

ALABAMA GREECE INITIATIVE

Brief History

Although faculty from the University of Alabama (UA) have individually been taking students to Greece for many years (on summer “study abroad” courses), the **College of Arts & Sciences’ Alabama/Greece Initiative** began formally in 2010 when Dean Robert Olin began exploring the possibilities of such a working relationship by funding the first AUTH doctoral student to come to the U.S., on a work Visa, to work for one semester in the Department of Religious Studies and the Department of Modern Languages and Classics. A second AUTH doctoral student was employed by UA for a semester in 2012 and, in the intervening year (2011), two AUTH faculty members (from Theology and Music) were each brought to Alabama for a week, to lecture and learn more about the University of Alabama.



To further explore the possibility of a long term, collaborative relationship between these two universities, Dean Olin and Associate Dean Luoheng Han (in charge of international programs; pictured at left dining at Katouni Square), traveled to Thessaloniki in May 2012, to meet with representatives of AUTH’s International Committee as well as various administrators and faculty (see the last photo). By the following Fall a draft agreement was developed by the two universities and a formal Memorandum of Understanding was signed by early 2013.

The next phase of the initiative was then planned for 2014: 1) Dean Spyros Pavlides (at right, at his public lecture at UA) was identified as an AUTH faculty member and administrator to invite to Tuscaloosa for a week of meetings and lectures and, 2) of forty applications from UA faculty, seven were selected, with input from AUTH, to travel to Thessaloniki in early May 2014, to work one-on-one with AUTH collaborators on common research projects. The UA faculty participating in this collaboration work in the following areas: American Studies, Biology, Classics, English Literature, Geology, Music Therapy, and Theatre & Dance.



Background on the College of Arts & Sciences at UA

Typical of U.S. universities, the University of Alabama’s many departments are organized into Colleges (each headed by a Dean), such as the Colleges of Nursing, Business, Engineering, Communications, etc. The largest of these, which includes 22 different academic departments (from Chemistry, Physics, and Geography to Anthropology, History, and Gender/Race Studies) is the College of Arts & Sciences, led since 2000 by Dean Olin (himself a mathematician). It houses 100 different programs of study (including

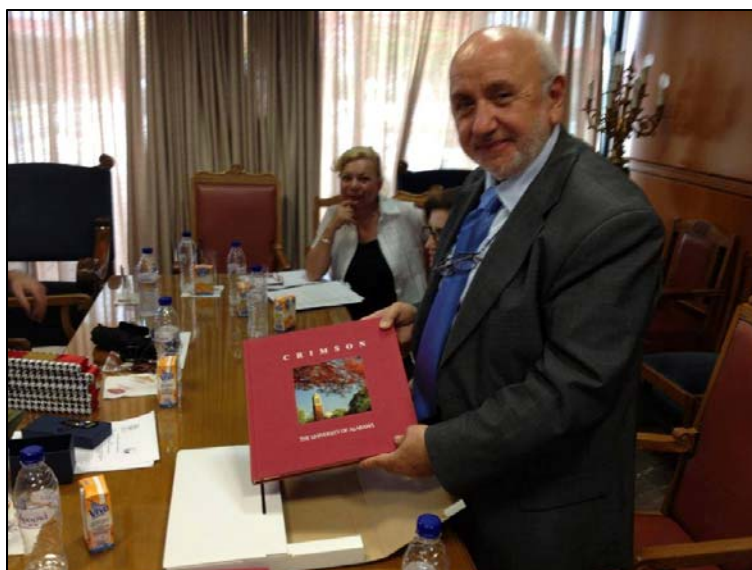
doctoral, masters, and bachelor degrees), with 475 tenured or tenure-track faculty and 9,600 students (including 1,100 graduate students)—though what we call the Core Curriculum (a general education curriculum required of all UA undergraduate students, regardless of their specialty) is almost exclusively offered by faculty in Arts & Sciences, ensuring that nearly all of UA's 35,000 students take classes in A&S at some point during their studies.

Among the College of Arts & Sciences' international projects is a twelve year initiative in Cuba (which involves U.S. and Cuban faculty exchanges, visits, and U.S. students traveling to Cuba for an entire semester's study), as well as projects in China, and also Greece. While the wider university has a wide variety of other international projects and study abroad programs, these three initiatives are of particular importance to Arts & Sciences, though also involve and benefit members of the entire university community.

Background on the University of Alabama

The University of Alabama's main campus is in Tuscaloosa (whose famous American football team is known widely as "the Crimson Tide"), located in the southern U.S. state of Alabama, and along with two other campuses (at Huntsville, in the north, and nearby in Birmingham), they comprise the UA System. Headed by a Chancellor who is appointed by a Board of Trustees, all of whom serve the Governor of the State, the UA System's three campuses are each led by a President, each with a variety of Vice Presidents (e.g., Facilities, Finance, etc.), one of whom is also known as the Provost/VP of Academic Affairs and who heads all matters related to student and faculty life on campus. Each campus is then divided into Colleges, led by Deans, containing Departments that are led by Department Chairs, all of which contain faculty and staff members. Each Department likely offers more than one degree program (e.g., a B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in Anthropology).

The UA System is a public university though its finances derive only in part from the state of Alabama. Tuition along with grants from private corporations and foundations as well as federal U.S. funding sources (e.g., the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Institutes of Health, etc.) are main sources of funding at all U.S. universities. Donations from past students and benefactors comprise yet another important source of income.



For More Information...

Visit ua.edu to learn more about the University of Alabama

Visit as.ua.edu to learn more about the College of Arts & Sciences

Visit as.ua.edu/Greece to learn more about the Alabama/Greece Initiative