

## Proposal to the Senate Educational Policy Committee

### TITLE OF PROPOSAL: CREATION OF A GRADUATE MINOR IN EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES

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#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

We propose a Graduate Minor in European Union Studies, modeled on similar minors in existing area studies such as the Centers in African Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Like these minors, the EU studies minor will serve masters and doctoral students who wish to add area expertise to their program and professional students who desire acknowledgement of area expertise alongside their professional degree. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) will provide administrative oversight for the program. Day-to-day administration of the program will be handled by the European Union Center (EUC) and International Programs and Studies (IPS). The European Union Center reports jointly to LAS and IPS. The division of labor between LAS, the EUC, and IPS is described in an attached Memorandum of Agreement (See Attachment I).

#### JUSTIFICATION

The demand for individuals with specialized training in EU matters has never been greater and will continue to grow dramatically. At Illinois, student interest in the European Union has grown in parallel with the emergence of the EU itself. To accommodate this growing interest, the EUC has for the past seven years offered a two-semester interdisciplinary graduate research seminar. Average enrollments in the seminar have increased from about 12 students per semester in 1998/99 to about 25 students a semester presently.

Demand is now sufficiently strong to introduce an interdisciplinary graduate minor in European Unions Studies. While the European Union Center's interdisciplinary graduate research seminar attracts students from every college on the campus, most participants have come from professional schools, such as law, business, and education, and departments with professional

degree programs, such as urban and regional planning. The minor would provide a focus for their interests, giving them an opportunity to bring area expertise into their professional careers. This minor is also critical to an area studies center seeking to maintain its status as a National Resource Center (NRC).

**Intellectual Coherence of the Field.** At the University of Illinois, EU-related course offerings may be found in political science, economics, sociology, law, agricultural and consumer economics, and urban and regional planning, among others. These programs provide the depth and specialization necessary to support advanced study of the European Union and EU-US relations from particular disciplinary perspectives. (See Attachment 2)

There is also a recognizable and growing volume of interdisciplinary scholarship in the field of European Union Studies. This is evident in the work of the University of Illinois' own faculty members. (See Attachment 3)

**Expertise of Existing University of Illinois Staff.** The European Union Center draws upon the expertise of faculty from departments across campus, providing a broad range of disciplinary knowledge. (See Attachment 3)

**Career Opportunities for Graduates.** Because the European Union is the largest economy in the world, it represents many career opportunities. These are found in Europe, the United States, and in the community of professionals working on both sides of the Atlantic. Opportunities in these areas will only increase as the EU continues to expand and develop. The relative scarcity of programs with a specialized focus in EU studies will give our graduates a competitive advantage in this field. While the minor can accommodate students preparing for further academic study in a particular discipline, the primary targets are students preparing for careers in government, business, and the professions.

**Language Skills.** The graduate minor requires that students demonstrate the equivalent of two-years of college study of a language of the European Union, to support development of a technical vocabulary in fields such as business, law, and agriculture.

**Relation to Other Programs at UIUC.** The graduate minor will complement existing programs. Because these programs are defined by geographical area, they do not generally overlap. The recent accession of some East European countries to the European Union (such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) will result in some complementary cross-coverage with the Center for Russia, East European and Eurasian Studies (REEEC). The EUC enjoys particularly good working relations with REEEC, and it collaborates each year with other area studies centers, the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), the Center for Global Studies (CGS), and the Program in Arms Control Disarmament and International Security (ACDIS) in staging a Joint Area Studies Symposium.

The graduate minor will also complement PhD programs in many departments, especially the social sciences, and provide an opportunity for students to pursue an area studies program as well as their primary field. There is much interest in this especially from disciplines such as law, business, education, architecture and planning, library and information science, and veterinary science.

**Program Administration and Oversight.** The graduate minor will be administered alongside the MA in European Union Studies, sponsored by the European Union Center in International Programs and Studies. Oversight for the program will be provided by the Office of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In keeping with conditions of U.S. Department of Education funding of National Resource Centers, the Center's faculty advisory board will arrange for on-campus and external evaluation of the minor at regular intervals.

**Comparison with Programs of European Studies at Other Universities.** There are many area studies programs with a European focus at universities in the United States, but there are few programs of study with a specific focus on the European Union. A graduate minor represents a significant body of work but one that is not burdensome to students enrolled in MA, PhD or professional degree programs. We believe that such a program at the University of Illinois will attain a high level of excellence and enjoy a position of national prominence.

The Center enjoys close working relationships with representatives of the EU government and key industries and universities that are centrally involved in the development of EU policies. In view of the recent expansion of the European Union to the east, the University of Illinois is, by virtue of its strength in Eastern European Studies, well positioned to offer a strong program of training for students interested in these areas.

#### **BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS**

**Organizational Issues.** The graduate minor will be administered in conjunction with the MA in European Union Studies. The lead role will be taken by an academic professional Program Coordinator in the EU Center. The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Center Director (faculty) and faculty advisory board sub-committees, will manage admissions, financial aid, and advising. This position will be funded by IPS. Teaching of the seminar will be a responsibility of the EUC Director and/or Coordinator, in collaboration with affiliated faculty. Additional instruction will be provided by the nine colleges now delivering approved courses (see Attachment 3); currently, roughly 80 percent of the EU seminar students are enrolled in graduate or professional degree programs ranging from agricultural and consumer economics to law.

**Staff and Budgetary Requirements.** The creation of a graduate minor is part of an undertaking whose long-term objective is a vibrant area studies center at the University of Illinois focusing on the European Union, including contemporary western and central Europe. The services of an MA Program Coordinator will be required. See Attachment 4 – Letter of IPS Commitment- for information on the funding.

Operations of the European Union Center are presently funded by a combination of external and state funds through IPS. Initial funding for the Center was provided by the European Commission (EC) of the EU, with matching resources from the University of Illinois. The most obvious external source to replace this funding is the United States Department of Education (USDE). In 2003 the USDE designated the Center as a Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Program and awarded the Center, for the 2003-2006 period, \$723,000 in support of its NRC programs and \$372,000 in FLAS Fellowships. Beginning November 2005, the EUC was able to apply for continued funding every four years. In 2006-2010, the EUC has an NRC grant of \$206,857 and FLAS funds of \$134,000 each year for

four years.

With current Title VI funding and future tuition and IU income from students enrolled in the EURO rubric courses, a need for additional state funding is not anticipated. Apart from FLAS fellowships, there will be no other programmatic funding for graduate students.

**Internal Reallocations Needed.** The EUC has offered an interdisciplinary graduate seminar in each semester of its seven-year existence, either as part of the Director's responsibilities or with funding from IPS and other sources. Support for the Program Coordinator (one FTE staff person) will come from USDE funding and IPS.

Ultimately, the EUC will offer core seminars under its own rubric, just as REEEC and other area studies centers in LAS do. The fall semester version of this course will become EURO 501, with the spring semester version becoming EURO 502. The EUC will create two other courses as part of this program, EURO 598 and EURO 599 for study abroad or internship placement and thesis research. Study abroad will occur under existing programs, such as the European business program offered MBA students in Leuven.

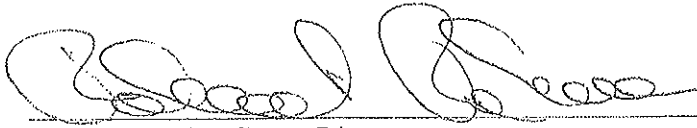
**Effect on Course Enrollments in other Departments.** Much of the graduate minor program relies on existing courses in departments across campus, though half of the required courses could be met with the interdisciplinary graduate seminars. At the 500-level, this program may enable departments to offer courses that currently do not attract enough students to be offered regularly. The department heads of French, German, and Spanish have mentioned the positive benefits to be gained from higher enrollment in 400-level courses (see Attachment 6). The graduate minor will generate interest in developing new 500-level courses, with some course development funded by the European Union Center's Department of Education NRC grants. The EUC already offers grants to develop new courses and revise existing ones at the undergraduate level.

**Impact on Library, and Computer Use.** The resources needed by students pursuing the minor are already part of the University of Illinois Library collections because of the research interests of Illinois faculty. The Law Library is an official depository for publications of the European Union, and students in the EU seminar already rely on this collection as well as using other library collections on campus. The Center is currently working with Lynne Rudasill in the social science library to inventory the various collections of EU and European documents across campus. The Center's 2003-05 NRC grant funded over \$70,000 in library acquisitions.

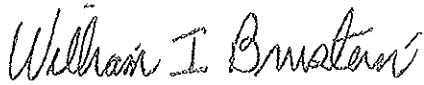
**Student Funding.** In addition to NRC funding from the Department of Education, the EUC received funding totaling \$372,000 for Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships during the 2003-05 Title VI cycle (\$100,000 annually for academic-year awards and \$24,000 annually for summer awards). The Center was rewarded with a renewal of these fellowships for the four-year period of 2006-2009, and will seek other sources of student funds. FLAS fellowships will be offered to students in the minor program who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Students are eligible to compete for other fellowships at the campus level, and can obtain need-based financial aid from the Office of Student Financial Aid.

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval**

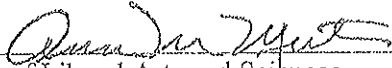
CLEARANCES



European Union Center Director



Associate Provost for International Affairs



2-7-08

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



8/28/08

Graduate College

Provost