

9-17-2008

\$75,000 Grant Launches UNH Effort To Start First African Study Abroad Program

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Recommended Citation

Wright, Lori, "\$75,000 Grant Launches UNH Effort To Start First African Study Abroad Program" (2008). *UNH Today*. 531.
<http://scholars.unh.edu/news/531>

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UNH Media Relations

September 17, 2008

DURHAM, N.H.- The University of New Hampshire has received a \$75,000 grant to create a new study abroad program for students in Ghana. It will be the university's first formal study abroad program in Africa.

The UNH Center for the Humanities, in cooperation with the Center for International Education and the Africana and African American Studies program, received the two-year grant from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The UNH Center for the Humanities administers the minor in Africana and African American Studies, which will be a key participant in the project. The program will be open to students from across the university.

The study abroad program partners UNH with the University of Ghana, Legon (UG) and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana. UNH has involved UG and KNUST to provide UNH students the opportunity to learn in both urban and rural settings in Ghana.

"It's very exciting to think about our students studying in Africa, a part of the world that is under-represented in study-abroad programs. With our faculty strengths and interests in Africa as inspiration, we believe that UNH students will be enthusiastic about these new opportunities. Ghana is a wonderfully promising and appealing place for students in programs ranging from history to business to natural resources to nursing," said Burt Feintuch, director of the UNH Center for the Humanities.

Student demand for university-sponsored opportunities to study in Africa has been growing, and the Ghana study abroad program would be UNH's first in Africa. UNH currently has 15 formal study abroad programs: 12 in Europe, and one each in Japan, Mexico and New Zealand. The university also manages six exchange programs; 1/2one in Canada, and five in Europe.

UNH chose Ghana as its first location for an African study abroad program because it is a politically stable, mature democracy, and because the City of Portsmouth has a sister city relationship with the City of Accra in Ghana. An informally organized gathering of artists, business people, educators, and community activists who came together because of their existing connections to Ghana, the sister city connection is what initiated discussion between UNH and the University of Ghana.

The initial grant will support building collaboration among faculty and humanities/cultural centers at all three institutions, attracting student interest in a Ghana study abroad program through the creation of quality academic and research experiences, broadening cultural

understanding and diversity at UNH, and developing the capacity of economically disadvantaged and/or minority students to participate in a study abroad program in Ghana.

Over the two-year grant period, teams of UNH faculty members will travel to Ghana, and faculty members from the University of Ghana and KNUST will travel to UNH for site visits. The exchange will familiarize partners with each others' institutions and promote discussion about the study abroad program. UNH also hopes to develop innovative programs to enable underserved students to take advantage of study abroad opportunities, especially in Ghana.

The university anticipates sending its first students abroad to Africa in the 2010-2011 academic year.

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