



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

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July 17, 2017

Administrative Board of the College of Arts and Sciences
Office of General Education
UNC-CH

Dear Colleagues,

Direct Enroll Program for Undergraduates at the University of Aveiro, Portugal and supported by the Department of Romance Studies

The Department of Romance Studies and the Study Abroad Office are seeking your approval for a new direct enroll program at the University of Aveiro in the city of Aveiro, Portugal to be available to UNC-Chapel Hill students commencing fall 2018.

Rationale

Currently there are no programs in Portugal on the Study Abroad Approved list of programs and both the Study Abroad Office as well as the Portuguese section of the Department of Romance Studies have received requests from UNC students to study in Portugal. While there is a Portuguese language program in Brazil through a program provider (CET), the Portuguese section of the Romance Studies Department has requested that we add a Direct Enroll program in Portugal.

In the summer of 2016, Dr. Richard Vernon undertook a site visit to Portugal with the hope of finding a Portuguese partner. The University of Aveiro (UA) showed great interest and although there is hope that University of Aveiro students would be able to participate in an exchange program in the future, it was decided it was best to make it possible for UNC students to go to the UA where they would pay the international student tuition fees (the “free mover” program). Tuition is still less in Portugal than in the US and this would be advantageous to UNC students.

Aveiro is a city of about 80,000 inhabitants, on the west coast of Portugal, set along a lagoon called Ria de Aveiro, just south of Porto. The University of Aveiro is a young university, created in 1973 and has about 15,000 enrolled students both undergraduate and graduate. It is listed as the 4th best Portuguese University. The campus is self-contained with buildings for teaching and research, administrative and technical support but also includes many halls of residence for students and staff, libraries, bookshops and stores, restaurants and cafeterias, sports facilities, a post-office, a bank and even a kindergarten. Some of the reasons for selecting this University are: the location, a smaller town located not far from Porto, which would give true immersion to students; since the University is young, it is more in touch with the needs of today’s students and has more of the logistical support students seek.

More information on the University of Aveiro can be found here: <http://www.ua.pt/page/14556> and the international web page: <https://www.ua.pt/internationalstudent/home>

Description

The UA is a strong supporter of student mobility and offers a number of undergraduate courses taught in English as well as semester long Portuguese language courses for students who do not have the level to take courses in Portuguese. There are a few English taught courses (called exchange packages) mostly in the STEM area (Chemistry, Computer Science, Environment and Planning, Mathematics and Physics) as well as some courses in Languages and Cultures. Each of these packages includes courses to make up a full semester load and students can choose between only one of these courses or the whole package. Some of the courses in the packages include Intercultural Relations, English Literature, Cultural Issues in Europe Today. Students who have at least 5 semesters of Portuguese may take direct enroll courses with Portuguese students.

Courses and Faculty

The UA offers courses in undergraduate majors as well as Masters and Doctoral programs. Students may take courses in these fields: <http://www.ua.pt/ensino/PageCourses.aspx?c=1> . Most of these courses are offered in Portuguese although a small number are offered in English as already mentioned. UA courses use the European Credit Transfer System, the standard for Europe. Many of the faculty do speak English and this would be helpful to UNC students. The Academic Calendar follows the European model of Semester 1 starting in September with classes ending in December but final exams take place in January. Semester 2 starts in February and classes end in the first week of June with exams through the end of June. International students attending the Fall semester are allowed to take their final exams before they leave in December.

Academic Requirements and Credit

UNC-Chapel Hill students participating in this program will need to have a 2.75 GPA to be eligible and at least second year status. The pre-requisite is 3 semesters of College level Portuguese.

TREQ credit will be awarded as long as the student receives a C or better in each course taken. UA will send an official transcript of all completed courses to the home institution. Students will be required to take between 20 and 30 ECTS, or the equivalent of 4 to 6 courses, to maintain and transfer a full load of courses to UNC.

Logistics, Health and Safety

Facilities

The main campus is the Campus Santiago which was designed by a number of famous Portuguese architects; it is a small campus, easy to navigate and close to the city-center. Logistically, all the necessities are nearby: residences, cafeterias, libraries, as well as other amenities such as sports facilities, bank and post-office. It is also considered an “environmentally friendly” campus, supporting the sustainable consumption of water and energy. Students also have access to 100 % wireless coverage on campus.

Housing and Transportation

Students are usually housed either in student residences or may decide to find their own housing and share apartments with other students. The housing office on campus will help either place them in residential housing or send them information on how to find independent housing. The cost of living is very reasonable in Aveiro and students can live comfortably for about 600 Euros per month.

Although there is plenty of public transport (trains, buses and taxis) in Aveiro, the bicycle is the preferred vehicle for students since the area around Aveiro is pretty flat. Aveiro has made bicycles available, free of charge for urban use (BUGA bicycles free for use in Aveiro). The closest airport is one hour away and easily accessible by public transportation.

Other activities

Students have access to the excellent sport facilities, a comprehensive program of sports, both recreational or for competition purposes; there are also student organizations that plan special events for students (the ESN-Erasmus Student Network). The University maintains and regularly updates a calendar with various activities and events.

Health and Safety

The University has a medical office on the campus with access to medical, nursing, psychological and gynecological care. There is a health center which provides generic health care and a hospital right across from the UA which provides 24 hours' emergency service. In the town of Aveiro students can find private health services (general practice, dentists) at a discounted cost for students of the University.

The Department of State reminds us that Portugal has open borders with Western Europe which allow possible terrorist groups to enter and exit the country and so "all European countries remain potentially vulnerable to attacks from transnational terrorist organizations. U.S. citizens are reminded to remain vigilant with regard to their personal security." It also mentions that crimes of opportunity, such as pickpockets and purse snatchers, are common at popular tourist sites. Aveiro is within 10 kms of the coast and has some nice beaches nearby but it is not one of the more popular beach tourist areas in Portugal.

Conclusion

We hope this proposal has given a clear representation of the program proposed for UNC students as a direct enroll program at the University of Aveiro. We hope this program will be of interest to students majoring/minoring in Portuguese. We are happy to provide you with any additional information you might need to aid in your evaluations of this proposal.

Sincerely,



9/12/2017

Dr. Samuel Amago, Chair, Department of Romance Studies

Date



9.22.17

Dr. Robert Miles, Associate Dean: Study Abroad and International Exchanges

Date



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September 19, 2017

Dear Dr. Bob Jenkins and the Study Abroad Advisory Board,

In July of 2016 I travelled to Portugal to investigate potential study-abroad opportunities for UNC students. I included a visit to the University of Aveiro during the trip because I know it to be one of Portugal's top universities and because I have a colleague there with whom I have collaborated since 1999—Professor Ana Margarida Santos. She was able to set up meetings with several university administrators and arrange a tour of the library, some of the classrooms, and some student dormitories. I also had lunch in the student cafeteria. The food, subsidized by the government, is minimally processed (as if homemade), excellent, and very inexpensive for students—less than \$3 a meal typically.

Unlike most European universities, the University of Aveiro has a campus very similar to US university campuses. I found those with whom I met very anxious to work with UNC and enthusiastic about the opportunity to have some of our students in their classrooms. Approximately 10% of their student population are foreign nationals so they are accustomed to dealing with students who are unfamiliar with their systems and even the Portuguese language. They have many Erasmus scholars for instance who come to the university with little or no knowledge of Portuguese.

The town itself is also very welcoming. It is rich in history, beautiful—several sections of the downtown area are built along canals—has excellent public transportation, and is an easy train ride from Portugal's two largest cities.

If you have any questions about my experience there or the university itself, I am more than happy to answer whatever I can.

Warm regards,

Richard Vernon, PhD
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UNC, Chapel Hill
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