Introduction

The program and minor in British Studies are designed to provide an integrative study of British life and culture throughout the ages. Students examine the impact of British institutions and customs on the American experience and gain an understanding of how British identity has been constituted in its member nations, the European Union, and the global community. The program offers courses and experiences in the study of England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and those countries and territories formerly a part of the British Empire.

The British Studies program at the College of Charleston offers students unique opportunities to learn more about an important region of the world. Understanding its history, culture and politics fosters a deeper appreciation of the complex ways that Britain has influenced past and present events and will continue to have an impact on issues in the future. Students may complete an 18 credit interdisciplinary minor and/or participate in one of several popular semester or summer study abroad programs.

Currently the program has 11 faculty affiliates in the Schools of Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences and five undergraduate minors.

Faculty Affiliates

Doryjane Birrer    English
Tim Carens        English
Cara Delay         History
Jeffrey Diamond   History
Simon Lewis        English
Amy McCandless     History, Dean of Graduate School
Kathy Beres Rogers English
Bill Russell       English
Myra Seaman        English
Catherine Thomas   English, Director of BRST Program
Trish Ward         English, Chair
**Academics**

**Curriculum**

There were no major changes to the curriculum in 2009-10. Some special topics classes and independent studies in English and History have been included for counting for the minor based on applicability and on a case-by-case basis.

One of the challenges for the minor and for the future of the program remains the availability of applicable history courses that count for 6 credits in the first category (among them: Tudor England, Stuart England, Georgian England, Victorian England, Geographies and Politics of the European Union). Currently, this situation is being remedied via independent studies and study abroad opportunities. Discussions continue among the affiliated faculty as to how best to address this problem.

**The Minor**

This year the program did not graduate any minors. One senior who was minoring in British Studies dropped during her last semester due to inability to reconcile her minor requirements with those of her major and other two minors. That leaves the program with five minors. Efforts to recruit students within target major courses (especially History and English), major/minor fairs, and study abroad fairs continue. Since we have a relatively large number of students participating in British Studies-related summer abroad programs this year, I will also be pursuing them as recruits when they return to campus this fall.

**Study Abroad**

**British Studies Summer Consortium**

While the BSP Consortium falls partially under the study abroad umbrella, it is also an integral academic factor for many of our minors. This year 11 C of C students will participate in various classes and I will be instructing “Love, Sex, and Desire in Shakespeare” in the July summer program. I am also in talks with the U. of S. Mississippi British Studies Program (the head consortium university) about bringing more College of Charleston faculty into the teaching rotation. The annual consortium meeting in Hattiesburg, MS was attended in January of this year (2010).

**Bilateral Semester Study Abroad Program**

British Studies at C of C had five bilateral partnerships with British universities: Univ. of Nottingham, Univ. of Northampton, Bath Spa Univ., Univ. of Lincoln, and Buckinghamshire New Univ. This year was a very successful one for bilateral participation. 15 C of C students went abroad to these universities during 2009-10—3 to Bath Spa, 3 to Bucks New, and 9 to Nottingham. In exchange, we hosted 9 British students from five of our partner universities at various times during the year. Dr. Amy McCandless
and I met with some of these students during the year to ensure their experience was a good one and to serve as goodwill ambassadors. Recruiting for next year’s bilateral studies begins this fall, and I intend to reach out to those students who studied abroad to invite them to participate in our minor program.

There are some changes afoot, however, in terms of our bi-lateral programs. The exchange with the University of Northampton, our longest partner, has been shut down due to budget cuts and the elimination of the American Studies group there (who had been sponsoring our students). We hope that the economy will eventually pick up and we will be able to reestablish the relationship at a future date, but for now, no students will be exchanged between the universities. In addition, numbers for C of C students going to the University of Lincoln have been small in comparison with those of UL’s students visiting us. The International Education Office and our program are in talks about how to increase the numbers or whether it makes sense to not renew that exchange next year in favor of trying to establish a new university connection, possibly with a school in London proper. Finally, Drs. Amy McCandless, Jason Coy (DGS-History), and I are in talks with representatives from the Univ. of Nottingham to investigate the possibility of history graduate student exchanges between the schools. If successful, this might be a model we could pursue with Lincoln or the other partner universities.

**Programming and Administration**

The British Studies Program Steering Committee of faculty affiliates met one time officially and held several online conversations to discuss initiatives. Issues included:

- Library fund requests (used all of allotted $700)
- Recruitment for minor and study abroad opportunities—strategies, participation
- Programming opportunities

Faculty affiliates with British Studies are involved in multiple programs and often have significant departmental commitments, so our discussions were lightly attended.

**Events and Contributions**

- Spring 2010 the British Studies Program contributed $250 towards the Department of English’s Visiting Speaker Series (since several speakers specialized in British literature).
- On March 25, the British Studies Program participated in the World Cultures Fair. Several faculty staffed the table during the day and served scones and hot tea, while sharing program recruiting literature and photographs from study abroad trips.
- On March 29, we hosted Dr. Robert Tyler, Fulbright-Robertson Visiting Professor of British History at Westminster College. He delivered a provocative talk based on his current research, "The Disunited Kingdom: The Break-up of Britain?" The lecture was well attended by faculty and students.
• On April 16, Dr. Amy McCandless hosted for lunch Dr. Peter Ling (our faculty/admin liaison for the Univ. of Nottingham exchange) and students who had attended Nottingham through our exchanges. I also met with Drs. McCandless and Ling afterwards to talk about ways to improve and possibly expand the exchange program between the schools.

Planning and Development

There are several ongoing initiatives that I believe will help enliven and support the program as a whole:

• Recruiting. Dr. Cara Delay and I updated the copy text for our British Studies flyers. I have been working with Mr. Dan Dickison in the campus public relations office to craft a new one-page flyer for the program. Proofs should be out by July 1, and the final document should be ready for fall recruiting. We will continue to have BRST faculty and student representation when possible at major/minor fairs, new student orientation, and the World Cultures Fair annually. I have also set up a blog for the C of C students participating in the British Studies consortium classes this summer: http://2010cofcbritishstudiesabroad.blogspot.com/. My hope is that this may serve as a recruiting tool for future minors and program participants.

• Guest Speaker(s). While we intend to continue supporting our spring Fulbright history speaker, we hope to expand our support to those incoming through other relevant departments such as History and English. We have encouraged our minors to attend these talks, as well as recruited attendees through classes taught in BRST-related subjects.

2009-2010 was a very solid and reasonably active year for the program. As always, our faculty members remain committed to improving recruiting for the minor and providing excellent study opportunities for our students, here and abroad.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine E. Thomas, Director