

Transatlantic Studies Degree

Overview

In May 2007 seven institutions in the University System of Georgia were awarded a Title VI grant by the U.S. Department of Education. The \$350,000 grant will fund the development of a new interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Transatlantic Studies that will be offered mainly in an online format. The grant period runs for three years beginning 1 July 2007.

The heart of the three-year grant project will be the development of ten new online courses in Transatlantic Studies. The courses will be created by interdisciplinary faculty teams drawn from the seven consortium institutions. Each of the three-hour courses will also have one-hour foreign language components in both French and Spanish that will be designed by consortium faculty. The grant period will also be used to establish the necessary administrative infrastructure to run the new degree program. The BA in Transatlantic Studies will be offered at each of the consortium institutions beginning in the fall 2009 semester.

Purpose

The transatlantic relationship between the U.S. and the European Union constitutes the bedrock alliance for each partner in terms of commercial, security, and cultural collaboration. The transatlantic relationship is also an important factor influencing different regions of the world and global policy issues. Yet recent research has revealed growing academic indifference to the study of transatlantic issues. This situation undermines national interests and leaves students unprepared for the primary international context they will confront in their lives. The main objective of the BA in Transatlantic Studies is to restore vitality to the understanding of the transatlantic relationship.

Consortium Institutions

The seven USG institutions making up the Transatlantic Studies consortium are: Armstrong Atlantic State University, Augusta State University, Georgia College and State University, Georgia Southern University, Georgia Southwestern State University, North Georgia College and State University, Valdosta State University. The project coordinators at each campus are listed below.

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Online Courses

The principle activity of the Title VI grant project will be the development of ten new online courses in Transatlantic Studies. Once completed, this catalog of three-hour courses will constitute the curricular core of the BA in Transatlantic Studies.

Five of the new courses will examine how the transatlantic relationship interacts with other global regions:

- Africa
- Asia and the Pacific
- Russia and Eurasia
- The Middle East
- The Americas

Five additional courses will focus on how the transatlantic relationship influences and is affected by key global policy issues:

- Environment and Energy
- Health and Welfare
- Trade and Economics
- Religion and Culture
- Security

This curricular structure aims at building a bridge between competing approaches to the study of international affairs – area studies and policy analysis – by incorporating both methodologies to ensure students obtain an optimal learning experience.

The online courses will be composed in a modular fashion consisting of a series of two or three week segments that are self-contained units, with each including its own learning objectives, reading assignments, case studies, and means of assessment. In this way, each module can stand alone for use as a supplement in other courses while infusing them with a transatlantic dimension at the same time. An online course will contain five, but no more than six, modules.

Interdisciplinary Approach

Each of the ten new courses will be developed by interdisciplinary faculty teams, involving one member from each of the four main discipline areas: Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Economics, and Natural and Health Sciences. Faculty members will be drawn from

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consortium institutions through a “call for participants” issued in the first year of the grant. Once the new degree is up and running, the online courses will be taught by consortium faculty drawn from all academic disciplines.

The purpose of this interdisciplinary approach is to present students with an integrated overview of a topic, not a discipline-specific perspective. The goal is to equip students with a broad set of skills and a wide knowledge base to enable them to become life-long learners. A curriculum consultant will assist the course design teams and help ensure an interdisciplinary and problem-based approach to learning in the online courses.

Foreign Languages

Each of the area and policy courses will have a co-requisite one-hour language course (at the 3000 level) in either French or Spanish. These courses will be created by a parallel set of foreign language designers (both French and Spanish) who will be recruited from consortium institutions. The language designers, working in pairs (French and Spanish), will coordinate with the course content designers to determine what readings and research are appropriate to the subject matter. The language courses will correspond to the same modular format applied to the regional and policy courses, meaning each module will have its own learning objectives, readings, assessment instrument, and applied project.

Students earning the BA in Transatlantic Studies will need to complete six of the co-requisite language courses and must also fulfill a dedicated minor in either French or Spanish.

Technology and Pedagogy

The project will introduce technological advances into the delivery of online and language courses to solve at least some of the problems that have plagued distance learning. The online courses will use the USG’s web-based instructional platform (Vista). The courses will make use of technologies such as podcasting (iTunes) and videoconferencing, and a special voice program (CollabWorx) will be used for audio testing of foreign languages. A technology consultant will assist the course design teams and ensure the effective incorporation of advanced teaching technology. Technical support will also be provided by the USG’s Office of Advanced Learning Technology (ALT).

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Assessment

Assessment for the grant project will be conducted on two levels: formative and summative. The function of formative assessment is to obtain periodic feedback to remedy program deficiencies before they escalate or persist, while summative assessment is concerned with results of the project and seeks to determine whether objectives have been realized as originally defined. Dr. Amie Kreppel, University of Florida, previous director of a Title VI grant and a subsequent reviewer of proposals, will serve as outside evaluator of the project; she will advise the project's leadership on the application of assessment instruments, evaluate assessment data, and report whether annual objectives are being fulfilled. Dr. Philip Knight, Georgia Tech, will also consult on assessment.

Formative and summative assessment will be conducted for all aspects of the grant project – curricular development, foreign language instruction, and administrative structure – utilizing a series of mixed instruments – including surveys, focus groups, simulations, and the Advisory Board – at pivotal points of the project's execution. In the post-grant period, assessment of the online courses will continue through quantitative instruments administered to students and faculty instructors in an effort to monitor course content, pedagogy, and delivery. Course instructors and language teams will update material as courses are offered.

Degree Structure

The goal of the Title VI grant project is to create the foundations for a new BA degree in Transatlantic Studies. The new degree will be formally launched in fall 2009 at each of the consortium institutions.

The BA in Transatlantic Studies will require a minimum of 120 semester hours of academic credit.

The first 60 hours are devoted to the completion of core educational requirements that are fairly uniform across consortium institutions. Students pursuing a BA in Transatlantic Studies must demonstrate competence in French or Spanish at the 2000 level either through course work or a proficiency exam. They must also complete the Introduction to the European Union course, either online or at their home institution, as part of their general education core.

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At the upper or senior college level, the TA Studies degree consists of 39 academic hours. The only mandatory course is EU-US Relations; offered at least once every year in an online format.

Once this prerequisite is fulfilled, students must complete three regional and three policy courses from the catalog of ten online options. Each of these courses will include a one-hour co-requisite course in French and Spanish.

Students must also complete a Capstone Seminar in Transatlantic Studies, involving a research paper whose theme will vary by instructor, and perform either an internship or study abroad experience.

To promote specialization, two electives must be selected that complement one of the regional or policy areas to create a concentration. These courses can be taken at the campus level through existing offerings or via EU Studies online courses.

A dedicated minor (15 hours) in Spanish or French will be required. Students can apply three of the one-hour co-requisite courses in French or Spanish to this minor.

The degree in Transatlantic Studies can be summarized in the following terms:

Course	Major Hours	Language Hours
EU-US Relations	3	
Three Regional Courses	9	3
Three Policy Courses	9	3
Capstone Seminar in Transatlantic Studies	3	
Internship/study abroad experience	3	
Two Course Elective Concentration	6	

A student's home institution will issue the formal BA in Transatlantic Studies.

Time Line

The Title VI grant project has the following key dates and deadlines:

Year One (2007-2008)

Project launch
RFPs for faculty course designers and foreign language faculty

July 1
Sept. 15

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Selection of course designers and foreign language faculty	Nov. 15
Orientation and workshop for course and language designers	Mid-January
Alignment of campus offices to support degree	Jan. 30
First modules for 10 online courses	April 15
Language modules for first content modules	May 1
Approval of degree on each campus	May 1
Agreement of each institution to offer degree (MOU signed)	June 1

Year Two (2008-2009)

Second content and language modules for 10 online courses	Sept. 15
Third content and language modules for 10 online courses	Nov. 1
Fourth content and language modules for 10 online courses	Dec. 15
Campus informational meetings	Mid-January
Fifth content and language modules for 10 online courses	Feb. 15
Second year workshop for course and language designers	April 1

Year Three (2009-2010)

Degree launched (online courses Introduction to the EU and US-EU Relations offered)	Mid-August
First complete draft of 10 online courses (content and language)	Oct. 1
Two new online courses offered (one regional course and one policy course)	Early January
Third year workshop for course and language designers	April 1
Online courses completed	April 15
Grant project completed	June 30

Project Administration

The administrative team for the Title VI grant project consists of faculty drawn from the consortium institutions:

Project Director:	D. Brian Mann Head, Dept. of Modern Languages Associate Professor of French and Spanish North Georgia College and State University (706) 864-1683 BMann@ngcsu.edu
Associate Director, Administration:	Christopher Jespersen Dean, School of Arts & Letters North Georgia College and State University (706) 864-1771

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TCJespersen@ngcsu.edu

Associate Director, Course Development: Michael Baun
Professor, Dept. of Political Science
Valdosta State University
(229) 259-5082
mbaun@valdosta.edu

Associate Director, Foreign Languages: David Seaman
Professor of French
Dept. of Foreign Languages
Georgia Southern University
(912) 681-5470
dseaman@georgiasouthern.edu

Associate Director, Assessment: Charles Crouch
Assistant Professor
Dept. of History
Georgia Southern University
(912) 681-0547
chascro@georgiasouthern.edu

Curriculum Consultant: Irene Kokkala
Director,
Center for Teaching & Learning
Excellence
North Georgia College and State
University
(706) 864-1368/1862
ikokkala@ngcsu.edu

Technical Consultant: Eric Nelken
Technical Consultant
Eric Nelken
Dept. of Information & Instructional
Technology
North Georgia College & State
University
(706) 864-1844
mailto:EANelken@ngcsu.edu

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Advisory Board

An Advisory Board representing regional business, diplomatic, governmental, and educational interests will help ensure that the new Transatlantic Studies degree fulfills the expectations of the job market. The Transatlantic Studies Advisory Board meets twice yearly, in October and March.

Members:

James Blair
Manager, Global Commerce
Georgia Department of Economic Development

Michael Chriszt
Senior Analyst
Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Lambros Kakissis
Consul
Consulate of Greece in Atlanta

John McIntyre
Director, CIBER
Georgia Institute of Technology

Cedric Suzman
Vice President
Southern Center for International Studies

Campus Project Coordinators

The Title VI grant project is represented at each consortium institution by Project Coordinators that have been appointed by their respective Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs. The campus project coordinators chair interdisciplinary Transatlantic Studies Committees at each institution that approve new online courses and any future changes in the degree and its requirements.

Armstrong Atlantic State University
Olavi Arens
Professor,

Transatlantic Studies Degree

Dept. of History
(912) 927-5283
arensola@MAIL.ARMSTRONG.EDU

Augusta State University
Holly Carter
Assistant Vice President for International Affairs
hcarter1@aug.edu

Georgia College and State University
Hank Edmondson
Professor of Political Science
Dept. of Government and Sociology
(478) 445-0943
hank.edmondson@gcsu.edu

Georgia Southern University
Nancy Shumaker
Assistant Vice President
Director, Center for International Studies
(912) 681-0332
shumaker@georgiasouthern.edu

Georgia Southwestern State University
Miles Cooper
Assistant Professor
Dept. of History and Political Science
(229) 931-2109
macooper@canes.gsw.edu

North Georgia College & State University
Russell Teasley
Assistant Professor of Management
Dept. of Business Administration
(706) 864-1616
RTeasley@NGCSU.EDU

Valdosta State University
Michael Baun
Pizer Professor of International Politics
Dept. of Political Science
(229) 359-5082
mbaun@valdosta.edu

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Contact Us

For more information about the Title VI grant project or the BA in Transatlantic Studies, please contact one of the Associate Directors listed above.