The Future of European Languages, Literatures, and Cultures in Stony Brook

It is obvious in today's world that language, literary and cultural studies, if they are not to retreat into a self-serving and ineffectual existence, have to engage the crucial modern-day realities. These include, radical advances in technology, parallel processes of globalization, and social-political changes that have placed a new emphasis on individual areas of the world. The United States is a world leader but the world it leads is made up cultures that increasingly demand awareness of their own complexities, goals, and rights to development. Unfortunately, a traditional insularity continues to negatively impact our understanding of other cultures. As noted by the Modern Language Association's most recent report on national trends, the "inability to communicate with or comprehend other parts of the world" is among the most obvious of needs to be addressed by academia.

The pressing goal for education in this regard is to establish new levels of translingual and transcultural competence among students. The means for fulfilling this goal must involve both faculty who are trained in multidisciplinary and multicultural methodology and a curriculum that addresses present day realities without falling into shallowness and opportunism foreign to true scholarship.

ELLC has a firm budgetary base, founded in an efficient use of resources and the largest undergraduate student enrollment in the humanities, on which to develop the outlined pedagogical mission. Continued growth will involve linkages between languages, literatures, and cultures painstakingly established in the classroom and the faculty's research. Future development will include the following principles:

- The knowledge of languages will be viewed as an integral part of the study of literature and culture as well as the foundation of a broad range of careers involving international areas.
- Pedagogical practice both in elementary and advanced classes of Italian, French, German, and Russian will incorporate technological advances to provide new access to the meaning and complexities of Europe. In related technological development, ELLC together with TLT, will introduce new media to provide individualized study in the classroom and outside of it.
- ELLC's study abroad program will be developed further and extended to new European institutions. As suggested by David Brooks in the *NY Times,* the traditional American insularity can be dealt with if study abroad becomes a rite of passage for college students.
- Academic contacts abroad will provide a natural source for developing uses of the internet in research and the classroom through direct communication with teachers and peers in Europe. Dissertation research and other forms of collaboration will be expanded based on the extensive scholarly network already available to the department.

The strong undergraduate program will serve as a foundation for fulfilling a long-standing goal in the department to develop its graduate program beyond the existing M.A. and M.A.T. degrees. The department has submitted proposals to the

Deans of the Graduate School and CAS for a new M.A. in European Studies and an inter-departmental Doctorate Program. Stony Brook has a particular opportunity to become an American leader in advanced study of European culture, since there are no equivalent doctoral programs in the United States (although they are widespread in Europe).

A central principle of the new degree will be an inter-disciplinary approach, involving affiliated faculty with language, literature and culture interests, that will allow due regard for the multifaceted nature of cultural phenomenon along the lines of different media—literary texts, cinema, internet, musical and theatre productions— as well as inter-cultural engagements. The new doctorate will provide different tracks dependent on particular cultural areas, but will also involve mutual courses in literary and cultural theory shared with other programs. Existing academic resources in CAS will be of considerable benefit in providing the degree with a supporting base. Faculty and courses from Africana Studies, Asian Study, CLS/CLT, English, Hispanic Languages and Literatures, History, and Women Studies will be involved through shared interests in studying different approaches to language, literature and culture, but also in honoring the particular significance of different cultures. A notable benefit of such affiliation would be the added depth and breadth provided to existing doctoral degrees. As a result of participating in the new program, for example, CLS/CLT's doctoral candidates will have better access to positions open in departments of foreign languages and literatures.

ELLC currently performs a leadership role in outreach programs to support language education throughout New York. The department looks forward to developing its strong M.A./M.A.T. programs to serve as an education track in the proposed new doctorate. The doctorate track will place ELLC as a leader in foreign language pedagogy nationally and internationally. An additional benefit during hard financial times will be the tuition revenue that will be generated.

In related areas:

- the department together with the CAS Office of Advancement is currently working to create an endowment for a Chair in Hellenic Studies to complement the first Stony Brook endowed chair in the humanities. The new Chair will strengthen the department's current Classics program and it will provide a historical and cultural base for the department's work in European civilization.
- ELLC, together with the Office of Admissions, has developed a new program, the Accelerated Education Program (ACE), addressing the high school curriculum and allowing talented students to develop their language skills before entering college. The program will provide both considerable tuition revenue and better prepared students for the university.