



UFC INTERNATIONALIZATION PLAN

Executive Summary



UNIVERSIDADE
FEDERAL DO CEARÁ

Executive Summary of the Internationalization Agenda of the Federal University of Ceará

The expansion of the internationalization process at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC) is an institutional demand rather than just a desirable possibility. Because of the quality of its research, UFC stands at an international level in various fields. The international experience of its faculty, administrative staff, students and collaborators is evidenced by the university's global indicators, as a result of the international partnerships in high-impact scientific projects and publications. This experience has been predominantly amassed over the last twenty years with the creation of the first doctoral programs, which currently score 6s and 7s on the CAPES standard and has brought on formidable academic innovation and crossed over from our graduate programs towards other areas of activity.

UFC has entered into scientific covenants, which have had a considerable impact on education and research, with a large number of excellent universities worldwide. Our effective international collaborations chiefly involve, but are not limited to, reputable institutions in the United States, France, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other nations at the forefront of scientific activity. This history of international collaboration has 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 regulated under such criteria as academic excellence, the improvement of university indicators, the strengthening of international partnerships and mobility, the encouragement of internationalization in graduate programs, and lastly the revamping or consolidation of research fields. Following similar criteria, foreign doctoral placements and institutional postdoctoral candidacies, coordinated by the Office of the Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, prioritize supervisory and institutional quality taking into account the results of the international placements in regard to scientific development and the performance rates of graduate programs.

Internationalization initiatives have intensified over the course of the last ten years, which prompted the Office of International Affairs to be reorganized into the Office of the Provost for International Affairs (PROINTER) in 2017, unequivocally conveying the central role played by internationalization at UFC. As with the other Offices of the Provost, PROINTER is engaged in the articulation and improvement of internationalization activities; the compliance of curricular and academic structures with international standards; and hosting foreign professors and students. Additionally, the Office is also charged with counselling UFC students, faculty and staff taking part in foreign missions; consolidating partnerships with foreign universities; and promoting linguistic internationalization at UFC.

In this context, UFC's Internationalization Agenda, as approved by the Superior Councils on September 11, 2017, delineates the policies that are to be adopted by the university on all fronts, namely the internationalization of education, research, extension and management activities. In 2018, it was incorporated to the Institutional Development Agenda for the 2018-2022 quinquennial plan. Below we present the Executive Summary of our Agenda, its general and specific objectives, touching upon our proposed actions and strategies, while emphasizing internationalization in research and graduate programs at UFC.

General and Specific Objectives in Research and Graduate Programs at UFC

This is a brief outline of the general objectives established by the UFC Internationalization Agenda in order to carry out and consolidate internationalization activities in graduate programs and research groups:

1. To make UFC an *international environment*, thus defined by the presence of foreign students and professors, by the international experiences of Brazilian students and professors and, most of all, by ensuring every member of the academic community understands they are part of a world that is interconnected, filled with opportunities for knowledge and social responsibilities, and one that is incompatible with intellectual and ethical isolation.
2. To enable our graduate students to interact and collaborate with the foremost international academics, competing with students at the best foreign institutions on equal academic ground, since there will be, in the future, no qualified professional activity that is immune to the impacts of globalization, at universities or elsewhere.
3. To propose a plan for an academic linguistic policy, in conformance with the premises of the internationalization of graduate education and scientific research.
4. To internationalize graduate education by continuously revising and adjusting 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 researchers at UFC who intend to institutionalize their collaborations with foreign investigators.

The specific research and graduate education objectives, heavily emphasized in UFC's Internationalization Agenda, are as follows:

1. To stimulate continuous 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 research groups involving investigators from international research centers, particularly in 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, professors and researchers.
4. To substantially augment nationwide research developed within UFC's graduate programs, bolstering the creation or consolidation of prominent groups in strategic fields for 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 installation of foreign researchers at UFC, or the installation of UFC researchers at international institutions, for the purpose of developing scientific activity.
6. To solicit state and federal funding agencies for a higher number of scholarships for international placements (especially split-site programs at different levels of higher education), full graduate and postdoctoral programs, and senior placements abroad.
7. To stimulate two-way international mobility, publicizing international exchange opportunities and encouraging those which may result in joint degrees or joint supervision of theses.
8. To support the offering of courses taught 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 proficiency in foreign languages, specifically promoting the offering of academia-oriented language courses and Portuguese as a Foreign Language courses.

Internationalization Strategies and Actions for Graduate Studies and Research at UFC

It is evident in the Internationalization Agenda that the main purpose of UFC's international insertion is academic development in all its dimensions. To that end, all actions in graduate studies and research that lead the university to an international scenario are established as priorities, for instance, split-site doctoral program placements, preferably the ones that implement and expand cotutelle doctoral agreements; post-doctoral placements; sabbatical leaves and scientific missions to centers of international excellency; attraction of visiting professors and foreign students, as well as the development of cooperation projects with a history of collaboration or a prospectus of impacting results. In accordance with these priorities, UFC has been allocating 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, prioritizing the allocation of scholarships for graduate students associated with institutional programs, such as GCUB-OEA.

In order to achieve some of the goals outlined for graduate studies and research at UFC, the Internationalization Agenda proposes, in a more immediate manner, the following actions: 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 the regulations in order to facilitate the practice of foreign professors in regular courses; develop a policy of encouragement in the learning of foreign languages; academically monitor students in academic mobility and create ways of taking advantage of their experiences after their return; promote and disseminate selection processes at UFC for graduate students and professors at an international level; monitor proposals for the creation of new graduate programs, as well as to keep track of the institutional assessment according to international criteria of the programs which already exist.

Structuring and Governance for the Internationalization of Graduate Studies and Research at UFC

The planning and governance models at UFC, internally and externally renowned, enable the institution to manage its own internationalization program. The structure proposed herein is based on the Governance Policy adopted by the University, which elected the model of Governance by Results. For this reason, the internationalization process encompasses and is based on the greater guidelines from the Higher Management and guarantees, by means of the monitoring through indexes, the achievement of the goals proposed by this plan.

In UFC's current organogram, the Office of the Provost for Research and Graduate Studies (PRPPG) accounts for the management of the academic aspect of research and graduate studies, including selective processes for the modalities of project financing and mobility, whereas the Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies (PROGRAD) is in charge of its academic counterpart in the management of undergraduate teaching, whereas the Office of the Provost for International Affairs (PROINTER) is responsible for the administrative procedures of formalization of agreements, academic mobility and linguistic policies. The reception of foreign students, for instance, is accomplished by PROINTER, which monitors students from the application procedures until their academic acclimatization. Actions related to the development of proficiency in foreign languages and its certification will be carried out under the Languages without Borders program. Finally, 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), composed of representatives of the internal community and representative segments which are external to the university, was established in 2017.

Final Considerations

Strategies based on areas and collaborations already consolidated and 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, always aiming at binding graduate studies at UFC to economic and social sectors of global impact.

Collaborative Network of the UFC Institutional Internationalization Proposal

