

# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Setting the pace,  
spanning the globe for 50 years

It all started in the Republic of Panama. It was 1957, the year “American Bandstand” first danced into this nation’s living rooms, Ford’s first Edsels rolled off the assembly line, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1, and Florida State University landed a U.S. Department of Defense contract to offer continuing education courses for American military personnel stationed in the Panama Canal Zone.

So began FSU’s International Programs.

Fast forward to MTV’s “Total Request Live,” hybrid vehicles and the International Space Station. The year is 2007, and enrollment on FSU’s Panama campus represents a diverse student body that hails from 18 countries around the world. Beginning with that original outpost, FSU’s study-abroad program, one of the world’s preeminent intercontinental academic initiatives, has placed some 20,000 students in more than a dozen and a half cities. It also has reached the half-century mark.

The golden anniversary has taken a year to celebrate.

Commemorating its auspicious beginning and feting the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its global educational leadership, FSU’s International Programs has been hosting a series of festivities around the world, beginning last fall in Tallahassee with a celebration and culminating back in Tallahassee on Oct. 26-27 during Homecoming 2007 at a reunion for its alumni and all faculty who have taught in the program.

There’s much to celebrate. In addition to the golden anniversary of the university’s commitment to international study, each of FSU’s four international campuses has reached its own memorable milestone recently. This year, not only has FSU-Panama crossed the half-century mark, but the newest campus in Valencia, Spain, reached the 10-year marker as well. In 2006, the Florence, Italy, location turned 40, and the London campus hit 35.



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Since 1957

Each continues the university’s commitment to turning the world into a classroom, providing high-quality, American-style education while immersing students in the vibrant culture and living patterns of its host city.

Beyond the study centers, students can choose from FSU programs around the world. With more than 20 study-abroad programs located from Europe to Asia to Central America, FSU’s International Programs ([international.fsu.edu](http://international.fsu.edu)) is a pacesetter in international education. The program’s extensive course offerings allow students to satisfy graduation requirements while living within diverse cultures the world over.

FSU’s Florence campus, the brainchild of then-Dean of Students Ross Oglesby, was born in 1966. After accompanying the FSU Flying High Circus on a European tour that included this history-laden city of the Italian Renaissance, an enamored Oglesby decided to hang out an academic shingle there.

Studying overseas is far more than what happens in the classroom. FSU’s first students arrived in Florence in the aftermath of a great flood and immediately pitched in. Italian officials later saluted them for their help in rescuing priceless historical treasures.

Bringing the modern into the art-permeated cultural treasure that is Florence, today’s FSU students attend classes in the program’s main building, the 15<sup>th</sup>-century palace of Alessandri, which also houses a library, computer lab and student lounge. Using the tools of the contemporary scholar, students explore the work of Galileo, da Vinci, Dante and others.

Studying in Florence inspired Todd G. Kocourek to chart an entirely new course for his future. “It changed my educational career and my subsequent life,” says Kocourek, who arrived in Italy in 1981 as a Stanford University student. Even though Stanford had a study-abroad program in Florence, Kocourek chose FSU’s program because of its choice location and reasonable tuition.

“The streets that I walked every day to go to class or buy my bread were a special field trip for my friends at the Stanford program in Florence—and they paid three to four times as much for the privilege,” recalls Kocourek. “After my time in the program was up, I elected to start studies at FSU.”

Kocourek made the move to FSU’s Tallahassee campus without so much as a prior visit—and he stayed, earning an undergraduate degree in Asian studies in 1985 and graduating from the law school in 1988. Today, he is president and chief executive officer of Florida First Capital Finance Corp. and also serves as consular correspondent for the Italian government in the greater Tallahassee area.

The London campus was established in 1971. Headquartered in a historic seven-building complex minutes from the West End theater district, the London Study Center is neighbor to the British Museum, the National Gallery and several landmarks of the British capital. With its small classes and liberal arts focus, the London Center is a standard-bearer for study-abroad programs. Its American and British teachers and scholars instruct students in a historic setting that nurtured Western government, commerce and literature.

While in London, students reside in stylish flats in the center’s renovated 17<sup>th</sup>-century structures, which also feature classrooms, a lecture hall that does double duty as a theater, a library and computer lab. And the Study Center provides state-of-the-art technology, with wireless Internet throughout, along with full-time technical support.

Seminole football’s Myron Rolle spent the summer in London. Visiting historic

sites, meeting new people and experiencing different parts of the city, the sophomore from New Jersey was impressed by what he encountered.

“I thought the diversity in the Big Apple was extraordinary, until I came to London,” Rolle observes. “There are people from all over the world [in London]. Sections of the city are dominated by a particular demographic population. For instance, Edgware Road has a heavy Middle Eastern influence. Brixton is populated by Jamaicans. The west part of Soho has China Town. London is truly a multi-cultural city.”

Since 1997, FSU has maintained a study-abroad program in Spain, beginning first in the seaside town of Torremolinos. Three years later, the program moved its study center to Valencia, the country’s third-largest city. More than 1,350 students from Florida and 2,500 overall have enrolled in some 600 different courses taught by 60 faculty members in this 2,000-year-old city bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

Continuing that legacy, in June, FSU President T.K. Wetherell inked an agreement with Universida Politecnica de Valencia President Juan Julia Igual that provides for academic, scientific and cultural collaboration between the two institutions.

The Valencia campus is located in a painstakingly refurbished two-building structure that includes housing, classrooms and administrative space. Preserving the city’s unique history, the two-building site contains part of a two-story-high portion of a thousand-year-old Arabian wall and several 14<sup>th</sup>-century tanning tanks used in making leather.

*Produced by University Communications*



FSU student-athlete  
Myron Rolle in London

Alumni who have participated in any of FSU’s study-abroad programs are invited to a series of special events during **Homecoming Week, Oct. 21-27**. Director of International Programs Jim Pitts will serve as Homecoming Parade Grand Marshal on Friday, Oct. 26, and alumni are invited to accompany the International Programs float as it travels the parade route.

Saturday, Oct. 27, will feature a **Game Day Reunion** and pregame buffet at the Alumni Center for all International Program alumni. A portion of the \$15 admission price will be contributed to an International Programs Scholarship Fund.

For more information about Homecoming Week activities, visit [international.fsu.edu](http://international.fsu.edu).