

# French school not for 'jet set'

Editor's note: This is the fifth in a series on student opportunities to study abroad. Today's story explains the program in France.

By KEYTE HLADKY  
Of the Emerald

"This program is not for jet-setters," says Prof. Louis Olivier, former resident director (1973-75) of the Oregon French Study Center at the University of Poitiers in Poitiers, France. "It's a serious academic experience."

The French overseas study program is sponsored by the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE). Its headquarters are at Oregon State University, which designed the program in 1971, but the program itself is administered by the University of Poitiers and an executive board made up of representatives from all the OSSHE schools.

The program includes nine months of study from mid-September to mid-June at the University of Poitiers. Twenty-six students are presently enrolled, 16 of whom are from the University of Oregon.

To be eligible for the program, a student must have two years of college French or its equivalent, junior standing (preferably, because the French government does not recognize lower division work as university-level), and a "reasonable" academic record. In addition, each applicant is interviewed separately by at least three French professors. The program is not restricted to French majors.

Once accepted, the student must make his own travel arrangements. Olivier says most students travel on Canadian Youth Fares, "which were \$500 round trip . . ."

In France, students enter a four-to-five-week intensive orientation and language study program. This consists of 30 hours a week of French study in small

groups with native language instructors and additional study in the audio-visual lab. In addition, there are excursions for cultural orientation.

"We make an effort to bring students in contact with members of the community," says Olivier. "For example, in 1973-74, we arranged for a small town to invite the whole group for a weekend . . . each student stayed with a different family. We had one with a goat herd, one with the president of the tiny local bank and so on. We repeated it the following year and will do something similar this year."

Several excursions are built into the program. The University of Poitiers also offers SEARCH-like courses during the school year which involve students with the community.

Poitiers is a town about the size of the Eugene-Springfield area. The University, founded in 1431, has about 12,000 students and two campuses—one old, one new.

"Poitiers goes back to Gallo-Roman times," says Olivier. "You can still see the ruins. The old campus is in the old town, which is built on a steep hill—a natural fortress between two small rivers. It's full of 14th and 15th century buildings, including the main campus building. The city had extended out onto a plateau; the new campus is on the edge of a modern housing area there."

While in France, most of the students in the program live in dorms, some with families and a few in "community apartments" similar to quads. Students eat in student restaurants, some of which serve cafeteria-style and some family-style.

When regular session begins, students study French in the Institute for Foreigners at the University of Poitiers. The program involves 16 hours of class a week; four-to-five hours of language instruction in the A-V lab; two hours

(Continued on Page 7)



Drawing by Cindy Sato

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