

European Studies

Learning Goals and Assessment Plan

Program Mission

The European Studies Program seeks to provide students interested in Europe, past and present, with an intellectual and social setting within which students can ask fundamental questions about Europe as place, people, economy, and cultural zone. Where does Europe begin and end and why? What is European about European culture? What defines "non-European" and how have these definitions changed with time, place, and context? How do Europe's complex pasts interact with current directions in politics, economics, and culture? And for each of these questions, who decides and what are their reasons? Drawing on many fields of study, European Studies insists that students investigate Europe and "things European" through multiple disciplinary lenses and begin to integrate these perspectives into a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary one. Through coursework and experiences on campus and abroad, students also gain an understanding of interactions between nations in Europe, the European Union as a global actor, and the meaning of Europe within the nation state. In particular, we seek to support students in integrating their off-campus experiences in Europe and their study of European languages (broadly understood) with their coursework on campus.

Learning Goals

Minors in European studies should

- be able to integrate knowledge gained through study abroad experience with that gained through classroom experience.
- understand the nature and effects of relationships between nations within Europe and between Europe and other parts of the world
- understand the idea and practice of interdisciplinary study and how it functions within European Studies.
- demonstrate the ability to conduct research using resources from multiple disciplines.

Assessment Plan

The Capstone Seminar (EUST 398), typically taken by seniors in their final semester, is the logical place to assess our learning outcomes. In the course, students are asked to research and develop a 10 to 15-minute presentation on a topic of their choosing. In order to make this project a better culminating assignment, we will require the project topic to meet several criteria:

- 1) it must involve the European country in which they studied, at least in part;
- 2) it needs to draw on the literatures of at least 3 academic disciplines;
- 3) it should have a transnational dimension (though this may be secondary)

In addition, students will write a significant reflective essay designed to pull together their coursework for the concentration, including the capstone project experience; their study abroad

program experiences; and their language study, and to reflect on the interrelationships between these elements. The essay should also consider the change and continuity in their own understanding, future curiosities, and ambitions with respect to Europe.

The director and at least one other faculty member will evaluate the Capstone presentations and the reflective essay using a rubric focused on one of our three learning goals and will discuss their observations. At the Program planning meeting in the following academic year, they will share their findings to program faculty and discuss next steps.