

New Dimensions of Internationalization at Purchase: A Report to the Campus Community

To: Faculty and Professional Staff

From: Elizabeth Langland, Provost; Wayne TeBrake, Associate Provost

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Over the last decade at least, Purchase College has maintained a modest but important commitment to international education. Through the Office of International Programs and Services we have encouraged a variety of study abroad opportunities for our students, often through programs offered by other SUNY campuses. At the same time, we have developed a number of direct exchange programs with other institutions, which offer our students program-specific opportunities for a semester or year of study abroad, principally in the arts. And in the last decade, we have nurtured our own summer programs in Pisciotta, Italy, Burgos, Spain, and Hyeres, France, which serve more than 100 students annually. In 2005, we also launched an experimental summer program in Beijing, China, which we hope to revive and maintain in another location beginning in 2008. In addition, we currently have approximately 120 international students (not counting permanent residents) enrolled in programs of study in both the arts and liberal arts, in roughly equal numbers.

In the last two years, pursuant to the Strategic Plan, the College has begun to develop collaborations with partner institutions abroad that promise to bring considerably more international students to our campus and offer our students new and distinctive opportunities for study abroad. In the fall of 2005, Purchase signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Iberoamericana University in Mexico City both to facilitate student and faculty exchanges and to enable the development of new dual-diploma programs of study. Currently we have a graphic design student spending a whole year in Mexico, and this semester we have the first contingent of Ibero students doing coursework at Purchase while working in internships at local social service agencies that reach out to the immigrant Hispanic community in Westchester County. At the same time, we continue to negotiate the financial and academic agreements that will allow us to implement dual-diploma programs of study in graphic design and art history; under these agreements both American and Mexican students would study for at least three semesters in each university and in the process complete the requirements for graduation of both institutions, thereby earning a single “global” degree that we hope will be a distinctive model for a new era of global education.

In the fall of 2006, under the umbrella of a larger collaboration between the State University of New York and the Turkish Ministry of Education, Purchase completed a similar set of agreements with Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul, under which annual cohorts of up to 30 Turkish students will study for two years in each institution - the first and last years at Bahçeşehir and the second and third years at Purchase - and earn dual-diploma degrees in New Media, American Studies, and Political Science/International Relations. The first Turkish students will be accepted into the dual-degree programs in New Media and American Studies and begin their studies at Bahçeşehir, which is an English medium university, in the fall of 2007 (we will delay the start of the Political Science program), and if they can meet the minimum requirements for English proficiency, they will arrive at Purchase in the fall of 2008. We are also developing a pilot summer study program at Bahçeşehir for our students - as well as students more generally in SUNY - to study the rich architectural history of Istanbul from the Byzantine and Ottoman eras to the present day.

In addition, we have just finalized the agreements for a novel degree-completion articulation agreement with the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore. Under this program, which involves dance faculty serving as consultants and instructors in Singapore, select

cohorts of students, perhaps 10-12 per year, who will have completed their three-year diploma in Dance in Singapore, will be able to complete the BFA degree in Dance at Purchase. If all goes well, the first dance students from Singapore will arrive at Purchase in the fall of 2007. Purchase is also a participant in a larger SUNY project to create dual-diploma programs of study in collaboration with Nanjing University in China, though this project is still in its infancy. Meanwhile, in the fall of 2006, Purchase College joined with the Office of International Programs and the Office of Learning Environments at SUNY System Administration to create the SUNY Center for Collaborative Online International Learning. The mission of the COIL Center is to develop more on-line courses with an international dimension throughout SUNY. For Purchase, in particular, we believe that the COIL center will become an indispensable component of our broader international collaborations, preparing students for exchanges and orienting students to new academic cultures prior to their departure.

Once they are implemented, these new international initiatives, building on our existing programs, promise to bring significant numbers of new international students to Purchase, perhaps doubling our current census within just a few years. Since these students will be paying out-of-state tuition, they will be bringing with them much-needed new tuition revenues to Purchase. But more important, these programs will enrich enormously the cultural diversity of our campus community and offer our students significant new opportunities for global education. And in the process, Purchase College, along with the State University of New York as a whole, has the opportunity to emerge as a global pioneer in undergraduate education.