Northeastern University attracts students and faculty from around the world who value experiential learning as a cornerstone of success in the global workplace, as necessary to deeply understanding different cultures, and as a guide to personal growth.

Northeastern is a mirror of our global society. In 2016, our students are going out into the world, and the world is increasingly coming to us. Students and faculty engage in opportunities for study abroad, from the award-winning, faculty-led Dialogues of Civilization to the successful and pioneering NUin program for freshmen; from course-based service-learning trips to traditional study abroad. International and out-of-region co-ops are on the rise. In all, 3,252 undergraduates had a global learning experience in 2014-2015; since 2006, Northeastern students have worked or studied in 131 different countries.

Our reach has expanded dramatically beyond our Boston campus. Northeastern has become a destination of choice — the sixth-ranked institution in the United States in 2014-2015 for international students. The campuses of the Northeastern University Global Network (NUGN) in Charlotte, Seattle, Silicon Valley and Toronto project the University’s identity nationally and globally. By the year 2025 we will expand our global identity to ensure that students, faculty and staff are true citizens of the world.

Northeastern in 2025 will pursue the interconnection between the local and the global in everything we do. The university’s signature model of global experiential learning will distinguish all of the university’s programs, wherever they are offered, and will provide diverse groups of learners with lifelong opportunities to understand, appreciate and navigate the continuing, ever-evolving importance of place and culture in a digitally and materially interconnected world. The university’s educational programs will lead the world in equipping students to work with and connect to others across cultural and national boundaries. The university’s research, scholarship and creative activity will fully embrace the role that place, culture and context play in meeting the world’s grand challenges.

1. In 2025, Northeastern will be the world leader in offering **globally networked learning opportunities** that are extended in space as well as in time. We will offer lifelong learning opportunities that build individuals’ cultural agility at any stage of their professional and
personal development. These programs will be offered wherever and however there is a Northeastern presence: on the Boston campus, online and through the growing Global Network of campuses.

We will develop an interconnected network of information, communication and student services for all of Northeastern’s global activities, programs and opportunities. This will transform global educational experiences by allowing greater coordinated flexibility of educational and co-op opportunities. For example, the traditional semester abroad may become three different global destinations that each offer a related educational module connected and organized through the network. Current students and faculty as well as alumni who have worked or lived in another country will have opportunities to connect with and mentor learners who are new to that country.

Undergraduate and graduate students will draw upon the Global Network as well as the Boston home campus and faculty networks to select the best places in the world in which to study and work in their fields. Students in computer and information science or in bioengineering may divide their studies and their co-ops between Boston, Seattle and Silicon Valley. Students in finance or political science may gain perspective on global finance, governance, and regulatory regimes by working and studying in Toronto as well as the United States. Students will join their faculty mentors in research on solar engineering in Spain, policy making in Belgium, robotics in Japan.

Northeastern in 2025 will offer a rich array of lifelong global learning opportunities. Northeastern’s global network of employer partners will be closely involved with the design and delivery of these programs. One example is the Cultural Agility Leadership Lab (CALL) in the D’Amore-McKim School of Business, which helps both individuals and organizations develop their cross-cultural competencies through international experience.

2. In 2025, all Northeastern undergraduates will have at least one meaningful experience of work and/or study abroad during their degree programs. This will be achieved through a combination of methods, including:

- Short-term experiences thoughtfully incorporated into heavily structured curricula, e.g. engineering, nursing. These experiences will provide our students with a unique perspective within their chosen profession, a feature that will be attractive for both recruitment and placement.
- Successful incorporation of a required group semester-long experience abroad into the curriculum in some majors, such as that currently required in Architecture. As a highlighted feature of more technically oriented degree programs, such semester-long experiences will give students a unique and practical competence in another cultural context.
• Semester-long exchange programs with global institutions of higher education where our students travel abroad to study, and students from our exchange partners’ institutions come to Boston to study.

• Programs designed from the ground up around their global international focus, such as the BS in International Business or the Masters in International Management. Such programs will typically incorporate one or two years of both studying and working in a host country, in the host national language.

• International co-ops. Currently 6% of all co-op placements are international; by 2025, our goal is to be at 30%. As a current Northeastern faculty member observed on the Academic Planning blog, “Globalizing co-op would cement NU’s distinctive competence and differentiate NU in its second century like few other initiatives.” International co-op placements provide students with unparalleled opportunities to build cultural agility and demonstrate their commitment to international careers.

Northeastern in 2025 will continue and increase its capacity to provide the targeted financial support needed to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have access to the university’s full range of global experiential learning opportunities.

3. In 2025, we will embrace the realization that global experiential learning takes place everywhere that Northeastern has a real or virtual presence: on the main campus and in Boston at large, at all of Northeastern’s campuses, as well as in study abroad and in every co-op placement, from Boston to Hong Kong. It includes reaching out to the communities of immigrants and world citizens that enrich and host our operations in every campus. Globalization, cultural understanding and diversity are not place-bound but are our signature mission.

Cross-cultural communication happens everywhere Northeastern reaches and is part of success in every workplace our students encounter, whether they are undergraduates, graduate students, or life-long learners. It is an important component of residential student life on the Boston campus as well as service learning in the diverse neighborhoods surrounding the campus. Global experiential learning incorporates the full engagement of international students in all of our programs; the full globalization of the curriculum; and the full inclusion of all of our students, domestic and international, in informal learning outside the classroom. Global experiential learning prepares all of our students for experiences beyond the boundaries of the campus or their birth countries.

4. In 2025, Northeastern will be the acknowledged world leader in demonstrating the learning outcomes achieved through global experiential education wherever and in whatever modality it takes place.
Having 100% of our Northeastern students gathering passport stamps is not enough to make them the culturally agile leaders we know they can be. Nor does the presence of a globally diverse student body sharing our physical campuses guarantee all students access to the same learning experiences and opportunities for success, or ensure that students interact across cultural differences on campus as well as abroad. Over the next ten years, the university will develop and deploy a range of strategies to assess and continuously improve not only the input measures but also the outcomes of global experiential education.

This goal will be achieved by our relentless dedication to crafting high-quality developmental experiences for our students, whatever their program of study or country of origin. From research, we know that the development of cultural agility occurs when people are placed in rich developmental experiences that provide: (1) cross-cultural novelty, pushing them to understand the importance of context and the limits of their knowledge, (2) stretch situations where they can challenge their expectations, (3) peer-level learning through meaningful projects, (4) opportunities to practice unfamiliar culturally-appropriate behaviors, and (5) emotionally safe situations in which to make cultural mistakes, receive feedback, and continually improve. In 2025, all of Northeastern’s undergraduate academic programs, and a substantial number of the university’s professional graduate programs, will intentionally incorporate this range of developmental experiences and the learning outcomes associated with them. These outcomes will be pursued through increasing campus-based dialogue between domestic and international students about their shared learning, as well through work and study experiences abroad.

We will increase international student inclusion and cross-cultural dialogue in the co-curriculum of campus life. Historically, a large part of Northeastern’s international student body has been relatively isolated from the co-curriculum of campus activities and the informal learning that accompanies it. The Integrated Student Learning Experience (ISLE) initiative, rolling out in fall 2016, will provide an important source of information on the outcomes of global experiential learning in both the formal curriculum and the co-curriculum. As its full name indicates, ISLE will help students direct and assess their own learning in everything they do — whether on campus or off campus, inside or outside of class. Achieving a global mindset is one of the major learning goals defined in ISLE. By 2025, ISLE will have accumulated almost ten years’ worth of data on where and how course work, undergraduate research, participation in clubs and organizations, athletics, advising and co-op enhance students’ global capability. In addition to giving students the means to become lifelong, self-directed learners, ISLE will provide Northeastern with the information needed to assess and improve global learning outcomes continuously across every dimension of the student experience.

Northeastern’s graduate programs draw substantial and increasing numbers of international students to our campuses. Historically, the International Students and Scholars Institute (ISSI) has assisted graduate as well as undergraduate students in compliance with visa requirements
(including those connected with post-degree training opportunities) and with their initial orientation to Boston. Beyond ISSI, international graduate students have encountered a sparse network of resources, including orientation for international teaching assistants and more localized support services for language and writing skills. The new Intercultural and Language Support Center being launched in 2016, along with the new Intercultural Support and Engagement Alliance, will improve and connect resources offered to graduate as well as undergraduate students.

By 2025, international and domestic students at Northeastern, at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels, will achieve comparable learning outcomes as demonstrated by student retention and graduation rates, participation in and satisfaction with co-op, and surveys of student engagement. All undergraduates, whatever their countries of origin, will achieve the global mindset called for by ISLE through a combination of curricular and co-curricular activities and reflection. Cross-cultural agility will be a featured learning outcome of many of Northeastern’s graduate programs, including experiential PhD programs that will highlight, for example, learning to work in cross-cultural research teams or to teach second language learners effectively. Employers of all kinds will prize Northeastern graduates as having a unique set of diverse cultural skills and values, as demonstrated by employer surveys and by postgraduate employment data. Alumni surveyed five, ten, and more years beyond graduation will continue to appreciate and show development in their global perspective, and will return to Northeastern for both formal and informal opportunities to expand their global capacities and networks.

5. In 2025, Northeastern will be recognized around the world for translational research, scholarship and creative work that reaches across languages and cultures as well as across academic disciplines. Translation—in the sense of creating shared meaning and goals across linguistic and cultural barriers—is essential to the development of locally sensitive solutions to challenges that cross national boundaries. Northeastern’s translational research enterprise will increasingly draw on disciplines in the social sciences, humanities, arts, business and law, as well as engineering and the physical sciences, in addressing global needs. For example,

- In the domain of security, the greatest threats to physical security or cybersecurity currently come from emerging economies. Northeastern’s approach goes beyond devising technological solutions to problems of detection and surveillance to envision political and social solutions, aimed at developing social capital and resilient communities around the world.

- In the domain of sustainability, rapid urbanization is concentrating energy, material and human resources into urban contexts across the globe. In all economies, from the wealthiest to the poorest, a majority of a society’s resources are devoted to the built environment, its material extraction, construction, operation and demolition. Urbanization induces significant resource efficiencies when the proper infrastructure is
designed to anticipate urban growth. Drawing on architecture, urban design, landscape
design, civil and environmental engineering, and urban-focused law and policy,
Northeastern approaches the design of such mega-systems as a global imperative in a
world of declining resources and increasing population.

- Northeastern will drive improvements in global health through research and innovation
  in healthcare informatics, delivery, financing and policy as well as new medical
technologies. A faculty member commented on the Academic Planning website that
“innovations in healthcare delivery can do more to improve quality of life in poor
countries than breakthroughs in medical procedures, medicines, or medical devices.”
Healthcare innovations designed for emerging economies will improve healthcare
access, affordability and outcomes throughout the world.

- By 2025, Northeastern will be the world leader in the domain of research into the
  science of experiential learning, anchored by the Research Institute for Experiential
  Learning (RIEL), including research into the global dimensions and outcomes of
  experiential learning.

6. In 2025, Northeastern will be recognized for its innovative support of **globally networked
faculty careers**. Working through the Global Network’s campuses, and also increasingly with
other academic and employer partners, the university will expand faculty opportunities for
research and teaching abroad, and for industry experience abroad as well.

The interconnected network of student experiences will be paralleled by faculty research and
teaching networks constituted of consortia of global institutions of higher education and
industry partners. This network will facilitate the flow of knowledge to diverse destinations and
different cultural contexts to bring a global expertise to regional issues. For example, traditional
and vernacular building practices of developing nations can be tested and optimized in
advanced laboratories. This way, traditional practices can persist while their performance can be
greatly improved. Across the university’s disciplines, Northeastern will find similar opportunities
to connect faculty members’ global experience and research interests to local wisdom and
challenges.

7. In 2025, Northeastern will **engage the university’s alumni** to further our success in all these
arenas. Our alumni, alumni located all across the globe are integral to our global reach and
goals. They can provide support for current students, faculty, and staff who are abroad to act as
local experts within their geographies and provide expertise on everyday life and customs within
their country. This personal connection will give members of the Northeastern community an
authentic experience and bring full circle our overarching Northeastern 2025 goal of imbuing the
interconnection between the local and the global in everything we do.