



-Photo by Matt Haffner at the European Union

## Perspective on Global Issues and Sustainability Workshop

Kennesaw State University Faculty Professional Development Program  
European Academy of Otzenhausen

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As a Global Citizen whose priorities are that of international travel, gaining new understandings of cultural perspectives, personal growth, and considerations of my impact on the world, I was pleasantly surprised by this faculty development workshop. As a professor of art, I was unclear as to how this workshop would impact my teaching and overall university experience. However, it revealed to me many of the things I already do in the classroom, between departments, and in the community. It also has created a desire in me to have a greater impact on those around me and pass this knowledge along to my students and see how their own perspectives and ideas can help change the world around them. As artists, we have an uncommon voice of those that create culture. This voice has the power to draw attention to issues close to our hearts and make important changes happen.

Throughout the wide variety of lectures and workshops that we engaged in at the EAO, I was particularly interested in the primary ideas of sustainability, collaboration, and the application of global impacts in the classroom.

### Collaboration

For me this was the biggest take away from the conference. I have already worked to establish perpetuating partnerships between the Department of Dance and our Photography students for our open house events and for helping both groups of students create portfolio pieces that will help them in their career after college. Photographers need models and the dance students need photos of themselves in action. This has been a wonderful ongoing relationship and is evolving each semester.

While attending the EAO workshop, I connected with several individuals from another visual department; Architecture. While there we discussed many possible collaboration projects, course materials, and new classes. I'm currently working to write an Architectural Photography course that can be cross listed and will benefit students both in the School of Art and Design as well as the College of Architecture and Construction Management. Additionally, I have been in discussions with faculty in the Architecture program about how our classes can work on projects together, working through creativity and project-based concepts. I also plan to be a part of the Architecture project based studio course by offering criticism, personal experience with galleries and museums, as well as my own experiences with site specific installations and spatial considerations.

Another collaboration that I have begun that is international and is ongoing and developing is a photography exhibit with students from the study abroad program in Montepulciano and the Fortezza which houses KSU's campus in Italy. Students who were enrolled in my course did cultural documentary photography projects and connected those to visual anthropological studies. This came to fruition in the form of a permanent and evolving photography exhibition that was hosted by KSU and is on permanent display in Montepulciano.

### Sustainability

This was another huge takeaway for me at this workshop. I've always been aware of my usage of foods, consumables, energy, and my impact in regard to carbon footprint and other global sustainability issues, but the EAO workshop made me think of more personal and immediate concerns. In the creative fields, often artists abandon their craft over time due to lack of financial support, not enough venues to showcase their work, or there is not enough of a community of like-minded individuals who champion what they do.

I have worked with artist residency centers in the past and I believe that the EAO is perfectly positioned in many aspects to support an artist in residency program. I plan on speaking to visitors from the organization about this and pitching ideas about how they could potentially be supportive of the arts and individual artists. I would like to be able to broker an agreement which could permit artists from the US to go to Germany and share their work, as well as have German artists come to KSU as part of an artist in residence exchange program, that could broaden international collaboration and help sustain artist careers through this type of residency support.

I am well positioned to help create exhibition opportunities for artists, connect them with other residency programs, meet curators, gallery directors, and museum directors in the Atlanta area and Southeast region.

### Application of Ideas in the Classroom

As mentioned earlier, I have already connected with other professors, both through the EAO conference, as well as through other interdepartmental, and study abroad collaborations. Though, through the workshops at the EAO and through conversations with other attending faculty, I have begun to develop and implement some specific changes to my curriculum in existing courses.

Specifically, in the KSU courses ART2990 Concept, Creativity, and Studio Practice, and in ART3400 - Digital Photography, as well as ART4410 - Advanced Photography.

In Concept Creativity and Studio Practice, one of the projects students due is centered around data collection and making visual representations of this data. Students are encouraged to examine data that is important to them and that potentially has impacts on a regional, national, or international scale.

In my photography courses, as well as some video course content, students work on documentary and visual anthropological studies projects that look at our place in the larger world and the impact we have on it. These projects have already examined urban sprawl, personal carbon footprints and consumables wasted, the healthcare system, political systems and critiques of power in the United States, among other projects. All of my courses involve critical thinking and examining our culture, our place in the larger world, and our impacts on our community and how we can use our voice as visual artists to make effective changes for the future.

I have such gratitude that I was given the opportunity to participate in such an impactful workshop. The thinking behind much of this faculty development opportunity was such that I believe all faculty and students should be exposed to this sort of global experience. I encourage other faculty in my college to attend this in the future and for students to explore options related to this or other study abroad possibilities. Each of us needs to experience other cultures, peoples, and ways of thinking to be true global inhabitants, and have a real empathy toward our fellow citizens.