

**STRATEGIC PLAN:
CENTER FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES
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I. Introduction: CES mission statement

As a Title VI Center, the primary goal of the Center for European Studies (CES) is to assist in the development of area and language skills among the country's best students through fostering rich academic and cultural environments including broad language and areas studies courses, degree options, and study abroad opportunities. To accomplish this goal the CES also provides a wide array of development opportunities to faculty members from across the university. These opportunities insure that faculty members have the resources and skills necessary to provide students with the highest quality education possible while at the same time supporting faculty research agendas. As a Title VI center, the CES also plays a critical role in fostering greater international awareness in the broader community through education programs for state and local government, business organizations, K-12 students and teachers, the media and the general public.

II. CES in UF and beyond

The CES occupies a rather unique place in CLAS combining the traditional functions of a department (e.g. faculty lines, degree programs) with the mission of a Title VI National Resource Center. By virtue of CES' profile, there is a strong symbiosis with numerous units in CLAS (e.g. Anthropology, English/Film and Media Studies, History, LLC, Political Science, Sociology) making these (and other) departments stronger and more diverse, particularly in the areas of faculty co-assignments, curriculum development, and graduate student funding. In particular, graduate and undergraduate students from these departments benefit by enrolling in CES faculty led courses either directly or through crosslisted courses, and through the numerous funding opportunities available at the CES. Additionally, the CES has exemplary and efficient structures of administration and fiscal responsibility.

Intra-university grant programs sponsored by the CES provide sources of funding for curriculum development (travel, course development, and course enhancement grants), faculty research and development, conferences and symposia, and graduate student funding in many fields and specializations. These funding programs assure that: 1) UF offers faculty and students access to new, cutting-edge research related to Europe in disciplines across campus; 2) graduate students have opportunities to teach original, new courses; 3) graduate students expand their research profiles through studying new languages (FLAS program); 4) potential and incoming quality graduate students are assured proper financial support for research and development. Furthermore, CES contributes to undergraduate programs by offering undergraduate grants for study abroad and internship programs. Finally, CES is committed to continue to co-sponsor Europe related symposia, speakers, workshops, etc. throughout campus.

UF's mission of 'internationalization' is significantly aided by the CES. The unit acts as a magnet for graduate and undergraduate students interested in Europe, and has Title VI and EU grants that recognize and aid its internationalization efforts. This mission is complemented by our lesser and least

commonly taught language (LCTL) offerings, as well as the five study abroad programs that provide opportunities to students to broaden their cultural and intellectual horizons.

With its “Europe focus”, the CES is the only one of its kind in the southeast US, helping attract graduate students to UF. The center’s LCTL program is described by external evaluators as one of the most nationally competitive, allowing graduate and undergraduate students access to a variety of priority and strategic languages as designated by the Department of Education. The success of this program is reinforced by attractive student/faculty ratio and a personalized experience in mentoring students.

III. On Interdisciplinarity and the CES

The interdisciplinarity of faculty research and specializations, as well as courses offered, is one of the most salient features of the CES. We offer a robust, interdisciplinary Europe-focused program, specializing in Central and Eastern Europe, the European Union and its past and future enlargements, and Turkey. Our interdisciplinary and regional focus helps draw students from different disciplines into our varied area studies offerings, helping to create a more diverse learning environment.

As scholarship in the humanities and social sciences continues to become increasingly interdisciplinary, the presence of regional studies centers, like the CES (and other Title VI centers), becomes more and more important. The CES provides an institutional space for breaking out of the traditional, discipline-driven departmental structures, allowing scholars with discipline-specific approaches to collaborate and present a broad picture of a cultural and political space as defined by a region. By having strengths in both the humanities and social sciences, CES has actively sought to develop a truly interdisciplinary area studies center: we examine the area of Europe as both a “strategic” area and a broader cultural space.

Interdisciplinarity of faculty and regular interaction among faculty of different disciplines encourages a thorough presentation and understanding of current global issues that are not limited by academic disciplines or national boundaries. Such an approach to scholarship and higher education is vital in a world, where global phenomena and challenges such as nationalism, migration, energy politics, information technology, global media, overpopulation, or climate change require interdisciplinary solutions and approaches that combine methodologies from the Humanities and Social Sciences.

CES faculty expects that over the next twenty years, Europe’s lead role in the world will be changing, making it not only more attractive as a region of study, but also vital for a thorough understanding of the trans-regional issues highlighted above. This suggests that area studies may move away from a ‘national’ focus, towards an increasingly regional or even global one. The growth of the “global” demands more comparison across regions that will require foreign language training in symbiosis with regional, interdisciplinary studies.

IV. Programming and Curriculum Development

Unlike many National Resource Centers (NRC) in the United States, the CES is structured and functions in much the same way that a department does. Since its establishment, CES has offered a diverse and interdisciplinary academic program. There is widespread consensus that CES offers a competitive robust curriculum, typified by a wide selection of area studies and language courses. Language courses housed in the CES—Czech, modern Greek, Hungarian, Polish and Turkish—are lesser/least commonly taught European languages (LCTLs), some of which are classified by the Department of Education as ‘priority’ and the Department of Defense as ‘strategic’ languages. Our specializations in Eastern Europe and the EU (covering a variety of disciplines) are where we most successfully compete. Based on our collaboration with other units across the college and campus community, CES social science course enrollments are the most successful at attracting students from a variety of departments with ethnic and nationalism interests in Sociology, Anthropology and

Political Science. Increasingly, our 2000 level courses (EUS2001 and EUS2003) are helping to attract students to our upper level area studies courses.

To improve our curriculum, CES believes that we need to develop a more cohesive definition of 'European Studies' in the context of the CES and UF curriculum. As the CES has grown, the number of our course offerings has increased as well and a more structured approach to course design, scheduling and curriculum design is required. CES faculty expressed that partially such an approach lies in the establishment of a European Studies Major (independent of the IDS major in Modern European Studies) in the 2010-14 grant cycle, supported by our current minors in European Union Studies and East Central European Studies. Furthermore, CES believes in the necessity to develop and offer more targeted introductory level courses (2000 level) that would help increase student enrollments for our minors and proposed major.

VI. Conclusion and Proposed Changes

At this stage of CES growth, we have determined that one of the primary tasks facing the center is to capitalize on and maximize our interdisciplinarity by creating a stronger, more unified center identity, and improving internal synergies in the following areas: curriculum, outreach to other departments and students, and funding.

Suggested changes

Curriculum Issues. The CES feels that curriculum development would benefit from intensified cross-collaboration with other centers/departments on campus. Additionally, there are some internal administrative changes which if implemented would lead to a more cohesive CES curriculum.

- Facilitation of cross listing at college level
- Updating graduate school policy giving graduate students approval to take 1000 & 2000 level language courses in LCTLs for research purposes
- Encourage CLAS and LLC to develop a Comparative Literature Program which would have a positive effect on enrollments in Humanities and area/cultural studies courses
- Offer a better balance between CES specific courses and cross-listings to address student credit hours (SCH) issue
- Adopt a more structured approach to course scheduling and/or design to help avoid offering competing courses and saturation; approach the process more programmatically.
- Submit more UCC1's to establish permanent course codes
- Work toward more CES courses "counting" toward majors (IDS is not sufficient approach); possibly offer an International Studies Major in this next funding cycle
- Retool curriculum of ECES minor to offer a better integrated program of courses; offer more required courses for this major
- Offer more 2000 and 3000 level courses for minors that capitalize on our interdisciplinarity (i.e. a 2000 level intro course to ECES to increase enrollments for the minor and make CES more visible to incoming students)
- Design "Bread and Butter" courses that are better geared toward our constituency. For example, a course entitled "Travel Companion to Europe" OR "Europe Today" that focus on contemporary Europe and what to expect when there. Units might include such topics as "Working in Europe," "Geography," "Family structure," "Social Safety Net," etc... Basically, create a course with a more pragmatic and thematic approach
- Make stronger efforts towards developing a graduate degree program at the masters level, prioritizing the hire of an Economist specializing in Europe

Outreach to other departments and students. To capitalize on its strengths, the CES needs to expand its linkages to units outside of CLAS, especially in the professional schools. This includes collaboration at the faculty level through joint courses or research groups, as well as increasing

awareness among non-CLAS students about the CES. In particular, without better ‘outreach’ to attract students, a new major alone will not increase enrollments.

- Improve communication with and involvement of CLAS departmental chairs in CES through sponsoring lunch/info sessions
- Encourage collaboration and cooperation within CES and with other units (team teaching, joint grant writing)
- Topic based collaboration with other centers/departments within UF. For example “sustainable development” or other interdisciplinary projects that would foster inter-departmental (and inter-college) cooperation
- Theme based approach to projects with maximum collaboration with other UF units. For example: LAS, CAS & CES could come up with a joint themed speakers’ series by pooling resources, allowing UF centers to be able to bring in renowned scholars to increase visibility
- Establish relations with academic advisors outside of CLAS by visiting other colleges and meeting with undergraduate coordinators and representatives from the professional schools
- Engage with student clubs and organizations, letting them know about the CES academic programs
- Organize graduate and undergraduate conferences on European Studies in collaboration with other Florida public universities to encourage interdisciplinary study and enthuse students, especially undergraduates, to a variety of fields

Funding. Proposals in this section deal both with CES-run funding competitions and with increasing faculty engagement in drawing external funding.

- In running CES curriculum development competitions, be more selective in grant awards not to repeat existing ‘hot’ offerings
- Provide seed funding for faculty wishing to travel to external funding agencies to increase the success rate of such proposals
- Solicit community donations for a more general CES library, including, for example, children’s books in European languages that could be used for language instruction and teacher outreach