits at NDU for degree purposes. The registration of exchange students is valid for one academic year and is not renewable. At the end of the period of study, no official diploma or certificate whatsoever will be delivered to the student; only an official transcript of records will be issued for the exclusive purpose of transfer to the Home Institution.

An exchange student is entitled to an enrollment certificate from the Home Institution.

Registration Procedures

For registration, an incoming exchange student will observe the following steps:

- a) Secure an official exchange form from the Home Institution.
- b) Hand in all the required documents to the Director of OIR.
- c) Obtain an acceptance letter as an exchange student from the Admissions Office.
- d) Proceed to the Registrar's Office in order to finalize registration.
- e) The NDU Registrar will sign the student exchange program form. The following copies should be distributed:
 - Copy to the Host Institution;
 - Copy to the Business Office;
 - Copy to the Registrar's Office;
 - Copy to the OIR; and
 - Copy to the student.

NB: Attached are:

- Exchange Student Registration Form;
- Glossary; and

- Appendices 1 and 2¹.

¹ The *Appendices* are not part of the *Student Exchange Policy*.

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Exchange Student Registration Form

To: The Registrar _____ Date ____/____/____

From: The Registrar's Office (NDU)

Subject: Exchange Student – Registration for _____ Semester 20____

Upon the approval of the units concerned at NDU,

Ms./Mr. _____

Family Name

First Name

Father's Name

ID No. _____

Has permission to take the following ____ course(s) at your institution and be given credit at Notre Dame University – Louaize

<u>Course No.</u>	<u>Course Title (see attached form)</u>	<u>Credit</u>
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

Approved By:

Advisor _____

Date _____

Department Chairperson _____

Date _____

Faculty Dean _____

Date _____

Registrar's Office _____

Date _____

Business Office _____

Date _____

Exchange Student – Registration for the above mentioned course or courses is allowed.

Date

Authorized Signature

Copy to: Host University – Registrar's Office – Business Office – Student

Glossary

Exchange Student

An exchange student is a student who participates in a student exchange program that has been formally agreed between Notre Dame University-Louaize and another higher educational institution.

Home Institution

The home institution is the institution at which a student has been formally admitted to, that is, the institution at which the student is normally enrolled.

Host Institution

The host institution is the institution at which a student participates in a student exchange program that is, the institution which the student visits for the exchange program.

Exchange Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation

The Exchange Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation is a mutual bilateral agreement that has been formalized between Notre Dame University-Louaize and another university. The agreement/memorandum is normally based on principles of equity and reciprocal benefit.

The Exchange Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation by and large articulates the specific details of the student exchange program.

Partner Institution

A university that has a formal exchange agreement/memorandum of cooperation with NDU.

Appendix 1

Services Provided by the Office of International Relations (OIR)

The OIR will:

- a) Inform the student of funding which may be available for the student exchange program.
- b) Provide advice on the financial commitment required by the student on student exchange programs to cover accommodation arrangements, travel, insurance, etc.
- c) Provide the student with general advice about travel and health insurance, as well as visa requirements.
- d) Provide the student with the required student exchange program documentation, and a copy of the *Student Exchange Policy*.
- e) Confirm with all parties whether the Host Institution has approved the application.
- f) Submit the approved student exchange program documentation to the respected Host Institution.

Appendix 2

Services Provided by the Student Affairs Office (SAO)

NDU, through its SAO, provides the incoming exchange students with an introduction and an orientation to its campuses, counseling services, allocation of course offerings and registration procedures.

Exchange students will also be provided with student ID cards, access to e-mail and other online facilities, and briefed on the many international student support services available, including language and study advisors.

Students are invited to participate in all orientation sessions in the initial study period on campus. The care and well-being of students on exchange programs will be monitored by the SAO in consultation with the academic units and divisions concerned, and the relevant Program Director, as appropriate.

The SAO will provide incoming exchange students with special assistance regarding visas, residency permits, lodging and food facilities.

Among the different services offered to Exchange Students:

- a) **Health Care:** NDU provides all students with a variety of health services at the NDU Infirmary located in the SAO. A University physician is available every day from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Infirmary and is on call for any emergency and for consultations 24/7 (free-of-charge). A counselor is also available upon request and by appointment.
NDU does not provide health insurance for exchange students. It is the responsibility of the exchange students to ensure that they are covered by health insurance and any other insurance for the period and place of their exchange, including travel between their Home and Host Institutions, and the repatriation of remains. Exchange students are expected to submit a photocopy of this health insurance while submitting their file to the NDU Infirmary. Exchange students who have a special medical condition (physical condition or mobility issue), which requires immediate medical attention during the exchange period, have to inform the NDU Infirmary about this prior to their arrival.
- b) **Student Housing:** Arrangements for on-campus housing are made through the SAO. Exchange students are asked to reserve a room through the SAO while they are submitting their file to NDU. Housing is not free-of-charge, and this cost must be covered by the exchange student.
- c) **Athletic Services:** Exchange students can join any of the sport activities that are offered by the Athletic Services Office.
- d) **Activities Office:** One way for exchange students to be more involved in campus life is by partaking in activities and by being involved as members in the various NDU Clubs and Societies. Exchange students can join any activity organized by any student Club or Society.
- e) **Campus Ministry:** The NDU Campus Ministry is a space where culture, thought, and civilization interact with faith. The Campus Ministry is open to all students, including incoming exchange students.