



When Distance Education Comes Up Short: Two Cases of Social Science Programs

Professor Bruce Ahrendsen
University of Arkansas, USA

ICA Week of Conferences 2012
Educating the Net Generation in the Life Sciences

Free University of Bozen, Bolzano, Italy
20-23 June 2012

Personal experiences with two social science programs

- International MBA in Agribusiness (AGRIMBA)
- Atlantis EU-US Double MSc Degrees in Rural Development and Agricultural Economics
 - European Erasmus Mundus Programme “Erasmus Mundus International Master of Science in Rural Development ” (Course N° 2004-0018/001-FRAME MUNB123) and the EU-US Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Vocational Training (Transatlantic Degree Consortia Projects) nr. 2008-1745/001 – 001 CPT-USTRAN and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (EU-US Atlantis Program grant P116J080034, U.S. Department of Education).
 - Disclaimer: However, the contents of this presentation do not necessarily represent the policy of the supporting agencies, and you should not assume endorsement by the supporting agencies.

Distance Education v Face-to-Face

Distance Education

- Economical
 - Large courses
 - Lower level courses
 - Walmart?
 - Phoenix University?
 - Student debt
 - Student placement
- Efficient
- Convenient
 - Comfort of your own office
 - Time

However when Learning Objectives are:

- Cultural awareness
- Appreciation for other ways of doing...
 - Teaching methods...
- International context
- Face-to-Face or Feet-on-the-ground education will serve the student better
 - Student mobility
 - “Classroom” settings



Case 1: International MBA in Agribusiness

- International network of academics and professionals (Heijman, 2009)
- Objectives
 - Set standards
 - Input on international business practices
- 17 year history



International MBA in Agribusiness

- At Life Science Universities in
 - Warsaw
 - Prague
 - Debrecen, Hungary
 - Kiev
 - Moscow
 - Zagreb
 - Belgrade
- Newer: Nitra, Kazan, Belgorod, Podgorica
- Newest: Ulan Bataar, Stavropol, Kaliningrad

Joint International Study Week stimulates students' senses...aromas





And
aromas...



Multinational Student Teams work and learn together on live case studies







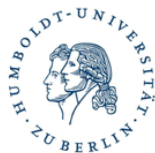
Case 2: Atlantis Program



EU-US Double MSc Degree Program in Rural Development and Agricultural Economics

Main objective

- Develop and offer
 - Double degree in rural development & agricultural economics
 - Joint EU International Master in Rural Development (IMRD)
 - MSc from US
 - Agricultural Economics from U of Arkansas
 - Food & Resource Economics from U of Florida





Atlantis Program



Sub-objectives

- Student and faculty mobility
- Institutional collaboration
- Research interaction

Grant No.
2008-1745



Bilateral Cooperation
with
Industrialised Countries

P116J080034



FPSE



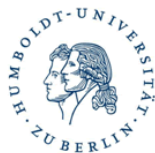


Atlantis Program



Partner cooperation

- Memorandum of Agreement by
 - Five universities in the EU
 - Ghent U, Belgium, Lead university
 - Agrocampus Ouest, Rennes, France
 - Humboldt U, Berlin, Germany
 - Pisa U, Italy
 - Slovak U of Agriculture, Nitra
 - Two universities in the US
 - U of Arkansas, Lead university
 - U of Florida





Atlantis Program

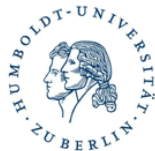


Partner cooperation

- Innovative curricula development
- Academic credit arrangement & assessment
- Organizational framework for student mobility
- Language and cultural preparation

Practical experience and research

- Case study
- Internship
- Thesis: EU-US comparative study

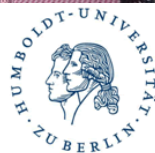




Atlantis Program



- Main challenge
 - Student mobility and thesis research
 - Two-year program: Min of three locations (1 in US and 2 in EU)
- Main benefit
 - Student mobility and learning!





Contact

Prof. Bruce Ahrendsen
AGRIMBA Joint international study week
Atlantis Program Coordinator

217 Agriculture Building
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville AR 72701 USA
+1-479-575-6643
ahrend@uark.edu

Atlantis website: agribus.uark.edu/4028.php
Agricultural Economics website:
agribus.uark.edu/2857.php

