

**Dr. Peterson**

**International Plan Induction Ceremony**

5-7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2014, Student Center Ballroom

Good evening, and welcome. More than 800 students participate in the IP, and I'm told there are some 200 freshmen in the audience. I believe your choice of participating in the International Plan will enrich your Georgia Tech experience more than just about anything else you could choose.

Each year when talking with graduating seniors I frequently ask them about their most meaningful experience during their years at Georgia Tech. I have yet to have someone tell me "It was that chemistry lab," or "I really loved statistics." More often than not, it is about cooperative education or an international experience. Parents really love the international experience, because it means that they can travel there to visit with you! We're proud of the fact that 47% of Georgia Tech graduates have an international experience before they graduate, including work, study or research abroad. That compares to 14% nationwide. Nationally, the percentage of engineering students that study abroad is 3%. With more than 57 percent of the total abroad, Georgia Tech student engineers made up the largest group of students abroad in 2012-13.

During the past two decades, Georgia Tech has grown into one of the world's most globalized technological universities, with collaborations in more than 80 countries, and institutional partnerships in more than 30 countries. Along with our full campus in France, we have global centers in China, Singapore, Costa Rica, Panama, and Mexico. We have students from 115 countries.

In partnership with Tianjin University in China, Georgia Tech became a member of the Shenzhen Virtual University Park in April 2013. In April 2014, we began offering a Master of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering in conjunction with Shenzhen Virtual University Park.

In May we opened the Lafayette Institute on the Georgia Tech Lorraine campus in Metz, France. It is providing an ecosystem to create value for our international partners.

A culture of innovation permeates our campus, which I hope you began to realize from the first day you stepped onto it. It's not only a high priority among our world-class faculty. Students are involved, too. Our students don't wait until they graduate to become innovators. They invent products and create companies while they're still enrolled. In fact, more than 60 percent of all of Georgia Tech's invention disclosures list at least one student.

One of the ways that Georgia Tech nurtures that innovation culture is through industry-sponsored competitions. We encourage students to begin thinking about how they can solve global challenges. One example of that: The InVenture Prize is the nation's largest undergraduate invention competition. Our 2014 Georgia Tech InVenture Prize winner was Team Sanivation, composed of three female students who invented an inexpensive mobile toilet to help nearly 2.6 billion people who lack access to hygienic bathrooms. All three members traveled to Kenya this summer for field trials.

On the "Big Picture" side, we want you to understand how the International Plan fits into Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan and help you become informed about the value it can bring to your education and future career. You're going to run into your fellow IP participants quite a bit, so we hope you'll leave here today inspired to take full advantage of the program and start building a sense of community among the cohort. In attendance today are the newest class of IP participants and the faculty/staff who work with the IP and Tech's international programs.

You'll find that we here at Georgia Tech are always looking ahead. Our 25-year Strategic Plan called "Designing the Future" is one example of that. Hundreds of members of the Tech community contributed, including students. It's hard to believe

some of the students engaged in developing Georgia Tech's strategic plan have already graduated. We released it in August 2010. It's a blueprint for where we want Georgia Tech to be by the year 2035. It's designed to be visionary — that's why we looked out 25 years — and responsive.

We had a lot of very smart people working on Georgia Tech's plan, but no one predicted MOOCS. (talk about what they add, how Georgia Tech is a leader, but what they can't provide — 1) student/faculty, 2) student/student, 3) Additional college experiences that can't come with MOOCS.) (Don't have any friends I've never met, but my adult children do, and I'm sure you do as well).

While we didn't predict MOOCs specifically, they are included in the strategy we outlined to be innovative in instructional methods, course design, and curricula. In addition, one of the concepts that grew out of the Strategic Planning process was an X Degree, offering students more flexibility in designing their program of study to meet specific needs. The International Plan has a similar spirit, allowing students to create a coherent set of international experiences whether that be study abroad, interning abroad and/or research abroad.

The Strategic Plan has five goals, and the International Plan hits right in the sweet spot of Goal No. 4: "Expand Our Global Footprint and Influence to Ensure That We Are Graduating Good Global Citizens."

- **The value of the International Plan to a student's academic and professional development**
  - The IP provides the framework for students to take globally focused coursework as part of their degree requirements. These diverse perspectives help students understand complex global systems and issues and prepare them to think critically about situations they encounter while abroad. The IP

Capstone allows to students to integrate their global knowledge into a real-world, major-specific project.

- Time spent abroad for the IP allows students to take part in culturally immersive and academically related experiences (such as study, work, and/or research abroad). These experiences foster intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communication skills, the ability to approach problems from multiple perspectives, and a global understanding of one's discipline.
- The international plan offers a series of interrelated coursework and international experiences throughout the degree, as compared to just studying or working abroad independently.
  - Georgia Tech Assessment Data showed that IP students who spent two terms abroad are rated an average of 15 points higher on their intercultural sensitivity scores than non-IP students who studied abroad for only one term.
  - Georgia Tech Assessment Data showed that 66.7% of IP work-abroad students were ranked “outstanding” in overall quality of work compared to 43.5% of non-IP work-abroad students.
  - According to Dr. Larry Jacobs, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in our College of Engineering, “*When I speak to companies recruiting our students, one of the things that they look for is an international experience; employers like Siemens or General Electric will use this as a differentiator when making hiring decisions.*”
  - Several recent studies have shown that employers in a variety of industries are seeking candidates who have both cultural competency (i.e., knowing world business cultures, comfort with diversity, intercultural communication skills, etc.) and global competency (i.e., 21st century skills: collaboration, teamwork, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, language skills, adaptability).
  - According to the 2011 QS Global Employer Survey, 54% of responding American companies seek out international experience when hiring candidates. Certain industries such as energy, electronics, IT, engineering,

biotechnology, and consulting place an even higher value on international experience.

- A 2012 survey of GT alumni conducted by Georgia Tech's Office of Assessment found that 60% hold positions where working with multinational groups or teams plays an important role in their jobs.

### **How does the International Plan differ from just studying abroad? How did it impact your overall education at Georgia Tech?**

- Patti Murphy, Biology major and German minor, graduated in 2013. She spent a semester at Georgia Tech's exchange partner university EPFL in Switzerland, and completed Georgia Tech's German language immersion program. She used her IP experiences to inform her research on "the understanding of international biosecurity and public health, especially as relates to neurological disorders and technologies developed to treat them." She has since gone on to pursue a PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania.
  - "The IP helped me figure out how all of my interests fit together, something the regular Biology program could have never done. Had I not done the IP, I might have had to give one of my interests up when selecting a career."
  - "I hope to participate in global discourse on the eradication of disabilities related to neuronal injury and disease (public health) and the development of safety and ethical standards for dual-use research (biosecurity). In order to prepare for the political aspect of my future career, I pursued undergraduate research on biological weapons policy in the School of International Affairs and studied two foreign languages (French and German) alongside my major-related research in the NeuroLab."

### **What benefits can one gain from participating in the International Plan?**

- Hannah Oermann, Mechanical Engineering major, graduated in 2013. She spent six months interning with a German company. She is currently pursuing a

Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech and is a GRA in the Sustainable Thermal Systems Laboratory.

- “I feel much more equipped to interact with people from any international background. While working in research and development for the oil industry, I found that there was a demand for my willingness and capability to work on cross-cultural teams. Oil companies have field positions in over 100 countries, so my ability to adapt and respond well to new cultures is critical”.
- Tell story of SHAPE/ General Breedlove/Normandy

We've covered a lot of ground about the International Plan today. If you have dreams of working internationally, you're in the right place. By the time you're done, you will have a minimum of 26 weeks of international experience — work, research or study. Even if you decide to stay in the States, you will have a competitive advantage. The advantage is not necessarily what you learned in a certain country. It broadens your perspective. It enlarges your vision, and helps give you a global perspective. This is an exciting time to be at Georgia Tech. As you embark on your journey here, I encourage you to squeeze every bit of value you can out of the experience.

Thank you for your time and your attention, and we wish you the best as you take full advantage of the Georgia Tech International Plan.