

SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY



Meeting Our Brothers and Sisters Around the Globe

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2012

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Semester in France
Summer in France
Springtime in Italy
May in Mexico
Diving in St. Lucia
Spring Break in London
Am. Sign Lang. trip
Research & Service in
Bolivia
Hugs United

Cooperative Center for
Study Abroad Offerings

Detailed information about the
programs listed above may be
found at:

www.francis.edu/StudyAbroad.htm

2012 SPRING SEMESTER IN FRANCE

This spring was another great semester in Ambialet, France. As always with studying abroad, one's eyes are opened to new experiences and new ways of living and even looking at life. Beyond the varied activities of daily life in Ambialet such as attending classes, helping with the gardening, riding bikes, and making crepes after dinner, this semester offered some exciting new adventures. In addition to the fascinating trips to Barcelona and Paris, there was a visit to the beautiful city of Avignon, France. This small city in southern France was, at one point in history, the seat of several popes, and today the large and impressive Papal Palace remains to stand testimony. This visit meshed perfectly with a course geared toward the early Church and the Crusades.

Another class filled with great experiences both in and out of the classroom was the Art History course. To enhance all that was learned in class, students made visits to the Picasso Museum, the Salvador Dali Museum, and the Louvre, to name a few, but to take the experience even further, the students met with artists in both Barcelona and Paris and even had the opportunity to begin their own collections of art. On the other end of the spectrum, Dr. Larry Rager provided an international business element to the semester. One interesting excursion for that class was a visit to the Airbus factory in Toulouse where the incredibly large A380 plane is assembled and takes its first flight.

While there are so many highlights of the semester, one event deserves mentioning. In Fall 2011, Ambialet saw its first American football game and now Spring 2012 saw the first America vs. England cricket match on Easter Sunday. With trumpets blaring and British and American flags waving, the game kicked off. It was a tough battle and while the Americans gave it their best and

made some great plays, they were no match for the British and their rules of Cricket. No matter, everyone walked away with heads held high, and the evening feast brought everyone back together. Toasts were made to the good times that were just had and to those still to come. *(Submitted by Eric Sepich, Semester in France Program Assistant)*



FULL HOUSE

Faculty members, Sue Morra, Chuck Olson and Marie Olson will be teaching in France during the 2013 spring semester. Course offerings will be FREN 112, FREN 201, RLST 400, FNAR (a variety), BIOL 322 (Natural History of Southern France) and BIOL 206 plus lab. We have such a long list of students for the 2013 spring semester it appears we will be turning students away. Students who do not make the cut for the 2013 spring semester are encouraged to get on the list as soon as possible for the 2013 Fall Semester. Courses offered for the 2013 fall semester will include FREN, RLST, FNAR and a variety of business courses offered by assistant professor, Bob Low. Students may also take online courses, if needed.

I realized something this morning on the bus ride to Albi. As I watched the foothills of the Pyrenees roll along the French horizon, I realized that I'm actually living out my biggest dream, which is to travel the world. A lot of people share this dream; I think we all have some sort of desire to know more than what is available to us in our backyards. For me, this realization was monumental. Never before have I been able to say that I am taking steps to live out my life. It has always been about making plans for the future; where I'm going to college, what my career will be, where I might want to live someday. I used to always think, "Someday, I'll travel abroad and see whole new worlds and have adventure in my life." Now I get to think, "Here I am! I'm travelling the world, seeing things that I've only ever imagined seeing."

- Hannah Brooks
2012 Spring Semester in France

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS TOUR: SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE

For the fourth consecutive summer, a group of Saint Francis alumni and friends sampled the magic of SFU's monastery in southwestern France. Sightseeing and French cuisine prevailed: castles, chateaux, medieval villages and cathedrals were interspersed with meal after meal of France's finest. Wines from the local Gaillac region, Bordeaux, Burgundy and the Rhone Valley complemented meals that varied from typical bistro fare to a Michelin-starred meal featuring dishes none of the group had ever had before (mousse of foie gras with cacao bits topped with a coffee foam, for example-- and that was just the 'warm up your palate' course!). Undoubtedly the highlight was the meal that included a "pre-dessert" -- truly an inspired concept!

The group also got a good taste of life at the monastery. Besides partaking of Chef Bernard's consistently appetizing meals, the group had lectures and follow-up tours by Eric Crema, the academic program's Religious Studies professor. They met the staff and had a day to spend in the fairy tale village of Ambialet. Of course, one can't visit without getting to know the three dogs, either. Timing was such that there were two concerts in the adjacent 11th century chapel, with its unparalleled acoustics.

Participants on this year's tour were: Renee & Robert Bernard, Sara Gardner, Scott Keller, Janette & Todd Kelly, Linda & Marshall Wagner, and Kirk & Mary Jeanne Weixel. Be forewarned: any use of the words France, summer, food, church, wine, cheese, or fun while near one of the lucky participants may trigger photos and lengthy stories of this May's tour. *(Submitted by Tim Perkins)*



SCUBA DIVING AND CORAL REEF ECOLOGY IN ST. LUCIA

The St. Lucia travels this year turned out to be a wonderful learning experience for all participants! Eight students (Alyson Leyo, Alyssa Ciccarella, Angela Pucciarella, Wyatt Hall, Lindsey Wolfe, Madison Madore, Monika Goss, and Zack Rozansky) traveled with Nick Weakland, Autumn Weakland, and Dr. Sue Morra to St. Lucia in May to learn about Coral Reef Ecology and to better their scuba diving skills. Students completed 11 dives over 5 days on various reefs learning about underwater reefs affected by storms and run off from the land, along with environmental pollution occurring in the islands. They also

studied beautiful unaffected reefs, learning how to measure fish populations and assess coral health. While on land, the students learned about native island foods and cultures.

Mass on Sunday morning was enjoyed by all, with island breezes cooling the cinder block building and melodic songs being sung by all. Sunday afternoon, the students got their first sample of native cooking with wonderful fish and chicken. The students quickly learned to not ask what kind of fish they were eating since on St. Lucia, fish served to you is whatever fish was caught that day. Students further learned about the culture while interacting with the locals every evening and more about their coral reef studies while entering data into their journals every night. *(Submitted by Sue Morra.)*



The scuba diving class in St. Lucia posing for our first underwater "Reach Higher" photo.

THIS PAST FALL, SPRING AND SUMMER, SFU SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR A TOTAL OF 218 TRAVELERS:

Semester in France (Fall/Spring/Summer): 42

Alumni and Friends Tour-France: 10

Spring Break in London: 21

Spring Break in DR: 59

Spring Break in Nicaragua: 10

May in Mexico: 20

Springtime in Italy: 20

Scuba in St. Lucia: 11

ASL in Jamaica: 15

OT Clinical in Ireland: 1

PT Clinical in Italy: 6

PA Clinical in South Africa: 2

PA Clinical in Mexico: 1

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE SERVICE IN JAMAICA

From May 12-19, twelve Saint Francis University students participated in service learning at the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf (CCCD), a school in Knockpatrick, Jamaica, that houses 100 Deaf Jamaican Children ages 5-21. The SFU group was led by Ms. Gale DeArmin, Assistant Clinical Professor of American Sign Language, Ms. Sue Black, Associate Clinical Professor of Social Work, and Dr. Lauri Chose, Assistant Professor of English.

During their stay at CCCD, the SFU group painted an outdoor building and gate, built a roof, fixed a cistern, and painted a mural in the school library. After each day of physical labor, the team was free to have fun with the Deaf students. They played soccer, basketball, and other playground games while communicating in JSL (Jamaican Sign Language) with the CCCD students and staff.



SFU students had the chance to experience Sunday morning church services in JSL at New Life Church of the Deaf, located in Mandeville, Jamaica. They also planned and ran the chapel services on Wednesday evening at CCCD. SFU students performed the skit, "The Good Samaritan," and facilitated a lesson in compassion, helping others, and making good choices.

Not only did the SFU students perform valuable physical and spiritual service, they also served a largely ignored linguistic minority. Participants also learned the value of service and tolerance for cultural diversity. As a reward for their hard work, students spent the last day of the trip climbing and swimming at YS Falls, a beautiful waterfall located about an hour's drive from the CCCD campus. *(Submitted by Laurie Chose.)*

MAY IN MEXICO

The May in Mexico 2012 study abroad program proved to be an unforgettable experience. The students were able to relax on a beach, participate in adventurous activities, and perform acts of service, all while earning credits and gaining a better understanding of Mexican culture. Every day, students attended the International House in Playa del Carmen, where they took classes with authentic Spanish-speaking teachers. The school not only met their academic needs, but also created a culturally-rich, social environment, allowing students from all over the world to interact in a friendly manner. The school hosted various programs such as salsa dancing, trips to the movies, and excursions to near-by natural wonders. A family, affiliated with the school, supplied the students with a variety of delicious meals, meeting everyone's needs whole-heartedly. After dinner, students were free to explore 5th Avenue for some shopping or check out the exciting night-life at the nightclubs. On weekends, students participated in activities on the beach, including sunbathing, parasailing, boat rides, and jet-skiing. The program also sponsored all inclusive trips to Rio Secreto, Xel-ha, Chichen Itza, Merida, and Xcaret. Students explored the natural caves of Mexico, swam with the dolphins, attended a dinner show describing Mexico's history, zip-lined, snorkeled, explored the Mayan ruins and architecture, and more on these marvelous excursions. However, the most enriching part of the trip was the journey to The City of Joy. The students, equipped with an abundance of donations, were able to volunteer some of their time to better the lives of those less fortunate. Students interacted with the elderly, the patients in hospice, battered women and their children, and a group of school children. St. Francis students performed a dance, which brought smiles to the faces of young and old. Then, they participated in fun-filled relays hosted by the school children. Overall, the May in Mexico trip was jam-packed with a ton of exciting activity, while still allowing for relaxation time in paradise. The participants created many fantastic memories on this trip, which will last in their hearts for a lifetime. *(Submitted by student assistant, Devon Courtney.)*



SPRINGTIME IN ITALY

I went to Parma, Italy, for four weeks, with Mr. Chuck Olson (director of the program), two RA's, Chris Assman and Latitia Lazzano, and 15 students; my husband also accompanied us. I was there to teach a class, "American Artistic Visions of Italy."

We stayed at a long-term hotel, the Residence Liberty, which offered very nice accommodations. It is situated in the heart of the oldest part of downtown Parma, a lovely area that features museums, historic churches, an impressive shopping district, and many cafes and restaurants.

My class contained eight students; we spent time studying the concepts of "the Other" and "Orientalism," both of which have to do with how we view people from other cultures. We discussed stereotypes of both Italians and Americans and I asked the students to approach their experience in Italy with a critical eye toward how they were both "othering" and "being othered."

I was very impressed with how the students did this on a day-to-day basis, analyzing their impressions of the people, sites, and culture of Italy were shaped around and informed by their own cultural baggage. The students read theory about this topic, as well as reading a variety of writings from authors as diverse as Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, and modern-day journalists, about being American in Italy. They journaled about their experiences and also produced a polished piece of travel writing by the end of the summer.

Each weekend students could go on trips to various locations on their own; students went to Rome, Venice, and Cinque Terra (the historic "five villages" nestled into cliffs above the Mediterranean). Chuck's assistant in Italy, Tony, also arranged a field trip to a vineyard and a cheese factory (Parma is famous for its eponymous Parmesan cheese). According to my conversations with the students and their journals, the students very much enjoyed these experiences and felt enriched by them.

The trip went very smoothly; the only unexpected events were one student's need to leave early due to a family crisis, and several earthquakes which shook the region. Ms. Horvath provided assistance during both of these situations. Fortunately, the earthquakes were not serious in Parma – though there was more significant damage farther away.

The trip was run exceedingly smoothly by Mr. Olson and Ms. Horvath; it is clear that these two know what they are doing. As always, I was also very impressed by the Saint Francis University students, who were polite, respectful, and intellectually curious. I feel that the program was a resounding success and I thank Ms. Horvath, Mr. Olson, the SFU administration, and all others who enabled me to go on this trip. *(Submitted by Denise Holladay Damico.)*



SUMMER IN FRANCE

It is the last day of an incredible four week program with a most interesting group of students, adult "guests" and French friends. Every study abroad program seems to develop its own culture | based on courses, personalities, and events. The 2012 Summer edition of Ambialet was no exception. Our three students, Bobby Imbrogno, Quinn Pendred, and Dennis Ryan, took courses in French and Photography but it was also unique in the "visitors" to the monastery and the interaction that we all had. There is a sense of community here where all seek something new and vital. Former professors from IUP, University of Kansas, and Willamette College

were here to contribute to everyone's education as well as writers, artists, photographers and teachers from Pittsburgh and Washington DC. The great lunches and dinners prepared by Chef Bernard were roundtables of great conversations from everything from hiking, kayaking, art, music, history, education, to sociology.

The students took trips to Toulouse, Brousse le Chateau, Albi, Cordes sur Ceil, Paris, Coupiac, as well as 12 mile hikes, Tarn river swimming, and 6 mile kayak trips! Albi was alive with music as the city's annual Pause Guitar drew thousands of people to see and hear incredible music that included a concert by Sting for those of us lucky enough to get tickets! French flea markets, Bastille Day fireworks, evening games of Ivanhoe, and great shopping were all worked into the daily structure of classes and fabulous French food.

Saint Francis University's monastery at Ambialet in very sunny southwestern France continues to be a place of endless possibility. It simply inspires all who are fortunate enough to have said yes to the opportunity. *(Submitted by Chuck Olson.)*