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ABSTRACT

Undergraduate Area Studies in Ghana Program

The Undergraduate Area Studies in Ghana Program (UASGP) at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) will provide an opportunity for 13 U.S. undergraduate students, enrolled at UMES and 13 other public and private colleges and universities in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Florida, and the District of Columbia, to study for a 15-week semester at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, a culturally and historically rich Ghanaian city, located in the Ashanti Region of the country. The UASGP will provide a second option for studying abroad in Ghana at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), located in the sea-side city of Cape Coast, which is famous for its historic slave castles and its many educational institutions. UMES has formal linkage agreements with both KNUST and UCC. The major goal of the UASGP is to increase opportunities for students attending HBCUs and other colleges and universities in the United States to study abroad in Africa.

The specific objectives are to: (1) recruit 13 undergraduate students from HBCUs and other public and private institutions in the United States who are interested in studying abroad in Africa; (2) provide opportunities for UASGP participants to enroll in courses at the host institutions that are relevant to their major fields of study; (3) provide UASGP participants with the opportunity to acquire at least one community-based experience while studying abroad; (4) provide opportunities for UASGP participants to learn about Ghanaian culture and its diversity; and (5) provide opportunities for UASGP participants to share living and learning experiences acquired while studying abroad, when they return to their home institutions. Students selected for the UASGP will be able to pursue programs of study in agriculture, fine arts, the social sciences, the physical and natural sciences, engineering, education and tourism.

Continuation of the UASGP will have a major and significant impact on the students who participate in the exceptional study abroad experience that it will provide. Many of the students, particularly those from the HBCUs, as well as those from the other participating colleges and universities, have never had the opportunity to study abroad in an African country. Ghana, the site selected for implementing the UASGP, has an enormously rich cultural history, and is one of the most politically important and strategic countries on the continent of Africa. A critical objective of the UASGP is for participants to share the knowledge learned from their experience in Ghana by presenting seminars at their universities, elementary and secondary schools, and to community groups. Dissemination of the participants' knowledge acquired during the study abroad experience will expand the impact of the UASGP.