

Florida Atlantic University New Exchange Credit Transfer Process

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) has several reciprocal 1:1 student exchanges with universities around the world. Student exchanges allow FAU students to study alongside students from a host country for a summer, semester and/or academic year. In turn, FAU hosts incoming international exchange students for non-degree studies of similar lengths. Courses are evaluated at each institution and equivalencies are determined to ensure the work done at the partner school can be accepted for the home university degree. Students register and pay tuition and fees at their home school, and enroll at the host school in the agreed upon course equivalents. Exchanges can be college or field specific (e.g. Business) or open to multiple fields, as in comprehensive partnerships.

FAU has roughly 15-20 active exchanges at any time, and about 40-50 students on them each year.¹ Exchanges are growing as a cost effective way for students to study abroad since they pay home institution tuition and fees. It is also important for students to maintain eligibility for financial aid while on an exchange, including Bright Futures for the academic year. More exchanges in different fields of study will be added in the coming years.

In 2011-2012 the Office of the Provost asked OIP to work with the Registrar and Financial Aid offices to update the way grades are brought in from partner schools. Specifically, we were asked to find how other Florida schools handle work done abroad. Upon discovering that many schools now use a transfer credit model, a team of staff from OIP, the Registrar, and Financial Aid and faculty from colleges heavily engaged in exchanges designed the new process now being implemented. The process allows FAU to align with the practices now being used by several other Florida SUS schools and other non-Florida schools within the SACSCOC accrediting region.

Under the new process FAU students will enroll in two of seven new courses at FAU, and pay tuition and fees to FAU based on their course load done abroad at the partner school. However, the students will return to FAU with a transcript of their work done abroad and the transfer credits will be recorded (with the name of the school from abroad) on their FAU transcript. The College of Business which sends about 60-75% of the exchange students abroad each year, has agreed to host the new courses.

Three New 1 Credit Courses

IDS 2955 General Study Abroad
IDS 4955 General Study Abroad
IDS 6959 General Study Abroad

¹ The bulk of exchange students are undergraduates, but several graduate students do go on an exchange program each year.

One credit of tuition will be charged and the course will stay on the transcript. Students will enroll in one of these courses based on their student status. This one credit General Study Abroad course will allow exchange students to maintain their student status. The students will have to do some general work such as keep a journal and reflect in some fashion on their experience and learning while abroad, for a S/U grade. We hope to use this course to assess and gauge student learning outcomes toward intercultural awareness and cultural learning before and after an abroad experience.

Four New 0 Credit Courses

IDS 2950 General Study abroad PH (Place holder)
IDS 2951 General Study Abroad PH (Place holder)
IDS 6956 General Study Abroad PH (Place holder)
IDS 6958 General Study Abroad PH (Place holder)

Each of the four 0 credit courses (for undergraduate residents, undergraduate nonresidents, graduate residents and graduate nonresidents) will have several sections attached with fees that match the credits to be taken abroad. Financial aid will be available when applicable. As a place holder course, they will be removed from a transcript once the transfer credit comes back.

Once these seven new courses are created, they will not have to be changed. Each year the sections of the 0 credit courses will have fees adjusted by the Registrar to match tuition levels for that year. OIP, Registrar, Financial Aid and College of Business who will host the new courses will work collaborating to get the system running and working seamlessly for the students each year.