

## Perspectives on Global Issues Workshop

### Faculty Professional Development Program

Under the aegis of the Office of Academic Affairs, KSU launched a new initiative in faculty professional development starting May 2016. Envisioned as an annual program, and anchored in the KSU strategic plan's objectives of international prominence and global engagement, the "Perspectives on Global Issues Workshop" will involve a small group of KSU faculty from across the university in an active-learning, globally-focused, inter-cultural, academic-practitioner seminar built around selected themes. The purpose is to expand faculty understanding of and engagement in broad topical policy debates and discussions occurring in the world today, thereby providing them with an additional foundation for bringing these themes back to the campuses of KSU and extending the engagement to our students and surrounding communities. Through a combination of seminar-based discussions, site visits, interactive discussions with policymakers, and most importantly group-based dialogue, participants will engage in a wide-ranging, inter-and cross-cultural adult learning community.

The program will occur this May and take place at the European Academy of Otzenhausen in Germany (EAO). The thematic topic will be "Sustainability - Challenges for the World of Tomorrow." Clearly a topic of interest for Europe and European countries, there is also much to be learned that pertains to the United States, Georgia, and even Cobb County. The concept of "Sustainability" transcends all disciplines and all countries. The KSU Office of Sustainability considers sustainability as: "The most popular definition of sustainability can be traced to a 1987 UN conference. It defined sustainable developments as those that "meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs"(WECD, 1987). or, "sustainable development" is sometimes referred to as development that is governed by the Triple Bottom Line of: People, Planet, and Profit." Or to quote the US Environmental Protection agency: "Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations."

The European Academy of Otzenhausen has supported the educational initiative "Encouraging Sustainability," which aims to motivate civil society to treat the Earth in a responsible way. It is an excellent place to discuss the idea of sustainability from an international perspective. Topics to be discussed in this workshop include the "global learning" concept and education for sustainable development, ecotourism, corporate social responsibility, and energy and climate. Questions to be addressed include: What are the economic, environmental and social impacts of sustainability and policies to address it? What technological issues and capabilities are part of the challenges and potentially part of the ways and means to find workable policy responses surrounding sustainability? How does consumer behavior impact sustainability? What are the educational challenges and opportunities that emerge from an increased emphasis on sustainability? These topics and other topics will be viewed and discussed through a wide range of cross-disciplinary and inter-cultural lenses. Besides workshops, field

trips to venues such as the Zero Emission Campus Birkenfeld, Fraunhofer Institut, and Energielandschaft Morbach are planned (exact locations are subject to change) to show how sustainability practices are being utilized in the region. While much remains unknown even today, it is clear that a multi-faceted strategy incorporating a wide-range of tools and approaches are required, not to mention broad global engagement by a wide range of actors including both the public and private sectors.

### Travel Specifics

The proposed schedule calls for departure on May 11, 2017 and return on May 19, 2017. Costs will be covered by the Office of Academic Affairs including all transportation, room and board, materials, and internal travel directly related to the program (area excursions, site visits, speakers, etc.). Participants will be able to arrange their own personal travel either before or after the program, but must do so at their own expense and must be able to coordinate their arrival and departure with the requirements of the program. Participants will be responsible for all incidental and discretionary costs.

### Selection of Participants

In order to facilitate the selection of a representative and diverse cross-section of the KSU faculty, we are asking each of the 10 degree-granting colleges to forward two nominees, in rank order, to the Associate Vice President for Faculty's office no later than February 13, 2017. The method for selecting nominees is left to the discretion of each college, but an open, transparent and inclusive process is of course essential. The two nominees from each college should reflect the diversity of our faculty so that final selection of one nominee from each college as participants can carry that diversity forward. In a case where the person ranked first cannot accept, the second ranked person will be invited to attend the workshop. Nominees not selected for participation this year will of course be eligible for the next program and colleges may determine their own processes and policies for future nominations. Previous Perspectives on Global Issues workshop attendees are not eligible.

### Participants

The program is open to any full-time, permanent teaching faculty member in each of the degree-granting colleges of KSU. There are no specific pre-program requirements for participants other than their willingness to be available for the entire program and to engage fully in all aspects of it. However, in addition to the attendance and participation in the program itself, participating faculty are expected to propose and execute some type of "project" to be carried out at KSU during the next academic year (2017-18). As part of the nomination process, applicants must submit an application form answering the questions about their reasons for wanting to participate and how this experience will contribute to their teaching and/or scholarship and/or community engagement. This must include a description of what that project will be. Examples might include public lectures, integration of program "take-aways" in existing courses, or other initiatives that engage other faculty, students, and/or our community in some dimensions of the theme. The success of the program itself will depend on this full engagement of faculty participants and their energetic participation in all sessions, events, and discussions.

Participants are not required to be experts on any aspect of sustainability per se, nor do their academic areas of specialization necessarily have to relate to sustainability per se. We believe that active minds with a variety of different perspectives can create an exciting, adult-learning environment that can stimulate broad-based yet thoughtful policy analysis and problem solving from both academic and practitioner perspectives. Toward that end, applicants who demonstrate this kind of wide-ranging interest in any aspects of sustainability (policy options both theoretical and applied, implications, intercultural dimensions, and cross-disciplinary exchanges of ideas, etc.) will make the best participants and hence the best program.

Additional information about the EAO, including the facilities, its location in Germany/Europe, and programming can be found in the attached brochure. Specific information about the proposed program itself is being finalized now and will also be shared with interested faculty as soon as it is available and as requested. It will include cultural experiences as well as interaction with subject matter experts drawn from Europe and Eurasia.

For additional information please contact Dr. Ron Matson, Associate Vice President for Faculty ([rmatson@kennesaw.edu](mailto:rmatson@kennesaw.edu)).

We think this will be an exciting program and an equally exciting ongoing professional development activity for our KSU faculty. We look forward to working together with everyone to develop this as one of the unique KSU initiatives that benefits our faculty, students and community while also building even stronger ties between our University and the global community.

Sincerely,

Ron Matson