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GMU-CEIE Research Experiences for Foreign University Undergraduates (REFUU) – Summer 2014

Program summary:

The GMU-CEIE Research Experiences for Foreign University Undergraduates (REFUU) is an international outreach program by the George Mason University Sid and Reva Dewberry Department of Civil, Environmental, and Infrastructure Engineering. Its goal is to expose civil engineering undergraduates from selected foreign universities to a real research experience in the United States in the summer immediately before their final year of undergraduate study.

At the same time, the program is designed to build firm partnerships between GMU civil engineering faculty and faculty at the students' home institutions that will last beyond the REFUU summer experience. Success of the program is therefore heavily dependent on careful selection of candidate students by faculty at the home institution.

High performing REFUU students may be invited to apply to return to the Sid and Reva Dewberry Department of Civil, Environmental, and Infrastructure Engineering as funded graduate students after completion of their BS at their home institution. This enhances opportunities for continued joint research between faculties at the participating institutions.

Participation in the REFUU program is not an offer of admission to George Mason University's graduate program; REFUU participants must follow up with a graduate application after they return to their home country. Also, REFUU participants are not registered as George Mason University students during the REFUU period.

Program requirements/eligibility:

- Applicants must be entering the final year of their undergraduate BS-equivalent civil engineering program in the autumn following their REFUU summer award.
- Applicants must be enrolled full time in their BS program at the time of application, and must be committed to full-time study in the subsequent year.
- Areas of study and skill expectations will be spelled out each year, defined by the GMU-CEIE REFUU research opportunities. Only students with matching interests, coursework and skill levels will be considered for that year.
- In the initial years of the REFUU program, application by students will be open only through invited civil engineering faculty at selected foreign universities.
- Acceptance into the REFUU program is competitive and not all applicants will be admitted.
- Each successful REFUU student will be matched to a GMU-CEIE faculty member for the duration of the REFUU program. Dates of the program will be defined each year, but will typically have a duration of three to four weeks in the summer.

Program costs and support:

- **REFUU covered expenses:**
 - Shared housing in George Mason University student dormitories for the duration of the REFUU program; bed linens and internet access will be included.
 - An allowance for meals for the duration of the REFUU program.
- **What is not covered/include by REFUU:**
 - Travel from the home country to the George Mason University Fairfax campus and back to the home country (including both air and ground transportation).
 - Health insurance (strictly required).
 - US visa application costs.
 - Other personal expenses and discretionary spending not covered by the REFUU program allowance.

Procedures:

- In the initial years, application by students will be open only through invited civil engineering faculty at selected foreign universities.
- Areas of study and skill expectations will be spelled out on the GMU-CEIE REFUU website each year in the spring. Only students with matching interests, coursework and skill levels will be considered for that year.
- Students will be offered spaces in the REFUU program on a rolling basis and will have one week to accept or decline the offer.
- Students accepted into the program must apply to and be approved for a B1/B2 visa to visit the United States for the full period of REFUU. Students must confirm receipt of their visas and purchase of their health care by May 15; and purchase of their flight to the Washington DC area by June 1.

What happens if things don't work out:

Every effort will be made on the part of the REFUU faculty to provide a challenging, rewarding, and encouraging experience for REFUU students. REFUU reserves the right, however, to terminate students from the visit program early without compensation if student performance is unsatisfactory. The success of the program is therefore heavily dependent on careful selection of candidate students by faculty at the home institution.

About George Mason University:

George Mason University was founded in Fairfax, Virginia, in 1957 as a campus of the University of Virginia, and become an independent university in 1972. Located in the heart of Northern Virginia's technology corridor near Washington, D.C., it is an innovative, entrepreneurial institution with national distinction in a range of academic fields. It is now one of the largest universities in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is ranked by U.S. News as the #1 up and coming national university, and is included by the London Times Higher Education among their list of top 100 universities worldwide under 50 years old. With its location in the affluent northern Virginia suburbs of Washington D.C., it combines the benefits of a vibrant self-contained, safe campus community with dormitories, athletic facilities, a performing arts center, and a major sporting events center, with the museums, entertainment, and political energy of Washington, D.C., within easy reach by public transportation. The advantages of GMU's location are evident in the impressive diversity of its student body and student engagement with issues both on and off-campus, as well as in the caliber of the faculty recruited to the university because of the unparalleled opportunities it offers. For more information, visit <http://www.gmu.edu>.