

## **Bluefield State College J-1 Annual Report for 2019-20**

**Did you host any J-1 exchange visitors during the period of 07/01/2019 to 06/30/2020? If so, what kinds of activities did they engage in (such as studying, lecturing, performing research, etc.)?**

*Response: None directly, only third-party J-1 Exchange Students and Scholars.*

**List all active agreements you have with foreign universities that could result in students or scholars coming through our J-1 program and indicate if it's a new (this 2019/20 year) or extended agreement. Please elaborate on how these agreements are facilitating exchange. Please email me scanned copies of these agreements.**

*Response:*

***Active institutional partnership/agreements, extended via email correspondence:***

1. *National Ilan University, Taiwan (NIU) (2015; extended to 2021)*
2. *William V. S. Tubman University, Liberia (TU) (2015; extended to 2021)*
3. *Kazan National Research Technological University, Kazan, Russia (KNRTU) (2015; extended to 2021)*
4. *Universidad Autonoma de Santa Ana (UNASA), El Salvador (since 2017)*
5. *Universidad de Oriente (UNIVO), San Miguel, El Salvador (since 2017)*
6. *Ilia State University (ISU), Tbilisi, Georgia (2017)*
7. *UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DO CENTRO-OESTE (UNICENTRO), Brazil (since 2017)*
8. *University of Oran No.2 (UO2), Algeria (since 2018)*
9. *European University of Rome, Italy (signed in fall 2018)*
10. *Alexander Dubcek University of Trencin, Slovakia (signed in spring 2019)*

***Active institutional partnership/agreements, new:***

1. *Istanbul Medipol University*

***Exchanges facilitated by partnerships/agreements:***

1. *BSC-KNRTU, Russia: Postponed due to COVID-19, Dr. Bonnie Reese's 2020 summer study abroad about Russian Theater History.*
2. *English for International Students: BSC will issue J-1 visas to students from partner institutions to enroll in its pre-baccalaureate English for International Students program.*

MoUs may be viewed at: <https://bluefieldstate.edu/resources/international-initiatives/international-partners>

**Did you have any J-1 exchange visitors come to your institution during the 2018-19 period who came on DS-2019s issued by a third-party (IIE, Fulbright, IREX, etc.)? If so, please elaborate.**

*Third party Exchange Students:*

*AY 2019-20: 1 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange participant from Germany (Cultural Vistas).*

*Preparations under way to accept two male participants in January 2021 (through June 30, 2021).*

*Third-party Exchange Scholars:*

*Four Fulbright Scholars in Residence at other US host institutions visited BSC with funding support from the IIE-CIES Outreach Lecturing Fund and a local donor.*

*October 2019: Dr. Victoria Bam of Ghana, based out of Millikin University, Decatur, IL, delivered presentations on "Public Health Challenges of Ghana" and "Ghana's Customs and Cultures" to students at BSC, Riverview and Mt. View High Schools in McDowell County.*

*November 2019: Dr. Jakob Nimrod Keyan of Israel, a visiting neuroscientist research scholar at Stanford University's School of Medicine in California, delivered presentations to students of BSC and Wyoming East and Westside High Schools in Wyoming County on "Israel's' Customs and Cultures" and "The effect of stress on the brain and brain-computer interfaces for treatment of stress related psychopathology."*

*December 2019: Dr. Murat Culdüz of Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey, and Fulbright Scholar in Residence at Tennessee State University, delivered presentations on "Turkey's Customs and Cultures" and "Why English is learned in Turkey" to students at BSC and Montcalm and Princeton Senior High Schools in Mercer County. Also, during his visit, Dr. Culdüz was authorized by the Rector of Istanbul Medipol University to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with BSC to support student and faculty exchanges, collaborative faculty research, and information exchange.*

*February 2020: Dr. Asif Kalinder Shaik of India, Fulbright Scholar at Texas A & M- College Station in Texas, delivered presentations about "India's Customs and Cultures" to students at Bluefield High School in Mercer County. He also delivered presentations to BSC students and Bluefield's Rotary International about "India's fascination with Mathematics."*

**List the various cross-cultural activities you offered on your campus during the 2019-20 period that were attended by international students and scholars and promoted cross-cultural awareness. Elaborate on each activity (one or two sentences at most). Please email me scanned copies of flyers or handouts that were used for these activities.**

*Cross-cultural awareness activities:*

*Fall 2019:*

*August-December: Posted flyers campus wide and on office's Facebook page about 2019 study abroad programs being planned (Russia, Argentina) but the Russia program had to be postponed and the Argentina trip, with the Solar Eclipse as its focus, may be cancelled.*

*September: Welcome reception for international students attended by BSC staff, faculty, and administrators*

*October 24: United Nations Day: BSC's international students set up displays about their countries.*

*October-January 2019: Campus wide flyers and Facebook announcements to encourage students to register for 20 free passports slated for February 21, 2020*

*December 6: BSC's Annual Humanities Challenge, which promotes the study of literatures and cultures from around the world attended by students of BSC and area high schools -- VA: (Bland, Giles, Graham, Narrows, Tazewell, Richlands; WV: Montcalm, Princeton Senior, Wyoming East and Westside High Schools)*

*In fall 2019, BSC students were invited to become members of newly formed student organizations: Future Teachers without Borders; Rural Healthcare Services Students without Borders, the BSC Chapter of Engineers without Borders, Rotaract, and Business Students without Borders.*

*Spring 2020:*

*January and February: Six BSC faculty—Colin Cavell, Debjani Chakrabarti, Bill Bennett, Phillip Imel, Tara Mullins, and Sudhakar R Jamkhandi—enrolled in the IDEAS workshops hosted by the US Department of State and World Learning to help build the study abroad capacities of higher education institutions. [Bill Bennett and Vincent Mateescu have enrolled in summer 2020 webinars on the same subject offered by these entities.]*

*February: See section above about Fulbright Scholar on Campus in spring 2020.*

*February 21: In collaboration with US Postal Service, held Passport to the World when 10 passports were issued to BSC students.*

*March 6: International Student Organization celebrated International Women's Day by presenting roses to BSC's female staff, faculty, and administrators*

*Beginning March 16, the spring 2020 semester was transitioned to online learning/teaching because of COVID-19. Several on campus activities were cancelled, including all 2020 summer study abroad program.*

*10 BSC International students opted to stay in Bluefield and 10 opted to return to their homelands. Dr. Jamkhandi has communicated with current international students on a weekly basis to ensure their completion of coursework for spring 2020 and pre-registration for fall 2020 classes.*

*April 15 -- BSC's 7th Annual Agora, A Celebration of Creative Expression: In anticipation of not being able to convene on campus, beginning in late February, Agora Coordinator Dr. Sudhakar R Jamkhandi reached out to West Virginia creative artists and writers, BSC alumni who were past Agora participants, area high school students, and Fulbright artists who had visited BSC in the past to share video recordings. The response was tremendous as evidenced in the virtual Agora which may be viewed at <https://www.bluefieldstate.edu/agora/virtual-agora-2020>*

*Applicable scanned copies of flyers or handouts will be emailed separately.*

**Discuss some of the issues you have encountered as you implemented the J-1 program on your campus. 1) how you went about providing orientation to new international students and scholars; 2) how you dealt with insurance coverage; or possibly 3) how you onboarded new AROs.**

*Response: No issues arose pertaining to the J-1 Exchange Scholar Program because BSC has yet to take advantage of this opportunity.*

*Orientation for new international students, including 3<sup>rd</sup> party sponsored J1 visa holders: This annual event is held on the Friday before classes start. Since BSC did not have J-1 visa holders, no orientation was held.*

*Insurance coverage: Will use the tool at this web site when needed:*

*<http://www.insubuy.com/international-student-medical-insurance/?affiliateid=overture>*

*Onboarding of new Alternate Responsible Office: Not applicable.*

**Discuss what has been your biggest difficulty implementing the J-1 program.**

*Visiting Faculty:*

*Identifying English-speaking faculty from partner institutions in non-English speaking countries who can spend up to an entire academic year at BSC.*

*Foreign partner institutions have the same challenge faced by US institutions, namely, releasing full-time faculty to go abroad for scholarly activities and finding substitute (adjunct) faculty who will teach their courses in their absence. Reciprocal exchanges will be a rare occurrence.*

*Appropriate housing for exchange scholars along with the cost of such housing (i.e., who will cover rental costs?)*

*How can substitute (adjunct) faculty salaries be paid/justified and from what funding source?*

*Partner institutions' students: No incentive for partner institutions' students to study at BSC if they do not have English and if they have to pay non-resident tuition and fees. Unfortunately, our state institutions are not geared to handle reciprocal exchanges nor is the state willing to charge in-state tuition for students from partner institutions. Only short-term cultural immersion trips are possible for partner institutions' students.*

*Absence of financial support from WV HEPC to support salaries for exchange scholars from partner institutions (within BSC budget allocation) or to engage in two-way student mobility with international partner institutions.*

**Discuss your plans for the future.**

**Post COVID-19:**

*Existing and future Agreements: Design study abroad curricula in different fields for students of partner institutions for customized short-term study at BSC.*

*Sustain cross-cultural activities indicated above.*

*Custom design BSC faculty led study abroad for BSC students at partner institutions.*

*New Agreements: The latest MoU was signed in December 2019 with Istanbul Medipol University in Turkey. A few have been inactive and hence they have been terminated-- Sisian State College, Armenia, Holy Cross College, India, and Yunan College of Mechanical and Electronic Engineering Technology, China.*

*In June 2020, with the support of the US Department of Commerce and the WV HEPC International Education Director, two new MoU's have resulted to promote student mobility, collaborative faculty research, and information exchange have evolved with Varna University of Management in Bulgaria and FUNDAÇÃO ESCOLA DE COMERCIO ALVARES PENTEADO (FECAP).*

*Third Party Exchange Students:*

*Approved for AY 2020-21: 2 male Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange will study and intern at BSC in 2021 (January-June) with the Feuchtenbergers and Gino Russo as host families.*

*Third party Exchange scholars/professors (in collaboration with CIES/IIE Outreach Lecturing Fund: This activity may take place in person and/or virtually.*

*BSC has been selected to host a Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant for Portuguese in AY 2020-21.*

*Passport to the World: If funded by local foundations/civic organizations and/or a WV based corporation, 20 free passports will be issued in February 2021 in collaboration with the US Postal Service.*

*J-1 Exchange Scholars: BSC will make every effort to host exchange scholars from at least two partner institutions to teach at BSC for one or two semesters in AY 2020-21.*

*J-1 Exchange students: BSC will encourage partner institutions' students to enroll in the English for International Students program, participate in semester or yearlong programs that include paid internships, and/or short-term cultural immersion study tours.*

*Partner with BSC's international partner institutions UNASA (El Salvador) and UNICENTRO (Brazil) to provide online/synchronous foreign language tutoring for BSC students in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively, beginning in AY 2020-21.*