Memorandum

Date: March 8, 2018

To: Faculty Colleagues

From: Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice Provost for Global Programs and University Life – Professor Linda G. Mills

Re: Updates on Study Away and Academic Developments at the Global Sites

This past fall marked five years since Matthew Santirocco (then Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs) and I began a year-long series of conversations with faculty, department chairs, deans, and faculty committees about academic planning and programming for our study away sites. This memo provides a summary update on where things stand today, and you can find more information and detail posted on the web here.

Academic programming at the global sites

As a result of the conversations Matthew and I led in 2012 and 2013 and the clear desire of the faculty to play a stronger role in shaping and overseeing the academic offerings around the global network, we made substantial changes to the University’s approach to managing the study away sites. Faculty-led Site-Specific Advisory Committees (SSACs) were created for each of the 11 global sites. Schools and departments, in addition to their ongoing role in designing the courses and identifying and approving local faculty hires at the global sites, were invited to establish partnerships or affiliations with individual sites as they saw fit. And academic units worked closely with the Office of Global Programs (OGP) to create a variety of “pathway” models to ensure that even students in highly structured majors could study away while still making progress toward degree requirements. Today, more than 60 departments, institutes, and schools have established more than 220 partnerships or affiliations with at least one of the global sites, and more than 140 faculty members currently serve on one or more of the SSACs. Moreover, every site is led by a research-active NYU faculty member either as Director or as Academic Director.

School and departmental leaders interested in exploring new opportunities at the global sites should contact us at global.feedback@nyu.edu.

Study away enrollments and growing student interest

More NYU students study away than at any other university in the country, and our numbers continue to grow. Last year, we saw a total of more than 4,000 semester-long study away enrollments across the global network. London will be the most attended study away destination for the seventh year in a row, followed by New York (for Abu Dhabi and Shanghai students), Florence, Paris, and Prague.
Across all schools and including Summer and January Term programs, 45 percent of NYU bachelor’s degree recipients in the Class of 2017 studied away, up from 43 percent and 40 percent the two previous years. While these are large totals, we know that even higher numbers of students want to study away — nearly 80 percent of the incoming Class of 2021, for example, said they planned to do so in this year’s Survey of Admitted Students. Over time, we expect this gap to narrow as the University, schools, and departments continue to work to make study away possible for any student who wants to participate while ensuring that these experiences are academically rigorous and well integrated with the student’s studies at the home campus. This may even include finding new ways to innovate and collaborate in the broader global space. For example, three schools, in conjunction with the University, have begun to explore potential structures and platforms to offer support and programming for students in the arts and emerging media from multiple schools who want to spend time in Los Angeles completing internships and developing industry connections, building on a small program Tisch created in 2015. Other schools are working with OGP to develop new offerings in partnership with outstanding institutions in our global site cities, expanding the options available to students while continuing to build academic excellence throughout the network.

Professional- and master's-level education at the global sites also continues to expand. Five schools now offer graduate degree programs that take place either in whole or in part at the sites, including two that offer semester-long study away programs for their graduate students. All of the global sites also host January or Summer Term graduate-level courses offered by a wide array of schools.

Situating the value of study away among other academic goals

While NYU's global presence and the integrated opportunities our students can access through the global network are one of the University's most distinctive strengths, there are always tensions between the benefits that students can gain from studying away and those that accrue from spending more uninterrupted time under the supervision of faculty at the home campus — and the right balance can vary greatly across schools, majors, and individual students. This is a challenging issue without easy answers, but with a broad base of faculty now involved in the global network, the time is right to advance the conversation, both within and across schools and departments.

Last year, a Faculty Working Group on Global Learning Objectives (GLO) with representatives from eight schools conducted a systematic reflection on the role of study away and global learning in a 21st-century undergraduate education and developed a list of generalized learning objectives — both in terms of competencies and attitudes/values — that students should achieve as a result of global study. These include, for example, increases in the ability to situate local knowledge and ways of knowing in comparative perspective; cultural self-awareness and the ability to adopt a reflective distance from one’s own way of being in the world; confidence, independence, and a willingness to take risks; and curiosity, respect, and empathy for the experience of others.

The group's report provides an excellent jumping-off point for further conversations within the faculty. In this spirit, Professor Eliot Borenstein (a member of the GLO Working Group and the Senior Academic Convenor for the Global Network) has drafted a reflection piece on the value of study away and will convene a series of “Global Conversations” open to all faculty, currently scheduled for April 9 in New York, with dates to be announced soon in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai. Topics will include: educational philosophy and the purpose of study away at NYU; advancing undergraduate research opportunities at the global sites; and facilitating study away for students in STEM and arts practice disciplines. Please see the Global Conversations webpage for additional details and updates.

President Hamilton’s priorities for the global network

President Hamilton has highlighted a number of priorities for advancing the global network in the years to come. One goal is to continue to reduce friction points and break down barriers to participating in the global network for those who want to do so, making it as easy and straightforward as possible for both students and faculty to access — including, but not limited to, ensuring that
academically outstanding global opportunities are available to all NYU students no matter their financial background. A second goal is to enhance engagement and connectivity with local communities in our global site cities, facilitating more deeply immersive and “outside the bubble” experiences for students and connecting those experiences to global learning objectives. At the same time, we must adequately prepare students to navigate cultural differences and practices that they may encounter in challenging ways as visitors in other countries, particularly those who may identify or be identified with historically underrepresented and/or marginalized groups. We are in dialogue with student groups about this important topic. A third goal is to support expanded research activity at the sites, developing their potential to serve the scholarly work of faculty and graduate students while also enhancing the undergraduate experience.

A final goal is to take advantage of NYU’s unique and leading role in global higher education to pursue our academic mission in important and distinctive ways. As an academic community, we recognize that international and intercultural engagement and understanding are essential to facilitating progress and cooperative action to address the critical challenges of our time. Conversations with hundreds of faculty members continually suggest that the global network gives us a unique platform to advance this purpose while providing NYU graduates with a liberal arts education that includes a study away experience. The GLO Working Group recognized this unique asset and recommended that the University consider developing new global degree program(s) strategically designed to integrate courses at the global sites and portal campuses. One possible approach under exploration, for example, is for interested schools to develop globally inflected variations on existing majors that might feed into relevant master’s degree programs in New York. We will pursue further discussions with schools and relevant faculty committees over the next year.

**Global leadership roles for faculty**

The global network continues to evolve and play an important role in contributing to NYU’s academic mission. Against this background and reflecting suggestions from two faculty committees, last year the University created part-time faculty leadership positions related to global academic and faculty planning. Coming out of that process, senior faculty members from five schools (i.e., Arts and Science, Global Public Health, Medicine, Shanghai, and Tisch) took on these roles:

- **Associate Vice Chancellors for Global Network Academic Planning:** Professor Olugbenga (“Gbenga”) Ogedegbe (School of Medicine and College of Global Public Health) and Professor Marianne Petit (Tisch School of the Arts and NYU Shanghai)
- **Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Network Faculty Planning:** Professor Zvi Ben-Dor Benite (Faculty of Arts and Science)
- **Senior Academic Convenor for the Global Network:** Professor Eliot Borenstein (Faculty of Arts and Science)

Additional information about these positions is posted here. Faculty members should feel free to reach out to Gbenga, Marianne, Zvi, or Eliot with comments or questions about the global network at any time.

Two additional senior faculty members are now working closely with Global Programs and relevant schools and departments to develop global offerings and opportunities in areas where curricular and other barriers to study away have historically been high. Professor Joe Pichirallo (Tisch School of the Arts) is serving as Global Faculty Lead in TV, Film, and Visual Storytelling to help further develop our offerings in those areas, given his previous role in developing global courses while chairing Tisch’s Undergraduate Film and Television Department and his extensive overseas work as a film producer. Professor Mal Semple (Faculty of Arts and Science and Director of NYU Sydney) is serving as Global Faculty Lead in STEM to facilitate continued growth and development of our offerings in STEM disciplines, given the outstanding work he has done to develop science offerings in his various leadership positions at NYU.
Finally, I am very pleased to announce that Professor Catherine Robson (Faculty of Arts and Science) has been named Director of NYU London following her outstanding leadership of the site in an interim capacity since the death of Professor Gary Slapper. We are also nearing completion of an open search for a new Director of NYU Paris, with results to be announced soon. We will continue to make global leadership opportunities available for faculty members as needs emerge.

**Faculty opportunities in the global network**

Over the past few years, opportunities for faculty to take advantage of the global network in multiple ways have continued to expand, particularly in response to ongoing faculty interest in using the global network to advance their research and curricular interests. In addition to opportunities at the three portal campuses, there are programs available at the 11 global sites to support academic program development and planning, individual faculty and graduate student scholarship, and conferencing. Information about these opportunities can be found here, and the Provost’s Global Research Initiatives (GRI) page is here.

**Global mobility**

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the Faculty Committee on NYU’s Global Network for providing valuable recommendations on how the University can improve its processes surrounding the increasingly complicated topic of global mobility. As you likely saw in President Hamilton’s February 9 email, University leaders have already begun implementing several of the Committee’s recommendations. We will continue to partner with the Committee on developments related to mobility across the global network as they arise.

**Further thank-yous**

I continue to offer my deep gratitude to all the faculty members who contribute to the development and success of the global network through the SSACs, the Faculty Committee on NYU’s Global Network, the Global Network University Committees of the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Senators Council (T-FSC) and Full-Time Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (C-FSC), and myriad other ways. With your partnership and engagement, we have greatly strengthened and integrated academic programming across the global network, and I look forward to continuing that work in the months and years ahead.