

## INDIVIDUALIZED MAJOR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE EUROPEAN COMMERCE

My intended major is a comprehensive study of Europe, with respect to its culture, its markets, and its politics. The distinction between these three themes has blurred in the past 20 years as European countries have moved from independent Nation-States to form a sophisticated political Alliance – the European Union. This transition was furthered in January 2002, when the EU became a world player economically as member states adopted the Euro as common currency. Within Europe, the conversion to the Euro has had a multitude of effects as countries are trying to find a balance with their individual market and the common market, while at the same time maintaining their culture and individuality. As a Finance major, I feel that European Commerce would be a perfect complement as a dual degree. These majors work hand-in-hand by allowing me to study finance in a more specific context, while at the same time broadening my awareness about the world. The concept of European Commerce incorporates the departments of Political Science, German (my specialty), Finance, and Economics. These departments will allow a deeper understanding of the European culture and its political and economic frameworks.

By creating an interdisciplinary plan of study, I am able to take a cross-section of classes from several departments specifically related to Europe to focus on its cultural, political, and economic structures. A range of courses from different departments is essential to the make-up of my major because cultural, economic, political, and financial institutions within Europe are inter-dependent. For example, the people will choose a government that closely reflects their belief systems, which might affect how the government handles the market, or, how the market situation and cultural tendencies affect an investor's aversion to risk. Classes from the Political Science department provide insight to the nature and structure of European politics as well as an in-depth look at the political institutions within Europe. For example, the class Culture, Politics, and the Economy of EU (POLS 287 – taken in Germany) taught me about the structure of the European Union and its impact on the economy. Classes from the German department provide a glimpse into the culture of a foreign country. By learning the German language, I am better able to appreciate the sense of culture. Classes such as German Culture and Civilization (GERM 251) will teach me a history of the German people and their customs. Classes from the Economics department will introduce to me modern market theory and will demonstrate its function as the basis of international trade and its role in the European markets and the European Union. For example, International Finance (ECON 243) introduced such topics as international banking and trade. Finance department classes will expose me to foreign exchange markets: their tariff policies, risks, returns, and capital flows. Classes such as Global Financial Management (FNCE 205) teach me about foreign currency valuation, hedging, and exchange risk.

My interest with European Affairs began the minute I stepped off the plane in the Frankfurt Airport. I went to study with the Baden Württemberg exchange program in Freiburg, Germany. I landed in a completely different world, and loved every minute of it. As a business major abroad, it was expected of me to take the usual finance courses mixed in with a heavy dose of German grammar and composition. While choosing my classes, however, I preferred to take classes specific to Europe that were not offered at UConn. After a year, I was not ready to leave

Germany so I stayed another semester in Freiburg, and studied as well for a semester in Alicante, Spain. During this time, I was taking classes pertaining to Europe and fine-tuning my language skills. Upon my return to UConn, I concentrated on finishing my Finance degree, but continued to take several European related courses, and introductory French and Greek. I realized I wanted to create a complementary major to my Finance degree, which reflected my interest and specialization in European culture and economics.

I believe that as a Finance and European Commerce dual degree student, I will be very marketable in the international arena. Because of my passion for Europe, I plan to work abroad for a few years in the field of finance to gain some practical experience. Ultimately, I would love to receive my master's degree in Germany and work for the UN or the EU.