VCU, international partners receive over $950,000 to develop a transatlantic degree in cinema and language

RICHMOND, Va. (Oct. XX, 2010) – Virginia Commonwealth University and two of its international partners, the University of Cordoba and the University of Messina, received over $950,000 from the U.S. Department of Education and the European Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture to develop a transatlantic degree that allows students to study cinema and language.

Called the Atlantis Project, the four-year grant provides students with an opportunity to study in three countries.

“The program weaves existing graduate courses in specific areas of expertise at each university into an innovative, interdisciplinary curriculum in cinema studies that explores issues of identity, globalization and intercultural relations,” said Dr. Oliver Speck, assistant professor of film studies. “It is built into the existing Master of Interdisciplinary Studies.”

Each fall, six students from VCU, three from the University of Cordoba and three from the University of Messina will begin taking courses as part of a two-year graduate program. Students are studying in Cordoba, Spain this fall. In February, the group will move to Messina, Italy and in the fall of 2011, they will come to VCU.

The students will gain practical experience, working as interns at French Film Festival during their time at VCU and at the Taormina Film Festival in Sicily and Cordoba’s Filmoteca de Andalucia.

“They will learn about cinema – from film production and film analysis to the business side of a film festival and at the same time, they will experience a full immersion into a different language and culture,” Speck said.

The three universities are founding members of the Center for Integrative Mediterranean Studies, which was created in 2005 as a formal base for collaboration on research and student/faculty exchange opportunities with a focus on health, peace and security issues within and around the Mediterranean region.

At VCU, the degree is a joint effort of the College of Humanities and Sciences, the School of World Studies and the Global Education Office.

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About VCU and the VCU Medical Center: Virginia Commonwealth University is a major, urban public research university with national and international rankings in sponsored research. Located on two downtown campuses in Richmond, VCU enrolls more than 32,000 students in 211 certificate and degree programs in the arts, sciences and humanities. Sixty-nine of the programs are unique in Virginia, many of them crossing the disciplines of VCU’s 13 schools and one college. MCV Hospitals and the health sciences schools of Virginia Commonwealth University compose the VCU Medical Center, one of the nation’s leading academic medical centers. For more, see [www.vcu.edu](http://www.vcu.edu).