



Modern Languages at Southampton

School of Humanities

April 2006

The best thing about doing Languages and Contemporary European Studies is the flexibility of the course and how, to some extent, you can tailor it towards your own interests.

During my time at university I have studied modules from the departments of Politics, Sociology, Management and Geography, as well as Modern Languages. When we have been given the choice, I have usually chosen content units from Modern Languages because I really enjoy them, but I also love the variety that is on offer to me from other departments and I am definitely glad that I chose to do this multidisciplinary degree.

This semester I have been doing a Geography course and it is fascinating. My units complement each other really well and the degree offers a perfect balance of actual language work, and the content work.

This degree has been ideal for me because it has given me the opportunity to focus on what I love most (learning languages) as well as enabling me to study a broad range of other subjects alongside it.

I will finish my studies at the end of this year and in some ways I am sad about that because I have enjoyed my degree so much - I want it to continue! However, at the same time, I am excited about the new opportunities and challenges that I will experience as I begin my career and I am looking forward to putting all that I have learnt from my degree into practice.

Claire, Fourth Year

Why study Languages and Contemporary European Studies?

Whether you are hoping for a career in a European framework, or simply want to acquire a wide ranging and up-to-date knowledge of modern European institutions, society and culture, you will find the four year BA in Languages and Contemporary European Studies tailored to your needs.



Apart from work in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe, many graduates are employed as conference organisers, in non-governmental organizations, in telecommunications, banking, marketing, European publishing, as research consultants, in the media or PR. In fact, the possibilities of Europe-related work are virtually endless as the EU expands its political, cultural, and commercial links.

Languages and Contemporary European Studies at Southampton

The BA in Languages and Contemporary European Studies is **unique to Southampton** and has proved extremely successful with students. As a broad interdisciplinary course, it combines many of the attractions of a Modern Languages degree with a wide range of social and cultural studies. You will study two languages, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese or Italian. You must have an A level in one of these languages but the other one can be started from scratch.

You will have the opportunity to tailor much of your degree towards your own

interests, by choosing from a range of options in, for example, Politics, Geography, Sociology and Social Policy, Economics and Law.

Year 3 will be spent abroad, studying at a university or taking up an appropriate work placement. The year abroad is an excellent opportunity to improve your language skills and to explore another European culture.

We also offer variations of the Languages and Contemporary European Studies programme for **European Union and international students** who wish to learn about British culture, society and the English language at a leading British university.

Modern Languages and the School of Humanities will provide an important focus for at least part of your social life at University. In particular you will be encouraged to take an active part in the student-run societies, which organise talks, parties, film series, etc. and provide excellent opportunities for you to meet the many foreign-language speakers studying and working at the University.

Dr. Heidi Armbruster

EUROVOLT via VLE

European Vocational Online Language Teaching and Vocational Online Language Learning via a Virtual Learning Environment

Yes, it's a very long title, one which can usually only be found in German texts. EUROVOLT via VLE has been awarded €320,000 by the European Leonardo da Vinci programme and will develop on-line

learning and teaching materials. Kirsten Söntgens is representing the Centre for Language Study (CLS) in this project which is currently running several projects in the area of e-learning.

EUROVOLT via VLE will be of benefit to staff and students alike as we are developing model online language learning modules for learners that



Leonardo da Vinci

present innovative approaches to language learning using the latest technologies available, such as mp3 players, podcasts, weblogs and ePortfolios.

Tutors will be able to sample the teacher training modules which will focus on the full integration of ICT and the new media in different vocational language teaching and learning scenarios and cultures and which will also have a new technical and methodological focus on oral communication skills and access for PC and Apple Macintosh users.

So watch this space when the new learning and teaching materials will be coming to a course near you! Piloting of the new materials will start in October 2006.

Kirsten Söntgens

ESWEB

Did you know that the currency in non-EU Kosovo is the Euro? Did you know that Marco Polo was born on the island of Korčula belonging to the Dalmatia region of Croatia? And did you know we are helping develop language units at universities in both Kosovo and Croatia?

The University of Southampton is currently working on a materials development project in partnership with the Universities of Salzburg, Prishtina and Rijeka. ESWEB (Europastudien für die westlichen Balkanländer) is a TEMPUS-CARDS funded EU project set up in 2002 to create a European Studies degree programme for the partner institutions in Kosovo and Croatia. Total funding for the project is €360,000 and includes the purchase of computer equipment for the universities of Prishtina and Rijeka.

Within the programme there are language units in German and English; the Universität Salzburg is working on the German units and Southampton is taking a leading role in developing the English Language units. We have been asked to create 200 hours of blended



learning materials at upper intermediate level. Visiting Southampton, colleagues from Prishtina and Rijeka had been very impressed by the materials that the elanguages team had created and, wanting to make good use of their new computers, both were very keen for us to produce blended learning materials. We were not able to follow the elanguages model exactly however, as Kosovo only has an intermittent electricity supply, which can be off for several hours at a time. It has been a challenge creating materials that can be used online and which are also easily adaptable to the traditional classroom setting, but Prishtina and Rijeka have both been very pleased with the results and it was not half as difficult as deciding the content of the European Culture units!

The materials will be delivered through Blackboard and a dedicated ESWEB website will be up and running after Easter should you want to have a closer look at the project. The materials will be completed by July of this year and, as well as being used by the EWSEB programme, they will also be available for use on Stage 4 and 5 units here at Southampton.

Simon Le Tocq

SPLLOC



Laura Domínguez and Ros Mitchell

Studying the acquisition of Spanish as a second language

Congratulations to a team of researchers lead by Professor Ros Mitchell who has been awarded a research grant by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Dr. Laura Domínguez, who will be the research assistant, and Dr. Sarah Rule who will provide training and support, complete the Southampton team. The project also includes Professor Florence Myles from Newcastle and Dr. Emma Marsden from York. The purpose of the project is to study how students, aged 14-21, learn Spanish as a second language. This project complements a similar on-going study on the acquisition of French by the same team of researchers.

The project has two parts; during the first year researchers will visit schools around Southampton in order to collect the data which will form a corpus of Spanish as a second language. Once the data is tagged and digitally prepared to be analysed, it will be made available to both teachers and researchers through the project's website. During the second year of the project the analysis of the collected data will be carried out. Researchers will pay close attention to how certain morphosyntactic properties of Spanish, which are not found in English, are learnt. These include word order, clitic pronouns and verb morphology.

This project will help understand the processes involved in learning a second language in general, and Spanish in particular. The conclusions drawn will be relevant to both researchers in language acquisition and foreign language teachers.

Dr. Laura Domínguez

Why study languages?

New resources for teachers

The Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) is hosted by the Modern Languages discipline at Southampton and is a UK centre

funded to support those teaching in higher education.

LLAS has recently launched a new CD designed to excite,

educate and encourage young people to continue with their language learning in Key Stage 4 and beyond.



This interactive CD contains quizzes, language facts and PowerPoint presentations. There are a number of interviews in which undergraduates at Southampton talk about

their love of studying languages and

their experiences during

their year abroad. The CD

is being used by teachers in

schools and by staff in

higher education who are

making visits to schools. To

find out how you can

purchase the CD, which comes with a free poster, go to www.llas.ac.uk/whystudylanguages

Liz Hudswell

Other avenues

Every other Wednesday I join up with other recently appointed lecturers at the University to attend PCAP (Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice)

PCAP, dispensed by the University's Centre for Learning and Teaching, serves to acquaint us with up-to-date thinking in education and to stimulate reflection on key areas in academic teaching: how to evaluate effective teaching and learning, how to design and present a new course in a student-centred manner, etc. An enjoyable feature of PCAP sessions is meeting colleagues from other

parts of the University, from other disciplines: in my discussion group last session were members of staff from Audiology, Music, Chemistry, Biomedical Sciences, Geography and Nursing. It is interesting to hear from colleagues about their disciplines and about what they do. So, whilst I have learned what lecturing in Composition or in Biomedical Sciences entails, so my colleagues from these disciplines have learned about what one does in French Linguistics. This sort of exchange is healthy for University life, and allows us to feel part of a wider academic community.

Dr. Henry Tyne

Christopher Brumfit

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Professor Christopher Brumfit on 18th March

Chris joined the University in 1984, and held many positions of responsibility, most recently as Head of Modern Languages.

Outside the University he was in constant demand as a keynote speaker at international conferences all over the world, and served as Chair of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, Chair of the British Council English Teaching Advisory Committee, Vice-President of the Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée, and in many more such roles.

His work, particularly his pioneering work on communicative language teaching and his recent work on individual freedom in language teaching, is well known all over the world, and he was held in very high esteem wherever he went.

Despite his immense reputation and his remarkable intellectual breadth and depth, Chris was very much a people person. He loved teaching, and was a proponent of learner-centred education long before the term became fashionable.

We shall all miss him enormously, but our thoughts are particularly with his wife, his sons, his parents and the rest of the family.

George Blue

The enhanced role of Portuguese Studies at Southampton - new initiatives

Portuguese is a truly global language. It is estimated that there are over 200 million native speakers worldwide, not only in Portugal, but also in Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guiné-Bissau, Cabo Verde, Macao, São Tomé e Príncipe and East Timor.

This makes Portuguese the sixth most spoken language on the planet. There are also significant Portuguese migrant communities established throughout Europe and the Americas, including Canada and the USA. In such communities, Portuguese is either the first or the second language.

There is a long and prestigious history of Portuguese Studies at Southampton. Alan Freeland, Senior Lecturer in Portuguese

Studies developed the BBC documentary series and language learning methodology *Discovering Portuguese*. Since his retirement in 2001, the profile of the Portuguese Section has been further enhanced by a committed undertaking within Modern Languages to fully support its teaching and research initiatives. Recent achievements include three new appointments, covering both language and content and consolidating those already in post. Our new and exciting research interests include Portuguese diaspora and migration, ethnolinguistic vitality within Portuguese communities in the UK; popular literature of the Brazilian North East; drama theory of Augusto Boal; and social and political issues of Portuguese transition. It is also envisaged that a new Portuguese Studies Lecture Series will be initiated next year.

Despite the role of Portuguese on the world stage and the potential for Portuguese speakers in the job market, there are generally relatively few students of the language at British universities. One of our main strengths to date has been a highly innovative approach to the teaching of Portuguese, focussing on both European and Brazilian varieties. Moreover, our beginner's accelerated course is popular both with Modern Language students and with students from other disciplines. We are forging strong links with the UK Portuguese communities, with the result that our students are often able to benefit linguistically, socially and culturally from contact with bilingual students, who come to Southampton to learn about their families' heritage.

Dr. Jaïne Beswick

Football fever!

Sauerkrautcup



Our team 'I. FC Delfine'

Yes, you have guessed it, with the name Sauerkrautcup it has to be something German. And it is!

This event is organised and sponsored by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and co-financed by the University of Southampton and will be played at the 'Deutsche Schule' in Richmond.

On the 27th of April our team the 'I. FC Delfine' will be competing against teams from Kings College London, Reading University and the German school in London. The team is coached by Adrian Sewell, our well-known Saints supporter; otherwise also known as our French and German language tutor.

We proudly present our all German team: Jacob Smit, Mark Lee, Kyle Curtis, Neal Hocking, Kevin George, Helen Sykes, Lionel Canavero, Will Schäfer-Peek, Nick Radford, David Knowles, Robert Mumby, David Jankowski, Maria sal Ruiz, Kiran Khuman, Natasha Carr.

They will be supported by more than 30 fans from Modern Languages who will be cheering them on. Wish them 'viel Glück!'

Herrada Förster, DAAD-Lektorin

During my year abroad I have landed my dream job in the press and communications department at **Atletico de Madrid Football Club**. This sort of job would be very difficult to get into in England.

I was already a big football fan, and now have my own team to follow in Spain. It is exciting, and I am given a lot of responsibility as I am in charge of the English website for the club. My job involves going to training sessions, press conferences and matches, writing reports and interviews for the

website as well as keeping it up to date on different events.

Here in Spain football is covered very intensely, we report on which players have trained in a particular session and what exercises they have done, its good for me, as I have to practise understanding different accents, and I get to meet all the players.

My advice for anyone going on a year abroad is that you have to take every chance, not to be intimidated and go for it, as you will find people are very happy to help you out.

Becky, Third Year

Spansoc - the Spanish students society

There are eight students on the committee each with a different role and we meet weekly to discuss our ideas for activities.

This year we have organised lots of socials including a 'Tapas and Sangria Party', an 'S' themed party and a Christmas Ball. Coming up we have our boat party the 'Floating Fiesta' on May 16th and a smaller social at Que Pasa on April 27th.

Our society isn't only for those who study Spanish but also for Spanish Erasmus students or anyone with an

interest in the Spanish language and culture and the idea is that everyone meets each other and practises their Spanish/English.

After the Easter break we have organised a 'question and answer' session for second years to attend and speak to fourth years about their year abroad (accommodation worries, when to go etc).

We are very pleased with the success of Spansoc and hope it continues after we leave University in the summer.

Lauren, Fourth Year

Going for Gold

On the 28th March, Avenue campus welcomed 200 year 10 students from 17 local schools who took part in the inter-school challenge, Going for Gold. Working in teams of 6, and in either Spanish, French or German, the teams competed to promote the region to visiting **Olympic football teams** for the 2012 games. The day was a great success. The students worked hard to complete their tasks and we were impressed by the quality of their work which is now on display in the Civic Centre. Prizes were donated by SEEDA and awarded by the Mayoress of Southampton.

Becky Allen, Comenius South East

I'm a fourth year Spanish and Latin American Studies student. In my university holidays I work match days at **Arsenal Football Club** in the Membership and Travel Club office. As they know I'm studying Spanish at the University of Southampton, when Arsenal played Real Madrid I was asked to act as a translator on the day before and match day. This included going to the airport with representatives from Arsenal to assist with the arrival of Real Madrid. I also had to write signs in Spanish to put up outside the stadium with ticket information and dealt with any queries from Spanish supporters at the office window. I saw David Beckham and other Spanish and British celebrities. It was an amazing experience and a great way to practise my Spanish!

Lauren, Fourth Year

Mexican film festival

Come and experience authentic food and film

Our Mexican exchange teachers, Obed Macias, Rosario (Chayo), Rosa Morales and Guillermo Durán, organise a 'Tequila and Palomitas Party' in the SPLAS room at Avenue Campus every Tuesday. People bring a variety of authentic Mexican delicacies for us to sample before viewing films such as *Y tu mamá también*, *Cronos*, *Amores Perros*, and Luis Buñuel's masterpiece *El Ángel Exterminador* in the lecture theatre. Recently we saw the spectacular film *Como agua para chocolate*.

Like water for chocolate was produced by the writer Laura Esquivel (directed by her ex-husband Luis Esquivel). This amazing historical account via food was worth experiencing!

Irina Nelson