

**Kennesaw State University Faculty Professional Development
Program
at the European Academy of Otzenhausen, Germany**
The Global Challenges of a Sustainable Development

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Summary

I participated at the European Academy of Otzenhausen (EAO) as a representative of the College of Architecture and Construction management. The goal was to utilize my experience in the sustainability subject and engage in professional dialogues with peers from KSU and EAO. The anticipated outcome of my participation was to learn more about the sustainability practices in Europe, and explore potential collaborations with our peers from Europe.

The week long workshop included several presentations which are; Sustainable Development – Responsibility for a global Challenge, Sustainability Challenges for the World of Tomorrow, Introduction to European Political Structures, Energy and Climate Policy in the EU and Germany, Water Policy in the US and in Europe, The Good, the Bad, the Ugly. A Multinational's Jump Into the Water, Global Population Growth and the Future of Food Supply, and Sustainability and Cultural Transformation.

The workshop LAO included the following trips; Tour Important places at the EAO, to the Celtic Circular Wall, Energielandschaft Morbach", Germany (Energy Landscape Morbach), organic, CSA farm: Wahlbacherhof, Zweibrücken, Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy, Tour to Bonn, and art tour of the EAO.

Lessons learned;

Below is the summary of what I gained from the workshop divided into 1-organizational skills, 2- knowledge gain , and 3- networking and collaborations

1- Organization;

Dr. Matosn was responsible for most of the logistics and the trip organization; In spite of his busy schedule as the Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, he dedicated a great amount of time to follow up with all details related to the trip to Germany and the activities during the workshop. I learned how a successful leader can manage his time, and pay attention to all details. I was impressed with Dr. Matosn's dedication and how he treated participants with great respect while making sure that all members are actively participating.

I also learned how to keep participants in a week long workshop engaged through a mixture for lectures and field trips. I feel confidence now that I can lead overseas trips to students from KSU.

2- knowledge learned;

The workshop included several lectures given by experts from different sustainability fields. The field trips also gave me better understanding of the actual perception of regular people in Germany towards sustainability. Unlike attending conference presentations, this workshop allowed me to better understand the business culture related in sustainability in Europe. Some lectures were long, monotonous, and did not have the excitements that we see at KSU. This gave me the confidence in our teaching skills at KSU. During the field trips I learned many things about the solar, wind, and biomass power generation that opened venues for me for more research and collaborations in these areas.

3- Networking;

The field visit allowed me to build strong and lasting relations with faculty members from KSU who share the same sustainability interest. For example, I learned how professors from Humanity, Engineering, Art, Culinary, and other areas approach sustainability in different ways, and the innovative approaches to engage their students to promote sustainability practices. I found great potentials for developing lectures across curriculums at KSU related to sustainability. There are also great potentials for collaboration between KSU and the surrounding community to improve the sustainability awareness.

Areas for improvement;

I think the workshop in general was a great idea and can be improved to maximize the benefit from it; the following are some of the suggestions;

- 1- The EAO should be more considerate when selecting field trips to the physical abilities of the participants. For example, the Hiking to the Celtic Circular Wall did not consider that some participants might not be able to walk and climb the hill. Some participants were left behind in the middle of the trip and some slid off on their back. I think these trips were designed for young students which are the majority of the EAO participants.
- 2- Although the EAO tried hard to accommodate the different dietary requirements of the participants, they were not sensitive when they organize a "wine and bread" dinner in a winery when they know that this does not match with the faith of some participants. There were also other participants who do not drink wine and do not like to be around drinking parties.
- 3- I felt several lectures were geared towards high school or undergraduate students and did not include peer-to-peer discussions and dialogue. Some of the lectures were not

related to the sustainability, and some speakers seems to have limited knowledge about the holistic vision of sustainability. I expected lectures that present new findings similar to what we see in other academic conferences. I did not find this in the workshop.