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Studying overseas translates to taste of foreign cultures

Thanks to a partnership with Portland-based AHA International, studying abroad is easier than ever

By Ayisha Yahya
News Editor

Hundreds of students and faculty members have chances each year to explore education in a different culture through study abroad programs, and a recent University partnership with the nonprofit organization AHA International promises to expand these opportunities.

Under the merger, AHA International will become a self-supporting University program. The organization, which helps organize study abroad programs for about 35 universities nationwide, has worked in collaboration with the University since 1977. The organization works with the Northwest Consortium for Study Abroad — of which the University is a member — the Midwest Consortium for Study Abroad, the Independent Liberal Arts College Association and Pennsylvania Colleges in Cologne.

"I think (the partnership) reflects the University's desire to be an international university," said Tom Mills, the associate vice president of international programs.

AHA works with universities to organize courses at foreign universities, to provide student registration and home stays, and to maintain rela-

tions with sites of study. It has programs in 14 countries in Europe, Latin America and Africa, and in the past academic year facilitated study for 900 students.

In the past school year, about 170 University students participated in the organization's programs. The University offers about 80 study abroad programs, including the AHA programs, in 50 countries. Mills said about 700 University students spend time abroad each year.

While the group's employees are now University employees, AHA will keep its office in Portland and will operate independently from the Office of International Programs.

AHA's International's Executive Director Bob Selby said AHA was formerly unable to give students — especially those from universities outside the consortium — credit for classes they take while abroad. Now, students will now be able to get University credit.

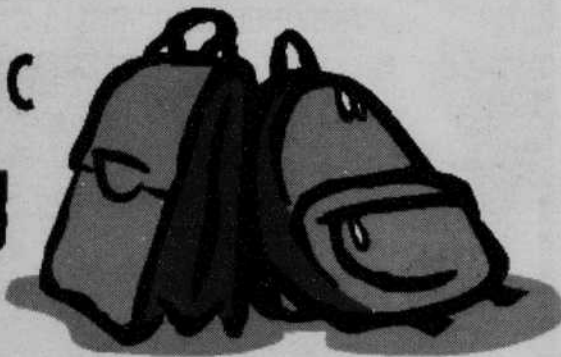
"We hope to vastly expand our national audience," Selby said. He added that AHA will benefit the University by bringing an extensive network of other schools, saying AHA's high enrollment numbers and support base will allow it to keep expenses low and support its programs for many years.

AHA's Director of Finance and Administration Harmony George said the partnership also allows AHA to be more independent and work with committees at individual universities to develop new programs.

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