



**CHERISHING THE PAST**

**NURTURING THE FUTURE**

### **The EASI Road to Silver**

A linchpin that has tied R&D sciences to arts and humanities at the former University of Chemical Engineering in Veszprém, in 2015 the English and American Studies Institute (EASI) is celebrating its silver jubilee, crediting 25 years of dedicated and successful training, education, and research. Anniversaries give us a moment to stop, to reflect, and to consider the time spent in growing our programs strategically while maintaining our high standards.

In the summer of 1990 the management of the university had decided to face the challenges of the age and opened new educational horizons by adding a second faculty to the internationally recognized faculty of chemical engineering at the *University of Chemical Engineering*. Four colleagues, with fresh memories of both domestic and foreign traditions in TEFL, founded our institute, then called the Department of English Studies, thus launching the Faculty of Teacher Training, as a result of which the whole institution's name changed to *University of Veszprém*. No better choice could have been made for the building allocated for the department's

headquarters: the stylish mansion had previously served as a kindergarten. The odds were on: we were destined to train excellent professionals for the next generations.

The first half of the decade had been marked by the synergy of professionalism and a tightly knit community. International support had been provided at all levels of operation. The British Council provided the expertise necessary to understand state-of-the-art TEFL rationale and methodology. The American Embassy in Budapest assisted the training through its USIS/USIA agencies. Dozens of young scholars and also seasoned professors coming from all the corners of the Anglo-Saxon world – from Peace Corps volunteers to Soros or Fulbright scholars – enthusiastically shared their knowledge both with students and faculty, which by the mid-1990s reached over thirty teaching personnel. The books and journals serving as solid grounds for academic research had been donated by the embassies of Australia, Canada, South Africa, UK, and the USA. International summer institutes hosted by the department clustered world famous lecturers, who created a stimulating environment and helped us tune to the latest requirements of TEFL processes.

In the second half of the 1990s the Department of English Studies had formulated its mission statement and committed itself to offering versatile training programs always in line with the current societal needs. In the field of education the department offered single and double major trainings at bachelor and master levels (college and university levels, according to the Hungarian terminology), both full- and part-time, launched degrees in philology and teacher training, offered retraining programs for EFL personnel and in-service teachers, and provided extensive trainers' training programs. For several years the department also organized general and special EFL courses preparing for language exams as well as post-secondary trainings for recruited students.

The dawn of the new millennium found the department stronger than ever before; it was an active participant in the Faculty's doctoral multidisciplinary school and a role model in the national higher education system. In 2006, when Hungary started implementing the Bologna Process, the newly renamed *University of Pannonia* – by now the most determining higher education institution in the whole of the Transdanubian region with five faculties – recalibrated the trainings at bachelor, master, and doctoral levels. Currently, EASI (*English and American Studies Institute*) – as the oldest of the institutes and departments of the Faculty of Modern Philology and Social Sciences – offers four majors taught in English: a B.A. and an M.A. program in English, a joint American Studies M.A. program in cooperation with Nazareth College (Rochester, New York, USA), an M.A. program in TEFL, the new complex English teacher training program, in addition to the postgraduate specialist training for teachers of mathematics, chemistry, and IT in English.

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Cutting-edge results could only be reached by a dedicated staff open to research and innovation. The institute, which currently encompasses three departments – English Linguistics, English Language and Language Pedagogy, and Literatures and Cultures in English – has a twenty-five-year history of excellence, with outstanding results in the national and international arena, participation at and organization of international conferences and symposia, and with rich publication activity. Current R&D in academic fields is steered by the TOPOS research centre on space and humanities. As a natural and logical consequence of research results implemented in the teaching process, EASI has a wide network of international relations and cooperation: EASI is a proud member of the Global U.S. Studies consortium, its faculty are amongst the members and board members of national and international organizations related to English, American, Canadian, and Australian Studies. The Faculty have received numerous grants and scholarships – Fulbright, Erasmus, Campus Hungary, Soros and national Scientific Research Fund grants.

Needless to say that the success of the institute also lies in the students' willingness to join our academic community, which equally caters both for their curricular and extracurricular needs by inviting them to join research activities, by organizing theatre competitions, researchers' nights, open evenings, potluck parties, outings, just to name a few.

At a silver celebration a true community balances off names, functions, detailed past or current achievements. Instead, it pays special credits to each and every colleague and student for having added a personalized brick to what we can EASI-ly call our mission.

Students, alumni, faculty, staff, campus officials, and friends participating at the celebration events take the opportunity to visit and catch up with friends, professors and classmates, to reconnect and celebrate the Institute's accomplishments and the bright future ahead.

We celebrate our past and look ahead to the future with a selection of work by our faculty, colleagues who have joined efforts in our various programs, projects, research, or activities on a national or international scale.

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