Seminar on Franco-Spanish dual degrees

As part of the implementation of the Franco-Spanish University (FSU), a seminar was organised at the Université de Pau et des Pays de l’Adour (UPPA) on the 7th October 2016, on the setting up and management of Franco-Spanish courses.

The day brought together 63 participants from 11 French establishments and 19 Spanish universities. It enabled participants to share experience and good practice on the setting up and management of dual degrees, integrated degrees, co-tutoring of theses or even joint degrees.

According to the French embassy’s scientific advisor in Madrid, Mr. Arthur Soucemarianadin, there are nearly 220 Franco-Spanish dual degrees/joint degrees.

The exchanges that took place during the day brought to light the benefits obtained from setting up dual degree courses (improved academic offer, better rate of employability among students who have experience abroad, international standing) but also the difficulties encountered (complex verification procedures, limited finance, time-consuming management of dual degrees for a small number of students, lack of recognition of joint degrees in the employment market).

One of the challenges facing the Franco-Spanish University will thus be to streamline the procedures for setting up and overseeing these dual degree courses by proposing tools and systems aimed at project sponsors. The FSU’s aim is to support certain dual degree courses by launching a call for projects relating to the certification of the curriculum. This call
for projects would in particular enable additional finance to be offered for student and teacher mobility but also strengthen the visibility and attractiveness of dual degree courses.

Co-tutoring of theses was also discussed, particularly in relation to the minimal duration of mobility for a PhD student, the rules to be applied for the payment of registration fees, the use of video-conferences for the final presentation of theses…all questions that will be debated during future workshops of the Franco-Spanish University.

Undergraduate and PhD students cannot study abroad unless they speak the host country’s language. That is why it is essential to concentrate on learning French in Spain and Spanish in France from the beginning of secondary school. Moreover, the FSU could use the universities’ language centres to offer students innovative tools.

This seminar was organised in partnership with the French Ministry for Education, Higher Education and Research, The Spanish Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport and the French Embassy in Spain.

**Future meetings organised in relation to the Franco-Spanish University:**

*  28th November 2016: research workshop in Madrid,
*  14th December 2016: sharing of experience with the Franco-German University and the Franco-Italian University.

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