



INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

University of Alaska Fairbanks

# 2016-2017 Handbook

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## International Programs & Initiatives Global Ambassador Program

*Globally Inspiring*

UAF is an AA/EO employer and educational institution.

### Mission Statement

It is the mission of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Global Ambassador Program to provide quality service and accurate information to international population. Global Ambassadors strive to be models of student leadership and community involvement while gaining experience in intercultural awareness and communication.

### Purpose

The UAF Global Ambassador Program enhances recruitment as well as on- and off-campus acculturation, by encouraging distinguished students to share their experiences and acquired knowledge of UAF. Global Ambassadors assist in a variety of functions, and strive to keep current and prospective students' best interests in mind.

### Oath of Service

I pledge to be a role model on campus, to always be honest in my representation of the university to aid my fellow ambassadors, and to work towards enhancing the experience of the UAF international community members.

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## Global Ambassador Program Description

Congratulations on being selected as a Global Ambassador with International Programs and Initiatives (IPI)! This program emphasizes outreach to the international population to include: international students, scholars and prospective/current and returned study away students. You represent UAF to other students, to the broader community, and to the world. You represent not only yourselves and other Global Ambassadors, but also UAF as a whole. You have been selected to be a Global Ambassador because of your ability to represent and to serve UAF. Through this program, you will develop leadership and cross-cultural skills, and create a strong network of social and professional contacts that may assist you in your future endeavors. You will also learn about the growing field of international education.

### International Outreach

Providing information to interested international students is a major responsibility of the Global Ambassadors. Student perspective brings authenticity regarding the student experience to this outreach and directly impacts international students' experiences at UAF. Your opinions and observations are important. International students may be new to the U.S. and depend on you for answers and explanations. The goal of international outreach is to be a resource for and to provide mentorship to incoming international students who may be traveling to the U.S. and experiencing American culture and education system for the first time.

### Study Away Outreach

Providing information to students about UAF opportunities to study away is another major responsibility of the Global Ambassadors. Global Ambassadors have a unique perspective regarding the student experience and can directly impact students' decisions to incorporate a study away experience into their UAF academic program. The goal of study away outreach is to provide information and mentorship to students at each stage of the study away process.

### Mixed Media Interaction

The goal of the Global Ambassador Program is to reach students through the medium that serves them best. We utilize social media, blogging and emails. Our outreach is ever-growing and your role is critical to the development and implementation of social outreach.

### Volunteering at Events

Throughout the year, Global Ambassadors help with recruitment and on- and off-campus events held by IPI and other offices and organizations. You may sit on a panel, speak at an event or interact generally with various communities. These events may change from year to year.

### Expectations

You are expected to volunteer for a minimum of three activities per semester.

### Opportunities

Global Ambassadors will be introduced to the fields of international education, immigration compliance and study away administration, and gain experience in intercultural awareness and communication.

## Global Ambassador Responsibilities

### Academic Achievements

It is expected that Global Ambassadors maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA and full-time student status. The Global Ambassador Program is designed to promote a holistic university and leadership experience. As such, academic achievement is integral to participation in the program. Should you find yourself having a tough time or unable to maintain the above minimum requirements, please notify your GAP Leads immediately.

### Getting Started Sessions

Before the start of the semester, we intend to host a session to acquaint you with the Global Ambassador Program and cover the requirements and expectations you will have as an ambassador.

### Duty Hours

As a Global Ambassador, your goal is to inform and to serve as a mentor for our international population. As a Global Ambassador you will be expected to engage in program-related activities or tasks during the semester. If you have signed up for an activity, we expect that you will follow through. We understand that you are a student first; if something comes up and you are unable to follow through with your assigned activity, you must let us know in a timely manner. In addition, our office and equipment are available for you to use to complete activities that require computer or internet access.

### Emails

You may receive emails from students interested in studying at UAF, in study away programs, etc., through contact of the IPI Global Ambassador website. We request that you blind-copy (BCC) the appropriate GAP Lead on all emails you reply to. However, we will not take any action on the email unless you ask us to contact the student, or if other information should be provided. If you find yourself receiving emails that make you uncomfortable or are in any way inappropriate (such as a request to stay at your residence upon arrival), please let your GAP Leads know immediately to address the situation.

### Blogging

We run a Global Ambassador Blog through Blogger, and expect Global Ambassadors to participate. Blogs can be about almost anything, particularly subjects related to UAF, Fairbanks, college life, student life, cultural differences, etc. Blogs are a great way to communicate with students and scholars who may be a little uncomfortable or shy about sending an email. If you have any questions about blogging, feel free to discuss it with your GAP Leads or your fellow ambassadors. Always have your blog post proofread before you post it! You will need to submit your Blog post to the GAP Leads on the Monday of the week it is due. When approved, the GAP Lead will then email it back to you and you will submit the post to Blogger on the day it is scheduled to be posted. Feel free to add pictures, videos, links, and other visuals to your blog posts!

### End of the Semester Reports

Global Ambassadors are expected to submit a final summary of your experience throughout the semester due on the Monday of the last week of class each semester. These reports should include your expectations, whether they were met, a reflection of the work you have done as a Global Ambassador and suggestions for improvement. These reports are beneficial for our program and you are encouraged to write about your experience as a Global Ambassador. Please include suggestions for future ambassadors and their GAP Leads.

## Event Descriptions

Our office hosts and participates in a number of events throughout the year in which the participation of the Global Ambassadors will be requested. In addition to these events, your involvement may be requested for other UAF-sponsored activities. Below are some of the events in which the Global Ambassadors could be involved.

### International Orientation Sessions

We conduct an international orientation session at the beginning of each semester in conjunction with New Student Orientation, in which we address topics such as maintaining immigration status and job opportunities for international students. These sessions are mandatory for new international students. This is one of the first in-person interactions between our office and the newly-arrived students. This event provides an opportunity to meet new international students and introduce yourself as a Global Ambassador. If you are available, encourage all Global Ambassadors to introduce themselves at this event.

### Welcome Mixer & Winternational Welcome

The Welcome Mixer is our first social gathering of the academic year, aimed at encouraging new international and NSE students to meet and mingle with current students. The Winternational Welcome is an event held in the beginning of each Spring semester for all new and returning students. As Global Ambassadors, your job is to lead ice-breaker activities and encourage students to engage in conversation and get to know each other. As part of the Mixer, Global Ambassadors will have the opportunity to lead our raffle, as well as, speak about the Global Ambassador Program and any announcements. The goal is to create a friendly atmosphere for new students. If you are available, we encourage all Global Ambassadors to attend this event.

### Flag Dedication Ceremony

This ceremony and reception is held to recognize international students, scholars and the countries they come from. We dedicate the flag from a country not previously represented by students or scholars, or re-dedicate a flag to recognize a particular country or event. Students are invited to speak about the meaning of their flag and to share information about their home country. Assistance with the program could include coordinating the speakers, writing a blog post about the event or the countries represented, getting students to attend the event, etc.

### Study Away Fair

During each semester's study away fair, we promote study away opportunities, exchange programs and more. Global Ambassadors are a key asset in this event since you can share your experience away from a more personal perspective and encourage your peers to go away. If you are a current international student, you can share your home culture or your experience as a student here at UAF.

### International Friendship Day

This event is aimed towards creating awareness of cultural diversity in our city. As part of the global community, whether as an international student or having had a study away experience, Global Ambassadors should celebrate our global culture. To do so, we encourage participation in International Friendship Day held at Pioneer Park each October. Your involvement can vary, from organizing an artistic performance, gathering a group of students to attend, staffing an information booth on study away opportunities or showcasing your cultural experience as an international student at UAF.

### Official Visits by University and Government Representatives

Occasionally, UAF receives visits from important representatives from other universities or government agencies. You may be asked to interact with these guests, whether by giving a campus tour or just sharing your experience here at UAF. This is a great opportunity to learn about intercollegiate relations as well as university-government relations.

### Blogging & Features of the Month

A good way to learn about study abroad opportunities and international academics, in general, is researching different education opportunities around the world. It is just as important to share that knowledge with fellow students, which you can do by writing blog posts. Some research subjects may be partner universities, study abroad programs, internships or other related subjects. Other topics to write about are UAF events, fun facts about your home country, tips for study away students or even an interview with an international or study away student/scholar. These articles will be posted on the Global Ambassador Blog and presented to the UAF community through the IPI website. Successfully submitting an article may count towards event participation, as needed. The blog can be found at: <http://uaf-ambassadors.blogspot.com/>.

### Other activities

There are a great deal of other activities in which the Global Ambassadors could participate. We encourage you to create your own events with the intention of including the international community at UAF. An example of these activities would be gathering a group to attend a Nanook Traditions event (Starvation Gulch, Winter Carnival or Springfest), International Education Week activities, gathering a group to attend a community event, leading coffee hour discussions, hosting a game night, talking with student clubs about study away/international experiences, hosting a returnee discussion, or whatever else you may be interested in doing to promote study away or international student integration. IPI must approve event proposals before they can be carried out. Be creative and remember to have a good time!



## Essential Points for Success

### Be Positive

The Global Ambassador Program highlights strengths. When negative subjects or questions come up, be honest in your answers, but try to be positive as well. Be conscious of the way you present your information.

### Be Honest

Never lie to a student. If you don't know the answer, that's okay. You can always refer them to your GAP Leads and we will gladly assist.

### Be Personable and Anecdotal

Be willing to share your personal stories and experiences. It's unimportant whether you're talking about your academic program or your first roommate. When you open up, even a little bit to a student, they feel more comfortable and are more willing to ask questions. This connection is critical for students. Sharing stories is also a great way to occupy time if you have a group that is quiet or nervous. **Note: If you're sharing personal stories, follow the Grandma Rule: don't say anything you wouldn't say in front of your grandma.**

### Be Relaxed and Have Fun

Everything Global Ambassadors do are supposed to be fun as well as informative. Do your best to inform the student, but don't forget to have a good time. Students will be more interested and engaged, and it will likely create a more positive experience for them. This is your chance to share your passions, and it's the most honest and valuable gift you can give them.

### Keep in touch with our office

Please make sure to keep in touch with our office throughout the semester. If we send you an email, we expect that you will respond. If you are unable to follow through with an activity you signed up for, please let us know. We understand that, as a student, you are busy; a quick email every now and then to check in would be appreciated.

## Things to Remember when Working with Students

- NEVER make commitments on behalf of UAF ("you'll be admitted," "You'll get a scholarship," etc.). If students want assurances, refer them to the appropriate office for more information.
- Treat all students with respect. As a Global Ambassador, it is your responsibility to show UAF's best qualities, including respect and kindness to everyone. Make sure to be courteous with the students at all times. Likewise, you have the right to be treated with respect. If anyone is being disrespectful or offensive, contact your GAP Leads immediately.
- If something is or feels wrong during any activity, don't hesitate to contact your GAP Leads and talk about the situation. It is our goal to ensure that the Global Ambassador Program is as enriching to the students as it is to you.
- Include students in stories or jokes you choose to tell. For example, talking about Starvation Gulch is all well and good, but it's not funny if you're the only one who knows what Starvation Gulch is. Provide the backstory and include everyone.
- Channel your enthusiasm. You wouldn't be a Global Ambassador if you didn't have some love and excitement for UAF!
- Don't allow your personal mood or life situation to negatively impact a student's experience. Every student deserves quality service.

## Be Prepared for Common Questions

The following is a list of questions students may ask at any moment during your interactions. There isn't necessarily a "right" answer to these questions, but it's important that you have something to say about the subject in general. If you're having trouble with certain questions because you have limited experience with the subject, ask your fellow Global Ambassadors or your GAP Leads for tips.

### Current/Future International Students

- When will I get my I-20 or DS-2019?
- How harsh is the winter weather in Fairbanks? What should or shouldn't I wear?
- Are there public transportation options for me?
- What are my employment options while I am at UAF? Are there any restrictions? Do I need special authorization or permission for anything?
- How do I extend my visa or status as an international student?
- How do I apply for a Social Security Number/driver's license/Alaska state ID card?
- Where do I get my Polar Express Card?

### Study Away Students

- How much does it cost to study away?
- Is exchange cheaper than study abroad?
- Can I use my financial aid while on study away? Are there any scholarships I can apply for?
- What courses can I take?
- Do I need to know the language of my country of interest?
- When can I go and for how long?
- I'm a student in F-1 status. Can I study away?
- Do I still qualify for the PFD even during my study away program? How do I stay eligible?

### Conversation Starters

In your time as a Global Ambassador, you will probably run into some shy students who may have a hard time conversing openly with someone they've just met (you!). If you run into this, here are a few good conversation starters. Students appreciate the interest and it's a great way to get to know your group.

- Tell me about your home country and/or culture.
- What are you majoring in?
- What's your favorite sport/movie/type of music/hobby?

The most important thing is to put the students at ease. The most effective way to do this is to let them know you are genuinely interested in them. Visiting a new country or new state for the first time can be intimidating. Let them know they're not the only students who will be experiencing these concerns at UAF. Remind them that they will have plenty of support as they adjust to life in Alaska or at their study away destination. Fill the time with anecdotes about UAF or your own experiences. Do your best to read your audience and keep them comfortable. Note: Not all groups from all places are culturally extroverted. If a student does seem quiet or shy, be conscious of cultural norms that may be different from your own.

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## Glossary

- Advising Agreement** - A document completed by study away students that shows how host campus courses are evaluated for UAF credit.
- Assistantship** - A financial award to a student that requires services specified in the award agreement. (e.g. a Teaching Assistantship [TA] or a Research Assistantship [RA]).
- Controlling Document** - A document that specifies the length of time a foreign national may remain in the U.S. in a certain status and that defines what that person can do during his or her stay.
- Culture Shock** - The name given to a feeling of distortion or confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar place and moves to an unfamiliar one.
- DS-2019** - controlling document needed to apply for a visa and enter the U.S. in J-1 student status.
- Exchange** - A study away program in which a student enrolls directly in another university for a specified length of time per an exchange agreement. International, north2north, and NSE Plan B exchange students pay their regular rate of tuition to UAF.
- GAP** - Acronym: Global Ambassador Program
- Home Campus** - The university where a student is degree-seeking.
- Host Campus** - The university where a study away student studies for a specified length of time.
- I-20** - The controlling document needed to apply for a visa and enter the U.S. in F-1 status.
- I-797** - The controlling document needed to apply for a visa and enter the U.S. in H1-B status.
- I-94** - The arrival record for a foreign national to the U.S.
- F-1 status** - The immigration status of a degree-seeking student or a student in a very specific academic program (e.g.: Intensive English or Summer Field School).
- Fellowship or Scholarship** - A financial award given to a student for purposes of study; this may include a tuition waiver; no service to the university or department is required.
- H1-B Status** - The employment immigration status of most international researchers and faculty.
- J-1 Status** - The immigration status of an exchange or study away incoming student. This status also includes a visiting professor or researcher.
- north2north Exchange** - A study away program at a participating university within the UArctic, a consortium of circumpolar institutions. IPI has a north2north scholarship that students can apply for, that is only applicable to exchanges with north2north partner schools.
- NSE** - The National Student Exchange program.
- Passport** - Proof of citizenship of a certain country.
- Plan A** - The NSE program offers two potential payment plans. Plan A students pay the in-state rate of tuition and mandatory student fees to their host campus.
- Plan B** - The NSE program offers two potential payment plans. Plan B students pay their regular rate of tuition and mandatory student fees to UAF.
- Study Abroad** - A study away program typically through a study abroad program provider. Tuition is paid to an institution or organization other than UAF.
- Study Away** - Academic programs for UAF students outside of Alaska, including International Exchange, north2north Exchange, National Student Exchange, and Study Abroad.
- UArctic / University of the Arctic** - A consortium of universities and institutions whose mission is to empower the people of the Circumpolar North by providing unique educational and research opportunities through collaboration.
- Visa / Residence Permit** - An immigration document that allows a foreign national to enter or remain in a country for a certain length of time and for a certain purpose.
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## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

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University of Alaska Fairbanks

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