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Center for Latin American Studies Adds Master’s Program, Minor

This fall, students looking to expand their knowledge and understanding of Latin America will have two new courses of study from which to choose. The Center for Latin American Studies has developed a new master’s program, a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, and a new minor in Andean and Amazonian studies.

The M.A. program in Latin American Studies hopes to attract students from a wide range of disciplines to complement and specify their course of study.
“It’s a very flexible and interdisciplinary program,” says Abril Trigo, director of the Center for Latin American Studies. “The program was designed to fit the needs and interests of people from many different disciplines.”

The program has no fixed set of courses, allowing students to choose from the wide offering of Latin American Studies courses to fit their interests. The degree was designed with the intention of allowing students to pursue a complementary course of study like geography, anthropology or business. This will provide students with the opportunity to acquire a broader knowledge of Latin America and concentrated training relative to specific disciplines or topics.

The Latin American Studies M.A. Program requires students to complete a minimum of 45 hours in graduate level courses in either a thesis or non-thesis track. The two required courses are International Studies 640, Globalization and Latin America: Interdisciplinary Approaches, and one additional course on research methods related to the student’s primary area of concentration. Students are able to choose two areas of disciplinary or interdisciplinary concentration from which they will take the remainder of their courses and graduate seminars from each.

Much like the Latin American Studies master’s program, the Andean and Amazonian Studies minor tapped into the wealth of existing courses in Latin American studies. In order to develop both programs, only one course was added.

“We have such a large offering across the university. We tried to utilize everything that was already in place,” says Trigo.

For students to complete a minor course of study in Andean and Amazonian Studies, they must complete a minimum of 25 hours, with the requirement of completing History 368.02, Native American Peoples of the Andes, and Spanish 332, Introduction to Andean & Amazonian Cultures. Additionally, students must complete two core courses and an elective course.

Both the Master of Arts in Latin American Studies and the Andean and Amazonian Studies minor programs will provide students with a unique opportunity to gain a better understanding of cultural, historical, economic and environmentally rich areas of the world. The programs cover the kind of courses and information that cannot be found in other degree programs, and the Center for Latin American Studies hope that they will attract a wide variety of students.
Research team studies effects of ocean temperature change on Caribbean coral

As global climate change causes the temperature of the world’s oceans to rise, corals on the ocean floor are experiencing heat stress. Dr. Andréa Grottoli, a professor in the School of Earth Sciences, is currently conducting research on coral in the Caribbean, and aims to identify which traits or species are more resilient to temperature increases. Grottoli’s study focuses on coral bleaching – a heat or stress-induced loss of color resulting from temperature changes. Over time, bleaching can lead to mass mortality of corals.

Corals are an important part of a reef’s ecosystem, acting as a home, protector and food source for many underwater species. They provide the structural building blocks that form the reefs. Reefs also protect humans by providing a buffer for large waves heading toward shore. Many of the world’s reefs are associated with underdeveloped countries, providing fish as a food source, as well as a tourism hub for scuba diving and sport fishing.

Grottoli, a dual Canadian-American citizen originally from Ontario, began studying coral in 1993, 12 years before coming to Ohio State. Her on-site research is being conducted during the summer months in Puerto Morelos, Mexico, an area between Cancun and Playa del Carmen, at a marine lab associated with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Grottoli’s team is made up of two PhD students – Stephen Levas, a Ford Foundation Minority Fellow, and Verena Shoepf, an international student from Austria. This year she will also have the help of an undergraduate student researcher. The Ohio State research team works in collaboration with a team from the University of Delaware, led by
Dr. Mark Warner. The group’s research is funded by a nearly $800,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

As part of her research, Grottoli and her team take samples of coral from the reef and place them in tanks in their Mexico lab. In these tanks, they induce temperature stress on some of the samples. They then examine the physiological traits associated with the survival and mortality of the different samples with the hope of better understanding what helps the survivors continue to thrive under stress. In addition the coral samples’ response to bleaching stress, the team also examines how they recover over time.

In their second year of research, Grottoli’s team is preparing to return to Puerto Morelos this summer for further testing and analysis of their samples from last year, as well as to take new samples. During her time in Mexico, Grottoli micro-blogs updates from her Twitter account, www.twitter.com/CoralResearch.

With the results from their research, Grottoli and her team hope to be able to make a recommendation to conservation groups and marine-protected areas about how to protect corals as members of reefs’ valuable underwater eco-systems.

Global Strategies – A Q&A with William Brustein

Is Ohio State’s office in Shanghai open?

We officially opened the Ohio State Global Gateway exploratory office in late February. The office is situated
right in the heart of the downtown Shanghai business district, so we are very close to major corporations, many of our Ohio State alumni and offices of the Chinese government.

The Ohio State China Gateway has been officially registered and approved as a Foreign Representative Office (FRO) by the State Administration of Industry and Commerce of the People's Republic of China.

Who is the director of the China Gateway?

Phoebe You, a recent graduate of the Moritz College of Law, has been named the acting director of our China Gateway. Initially, Phoebe will focus on developing a network of Ohio State alumni, exploring the market for executive training opportunities for Ohio State, and providing assistance and opportunities to the potential exchange of faculty and students. She’ll also be our liaison with the Chinese government as Ohio State’s builds its presence in Shanghai.

Initially, we had hoped to begin offering training programs to business executives in China so that the Gateways would be revenue generating. However, we determined a phased in approach would be best at this particular time. And, our current classification as an FRO does not permit the university to engage in any revenue generating activity.

What does the future hold for the China Gateway?

Once we have conducted some research in the area to determine if a market exists for executive training programs, we would expect to apply for approval from the Chinese government to establish the Gateway as a Wholly Owned Foreign Enterprise, which will enable the China Gateway to generate revenue.

If all goes according to plan, we believe that in the next year – and based on an assessment of our progress in the marketplace - we hope to open a full service Gateway that serves as a state-of-the-art facility for recruiting, networking, teaching, business consulting, and executive training.

What types of executive training programs are under consideration?

Building on Ohio State’s areas of excellence and the matching needs of corporations in China, we have begun seeking expertise from our faculty to explore the potential of establishing professional training programs in China to include: 1) Food Safety; 2) Supply Chain Management/Logistics; 3) Corporate Resilience; 4) Intellectual
Is the China Gateway moving in the right direction?

I believe we are on the right track to succeed with our Global Gateways. Phoebe is already working with our alumni to foster relationships and grow our network in Greater China. We are exploring revenue-generating options that will share Ohio State’s expertise with businesses around the world; and we are finding ways to engage our faculty and our students in new research and educational opportunities.

We are moving forward in a very positive way.

William Brustein, PhD is vice provost for global strategies and international affairs. His work at Ohio State is dedicated to fully integrating international and multicultural experiences to the academic units within the university and expanding and enhancing our global reach.

Fulbright Scholar: Keating examines Sri Lanka’s feminist movement

Christine Keating, an assistant professor in the Department of Women’s Studies, has had the opportunity to travel to Sri Lanka, an island country in South Asia about 20 miles off the southern coast of India, several times over the last 20 years to study and to conduct research – the first time as an exchange student in 1987. Last December, Keating traveled to Sri Lanka as a newly awarded Fulbright Scholar, and will return to Ohio State in July.

Keating works in the field of gender politics with an emphasis on
transnational and postcolonial feminism. As part of her Fulbright fellowship, Keating will be conducting research on two projects and giving guest lectures and presentations to both faculty and students at universities and research centers in Sri Lanka.

She is pursuing two research projects during her time in Sri Lanka, where she is affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in the Department of Political Science. In one of her research projects, "Towards a Gender-Just Peace in Sri Lanka," she will be both tracking and analyzing the openings and closures that the end of the civil war present for women in Sri Lanka. For her second project, "Cosmopolitan Solidarities," she is examining the relationship between cosmopolitan and transnational approaches to feminist organizing through the lens of the Sri Lankan feminist movement and how it works to redress inequities among women along class, racial, ethnic and national lines.

“My aim is furthering models of feminist solidarity that can help build more inclusive, democratic movements for social justice worldwide,” Keating explained.

Keating believes that this year is an important year of transition in Sri Lanka. In May 2009, the Sri Lankan government defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which ended a 30-year civil war. “During the war, discourses and practices of gender liberation became deeply intertwined with discourses and practices of militarism. I’m very interested in exploring how struggles for gender justice are rearticulated in this transition,” Keating said.

She applied for a Fulbright fellowship so that she would have extended time to devote to her research projects, access to colleagues in Sri Lanka and the opportunity to bring her family with her while she worked in another country.

According to Keating, each visit to Sri Lanka deepens her affection for and connection to the country. “It is the country’s diversity – cultural, religious, ecological, geographical, political – that initially drew me to Sri Lanka,” she explained. “And, I think it is the aspect of the country that I still love best.”

Keating earned her PhD in political science at the University of Washington. She has received several awards, including one for teaching excellence at the University of Washington and she was a recipient of a Fulbright Junior Scholar Grant. She has been at Ohio State for five years.
Students learning across the globe

Richard Martz

“I participated in a 10-day, architecture-focused study abroad program based mainly in Istanbul, Turkey, with excursions to sites in the Turkish countryside. The architecture in Turkey was historical and educational, and gave us something concrete and more engaging to relate to, given our previous coursework. The locals were incredibly kind people, always willing to help out and bridge the communication barrier, and always did it with a smile. Until this trip I had never traveled abroad, but after doing so I believe I'll be more open and more considerate of my work and its meaning to an international audience.”

Richard is an undergraduate majoring in architecture.

Ena Brnjic
“I went to Athens, Greece for a short-term study abroad trip. Over winter quarter I took Modern Greek H241: The Culture of Contemporary Greece. In the class, we studied the effect of the ancient past on modern Greek society. In Athens, we stayed just a couple of doors down from the new Acropolis museum, a short distance from the Acropolis itself. This trip helped me see how other people approach problems differently than Americans. Developing a global perspective is extremely important because we live in a global society that is becoming more and more connected because of technology.”

Ena is an undergraduate majoring in psychology.

International Scholar Profile: Ilnam Ok

1. What is your home country and city?  
Republic of Korea, Seoul

2. What is your degree in and where did you earn it?  
I have M. A. and PhD degrees in Social Studies Education from Seoul National University in Seoul, South Korea. The title of my PhD thesis was: “A study on students’ alienation in student-teacher interaction of Social Studies classroom.”

3. What department are you in at Ohio State?  
I am a visiting scholar in the School of Teaching and Learning.

4. Who is your Ohio State faculty mentor?
Merry M. Merryfield in the School of Teaching and Learning is my mentor. She is a co-author of *Social Studies and the World: Teaching Global Perspectives*. She inspired me toward open-mindedness for the world.

5. What are your research/specialty interests?
My research interests are in civic education, democratic citizenship education. The whole society is composed of educated citizens from school, home and community. I am interested in curriculum and social studies textbooks in secondary school, teacher-student interaction in social studies classroom activities, and the active process of civic education in both school and family. Nowadays, I do research on civic education in the U. S. family.

6. When did you arrive in the United States/Columbus and how long will you be here?
I arrived at Columbus in July 2009. I will stay until June 2010.

7. Why did you choose Ohio State?
I was looking for a Department of Social Studies Education. Nowadays multicultural education is more important than before in South Korea. Professor Merryfield specialized in this major. So, I was really happy at meeting her, and OSU.

8. What have you been doing at Ohio State as part of your exchange visit?
I have been interested in global education and multicultural education related to social studies education. So I wanted to experience the U. S. culture and civic education process in school and home. For this, I audited several classes connected with my concerns, including Professor Merryfield’s. I observed social studies classroom activities in high school, so I have an understanding of the curriculum process for civic education in Ohio. I went to the home of my daughter’s friend to experience the family’s civic education. Also, I made Korean food for U.S. students and international students in auditing classes. Through this activity I could introduce Korean food culture. I traveled to many attractions in U.S., Canada and Mexico, too. My travel aim is to understand and enjoy other cultures and accept them open-mindedly. Finally, I wanted to learn English. Life in U. S. was first to me. So I tried to polish my English skills.

9. What has most surprised you about your experience in Columbus?
The beautiful houses and landscape in Columbus impressed me. Green scenery, big trees, blue sky, and the flowers around the neighborhood
made me feel as if I were in heaven.

10. What has been the hardest thing to adapt to since you've come to Columbus?
I couldn’t go around or take a walk in the neighborhood at night or at dark. Public transportation in Columbus is not convenient, especially to the airport.

11. What is the most fun/exciting thing you've done since you've arrived at Ohio State?
Visiting a friend’s house of my daughter’s and enjoying U.S. culture of the family in Ohio. For example, Halloween trick or treat – giving out chocolates and candies – Thanksgiving Day food experience with a U.S. family, Christmas night lights in the neighborhood.

12. How has the Office of International Affairs helped you adapt to campus life?
The Office of International Affairs has been helpful in several ways, the most important of which is English conversation lunch program. Through these activities I could upgrade my English listening and speaking skills, get American culture and meet international scholars. Also, I traveled to adjacent countries safely and conveniently with guidance of OIA during my stay in the U.S. Sometimes OIA gave useful information to international scholars with e-mail, letting us know about free use of RPAC, Taste of OSU, Halloween party, Thanksgiving party, and potluck sharing.

Iceland study abroad program offers students a unique way to study the environment

Though its landmass is smaller than the state of Ohio, Iceland is a country that has a wealth
of environmental diversity. An island covered in waterfalls and glaciers and positioned on a continental rift, the European country provides a perfect platform for Ohio State students to learn about the environment.

Now in its second year, the Iceland Environment & Natural Resources Study Abroad Program provides students with the opportunity to spend 11 days between spring and summer quarters exploring and studying the country’s natural beauty and distinctive environment. The program stems from Ohio State’s partnership with the Agricultural University of Iceland.

“What’s unique about Iceland is that there are so many different things you can see,” says Susan Burks, an academic advisor in the School of Environment & Natural Resources. “You can see environmental advantages and problems, and how the nation is dealing with them.”

Burks acts as a resident director for the experience, along with Palli Kolka, an ENR graduate student and Iceland native. Kolka is responsible for teaching the pre-departure class at Ohio State, ENR 694, which is taught during spring quarter. The class is an academic introduction to Iceland and the various environmental topics that will be explored first-hand during the study abroad experience. Students learn about the geology and volcanism of the island and the country’s land restoration and soil conservation efforts, as well as the thriving fishing industry and other political and economic points of importance.

During their time abroad, the students are based at the Agricultural University of Iceland, in the southwest area of the country. From this location they are able to take one- and two-day excursions around the west and southern coasts.

“We can see so much without having to go far,” says Burks.

From the Agricultural University in Hvannseyri, the group travels to the capital city of Reykjavik, and to see glaciers in Vik and Þorsmörk. Earlier this year, a volcano near Eyjafjallajökull erupted in southern Iceland for the first time in nearly 200 years. Students should still be able to see the eruption in June. The group is also able to see first hand the result of thousand of years of volcanic eruptions, as volcanic lava fields and ash deposits are widespread throughout the island.

Dr. Merrill Kaplan, an assistant professor in the College of Humanities who specializes in Norse-Icelandic literature and folklore became an important part of last year’s trip. Through pre-departure
lectures, students were able go beyond the course material and get a good understanding of the culture and history of Iceland. Dr. Kaplan’s research in Iceland allowed her to meet up with the group during their time abroad to provide them with on-site anecdotes and history lessons.

This year’s study abroad program will run from June 11 – 20. Thirteen students are currently enrolled in the class and expected to travel to Iceland.

Honors students present research in Brazil, host Brazilian students at Denman

A commitment to undergraduate research is the focus of the collaboration between The Ohio State University Honors & Scholars Program and the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Each year students from the University of São Paulo visit Ohio State and students from Ohio State visit the University of São Paulo. This international exchange between the two universities allows undergraduate students to share their research with peers, dialogue with faculty and university administrators, as well as get an in depth look at what type of research is going on at each of the two institutions.

“Ohio State students visit the University of São Paulo for one week during the fall quarter,” explained Garret Heysel, senior associate director for Honors & Scholars. “While in Brazil, students visit several of the University of São Paulo campuses, present their research at campus symposiums, engage in research discussions with Brazilian students and faculty, tour laboratories, and enjoy various cultural activities.”

To participate in this study abroad experience Ohio State students
must first present at the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum that takes place on campus each May. During Fall Quarter 2009, five undergraduate researchers traveled to Brazil to present their findings at the University of São Paulo's International Research Symposium from November 7 – 14. Honors students Andrew Campbell (biology), Amy Eakins (anthropology), Richard Gallenstein (biology), Amanda Harper (biomedical science) and Hudson McFann (geography) all competed in the research forum and were then selected to represent the university in this symposium that regularly features more than 4,000 undergraduate researchers from various nations.

“I was appreciative of the opportunity to share this important work abroad. Especially because I could receive feedback from different perspectives while exploring the culture of Brazil,” said Campbell. “I also learned to explain my research more conceptually, with minimal jargon, to provide a clearer snapshot of the relevance and context of my findings from a less detailed level of analysis.”

“The Brazil Research Exchange Program is more than a conference and more than a study abroad; it’s an opportunity to do something that few undergrads ever get the chance to do: present internationally,” said Eakins, who has been abroad through an honors London trip, a summer in Scotland, a field school in Panama where she conducted research on primates, as well as presenting her research in Brazil. “Presenting internationally gave me a new perspective on my research and allowed me to meet students from around the world who also love the processes of science and learning.”

“Since the Brazil Research Exchange Program was established in 2001, more than 40 Ohio State undergraduate researchers have showcased their research before an international audience of peers and academic specialists in Brazil,” said Grace Johnson, director of study abroad at Ohio State. “This extraordinary opportunity introduces students to the international dimensions of their chosen fields as well as future possibilities for their research.”

The University of São Paulo students will travel to Columbus this spring to present their research here on campus at the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum. These Brazilian students will also meet with Ohio State professors and share informal research presentations.

Marion campus French class goes beyond the classroom
Rather than spend their free time relaxing, a group of students from the Ohio State University Marion Campus recently traveled more than 5,000 miles to learn about European culture during spring break. As an extension of their French 294 class, 25 students spent nine days in Greece and Turkey, learning about local culture and applying previous knowledge from their pre-departure class.

During winter quarter every year, a group of students at the Marion Campus are enrolled in French 294, a class designed to provide students with a taste of francophone countries and the French language. The goal of the course is to increase students’ cultural awareness and help them develop knowledge of art and architecture in Francophone countries.

“As part of learning any foreign language, you have to introduce the culture,” said Dr. Zuheir Alidib, the French 294 lecturer. “Unfortunately, we tend to neglect the culture the most of any aspect of learning a language.”

Alidib says that the five components of studying a language are reading, writing, listening, speaking and culture, all of which are equally important.

Started as part of French Club activities, the supplementary class experience was initiated by Alidib, a senior lecturer in French and Arabic language and culture. Alidib thought that the students lacked a culture component to their language education, so he started offering cultural activities like film screenings, potluck dinners and small field trips. With Alidib as the lead, Marion’s French Club began traveling to Quebec in 2000. The community there offered students a sample of French-speaking culture that was within driving distance of Marion.
The French Club funded the trip by hosting bake sales, concerts and film screenings on campus, charging a small fee for each. The money raised during these efforts was divided evenly among the students. Just two years later, the experience became more than a trip, as students were required to take a 3-credit class in order to participate. The location also changed, and Europe was added to the itinerary.

“Quebec is great, but you are limited to the North American mindset, and I wanted my students to be exposed to European ways of thinking and culture,” said Alidib.

In 2002, the group began traveling to Europe’s Francophone countries, as well as several others. They began with France and Spain, and in the years following, visited Italy, Morocco and Switzerland, keeping France as a destination every year.

For the first time since its inception, this year, the class traveled to Greece and Turkey, in an effort to open the program to more university students than just those interested in the French language. The university also began to award scholarships to students who successfully completed the class requirements, so that more students were able to participate in the experience.

“Most of our students have never left central Ohio, so this provides them with an excellent opportunity to experience another culture,” said Alidib.

Because his expertise is limited to French and Arabic, Dr. Zuheir Alidib, the French 294 lecturer, called on his colleagues to assist him in teaching the class this year. He invited other faculty members to speak about Greece and Turkey, and to help students learn survival phrases in those countries’ native languages. In the weeks leading up to spring break, students’ coursework prepared them to be immersed in the local culture.

As part of the requirements for the class, students must write a paper and present their research about a destination that they will visit while they are abroad. During their international experience, they must keep an analytical journal to be turned in and graded upon their return. In the future, Alidib hopes to compile the journals into a publication to be used as both an educational tool and a recruiting tool for potential French 294 students.

For the 2011 trip, Dr. Alidib has already begun to recruit students for a class that will focus on Paris, Normandy, and Brittany regions of France, and London.
Ghana visit explores new partnerships

In March, a delegation from Ohio State, led by Senior Vice President for Outreach and Engagement Joyce Beatty journeyed to Ghana to explore partnerships and collaborations centered on the topics of healthcare, food and nutrition safety and security and long-distance learning. The delegation also included Robert Agunga, associate professor in the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; Mary Jo Welker, MD, chair and professor of the Department of Clinical Family Medicine; Habiba Kamagate, an undergraduate majoring in human nutrition; Anna-Stacia Allen, an undergraduate majoring in strategic communications; and Alexis Swain, undergraduate member of the Ohio State Board of Trustees.

Joyce Beatty shares the results of the delegation's journey.

I was honored to lead a delegation of Ohio State faculty and students to the sub-Saharan nation of Ghana during Spring Break last month. Our goal for this exploratory journey was to build our cultural awareness of the country and discuss best practices in the areas of nutrition, healthcare, agriculture, government and distance learning.

It was truly an experience of a lifetime. We met with Ghana’s highest-ranking officials in the areas of health, agriculture and education. We were welcomed at three major universities (University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast and University of Education – Winneba) and talked to scholars about how to use teaching, research and service to their greatest impact in both of our nations.

We also immersed ourselves in the rich culture of Ghana by experiencing a hike through a rain forest on thin wooden bridges, visiting a major open-air market dominated by women traders, and being
the guests of honor at Atonkwa Village, a community of 1,500 people that greeted us with their ceremonial tradition, including dancers, drummers, a children’s choir and fire eaters!

The Chief of Atonkwa is the uncle of delegation member Habiba Kamagate, a Human Nutrition senior at Ohio State whose family is from Ghana. She reunited with her father after more than 12 years apart and met many other relatives for the first time.

Everyone with whom we met expressed great interest in continuing a dialogue about how we might form mutually-beneficial partnerships, from collaboration on grant applications to a possible partnership that would engage Ohio State medical students in international rotations. Global initiatives comprise a significant strategic priority for our office, and this journey is a major step forward in pursuing great opportunities across the globe for Ohio State.

Spring 2010 Global Perspectives

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