

## **Opportunities in Wales: New Program Seeks to Fund Texas students**

*Written by student intern reporter, Julia Paslavska, March 25, 2009*

On November 10, 2008 the European Union Center met with a group of scholars from Swansea University to discuss possible opportunities for Texas A&M engineering students. The focus of the meeting was the University's Global Academy Innovation Program, a new industrial engineering PhD program expected to launch in the upcoming spring. Notably, 10 out of the total 100 spots in the program have been set aside for Texas students, along with 25,000 pound (\$37,571) annual stipends for qualified candidates. The Academy is also looking to host visiting professors from Texas to conduct research in fields like energy, ICT, environmental management, bioscience, and space engineering.

The 3-year PhD program is a mix of research and hands-on experience at a private engineering firm in Wales. Although there are still a few details to finalize before the program officially launches, the University of Wales has dedicated 3.5 million pounds (\$5.3 million) to fund the program over the course of the next five years. The funds will be used to offer stipends to qualified applicants. Dr. Richard Turner, Project and Partnership Manager of the Global Academy, and one of the visitors on November 10<sup>th</sup>, stated that the university is waiting for the Prince of Wales' approval to affiliate his name with the fellowships. The program hopes to establish itself as the best industrial engineering PhD program in the world.

Dr. Turner explained that the purpose of his visit to Texas A&M is to make sure that the brightest and best candidates are aware of this opportunity. The industrial engineering program at Texas A&M is the only program in the state of Texas that ranks among the top ten national programs in its field. The Global Academy representatives encourage Texas A&M students and professors to apply for the program and the fellowship.

Swansea University sees the Global Academy Innovation Program as a benefit to the European Union in that it will produce top-level industrial engineers who will then assist in innovation, R&D, and development of Europe. Each year, the European Union allocates a considerable amount of resources to the European Regional Development Fund, an area that can greatly benefit from the quality engineers that the Academy will produce.

Swansea University was founded in 1920 as the fourth college of the University of Wales but became a full constituent institution in 2004. Located next to the coast of the Swansea Bay and outside the city of Swansea, the parkland campus attracts enough students each year to make it the third largest university in Wales. Today, Swansea University ranks as the 43<sup>rd</sup> best university in the UK and is constantly striving to differentiate itself from other institutions, as seen in its recent development of the engineering program.

Students and professors who are interested in learning more about the program should contact the European Center on campus. As the few details about the program undergo their last stages of resolution, applications for the upcoming 2009 academic year should be available soon.

