

# Workshop on the Future of European Studies in Asia

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## ABSTRACT OF PRESENTATION

### **Developing an e-learning Curriculum in European Studies: the Philippine experience**

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e-learning has assumed increasing importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century education system within and outside the formal school environment. New technologies such as the Internet and videoconferencing have made e-learning either as an effective complement or substitute to conventional classroom learning processes.

Despite its growing importance in a number of disciplines, eLearning has hardly made a “dent” in the teaching of European studies in the Philippines and perhaps elsewhere in Asia. In the Ateneo de Manila University’s European Studies Program, faculty members are enjoined to introduce innovation in pedagogy and classroom management, consistent with the school’s preference for a student-centered learning strategy. This includes introducing elements of e-learning. Variations in the application of web-based systems such as e-mail, e-groups and web-log sites have been introduced at varying degrees in a number of courses (e.g. European Marketing and Business Strategy (EU-132) and European Innovation and Entrepreneurship (EU-194.2).

The importance of e-learning in European studies from the Asian perspective is most palpable where the need for direct interaction with actors situated in Europe without the need for costly travel, is deemed critical to generate relevant knowledge and/or skills. Courses dealing in contemporary European issues would greatly benefit from this learning approach.

For an Asian institution to have an effective European studies curriculum that is highly oriented towards e-learning processes, it requires the following elements:

- The presence of an active product champion espousing the need for an e-learning curriculum;
- Changing the mindset of the majority of stakeholders within the institution;
- The installation of scalable technologies and infrastructure for e-learning;
- The establishment of a network of learning centres including with collaborating partners in Europe;
- Aggressive development of content and teaching materials; and,

- Benchmarking the curriculum against established quality standards for e-learning.

The initiatives of Ateneo de Manila University in opening up a quasi-online Masters course in Asian journalism and in the critical research on improved e-learning methodologies, which have earned positive reviews in the Philippines and abroad, serve as guideposts for a stronger e-learning-oriented European studies curriculum.