

Students explore overseas education



Contributed by Central Oregon Community College

Study abroad students are exposed to museums, new classroom experiences and stunning 12th century architecture in Florence, Italy.

By Mandie Gavitt
Associate Arts & Culture
Editor

Have you ever imagined being able to take your regular Clackamas Community College courses in another country? What many CCC students don't know is that this is, in fact, an option for them. That's right: you don't need to go to a university to study abroad; the opportunity is available for community college students as well.

According to Irma Bjerre, a CCC Spanish instructor who helps coordinate the program, Clackamas partners with eight other community colleges, including Central Oregon Community College, in the area to offer a study abroad program. Students involved in the program may take classes similar to those they would take here in Oregon, just in another country. Bjerre says there is nothing better than studying your regular courses abroad.

"You learn so much more than being in a classroom because everything is new to you," said Bjerre. "You are studying hard but at the same time you have opportunity to look at other things and experience the culture. I think it gives you a different feeling."

The students earn credit for the program and the classes are what you would expect the college to offer. "It is like taking the courses here, but being

there," said Bjerre.

There are a variety of programs in different countries, including Italy, Mexico, London, Germany and Costa Rica.

Students may use their financial aid to pay for classes and may apply for scholarships through the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship program.

According to the scholarship website, the program "offers grants for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad. Such international study is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world."

The program awards over 2,300 scholarships of up to \$5,000 for students to study abroad. Students who receive the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship are then eligible to receive an additional Critical Need Language Supplement of \$3,000, allowing for a total possible award of \$8,000.

Foreign language department chair, David Miller, helps coordinate the program for students who want to travel to Germany. He said that while in Germany, students receive free room and board. Students also go to museums and participate in various recreational activities.

"The trip happens every year there are enough students and an instruc-

tor able to go. We go at least one other year," said Miller. The trip to Stadhagen, the capital of the state of Schaumburg, in Lower Saxony, Germany takes place in June during finals week.

Students also travel from other countries to attend Clackamas. The college hosts German students every year as part of the program in Germany. While the German students are here they attend classes at the college and also stay room and board free.

According to Ann Bockman, who also helps coordinate the International Students Program, international students must pay out-of-state tuition which helps bring in revenue for the college. International students can receive department-paid tuition waivers, which help make the program more competitive.

Coming to the United States is sometimes more difficult than traveling elsewhere. International students must apply for a special visa and complete special paperwork to come here.

"Some countries are more difficult than others. The government tries to keep things standardized, that doesn't always happen," Bockman.

International students may stay at university or sometimes longer to receive job training, but eventually do eventually return home.

Students define cultured life



John Howard Clackamas Print

On April 21, Kayley Guay discusses her time abroad traveling to multiple countries and meeting different people.

ones," said Russau.

Although both Guay and Russau claimed that American culture could be better with relationships, Russau thought that America is better at allowing expression and individuality.

"I'm really grateful for the freedom to be able to express yourself in America because in other cultures they are not quite as open," she said.

Katie Bauer said she felt that finding culture was important for everyone. "I think everyone should have some aspect of culture in their life, whether it be just getting out on the street ... and taking in what you see around you or reading a book about something," she said.

Simona Dsouza emigrated from India to the United States in order to get a better education, leaving behind her family. "In India you don't have the opportunity to choose what you'd like to study. Here you have a lot of options," she said.

Dsouza said that when she arrived in America she experienced a big culture shock but that people here are accepting and interested in learning about her culture and home country.

"In this country you really need to be cultured because it is a really diverse country to live in. A lot of people from different lifestyles come here," she said.

Still, Dsouza said that overall Americans could do better about being cultured. "Americans might be cultured in their own lifestyle but they can be ignorant about other people's cultures and lifestyles."

While all the students here at CCC seem to have different opinions about what culture is and what being cultured means, everyone seemed to agree that being a cultured person is important.

Clackamas echo Stutz's belief that culture is an individual experience and a definition of themselves as a person. Jessica Russau said that she thinks people too often try to fit in rather than expressing their own culture.

"People follow the norm; they don't have a self worth. I feel like everybody just goes with the flow and haven't truly discovered who they are," she said.

Kayley Guay agreed with Russau, saying that in other cultures people are much more friendly and personable. Both Guay and Russau said they had traveled to other countries and found that people there were more friendly and likely to strike up a conversation instead of just being plugged into their iPods.

"Third World countries are much more relational," said Guay.

"In Third World countries they are much more grateful for what they have; they don't take advantage of their loved

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Culture can mean different things for different people. Portland is known for its unique culture and diversity but it seems culture in and of itself lacks definition.

Erin Stutz, a student at Clackamas Community college, says she feels she is cultured because she has lived in a variety of states.

"I feel like I've lived a rich life in so many different areas," said Stutz. "I feel like I take something from each of those and my perspective is different than a lot of people's are here. I've experienced more life outside of Oregon than most of my friends. I feel like that can be a form of culture ... knowing other people's form of living. I think it's more a definition of who you are and your beliefs."

Many students at



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