Morocco roundup

Two Ohio State faculty awarded Fulbright fellowships

Two faculty members from The Ohio State University have been selected as recipients of prestigious Fulbright Scholar fellowships. Recipients are selected by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, which administers the program for the U.S. Department of State.

Fellowships will conduct research abroad, consult with international colleagues, and lecture to promote global general welfare.

Fulbright fellowships are awarded to approximately 800 scholars each year. Recipients are chosen based on professional accomplishments and demonstrated leadership in their chosen fields. Since its inception in 1946, nearly 300,000 people have participated in the Fulbright exchange program, which is widely heralded as the nation’s flagship educational exchange program.

Ohio State’s 2008-2009 Fulbright Scholar Fellowship recipients are:

• Maria Myslova Mudrak (Department of History and Art, Kishinev) received her Fulbright grant for research in art and decorative art. Her project is called “Archaeological Restoration in the Republic of Moldova.”

• Sheherazad Youssouf Ezreddeen Ahmed, Department of Basic Engineering Sciences, Minnass University, Shali, Egypt. She is visiting the Department of Materials Science and Engineering and Professor Hesham El-Nabawy.

• Suzanne Kamiloa, Kyiv Department of Marketing and International Trade, Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics, Kyiv, Ukraine. She is visiting the Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics, and Professor Alan Randall.

• Udo Manders, Department of Geography, Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences, University of Tartu, Estonia. He is visiting the School of Environmental and Natural Resources, and Professor William J. Mitsch.

• Mbegna Mongui, Department of Literature, Kanayata University, Nairobi, Kenya. He is visiting the Institute of Anthropology, and Associate Professor Dorothy Noyes.

• Zahra Pekhovska, Department of Animal Sciences, Is. Cyril and Methodius University, Skope, Macedonia. She is visiting the Department of Animal Science and Professor Herbert Okerlarm.

• Temenuzhka Minkova Seizova-Nankova, Department of English Philology, Konstantin Palday University of Varna, Bulgaria. She is visiting the Department of Slavic and East European Languages, and Professor Brian D. Joseph.

• Leonard Zlot, Laboratory of Geomicrobiology, Sternberg Scientific Research Institute, Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia. He is visiting the Department of Earth Science, and Professor C.K. Shum.

• Margarita Draganova Dimitrova, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski. She is visiting the Resource Center for Slavic Studies, and Professor Predrag Majdic.

Mershon Center welcomes new postdoctoral fellows

Two post-doctoral fellows have taken up residence at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies this fall.

Robert Rakove, who is expecting a Ph.D. in History from University of Virginia, will spend the year revising his dissertation for publication as a book. His project, titled Refounding the Nonaligned: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Non-Aligned Movement, will examine the efforts of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to create lasting, constructive relations with leading states of the nonaligned world. Rakove defines nonaligned countries as those who declared neutrality during the Cold War, including India, Indonesia, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Tantoumania, and Yugoslavia.

The book will explore how U.S. policies of interaction with non-aligned powers helped define relations between the United States and its allies, many of whom had tense relations with the new post-colonial states in Africa and Asia.

Matthew Fehrs, who received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University, will spend his time at Mershon Center working on articles for publication and revisions to his dissertation.

His project, titled Are You Talking to Me? The Domestic Politics of Government Signaling in International Conflicts explores three puzzles in international relations theory:

What causes a country to have or perceive incomplete incentives and lead states?

Why, despite their high levels of transparency and freedom of information, are democracies still likely to be channel?

What is the role of opposition groups in military crises?

To answer these questions, Fehrs developed a theoretical model of how the presence of informal ties in the international relations of government in democratic states. He hypothesizes that the more unified government, the less likely it is to send mixed signals to potential challengers. Likewise, the more hawkish a country, the more likely it is to use military posturing and harsh rhetoric.

The increase in international freshman enrollment can be especially attributed to more students coming from China. Ohio State enrolled 110 students from China compared to 20 last year. Additionally, the university is seeing increases in the number of students coming from India, Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Canada, as well as Singapore, Argentina, and Kenya. New international graduate students primarily are hailing from China, India, Korea, Taiwan, and Indonesia.

Acren Trigo

Trigo said, “The program maintained economics 200 as a prerequisite, as well as investments and management economics 200, Economic Development in Latin America, but the addition of a stronger foreign language requirement supplemented by another globalization course makes for a more demanding program and is a step in the right direction. The intellectual requirements are much higher.”

“International Studies and the Center for Latin American Studies worked closely together to make these improvements and this cooperation will continue into the future as we look to improve the study of Latin America at the university,” Maghan said.

The significant changes included raising the foreign language requirement, including courses in Portuguese or Spanish at the 400 level, and adding international studies 640, which focuses on the globalization of Latin America, a requirement. The new courses are already in place and ready to go for autumn 2008.

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The making of a study abroad program to Warsaw

While teaching a variety of courses over the years at Ohio State, Kazimierz M. Slomczynski, a professor of political science and international studies at the school, realized that undergraduate and graduate students who have some experience traveling overseas are much better prepared to discuss current global issues than those who have not spent any time in another country. For this reason and because Slomczynski "values an inter-cultural exposure of young social scientists for its own sake," he has directed students’ travel abroad, particularly to Poland, the country of his origin. He regularly conducts public opinion surveys in Poland and the Baltic States, a study he started 3 years ago.

Over the last decade, Slomczynski has helped make arrangements for 13 Ohio State students to individually study in Poland, but he found the process very costly and time consuming. These students’ visits were not a part of the international study abroad programs organized by the university.

“In the fall of 2007 my former Ph.D. student, Irma Tomaszc-Dubrow, asked me, “Why not organize a summer school in Warsaw under the Study Abroad umbrella?”” Slomczynski said. “At the beginning I was reluctant, expecting a lot of bureaucratic problems. However, the Office of International Affairs was extremely helpful in organizing the study abroad program in Warsaw, as was the Graduate School of Social Research, the host institution in Warsaw.”

Slomczynski and Tomaszc-Dubrow developed an intensive training and research study abroad program with two tracks, one for undergraduates and another for graduate students. Students have four weeks of classroom instruction/research in Warsaw and upon their return to Ohio State, spend another month meeting individually with Slomczynski to discuss and finalize their work product. “We focus on rigorous training of students in quantitative research methods and on demonstrating to them how these methods could apply to specific public opinion surveys conducted in the region,” Slomczynski said.

The first Ohio State Summer School in Warsaw took place July 3-30, 2008 and was the first study abroad program developed for sociology. To supplement the work in Warsaw, students also studied major international organizations that assess social and political change in the region; the program also included daily visits to the cities of Krakow, Lodz, and Kazimierz Dolny.

A mix of undergraduate and graduate students combined with some graduate students from Poland participating in the program helped facilitate Ohio State students adapting well to their new environment. “The 2008 program was a success in terms of what the students have learned and the experience they gained from being in the country and working side by side with their peers from Poland,” assessed Slomczynski.

International studies has fresh Latin American twist

There are 10 major specializations from which students may choose within the international studies program. Offerings in regional specializations encompass African Studies, East Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, Middle East Studies, Slavic and East European Studies and Western European Studies. In addition to offering geographical specializations, International Studies provides a great breadth of thematic tracks: development studies, international and diplomatic studies, security and intelligence, and world business and economy.

“International studies is a good complement to other majors,” Trigo explained. “Students can be extremely well prepared by pairing international studies with history, economics, or a foreign language.”

OSU awarded global health grant

Ohio State recently has been awarded an NHI Fogarty International Global Health Grant. The award will help support an infrastructure and educational program that is multidisciplinary, serving the Health Sciences Colleges, other campus colleges, and the Metro High School in the mission of educating and igniting student interest in global health. The Ohio State University Center for Global Health will serve as the home for this effort. Daniel Sedmak, MD, is the lead investigator, and Mary Ellen Wewers, PhD, MPH, and Richard Love, MD, of the Colleges of Medicine and Public Health, are the co-investigators.

This prestigious designation as a Fogarty Center for Global Health gives Ohio State an unparalleled opportunity to advance global health and respond to the remarkable growth in students of all levels.

Study abroad applications to go online

Beginning this year, Ohio State students will be able to apply online for study abroad programs scheduled for summer 2009. As a result of the joint project between the Office of International Affairs and the Office of Information Technology, students will be able to access and submit their study abroad applications through a system set up on buckeylink.osu.edu. Paper applications still will be accepted for students applying for Winter and Spring 2009 study abroad programs.

osu.edu adds international dimension

With the redesign of Ohio State’s web site continuing, the Office of International Affairs will be giving students the opportunity to easily view key information regarding its international programs. A new tab on the osu.edu homepage, the International Affairs tab, provides a two-page view that contains information relating to the many international activities at Ohio State. From area studies to foreign language to global health initiatives to study abroad opportunities, the international page can help students, faculty and staff explore the university’s international perspective. Visit osu.edu and click on International.

International Scholar Profile: Maria Cecilia Machado Parrula

Name: Maria Cecilia Machado Parrula
Home country, city: Portugal, Lisbon
Degree: DVM
Department at Ohio State: Department of Veterinary Biosciences, College of Veterinary Medicine
What are your research/specifically interested in? I am interested in virology, viral oncogenesis, veterinary oncology, and veterinary clinical pathology.
How long have you been in the United States? 4 years and 5 months
Why did you choose Ohio State? I wanted to do a Ph.D. and at the same time get specialized training in veterinary clinical pathology. The college of veterinary medicine at OSU through the department of veterinary biosciences at OSU is one of only two colleges in the U.S. which offer a combined residency training/graduate pathology program in veterinary clinical pathology, therefore it was the perfect choice.
What have you been doing at Ohio State as part of your exchange visit? I have been working with a mouse model of a human leukemia and the application of measles virus as an oncolytic agent to this model.
What has most surprised you about your experience in Columbus? I was surprised to see so many people exercising, especially jogging in summer. It actually influenced me to exercise more regularly! I have been an in line runner.
What has been the hardest thing to adapt to since you’ve come to Columbus? The food. It was difficult to get used to some of the tastes. But after a couple years I was converted.
What is the most fun/interesting thing you’ve done since you’ve arrived at Ohio State?
During my first year at OSU, the OIA was particularly helpful in getting me settled to the life in Columbus, like for example getting a U.S. driving license and getting a bank account.

Ohio State professor honored with prestigious award

An Ohio State professor has been honored with the Order of the Rising Sun, the most prestigious national decoration awarded by the Japanese government. Bradley M. Richardson, professor emeritus in the Department of Political Science, is one of the 4,028 individuals selected from various fields, and one of 75 foreigners from 40 countries recognized with the autumn 2008 decorations. The Japanese government awards these decorations to individuals who have contributed greatly to the nation and the public in politics, business, culture and the arts.

Richardson has interests in comparative politics, comparative political behavior, and Japanese politics. His research is concerned with conflict vs. consensus in Japanese political processes, political culture in new democracies and comparative mass behavior, including political communications.

“Bradley Richardson is the leading non-Japanese specialist on Japanese elections, including helping start some of the first academic surveys on voting in Japan,” said Herb Weisberg, chair of Ohio State’s Department of Political Science. “He helped develop our graduate political science program at Ohio State, and he has helped graduate students in these courses, and helping start the careers of important young scholars of Japanese and East Asian politics.”

During a tenure at Ohio State that started in 1965, Richardson served as the director of the East Asian Studies Center and was instrumental in creating and leading the Institute for Japanese Studies. He also founded the Central Ohio Chapter of the U.S.-Japan Commission, and the Comite Conjunto de Intercambio Cultural e Educativo Hispano-Americano. He received the Ohio State University Distinguished Scholar Award in 1996.

Grant helps fund new courses relating to Africa

Students interested in learning more about the different ethnic groups facing Africa soon will have more opportunities at Ohio State. The Center for African Studies received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education making it possible to develop a total of nine new courses addressing the theme: “Understanding Contemporary Africa: the Challenges of Conflict, Health, and Natural Resources.”

The center already has supported the development of seven courses initiated over the last two years. The courses are housed in a variety of departments on campus, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the contemporary Africa theme. The newest course, History of Islam in West Africa, was developed by Dr. Osman Kobo in the Department of History and is being taught for the first time Autumn Quarter 2008.

Kobo will help his students explore the relationship between identity politics and Islamic movements in West Africa. The course will demonstrate that conflict as well as cooperation have been a part of a largely a communal practice. It also will examine ideas about what constitutes conflicts, what causes and effects and how are they resolved.

The Center for African Studies works to expand African studies curriculum across disciplines, and to enhance interaction between African faculty across campus, organize lectures and courses on African studies, and conduct research activities with K-12, business, government and civil groups.