APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

for the

2008 NEAR EAST & SOUTH ASIA UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

A program of the
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program (NESA UGRAD), a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, provides opportunities for first-, second-, and third-year undergraduate students, as well as students in their final year of secondary school, from the Middle East, North Africa and the South Asia for one semester or one academic year of full-time, non-degree study in the United States.

Participants will be enrolled in full-time, non-degree study at 2-year and 4-year institutions. Participants will live on-campus with an American roommate.

Participants will not choose host institutions. Confirmation of participation may be required prior to learning where a participant will be placed. Placements will not be changed.

Below are some of the possible fields of study for NESA UGRAD. Other fields will also be considered.

- Agriculture
- American Studies
- Anthropology
- Biology
- Business/Accounting
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Criminal Justice
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- Environmental Management
- Geology
- Hospitality Management
- International Relations
- Journalism and Mass communication
- Law
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Urban Planning

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Community Service: To expose participants to the principles of community service and social responsibility in the United States, NESA UGRAD participants will be required to perform a minimum of 20 hours of community service to local organizations during their first semester.

Part-Time Internship: Internships provide an opportunity for one-year participants to gain professional experience and skills that can be applied in their future careers in their home countries. NESA UGRAD participants on one academic year scholarship will be required to intern 40 hours per month during their second semester. Each participant's internship must be related to their field of study. Internships will be unpaid.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will be considered without respect to race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. Persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Competition for the Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program (NESA UGRAD) is merit-based and open to anyone who:

- Is a citizen, national or permanent resident qualified to hold a valid passport issued by the country from which applicant is applying;
- Is completing his/her final year of secondary school or enrolled in first-, second- or third-year full-time undergraduate study at the time of application at a registered academic institution in his/her country and is in good academic standing. Part-time students or correspondence students are not eligible;
- Submits a complete application with all required documents by the application deadline;
- Is able to begin the academic exchange program in the United States in Summer 2008;
- Is able to receive and maintain a J-1 visa;
- Is committed to returning to their home country after completion of the program; and
- Is proficient in spoken and written English at the time of application.

Individuals in the following circumstances are NOT eligible for the NESA UGRAD program:

- U.S. citizens and permanent residents of the United States;
- Individuals currently participating in academic, training, or research programs in the United States;
- Individuals currently residing or working outside of their home country;
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the U.S. government for a period of more than six weeks and who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of application;
- Individuals who have applied for U.S. permanent residency in the past three years;
- Local employees of the U.S. missions abroad who work for the U.S. Department of State during the period of their employment and for one year following the termination of employment;
- Immediate family members of U.S. Department of State employees for a period of one year following the termination of such employment. This provision does not disqualify self-supporting members of families who live apart from their parents;
- Persons arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime (excluding minor traffic violations);
- Current employees of affiliated cooperating agencies/consultants and their immediate family members (e.g. spouses, parents, children, and siblings) for a period of one year following the termination of such employment.

The U.S. Department of State and the cooperating agency reserve the right to verify all of the information included in the application. In the event that there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.

Under the terms of the grant and the laws governing the J-1 visa required for participation in the NESA UGRAD Program, participants must return to their home country immediately upon completion of the program for a period of at least two years. Participants are not eligible for visa extensions under any circumstances. No exceptions will be made.

Applications not meeting the above eligibility requirements will not be forwarded to the selection committee.

PROVISIONS OF THE GRANT

If selected, the NESA UGRAD Program will cover a participant's:

- J-1 visa support;
- Round-trip travel from participant's home city to host institution in the United States;
- Health benefits;
- Tuition and mandatory university fees (including required books and supplies);
- Room and board (housing and meals);
- Maintenance allowance; and
- Enrichment allowance.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The NESA UGRAD Program is conducted as a merit-based open competition. After the March 1 deadline, all eligible applications will be reviewed by a panel of academic specialists. Chosen semi-finalists will be interviewed in Libya. All applicants will be notified of their status in May/June 2008.

Selection panels will use the following criteria to evaluate applications (not in order of importance):

- Academic excellence
- Cross-cultural interest
- Demonstrated leadership potential
- Proficiency in written and spoken English
- Flexibility and suitability as an exchange student
- Commitment to returning to their home country after completion of the program
- Preference will be given to students that represent disadvantaged and underrepresented communities with no prior experience outside their countries.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

General Instructions:

- Answer ALL questions on the application in English.
- Include your full, legal name, family name (surname) as spelled on your passport (if available).
- Include complete contact information (including index codes for all addresses and city/country codes for all phone and fax numbers).

- Do NOT leave any spaces blank. If a question does not apply to you, enter "N/A" (not applicable).
- All forms and supporting materials should be typewritten (if possible) and submitted with the completed application. Handwritten applications must be neatly printed in black ink.
- Write your full name and country of citizenship in the top of each page.

Specific Instructions:

Field of Study (page 2)

- Indicate the main subject you are currently (or intend to be) studying at you home university as "Major Field of Study"
- If applicable, you may include a secondary discipline as the "Minor Field of Study"
- Example: Major Field of Study: Literature
  Minor Filed of Study: English Language and Literature

Academic Completion (page 2)

To determine the appropriate placement at a U.S. host institution, the placement agency needs to determine the last full year of academic study you have completed as of the start of the program. This means you need to check the last full year of academic study you will have completed in July/August 2008.

For example, if you are in your first year of undergraduate study while filling out the application, you will have completed your first year of undergraduate study by July/August 2008. Therefore, you should check the box to the left of "1st year undergraduate study."

Language Proficiency (page 4)

You will need to self-assess your knowledge of foreign languages you choose to include in this section using "Excellent," "Good," or "Fair" to describe your ability.

You must also provide the results of the TOEFL or ITP TOEFL exam, as well as a copy of the test results with your application for placement purposes. (U.S. institutions require your official TOEFL or ITP TOEFL exam results.)

Non-academic Activities (page 4)

List your participation in extracurricular, non-academic activities which can include, but not limited to, jobs or internships, community service, clubs or organizations, sports, or cultural activities. Include your role in the activity. For example:

Location/Institution/Contact	Type of Activity	Date of Participation
Rotary Club, President Name	Treasurer	Jan. 2006-Dec. 2006

Personal Statement (page 6)

Use the personal statement to clarify your reasons for wanting to participate in the NESA Undergraduate Exchange Program. You will want to outline your background and your goals for the future. The personal statement should be written with the objective of clarifying your interest for the selection and placement committees. Follow the suggested topics and be clear and concise in your essay.

SELECTED APPLICANTS WILL NEED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

***For those who have completed secondary school by the time of application submission*:**

- A copy of applicant's high school diploma and leaving exam results with an accurate English translation, which may be done by applicant
- A copy of applicant's university transcript with an English translation
- A copy of applicant's passport (if available) or government-issued identification

For those who have not completed secondary school by the time of application submission:

- A copy of high school transcripts (course list and grades) with an English translation, which may be done by applicant
- A copy of applicant's passport (if available) or government-issued identification

The deadline for applications for the NESA UGRAD Program is March 1, 2008.

Applications will not be returned to the applicant after the end of the competition.

NESA UGRAD Timeline:

- March 1, 2008: NESA UGRAD application deadline.
- March 2008: Conduct interviews.
- May/June 2008: Finalists and alternates notified.
- June/July 2008: Pre-departure orientations.
- August-September 2008: Travel to the U.S.