

THE MINERVA PROGRAM: A FOCUSED CURRICULUM

The Minerva Program offers participants a unique curriculum that combines the best of economic theory and practice with special emphasis on the economic challenges facing Latin America. Designed to fit the learning styles of adult professionals, the Program provides five different types of learning experience to the students, presenting the material in a variety of formats and contexts.

First, the substantive core of the curriculum is presented in six major modules:

- Principles of Microeconomics (8 sessions)
- Principles of Macroeconomics (8 sessions)
- International Trade Theory (7 sessions)
- Public Finance (5 sessions)
- The Role of Government (4 sessions)
- The Austrian School of Economics (4 sessions)

These three-hour sessions are presented in a traditional small-group lecture format by a prominent GWU professor in the discipline; later, the students meet in discussion groups to review the concepts presented and offer specific examples from their own experiences.

Second, a series of seminars and presentations focuses on current topics in economic theory and its application, with special attention paid to the current economic challenges facing Latin America.

Recent seminar topics have included:

- The Costs of Corruption
- Public-Private Partnership in the Provision of Infrastructure
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Measuring Government Performance
- Public Sector Dealings with the Media

Third, participants take advantage of the many opportunities for site visits during their stay in the U.S. Several institutions and organizations have welcomed the Minerva participants as observers and have offered presentations by their managers and experts. Recent site visits have included:

- The World Bank
- The U.S. Federal Reserve Bank
- The International Monetary Fund
- Inter-American Development Bank
- Several New York investment banks

Fourth, Minerva participants take one formal graduate-level course at The George Washington University, allowing them to integrate into the academic community of the University. Each student may choose the course that best fits his or her interests and experience.

Finally, each Minerva participant writes a substantial research paper that applies his or her theoretical studies to current Latin American policy issues. This exercise offers the students an opportunity to integrate the knowledge acquired in the Program with their professional experiences and expertise. Since their papers are placed on the web site of the Center for Latin American Issues, their research provides a wealth of information to the public.