

Overseas jobs give choices in different fields

By Bryan Houston
Emerald Contributor

Most students attend college to prepare for a career in the United States. But there are also many careers available abroad.

One resource that assists students interested in working in another country is the University's International Studies Program. It offers a general education in the political, economic and cultural interrelationships that exist between the world's countries while providing a preprofessional training for careers in government, communications, law, business, philanthropic foundations and non-profit

Business, the military offer chances to see the world

organizations.

According to Susan Stevens, international internship coordinator for the program, reading information about international careers is the best way to get started.

Stevens suggested "Careers In International Affairs," published by Georgetown University, as one useful resource. "It summarizes the different fields available for students with international interests, and it gives an overview of background requirements...to pursue a career in the chosen field," she said.

Following are various fields and some examples of agencies or companies listed in the book:

- The U.S. Government (Peace Corps, International Trade Administration, U.S. Agency for International Development).
- International organizations (United Nations, Association of Southeast Asian Nations).
- Commercial banking (Continental Illinois Bank — Tokyo).
- The business industry (Xerox Corp.).
- Consulting firms.
- Trade and professional associations/trade unions.
- Research organizations (East-West Center, an organization set up by the U.S. government in Hawaii and funded by Congress to research Pacific-area issues).
- Non-profit organizations (Crossroads Africa, The Asia Foundation, International Red Cross).
- Education and teaching organizations (Friends World College; School for International Education, which has a study abroad program that takes groups of students to live and teach abroad).

Stevens said students can become interested in an international career as a result of exposure to an international experience, such as living or working overseas or having a parent with a foreign origin or ancestry. There also is a growing awareness of the increasing interdependency of the world community, she added.

"Many students are understanding that we (as a country) need to become more sophisticated in our knowledge of other cultures," Stevens said. "With the concerns lately about U.S. competitiveness with the world, we need to educate our citizens about world events and world issues."

Careers abroad can be lucrative, she continued, but that depends on the field in which one decides to work.

"The range is about the same as it is in the United States," she said.

The International Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program, meaning students in the International Studies Department must take classes from other departments in order to fulfill their requirements and receive background on the subject they have chosen to pursue as a career.

overseas, then they are to return to the United States," Gragg said. "That rule was changed years ago from allowing civil servants to go overseas and just stay there. The rule was changed because some people were going overseas and retiring there."

Most men and women in the armed forces can, in a 20-year career, expect to go overseas twice, Gragg said. For that,

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Stevens stressed an international internship as a good way to break into the market.

"Every masters student has done an internship. It is highly recommended but not compulsory for undergraduate students," Stevens said.

Masters students have served internships in places such as Manila, Tokyo, Singapore, Vienna, Geneva, Bangkok and Brussels.

There is also an internship program for foreign students who wish to pursue a career in the United States. These students serve in places such as Washington, D.C., New York City, San Francisco and even Eugene.

For students studying military science, ROTC does not actually offer "careers" abroad, but there is opportunity to travel to foreign lands.

According to ROTC Lt. Col. Robert Gragg, the government's civil service workers get a better chance to actually work overseas than those in the armed forces.

"Civil servants are allowed to work a maximum of five years

there is not much preparation as far as learning foreign languages or foreign cultures.

"The Military Science Department has a built-in requirement of one term of a foreign language, which is not real adequate preparation. If a serviceman or servicewoman is sent overseas, many of them go to a very good language school," Gragg said. That school is set up by the government for the sole use by armed forces personnel.

In reality, however, Gragg said there is no real need for troops to learn a foreign language because their contact with the actual culture is usually very limited.

Salaries do not increase for troops overseas, but some exceptions to the rule include increases to offset high housing rents in countries where the economy fluctuates wildly. The U.S. government has no control over over situations like that. Troops who are involved in war do see a pay increase, called Hostile Fire Pay.

"It is an increase, but not a big increase," Gragg said.

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