European Studies Annual Report 2009-2010

Introduction

The program and minor in European Studies is an interdisciplinary area studies minor that introduces students to the diverse cultures and nations of Europe through the study of history, literature, languages, visual arts, economics, business, politics, religion and society. The program offers courses and experiences in various disciplines as well as in many study abroad programs throughout Europe.

The European Studies program offers students a variety of opportunities to learn more about one of the major areas in the world today. The minor is intentionally designed to require students to obtain a wide geographic range of knowledge. Students can take courses in the earlier eras of European history as well as in the modern and contemporary eras. Unique to the program, students are required to successfully complete a European language up to the 202 level as well as completing the History general education requirement in European history. Unique to this minor as well, students must complete a capstone course (EUST 400) in their senior year which synthesizes their core and electives courses. Students can complete their 18 credit hours in a combination of cluster courses taught at the College of Charleston or in an approved study abroad program in a European country.

Currently the program has faculty affiliates and supporters in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of the Arts, the School of Business, and the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs.

Faculty Affiliates and Supporters

Terrance Bowers, English
Jason Coy, History
Irina Gigova, History
Giovanna De Luca, Italian Studies
Mark Long, Political Science
Moore Quinn, Anthropology
Howard Rudd, Management and Entrepreneurship
Robert Russell, Historic Preservation
Academics

Curriculum

No major changes occurred in the curriculum in 2009-2010. The program has a rich set of offerings in each of the clusters every semester. This allows students to have a wide choice of courses and to complete the minor in a timely fashion. Special topics are offered every semester as well.

Much discussion took place concerning the incorporation of European Studies as one of the core areas of concentration into the newly created International Studies major. The course structure and menu of courses of the minor was used as a template for the European Studies concentration for the International Studies major. It was decided to modify the clusters of the minor so as to create a parallel structure as much as possible among the 4 areas studies (African, Asian, European, and Latin American and Caribbean). One challenge was to find a way to incorporate the various minors already in place that were language-based. A practical solution was found and special accommodations were made to incorporate the various language minors as well as the British Studies minor under the umbrella of the European Studies concentration. The result was a fruitful blend of courses that will allow students the option of focusing on a particular European country and language within the overall course framework of the European Studies concentration. The goal was to allow students flexibility and choice in fulfilling the new major.

The Minor

According to the data provided by Academic Affairs, this year the program graduated three minors. Several students who would have completed the minor dropped out of school or transferred. This same data set shows that the program has twelve minors, a figure that represents a snapshot of the minor. Several students have expressed interest but have not yet declared. Overall, the minor has graduated a respectable 26 minors in the past five years. This total compares favorably with other area studies minors on campus. As director, I meet with every minor when the student declares to explain the minor and insure that the student is on track to graduate. Each student is provided with an up-to-date list of courses and their names are added to the email group list of minors. This group list is my main mechanism for passing along course information, study abroad programs, and announcements of speakers with a focus on Europe who come to campus.

Study Abroad

Quite a few students study in Europe every semester and there are several summer programs directed by College of Charleston faculty as well. This summer 2010 there were at least 5 College of Charleston programs taught in European countries. In addition, the College offers bi-lateral exchanges with European universities in Austria, Germany,
Italy, Netherlands, Spain, France, Denmark, Sweden, and the United Kingdom and many more independent programs that are located in Europe that our students study at. It would be most useful to have a list of these students before they depart for their study abroad experience in Europe. Country-by-country data of students abroad is not provided on an annual basis.

I directed a Maymester Western Europe study abroad program in 2010 with Dr. Howard Rudd in the School of Business. We visited Germany, Belgium, and France. I taught a course on the History of Contemporary Europe and Dr. Rudd taught a course on Comparative International Management. We took 12 students (2 additional students who had signed up later had to cancel). The highlight of this program from the perspective of the European Studies minor were on-site visits to international corporate headquarters at Lanxass/Bayer, BMW, Bosch, and Michelin and a 2-day on-site visit to the European Union headquarters in Brussels. These visits gave students a global perspective with a European focus.

**Planning and Development**

The most important development that took place was that a new faculty will teach the required European Studies capstone course (EUST 400) in spring 2011. This course has been taught every spring for the past 5 years by me as a course overload. It has made sense to offer it in the spring because that is when most seniors are graduating. It will be taught by Dr. Moore Quinn, who is in the Department of Anthropology, as part of her regular teaching load. The program appreciates the willingness of the department chair in Sociology and Anthropology to accommodate the need of this minor. Dr. Quinn will bring an anthropological perspective to this interdisciplinary course as well as her interest in Ireland. She may wish to teach this course in 2012 as well so that she can benefit from her experiences. Dr. Mark Long in the Department of Political Science has expressed an interest in teaching the capstone in the future.

Another development was to seek the interest of new faculty members. Dr. Malte Pehl in International and Intercultural Studies, is interested in becoming an affiliate. He has extensive knowledge of European affairs, especially in education as a native of Germany and will likely present a guest lecture next year in the capstone course. Faculty in Art History who teach courses in European art are another possibility.

A third important development is the need for the creation of a new web-site for the minor. The current web-site is one of the most attractive web-sites of all of the minors, but it needs to be updated. I have tried to do so in previous years but have met with various stumbling blocks with IT, partly because it has not been clear who, or whether anyone, in IT is responsible for working on web-sites. The announced switch to Banner for 2010-11 promises to resolve this problem.

One planning challenge for this coming year will be for the Steering committee to review how the minor will adapt to the changes in history general education that will come into
effect next year. The minor currently requires that History 101 and 102 must be taken as prerequisites, but these courses will be dropped from the college curriculum as of fall 2011. The committee will need to assess this current prerequisite.

A further planning challenge will be to advise students in the International Studies major who wish to concentrate in Europe while also focusing on a particular country and language. The curricular logistics are flexible in the new major but also require some explanation. A new development will be that students in the minor and in the major will be both taking the EUST 400 capstone course, but those in the major will take an additional International Studies capstone course as well. Good advising will be paramount.

Now that the new International Studies major will come into effect in fall 2010, the timing is right for a set of initiatives for program development. First, a new one-hour credit course for students who have studied and returned from Europe can be developed. This course would require students to meet and share their study abroad experiences and insights with themselves and other students on campus. They would be required to write a paper on their study abroad experience as well as act as peer-mentors and resources for students who have not yet studied abroad in Europe. Second, a renewed effort can be made to create opportunities for international students from Europe to share their perspectives with College of Charleston Americans by means of forums, pizza parties, etc. Third, it is worth setting up a means through the International Studies major to foster greater linkages among the European-focused minors. Currently, British Studies, German Studies, Italian Studies, and Russian Studies function as independent units, yet each is either entirely in Europe, or, in the case of Russia, has a sizeable geographic, historical, and cultural component that is European. Bringing these minors together would likely create more synergy. Fourth, the European Studies minor can look for closer relationships with the International Studies minor and the International Business major. The International Studies minor, for example, has a European option within it. Nine credit hours of this minor can be completed by taking European Studies courses, and I have advised students with an interest in Europe on how to fulfill the European component of this minor. Similarly, a fruitful exchange can be opened up with the International Business program. It graduated 53 students in this past academic year and had 139 declared majors in spring 2010. A number of these business students have an interest in Europe as a region of the world.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Olejniczak, Director