**Summary of ECOLAS (European Consortium of Liberal Arts and Sciences) presentation at Global Liberal Arts Alliance Meeting, November 10, 2016, Denison University**

ECOLAS is a European consortium of whose purpose is to cultivate the expansion of undergraduate liberal arts and sciences education within the European Higher Education Area. It currently boasts a network of twenty European institutions from seven different countries providing opportunities for students, faculty and staff through workshops, seminars, fellowships and a common website. The structure of liberal arts programs consists of a few independent colleges but mainly of ‘university colleges’ within large European research universities.

Our presentation outlined ECOLAS’ founding in 2007 and its subsequent development to the present day. Currently ECOLAS is working with five European liberal arts colleges on a 275,000 euro Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership grant over the next two years to produce useful tools for faculty, administrators and policy makers in three areas: (1) teaching and professional development, (2) quality standards and (3) undergraduate research. Teams of faculty in each area will produce effective instruments which will then be made available for use within the European Higher Education Area for those interested in beginning or sustaining programs in the liberal arts and sciences. Over the past two years ECOLAS has provided twenty research fellowships to LAS faculty for work related to the liberal arts and sciences. It also financially supported the first annual student organized conference on liberal arts and sciences held at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Germany.

The purpose of the subsequent discussion was to examine potential short-, medium- and long- term opportunities for collaboration in areas of common interest between GLAA and ECOLAS.

There are two areas of potential cooperation. First, the aim is to look for ways to build upon the achievements predicted for the Erasmus + grant in each of its above three areas of concentration in which members of the GLAA have specific expertise. The opportunities worth examining together are: establishing networks of communication among faculty members, seeking funding opportunities of mutual benefit, working to create student access to our institutions across consortium boundaries and sharing communication strategies regarding the liberal arts and sciences worldwide.

Second, ECOLAS is offering to facilitate communication between the study abroad offices of schools in the GLAA with the ECOLAS network schools. *Once mutual interest is established subsequent bilateral communication and cooperation would be in the hands of the institutions involved*. We believe that the cooperation could offer unique study abroad opportunities that would provide immersion opportunities in Europe within a liberal arts and sciences environment while guaranteeing the academic quality of the student experience.