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New Survey Examines U.S.-European Academic Collaboration

Research Report Provides Data on Transatlantic Joint and Double Degree Programs

NEW YORK and BERLIN, January 22, 2009 -- In today's global economy, professional collaboration with colleagues and customers in other countries is important for successful careers in business, government and academia. A new study by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Freie Universität Berlin finds that universities on both sides of the Atlantic are working to establish more international joint and double degree programs to make their campuses more international and better prepare their students, but participation in and support for such endeavors varies widely among institutions and countries. In particular, the study found that European campuses currently offer twice as many collaborative degrees, and European students are more likely to participate than their U.S. counterparts. The fact that 87% of respondents said that they wanted to develop more joint and double degree programs attests to the growing importance of this form of academic cooperation.

A new report, "*Joint and Double Degree Programs in the Transatlantic Context*," released today by IIE and Freie Universität Berlin, examines the key findings of an extensive survey conducted in spring 2008, based on responses from 180 higher education institutions in the United States and the European Union. The report assesses the current landscape of transatlantic degree programs and identifies inherent challenges and opportunities of expanding existing or developing new programs. It is available for download at: www.iie.org or at www.tdp-project.de.

The survey and report are part of a project sponsored by the "European Union-United States Atlantis Program" jointly administered and funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture. The project was launched in cooperation with several leading U.S. and European institutions: the Institute of International Education and the State University of New York (in the U.S.), and Freie Universität Berlin, the Franco-German University, and the Latvian Rectors' Council (in the E.U.).

Later this year, the project partners will also publish a *Transatlantic Degree Programs (TDP) Manual for Institutions*, which is intended to serve as a key resource to institutions who wish to build or expand transatlantic joint or double degree programs. Individual articles will provide practical recommendations on removing barriers and overcoming challenges in the development of these types of programs and highlight key issues related to establishing, managing and sustaining collaborative degree programs with a particular focus on the transatlantic context. Faculty members and university administrators with experience in developing and maintaining joint and dual/double degree programs are invited to submit articles to the *Manual*. Deadline for submitting articles is March 15, 2009. A call for papers is available on the websites mentioned above.

Major findings of *Joint and Double Degree Programs in the Transatlantic Context* report include:

- European institutions are about twice as likely to offer at least one joint degree as U.S. institutions and offer about twice as many such degrees as U.S. institutions.
- U.S. students are less likely than European students to participate in collaborative degree programs.
- Top 5 partner countries for European institutions: United States, France, Spain, Germany and the UK. Top 5 partner countries for U.S. institutions: Germany, China, France, Mexico, South Korea/Spain
- The most popular academic disciplines for collaborative degree programs are Business and Management and Engineering.
- English is by far the most commonly used language of instruction, but the majority of responding institutions indicate that their programs offered language training both at home and abroad.
- Dual or double degrees appear to be much more common than joint degrees.
- U.S. institutions are much more likely to cover costs with student fees than European institutions. EU institutions tend to draw more funding from university budgets and external sources (such as foundations, governments, etc).
- A large majority of responding institutions plan to continue to develop more joint and dual/double degrees.
- The motivations for launching joint and dual/double degree programs appear to revolve largely around advancing the internationalization of the campus and raising international visibility and prestige of the institution.
- The most important challenges for both EU and U.S. institutions appear to be securing adequate funding, and ensuring sustainability of the program. U.S. institutions also report challenges in securing institutional support and recruiting students, while EU institutions are more likely to encounter difficulties in designing the curriculum and agreeing on credit transfer recognition.

The Atlantis Program also sponsors a grant competition to promote a student-centered, transatlantic dimension to higher education and training in a wide range of academic and professional disciplines. The program will fund collaborative efforts to develop programs of study leading to joint or double undergraduate or graduate degrees. The deadline to apply for 2009 grants is March 23, 2009. Information on the Atlantis Program and the application process is available at:

www.ed.gov/programs/fipseec/index.html or
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/usa/2009/call_us_eu_2009.htm

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