

# **Précis**

Program Performance Review

## ***European Studies, BA***

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

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### **Background**

The European Studies Program established in 2004 conducted its initial program performance review during the 2009-2010 academic year. A self-study was completed. The review included evaluation by a visiting team. The visiting team reviewed the self-study and other documents, interviewed the associate dean of administration, program coordinator, members of the European Studies Program Council, chair of the History Department, and several current students as well as attended a program sponsored lecture during their one-day visit. The members of the team included Dr. Richard Haesly, Political Science Department Cal State Long Beach; Dr. Jane O. Newman, European Studies, UC Irvine, and Dr. Margaret Garber, Liberal Studies, Cal State Fullerton. The visiting team issued a report of its findings and recommendations. The team report is noteworthy for its level of detail replete with footnotes. In addition, the Dean provided a summary and recommendations and the Program Coordinator issued a written response to the team findings.

### **Key Data**

The European Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program housed in the Department of History. It has a coordinator who receives release time to administer the program and faculty comes from various departments. The European Studies Program Council comprised of faculty members from History, Modern Languages and Literatures, Liberal Studies and International Business provides oversight of the program. There are no FTEF allocations and the program does not receive an FTES target. It is a small program, since its inception in 2004; there have been 7 awarded BA degrees. The number of majors (including second majors) has declined in recent years from a high of 8 in 2007-08 to a low of 2 in fall 2010.

### **Key Issues**

It appears that the most pressing issue confronting the program is enrollment. The program has not developed a critical mass of students and will need to find ways to attract more students as evidence of viability. The program should engage in curriculum review and revision, which will include the development of a general education “gateway course” EUST 300. This course would hopefully serve to increase enrollment in the major. Curriculum review will also include an appraisal of the present language requirement and the senior capstone course. The program should consider expanding the interdisciplinary reach of the program to include faculty in other departments who might choose to teach in the program. Another issue for the program is the European Studies Program Council and the recommendation to add new faculty to its

membership. Coordinator support and related program resources is an issue that should be reviewed by the program in consultation with the college dean.

### **Outcomes Assessment**

The program has clearly conceptualized an assessment plan that when refined and fully implemented will inform the faculty on the critical subject of teaching and learning. There are six learning goals aligned with eight student learning outcomes included among the learning goals are *interdisciplinarity* and *Europe in the global context*. The learning goals link to the University goal to be a “regional university with a global outlook.” There is an assessment infrastructure in place in the form of the assessment committee, whose three members come from the ranks of the European Studies Program Council. The primary assessment strategy is the capstone seminar EUST490. Students develop portfolios of their work in addition to a final paper or project. Rubrics have been developed to evaluate the papers and portfolios. And importantly, the portfolios and papers must demonstrate that work has led to the fulfillment of the program learning goals. (This is accomplished by way of a student written self- assessment. Quite interestingly usually it is the faculty who would make such a determination in their review of the students work). While it is early in the assessment process, the program has progressed to looking at assessment data to inform curriculum change and improvement. It was found that written and oral communication might be a problem; it is not clear how the program assesses oral communication. However, the assessment committee reports that the proposed EUST 300 will provide another opportunity to develop students’ written and oral communication skills. At this point there is not a lot of quantity, but the program is to be commended for understanding and moving to act on “closing the loop”, the most critical phase of the assessment of student learning.

### **Outlook**

The visiting team commended the European Studies program as having the potential to be a model for interdisciplinary collaboration and cross-training of students. Strong and motivated leadership in the coordinator position bolstered by an engaged and dedicated program council is strength of the program. In addition, student interest as exemplified in the European Studies Society and its sponsorship of the speaker series “Eyewitness to War” has been heralded as a popular and successful co-curricular activity. Nevertheless, the visiting team also noted that the European Studies is at a critical juncture in its six year history. The very low enrollments are a source of concern and if such numbers are not increased it could impact the viability and sustainability of the program. Therefore, all parties in the review process including the program coordinator, the dean, and the visiting team have identified this as the number one priority to address and steps are being taken to increase enrollments through curriculum innovation, marketing and outreach.

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