

Summer 2013 offers chance to study in Italy

By Felicia Skriver
The Clackamas Print

Robert Luis Stevenson once said, "There are no foreign lands. It is the traveler only who is foreign," and here on Clackamas Community College soil you can begin a journey to experience it all. Next summer, students have the opportunity to explore Italy: the land, the people and the food, flourishing in the Italian culture as they travel abroad with the college's foreign language department.

It all starts with a talk with foreign language instructor Irma Bjerre in McLoughlin hall who will explain the exciting destinations that include Venice, Florence, Pompeii and many other intriguing locations. Bjerre has teamed up with the National Educational Travel Council's Educational

Travel Program to achieve a truly academic tour of Italy for Clackamas students. The two week trip will include Roman historical landmarks such as the Colosseum, the Arch of Constantine, Trajan's Column and the Forum.

CCC is a part of the Oregon International Consortium, a group of seven colleges in the state that participate in exchange programs and that sponsors the fall quarter in Florence as well as the spring quarter in London, Britain and Spain. The program is open to all students who are at least 18 years old and have completed 12 credits with a GPA of 2.5 or better.

Bjerre said many of her students have already expressed their interest in joining the voyage and some have proclaimed that they would like to involve

themselves in some fundraising activities in order to travel. With the trip planned for June 2013, there is still plenty of time for students to raise money for the educational journey.

The program costs around \$4,813 including a \$650 fee if you are over the age of 24. Students can enroll now, but must start making payments to cover the tuition costs.

Along with the Italian tour, the foreign language department has many other exchange programs as well as study abroad programs which allow students an entire term to study overseas.

The extended trips run almost twice the cost of the two week tours, running around \$7,895, not including Clackamas' tuition charge for 12-14 credits, along with airfare and taxes. Financial aid will be available to those who qualify.

Students can accumulate college credit for their travels, according to Dave Miller, head of the foreign language department. To qualify for the credit, study abroad students must complete a project, which can be arranged with any instructor. The foreign language credits attained through this arrangement will cost students the same tuition as a three credit class.

In spite of a price that is significantly more than standard education costs, Kristin Benintendi, vice president of the international club claims the benefits can be more than worth the higher price.

"You get to experience another culture, which I feel is invaluable," said Benintendi. "I feel like a lot of people don't realize there are so many different ways of life out there."

Clackamas is also a host to students from all over the world. Benintendi and the rest of the international club work on making international students feel at home, while submerging them in American traditions and holidays.

Patricia Maldonado, a foreign exchange student from Mexico, said Clackamas has been very encouraging.

"It's a good place, and you can always find people available to help," said Maldonado. "You can ask for help and people never say no."

Interested students can find the International club at the Fireside Lounge in the Bill Brod Community Center every Friday from noon to 1 p.m. For more information about the trip to Italy in June 2013, email Irma Bjerre at irmab@clackamas.edu.



The Colosseum in Rome, Italy is just one of destinations to visit if studying abroad.

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