

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Birmingham City University

A Bilateral Collaboration

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Learning from the past

- ▶ UK for many years has been one of the strongest Erasmus partners for Greek Universities
- ▶ High number of AUTH students wished to visit the UK institutions via the Erasmus exchanges
- ▶ Lower number of UK students was keen on travelling to Greece via Erasmus
- ▶ Internationalization offers the opportunity to reconsider exchange practices and revise educational priorities
- ▶ New avenues of academic partnerships can be explored
- ▶ Opportunities for creating targeted programs for teaching staff and students in both cultural contexts.



First steps in formulation and international collaboration ...

- ▶ 1. Deciding on the objectives that an international collaboration will aim to satisfy
 - ▶ 2. Communicating with our prospective university partners (referring here to particular Faculties or individual Schools) so as to ensure whether there is an English-speaking program or certain courses already taught in English in place or whether there is willingness for such a path to be explored and developed
 - ▶ 3. Seeking information about the ECTS the collaborating Faculties or Schools offer for their courses
 - ▶ 4. Considering whether the program to be built will be awarding ECTS or not to the participating students
 - ▶ 5. Considering whether the program to be designed will be separate or working in conjunction with a BA or MA program already running.
 - ▶ And 6. Communicating with the International Relations departments of the collaborating UK-Greece institutions so as to proceed with the approval and eventual signing of the MOU needed which will serve as the stepping stone for a new partnership initiative to develop.
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Connecting with Aristotle University ...

- ▶ Birmingham City University has been eager to connect with the following AUTh Faculties:
- ▶ Faculty of Fine Arts
- ▶ Faculty of Philosophy and
- ▶ Faculty of Engineering

- ▶ Under each faculty a number of Schools can be found.



School of English AUTh: areas studied

- ▶ The BA and MA programs offered correspond to the following areas:
- ▶ English Literature and Culture
- ▶ American Literature and Culture
- ▶ Applied and Theoretical Linguistics
- ▶ Translation and Intercultural Studies



Areas to be explored between BCU and AUTh

BCU experience with ...

- ▶ Interdisciplinary academic programs
- ▶ Connecting its programs to museums, art galleries, cultural and media agencies
- ▶ Cross-disciplinary Faculties as is the one on Arts, Design and Media bringing together such an array of academic Schools which facilitates multiple collaborations to emerge with the corresponding Faculties at AUTh.

School of English AUTh has been thinking of ...

- ▶ Extending its undergraduate internship program into other domains of action that move beyond education and teaching practice
- ▶ Sharing its experiences as these derive from various initiatives with international partners (i.e. the US) as is the case of the “Diversity Studies Initiative” that brings Greek and ethnically diverse university students together plus its Greek Language and Culture two-year online and onsite program.



A main challenge ...


- ▶ Available funding for the support of initiatives.
- ▶ Putting together cost-effective programs for the participating students
- ▶ Aiming at financially viable programs as regards their creation, coordination and sustenance.



Key factors behind an effective international collaboration

- ▶ Engaging and meaningful conversations with international partners
- ▶ Willingness in building bridges
- ▶ Organization of mutually beneficial programs
- ▶ Attention to the widening of academic horizons for students and teaching staff
- ▶ Interest in paving cross-cultural paths of collaboration between our cities and countries.
- ▶ Belief in shared vision with international partners
- ▶ Being passionate about crossing borders and making connections.





Thank you
for your attention

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