



Lebanese International University

INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGIC PLAN

OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2020-2025

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1. WHAT IS THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS? HOW DOES IT BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS? LIU? STAKEHOLDERS?

The office of International Relations (OIR) at LIU is of the purpose in pursuing LIU's internationalization aspiration. Indeed, the OIR is responsible for developing and coordinating international relations and activities, among others, it includes initiatives concerning students and staff mobility, international educational agreements, funding opportunities and alike.

Given the global orientation of the Lebanese International University, the office of International Relations is an instrumental and indispensable asset towards making significant progress for such purpose and direction. In this regard, actions are afoot in crafting a strategic plan that will set out goals, objective at various levels.

a) Institutional Level:

- i. Internationalization: The office will work on the development and implementation of the strategic plan for internationalization, which will also include adapting LIU's curricula to align with international competences and standards as well as enhancing LIU's profile and reputation.
- ii. The office in coordination with other academic units will strive to forge partnerships with foreign universities on providing joint or dual degree programs. Additionally, the office will play an important role in enhancing the universities international network and participating in calls for international project proposals.
- iii. International reference point: The OIR as a central hub within the university will manage and supervise all international activities as well as act as a reference to any international student/ faculty / staff mobility exchange and mobility.
- iv. International Image and Outreach: Step by step, the OIR will be building on the international profile of LIU, scaling up to reach new audiences abroad.

b) Stakeholder Level:

- i. The office will work on developing and managing international exchange and mobility opportunities for LIU students / faculty and staff.
- ii. The office will assist students and staff in activities concerning mobility, scholarship opportunities, exchange programs, and available grants.
- iii. The office shall foster and so maintain contact with alumni.
- iv. Students will gain international experience, developing global skills they need to succeed in the 21st century job market.

It is important to note that OIR will be working in coordination with all schools at LIU to facilitate whichever international agendas as they relate to and actively participating with all local. Regional and international stakeholders, such as partnership agreements and exchange opportunities. The OIR will thus work towards the strengthening of the international efforts of LIU through various activities, while encouraging the active participation of all stakeholders.

2. INTERNATIONALIZATION

Table 1 SWOTs Analysis Internationalization

Internationalization	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International scope of curricula. ● Effective cooperation with foreign organizations in the research domain. ● Commitment to the internationalized networking in teaching and learning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment to the use of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ● Internationalized environment study at home.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of funding provided to potential participants in mobility programs. ● Very few of agreements regulating the mutual recognition of ECTS or similar credits. ● No regulatory framework to assess the validity of international programs. ● Low accessibility of research resources to students and academics.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopting an institutional self-evaluation tool for internationalization and internationalization at home. ● Benefiting from the internationalized background of few faculty members.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inactive orientation program to guide the students to study abroad. ● International reach-out through competitions from neighboring institutions. ● Unexpected novelty crisis.

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The global context in which LIU operates requires connectivity beyond the boundaries of our immediate environs and country. While we seek to expand our international presence and interactions, this Internationalization Plan builds on our already strong international connections. It was developed as an outcome of LIU's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and is guided by specific goals to foster a diverse educational environment and increase international exposure and experiences for students, staff, and faculty by expanding opportunities abroad, synergy of education, research and innovation as well as bringing international students, academic professionals, and scholars to our Lebanon campuses.

4. STRATEGIC GOALS

In line with LIU's mission, this Internationalization Plan aims to help guide all efforts and activities at the different academic, research and administrative units towards fostering an international academic environment and to increase mobility of students and academic staff and to promote cooperation with other universities in Lebanon and abroad, in order to exchange experience and share education, research and development capacities. LIU strongly believes that students should be exposed to alternative cultures and experiences that provide a vibrant, challenging and stimulating learning environment that prepares them to live, work and succeed in an interconnected world.

To this end, the University takes account of its general objective to be an inclusive place that shapes integration and educates students for an increasingly international labor market to become responsible citizens and leaders. To accomplish these, LIU attributes great value on "Internationalization", and the number of long-term strategic goals that are defined in Internationalization Plan emphasizes this. Moreover, it is intended to be a dynamic document that will change and adapt as we engage in internationalization.

The themes and activities were determined based on their importance to LIU and their ability to help accelerate the internationalization effort. More importantly, they are designed to be synergistic and mutually supportive to provide strategic leadership for achieving desired outcomes that will have a transformative impact for improving the quality of all university activities and inform decisions. The themes are as follows:

5. INTERNATIONALIZATION PLAN THEMES

The strategic goals of the Internationalization plan are presented in four thematic pillars:

- I. International Mobility Opportunities
- II. Internationalization of Students

III. Internationalization of the Curriculum

IV. Strategic Partnerships and External Networking

To achieve these goals and take advantage of interactions between the four pillars of internationalization, we must work in an integrated and organic manner that encompasses both the Schools and Administrative units, facilitated primarily by the Office of International Relations (OIR)). Whilst some of this work will be phased in over the next three years, other tasks may require a longer commitment. As such, this plan will require appropriate and adequate support that includes: resources (people and finances), systems, technologies, capacities, policies and time for implementation.

5.1 International Mobility Opportunities

Goal 1: Increase access to and participation in international mobility & recruitment experiences for Students, Faculty Researchers, and administrative Staff

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Promote international mobility – both semester-long exchanges and shorter-term stay.
- 2) Streamline the process of credit recognition to studying abroad.
- 3) Encourage and support faculty in developing collaborative relationships with faculty from partner institutions as a means of strengthening partnerships and increasing student mobility.

Goal 2: Strengthen Exchange Agreements and Academic Study Abroad.

- 1) This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:
- 2) Increase the number of outgoing students and target specific majors.
- 3) Develop a model that better reports on the outgoing mobility of students and improve data management and procedures.
- 4) Support Exchange opportunities through European Credit Mobility projects.
- 5) Develop enrolment plan to recruit students from the North (Europe) and South (MENA and NENA) (competitive scholarship, Accessibility to accommodation)

Goal 3: Intensify International Mobility for Students, Faculty Researchers, and administrative Staff

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Participate in Erasmus+ credit mobility programs, future programs of the European Commission in the area of higher education and other mobility programs.
- 2) Raise the level of cooperation with foreign higher education institutions with which LIU already has signed cooperation agreements.
- 3) Develop support services for incoming international students and scholars.
- 4) Support existing student clubs to better integrate international Exchange students in relevant LIU club activities and programs.

5.2 Internationalization of Students

Goal 1: Provide innovation and leadership to increase multicultural, multinational and multilingual engagement through increased opportunities for global community engagement.

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Provide an opportunity for students to include an internationally focused course within their degree program.

- 2) Foster international skills/ competencies by LIU students who do not seek a stay or study abroad.
- 3) Foster e-learning or other forms of teaching that provide an international dimension.
- 4) Strengthen and guarantee the quality of teaching foreign languages and cultures.
- 5) Build a portfolio of international community organizations (industry, NGO, governmental agencies, networks) and support community engagement as an alternative path to education abroad for LIU students.

Goal 2: Enrich the cultural diversity and Involvement of the LIU community in International Activities.

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Encourage Faculty and staff members to attend exchange programs supported with grants by the EU Erasmus+ program.
- 2) Create an online resource for faculty to find information about available funding, deadlines and requirements for international collaboration in international academic exchange, research collaboration, organization of events, and external funding sources.
- 3) Encourage and create opportunities for involvement of students, faculty, and staff in intercultural activities.
- 4) Support for promotion of language skills (English and other foreign languages) of students, teaching and non-teaching staff, which will ensure their active participation in the process of University internationalization.

5.3 Internationalization of the Curriculum

Goal 1: Provide faculty with the resources needed to internationalize their courses and instructional strategies with diversified perspectives

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Promote innovative teaching in subjects related to internationalization.
- 2) Strengthen the international/ intercultural component of teaching by increasing the number of guest lecturers.
- 3) Promote a culture of sharing international experiences.

Goal 2: Provide innovation and leadership in the promotion of international, intercultural and interdisciplinary competency within academic curricula.

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Support for faculty to create new courses or enhance existing ones to feature international content.
- 2) Develop internationally focused instructional materials, coursework and/or degree programs to support international, intercultural and interdisciplinary competency within all schools.
- 3) Integrate international concepts and methodologies within the curriculum.
- 4) Adopt an international course requirement within the undergraduate core curriculum to ensure students have a base level of knowledge and understanding about the global dimensions of human society.

5.4 Partnership & Networking

Goal 1: Promote Cooperation with Foreign Universities and Research Institutions, Industry and other Partner Institutions through Continuous professional development.

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) provide the conditions for higher participation rate in international funding programs within Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and other programs.
- 2) Increase participation in international projects and promotion of cooperation with foreign universities, research institutions, industry and other partner institutions in various fields of education, research and innovation.
- 3) Raise the visibility of research capacities and results achieved at LIU at national and international level.

Goal 2: Support the development of strategic Partnerships through external networking to maintain a database for scientific research, maintaining continuous training on scientific research, and virtual data exchange.

This goal will be accomplished through the following objectives:

- 1) Create an Office of International Relations (OIR) website.
- 2) Develop and increase its participation in international networks and partnerships that add value and can generate external funding for student exchanges.
- 3) Develop outreach that is specifically linked to alumni engagement with and an interest in international affairs.
- 4) Establish new and expand existing international degree programs (e.g. joint degrees, double degrees) in the schools.
- 5) Establish short-term programs such as international summer schools.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The long term goals of internationalization will be achieved by following an approach of limited but high impact initiatives that can be set, implemented and evaluated in fixed periods. These initiatives can be reviewed and maintained or changed according to the international, national and institutional context of the university. The following mechanisms shall monitor progress towards the achievement of the strategic goals and initiatives to improve internal and external awareness of internationalization activities at LIU:

- a. Use in all Schools, OIR and other relevant administrative units (VPAA, Provost, Registrar's Office, Career's Office, Alumni Office, others).
- b. University wide common indicators and Academic or Administrative Unit specific indicators
- c. Exchange Student Surveys, Course evaluations,
- d. Performance indicators may be included in:
- e. Overseers Report
- f. Individual Annual Reports / Annual Strategies of Units
- g. External communications (websites, catalogs, brochures, presentations, orientation)

A detailed internal communications plan on internationalization will be developed for staff and student engagement around key internationalization initiatives as relevant.