

The opportunity to participate in the 2017 *Perspectives on Global Issues Workshop* was a true honor and is already contributing to my academic research and instruction within the Architecture department. I am extremely thankful for the discussions and cross departmental bonds that were formed through the experience and see it as a rare and valuable experience that enriched faculty learning and provided real potential for collaboration and growth in the realm of sustainability. The Global Issues Workshop enhanced my knowledge by allowing me to interact with others who are working within various departments and specialties to accomplish sustainable goals. It also expanded my awareness of the UN Goals that form a collaborative framework between nation-states as they seek to reduce their environmental footprints with variable metrics. This expanded my ability to teach the agreements of COP21 and other global initiatives to my students in June, 2017 during my study abroad trip and during this current semester in ARCH3313.

The presentations we received were simply amazing and extremely informative. They highlighted issues of infrastructure resiliency, ecological policy, transportation efficiency, and material sustainability and allowed us to discuss these in reflection of our own departments and interests. I was not able to gather as much data and operational insight from the Birkenfeld Zero Emission Campus as I had planned. However, the trip to that campus did inspire me to continue to seek aggressive sustainable practices on our own campus. I continue to work with planning and facilities at KSU via the Presidential Commission on Sustainability. I am continuing research and dialogue with the commission (and with the office of planning and sustainability) to more clearly define a carbon offset program for our university. I have volunteered for a sub-committee within the Commission to research funding, projects and programs that we can approach at KSU as a result of this passion. I plan to share the carbon offset ideas with the group at a later date and see this as a critical and fundamental part of our global learning culture.

The Otzenhausen campus was a peaceful and focused learning setting. Having conducted summer study abroad offerings for KSU over several years, I feel that the campus might contribute to the expansion and depth of global learning for my students. I have kept in touch with the program directors in hopes to possibly include their site in my own travels with students. I have gathered site information drawings of the land that they have purchased and I discussed conducting an architectural studio to explore buildings and landscape that can introduce a sustainable infrastructural expansion to their campus using aggressive sustainability guidelines. The interest in this is two-fold. Our students and KSU will learn about the implementation of the UN sustainable goals and the resultant projects could be useful to the Otzenhausen campus to test the site for future programs. I have already started using the UN goals as additive elements in my ARCH3313 class and hope to present the upcoming studio work, next semester, during the UN Sustainability week celebrations that will be organized on our campus during the Equinox celebrations of 2018.

Thank you for this opportunity and for offering the global workshop to enrich our University through faculty development. I reflect upon our time in Germany as one of the most enjoyable and enlightening experiences that I have had at Kennesaw State. I hope that I might be fortunate enough to participate in a similar experience again and look forward to the resultant collaborations and campus initiatives. Many thanks.

–Ed Akins, Architecture