



UFC INTERNATIONALIZATION PLAN

Executive Summary



UNIVERSIDADE
FEDERAL DO CEARÁ

Executive Summary of UFC's Internationalization Agenda

The expansion of internationalization at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC) is now an institutional demand, rather than solely a desirable possibility. Because of the quality of its research, UFC has secured itself at the international level across various fields of study. The international experience of our faculty, administrative staff, students and collaborators is evinced by the University's global indicators, which in turn are the result of the partnerships forged worldwide through numerous high-impact scientific projects and publications.

This expertise has been amassed in large part during the last twenty years, in the wake of the creation of our first doctoral programs (all of which attained scores of 6 or 7 in the latest institutional appraisals carried out by CAPES), and has steadfastly brought on formidable academic innovation, crossing over from our graduate programs towards all areas of activity.

UFC has entered into a multitude of international scientific covenants with a substantial array of institutions of academic excellence. These agreements have had considerable impact on teaching and research efforts, with our effective international collaborations chiefly involving renowned universities in the United States, France, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom and a number of other nations at the forefront of scientific activity.

This history of international cooperation laid the groundwork for the 2017 resolutions governing faculty and staff secondment of up to 2 years for the purpose of scientific collaboration. Thus, postdoctoral stays, sabbatical leaves and scientific missions are guided by such criteria as academic excellence, improvement of university indicators, strengthening of international partnerships and mobility, encouragement of internationalization in graduate programs, as well as the revamping or consolidation of existing research fields.

Similarly, the selection processes for international doctoral placements and institutional postdoctoral candidacies are under the oversight of the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, prioritizing advisory and institutional quality, while taking into account the results of the international placements with regard to scientific development and the performance rates of the graduate programs.

Internationalization initiatives have markedly escalated over the course of the last decades, which prompted the Coordinating Office of International Affairs to be reorganized into the Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs (**PROINTER**) in 2017, unequivocally conveying the pivotal role from then on assumed by internationalization in the University.

In consonance with the other Offices of the Vice Provost, PROINTER is engaged in the articulation and improvement of internationalization activities; the compliance of curricular and academic structures with international standards; and is responsible for hosting international faculty and students. The Office is also charged with counseling UFC students, faculty and staff taking part in international missions, consolidating partnerships with foreign universities and promoting linguistic internationalization throughout the University.

Owing to all of the above, the Internationalization Agenda was approved by the Superior Councils on 11 September 2017 with a view to outlining the policies that shall be enforced on all fronts, namely, in teaching, research, extension and administrative activities. In 2018

the Internationalization Agenda was incorporated into the UFC Institutional Development Agenda for the 2018-2022 quinquennium.

Following is the Executive Summary of the Internationalization Agenda, a list of general and specific goals, concurrently touching upon the proposed actions and strategies while emphasizing internationalization in research and graduate programs.

General and Specific Goals for Research and Graduate Programs

This is a brief outline of the general goals set forth in the UFC Internationalization Agenda in order to carry out and consolidate internationalization efforts in our graduate programs and research groups:

1. To make UFC an *international environment*, thus defined by the presence of international students and faculty, by the international experience of Brazilian students and professors and most of all by ensuring every member of the academic community understands that they are part of a world which is interconnected, filled with opportunities for knowledge and social responsibility, one that is incompatible with intellectual and ethical isolation.
2. To enable graduate students to interact and collaborate with the foremost international scholars, while competing with students from the world's top institutions on equal academic ground, since there will be, in the future, no qualified professional activity that is immune to the impacts of globalization, in universities or elsewhere.
3. To devise strategies for an academic linguistic policy in conformance with the internationalization premises of graduate education and scientific research.
4. To internationalize graduate education by continuously revising and revamping curricular structures, this condition being of paramount importance for swiftly and critically appropriating cultures, techniques and intellectual challenges on a global scale.
5. To seize opportunities and implement international agreements, providing the information and (administrative and financial) support that are needed by UFC researchers who wish to institutionalize their collaborations with international investigators.

The specific research and graduate education goals – heavily emphasized in the Internationalization Agenda – are as follows:

1. To stimulate continual participation of UFC's academic community in general programs of international cooperation, as well as the articulation of professors and students with relevant international scientific research centers.
2. To expand and consolidate existing research groups comprising investigators from international research centers, with particular focus in a number of strategic fields, thus promoting the creation of new research groups or graduate programs, the international consolidation of existing graduate programs, and the scientific and technological development of Brazil.
3. To support existing international cooperation programs, as well as the conception of new programs which enable the development of human resources abroad, in addition to exchange and mobility programs for students, faculty and researchers.

4. To substantially augment nationwide research developed from within UFC's graduate programs, bolstering the creation or establishment of prominent groups in strategic fields with a view to global development and supporting the publishing of scientific and technological production in international periodicals of high circulation and strong impact.
5. To work with federal and state governments to achieve funding solutions that allow for either the temporary placement of international researchers at UFC, or the secondment of UFC researchers at international institutions for the purpose of furthering scientific efforts.
6. To solicit increased scholarship funding for international placements from state and federal funding agencies, especially for split-site programs at different degree levels, as well as full-fledged graduate and postdoctoral programs and international senior placements.
7. To stimulate two-way international student mobility by publicizing international exchange opportunities, particularly encouraging those which are likely to result in double degrees or joint supervision of theses.
8. To support course offerings in foreign languages – classroom or web-based, as with massive course platforms – from the moment of their inclusion in the graduate programs' pedagogical projects.
9. To support and promote activities for the development of foreign language proficiency, specifically by bolstering offerings of academia-oriented language courses and Portuguese as a Foreign Language courses.

Internationalization Strategies and Actions for Research and Graduate Programs

The entire Internationalization Agenda makes it unequivocally clear that the main purpose of UFC's international insertion is academic development – in all its dimensions. To that end, all efforts in graduate studies and research that may lead the university to the international scenario have been established as priorities. For instance, split-site doctoral program placements, preferably those that implement and elaborate on cotutelle doctoral agreements; post-doctoral placements; sabbatical leaves and scientific missions to centers of international excellence; hosting of visiting professors and international students, as well as the development of cooperation projects with a history of collaboration or a prospect of impacting results.

In accordance with such priorities, UFC has allocated its own resources in order to hire visiting professors at several levels, with a focus on internationalization and innovation. Moreover, the university grants undergraduate and graduate scholarships to foreign students, while prioritizing the allocation of scholarships for graduate students affiliated with institutional programs, such as GCUB-OEA.

In order to achieve some of the goals outlined for graduate studies and research, the following efforts are listed in the Internationalization Agenda and are expected to be achieved in the near future: to foster the formalization of agreements with universities and other institutions and/or foreign organizations; encourage projects in the area of academic mobility for Brazilian and foreign graduate students; lighten regulations in order to

facilitate the presence of international faculty in regular courses; develop a policy of encouragement in the learning of foreign languages; academically monitor students in international mobility and create ways of taking advantage of their experience after their return; promote and disseminate selection processes at UFC for graduate students and professors at the international level; monitor proposals for the creation of new graduate programs, as well as to keep track of institutional assessments in conformity with the international-level criteria of existent programs.

Structuring and Governance for the Internationalization of Research and Graduate Studies

Both internally and externally renowned, the planning and governance models at UFC have enabled the institution to helm its own internationalization program. The structure proposed herein is based on the Governance Policy adopted by the University, which has elected the model of Result-Oriented Governance. For this reason, the internationalization process encompasses and is based on the greater guidelines laid out by the Higher Administration and aims to guarantee the achievement of the goals proposed in the plan by means of index-based monitoring.

Per the current UFC organogram, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies (PRPPG) accounts for the management of the academic aspects of research and graduate studies, including selection processes for the modalities of project financing and mobility, whereas the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies (PROGRAD) is in charge of its academic counterpart in the management of undergraduate teaching. The Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs (PROINTER) is in turn responsible for the administrative procedures of formalization of agreements, academic mobility and linguistic policies.

For instance, the welcoming of foreign students is accomplished by this Office, monitoring students' progress from the early stages of the application procedures through their acclimatization to the academic environment. Efforts pertaining to the development of language proficiency and certifications are carried out under the Languages without Borders program.

Lastly, considering the pressing need to monitor the initiatives and procedures related to internationalization at UFC, as well as the urgency to constitute a permanent agency to enable the participation of the academic community in the improvement of institutional internationalization policies and management, the Internationalization Committee of the Federal University of Ceará (COMINTER) was established in 2017, and it is composed of representatives from the internal community and representative segments which are external to the university.

Final Considerations

Strategies based on areas and collaborations already consolidated at the international level are proposed in UFC's Internationalization Agenda, but without neglecting areas whose internationalization potential is still not fully developed. The goal is, by means of the application of the above-mentioned plan, to propitiate an "international environment" that effectively promotes the opening of graduate studies and the development of high-level scientific research, persistently aiming to develop graduate studies in tandem with economic and social sectors of global impact.