International Education: Where Do We Fit In?

The new director of the Office of International Studies shares his thoughts

According to a recent publication of the American Council of Education, the fact “that we live in a global village has become a truism. Yet many Americans do not realize how their security, their health, and their livelihood depend on global systems.”1. Thanks to increased immigration, rapid and cheaper transport between countries, the extraordinary development of computer and other communication technologies, the frontiers between nations are becoming porous and thinner. As each day passes, the world becomes a much smaller place, making the challenges that used to be local or national, global. The real question is: are we prepared to face the challenges of cultural diversity at home and abroad? Do we understand how others in Europe, Asia, Africa, or in the Middle East think or conduct their business? Do we or can we understand their cultures and how they view us? Can we understand their ways of doing things so that we can conduct business, communicate and look for solutions for common problems in the world with them? How can we ensure that we are prepared for these and future challenges? Can education play a major role?

As the world undergoes massive and sweeping geographic, political and technological transformations, investing in international education has become paramount. In my view, our state’s future economic, social and cultural well-being depends upon our ability to develop a citizen base that is globally competent. That development, I contend, is best achieved through the solidification and expansion of international studies and programs at every major university across the state, including Illinois State University (ISU).

ISU’s full scope of international activities—undergraduate, graduate, professional, research and training—are coordinated by the Office of International Studies and Programs (OISP). The primary mission of OISP is to internationalize educational programs, research and training opportunities; hence advance the understanding of international and cross-cultural issues across campus and for the community at large. To carry out its global goals and responsibilities, OISP works closely with academic units across campus to:

⇒ advance the international education of all students at Illinois State by providing them with first-hand experiences in global affairs and cross-cultural activities. This requires further internationalizing of our curricula; promoting linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy; expanding the role and functions of area study units and topical program centers to promote and coordinate teaching and scholarship on different parts of the world; creating organizational structures that support and reward the academic achievement of students across departments and schools; and attending to the needs of international students.

⇒ provide support for international scholarship; including, the research, teaching, and service efforts of faculty and other professionals on campus. This requires: expanding and diversifying international exchange programs, including short and long term studies and research activities abroad; providing adequate support for the growth of area and topical study programs; creating or-

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Meet the Unit Directors

THE UNIT FOR LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES

CARLOS PARODI, a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and associate professor of politics and government, has a passion for the promotion and protection of human rights. His vision for a Human Rights Community here on the campus of Illinois State University includes constituents from faculty, students and community members and culminates in the institutional development of a local human rights organization that will be linked with grassroots human rights organizations in Latin America. Other areas of interest include the creation and development of truth commissions in Latin America, the enforcement economic and social rights, and facilitating corporate responsibility toward human rights principles. Through his leadership, Dr. Parodi envisions the Unit for Latin American and Caribbean Studies to offer a minor in Latino and Latin American Studies, training workshops in human rights for public and private organizations, and student opportunities for internships and study abroad programs.

THE UNIT FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

CASSANDRA VENEY joined the faculty of the Politics & Government Department in 1995 and continues to serve as an associate professor. Her area of interest focuses on the many—and often overlooked—facets of refugees, particularly the internally displaced. While refugees are primarily perceived as victims, Dr. Veney chooses to place refugees at the center of the issue by exploring the empowerment gained (particularly by women) by a decision to flee life-threatening situations, their political relationships as refugees and the political reasons for their decisions. Her perspective on this issue encompasses the human rights violations that create refugees, host government responses to refugees—which often result in further human rights violations—and the sometimes positive affects of displacement. Dr. Veney is eager to increase awareness of the many opportunities Africa has to offer, and in that spirit, she anticipates that her Unit will be involved in facilitating many new exchange opportunities for both faculty and students. In particular, these exchanges will go beyond the typical to offer credit and interaction within the fields of technology, law and medicine through venues not always provided by universities.

THE UNIT FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

MOHAMMAD TAVAKOLI-TARGHI is an associate professor in the History Department with a long and distinguished record of highly active leadership in a variety of international programs on the Illinois State University campus and in the local community, as well as the University of Chicago (his alma mater). Following that tradition, Dr. Tavakoli expects to work closely with the other unit directors to provide outstanding speakers to campus and the community with the goal of stimulating exceptional intellectual interaction among all participants. One of Dr. Tavakoli’s primary interests is to reconnect South Asia, the Middle East and India as areas more united in history and culture than commonly perceived, and one that he discusses at length in his book Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Historiography. Among the many areas of involvement Dr. Tavakoli has in mind for his unit are language training, student exchanges, arts festivals and library development for the beleaguered nation of Afghanistan.
OISP Establishes New Area Studies Programs

Dr. Momar Ndiaye, the new director in the Office of International Studies as of September 2001, has already begun to infuse our campus with his vision of international education by establishing three new units within the Office: the Unit for African Studies, the Unit for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and the Unit for Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies. Two other units—the Unit for European Studies and the Unit for East Asia Studies—are expected to be formed by Fall 2002 and the International Studies Office is already beginning to explore strategies to secure adequate support and funding opportunities for the continued development and growth of all area study units.

This initiative is geared toward making the most of the rich intellectual community on campus by using teaching, research, and discourse to enhance global education at Illinois State University to a nationally recognized level. The Units have a primary mandate to offer formal programs of undergraduate studies with the creation of area study minors, to encourage international and cross-cultural research, and to foster student and faculty exchanges with universities in Africa, South Asia and Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The unit directors—while unified in their enthusiasm for and commitment to international education—have a range of ideas about how they can work toward implementing this mandate (see unit director profiles on next page), both as individual units and as a team.

The establishment of these units was inaugurated with an exceptionally fine and well-attended Global Review (a staple of International House for 20 years) on January 31, featuring Ghanaian presidential candidate John Evans Atta Mills. A former Fulbright Scholar at Stanford Law School, Dr. Mills has served in a political capacity most recently as Vice President of Ghana, and also as commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service of Ghana. Dr. Mills’ presentation was entitled “Globalization and Governance in Africa,” and focused on the problems and solutions of African political systems. He cited corruption and the current process of economic globalization as challenges to be overcome by increased investment from industrialized nations, promotion of African trade, and the willingness of political leaders to abdicate power toward the goal of fresh, effective leadership. Dr. Mills believes that African leaders have recognized these challenges and are starting to work together to address them.

Dr. Mills’ lecture was the spectacular beginning of a month-long focus on Africa organized by Unit Director Cassandra Veney. Global Reviews in February included ambassadors from three African nations leading a panel discussion on the role of the international community in peace, security and conflict resolution in Africa; South African scholar King- ston Nyamapfene discussing land reform in Zimbabwe; and University of Chicago’s Donald Levine’s perspective on Ethiopia’s adaptation to the era of globalization.

The end of February, however, did not mark the end of international activity for any of the three unit directors. The International and Global Studies Seminar Series that started on January 30 with a roundtable discussion among the three directors on religion and the public sphere continues through the end of April with a series of provocative and distinguished speakers gleaned from both campus and off-campus academia. Look for more quality programming from these units in the fall semester!

Send Your Top Students Away!

Do you have inspiring undergraduate students whose academic goals include getting the most out of their education? Tell them about the National Student Exchange! The National Student Exchange program offers students the opportunity to study at other universities throughout the nation for up to one calendar year for the same tuition and fees—or even less—than if they’d stayed here at Illinois State. You can guide these promising young students toward other universities that are also at the top of your field so that they have the opportunity to choose courses that enrich, supplement or complement their plan of study here at Illinois State University.

In addition to academic diversification, they will also have a chance to explore graduate school or career opportunities, gain cultural awareness, and experience personal growth and development. Some of the schools in the NSE consortium include the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Rutgers University, University of Mississippi, University of Connecticut, Stony Brook University and the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Elizabeth Kosuth, the National Student Exchange Coordinator, can answer any of your questions, and is eager to help your students get the most out of their education. Elizabeth can be reached by phone at 309-438-5365, or email at ekosuth@ilstu.edu, and is available for appointments in the International Studies Office in 308 Fell Hall.
New Study Abroad Program Inspires Students

“I am ecstatic about learning” — words that sum up an attitude that scholars gallantly strive to foster in their undergraduate students, but becomes increasingly difficult to nurture in these days of higher education as a road not so much to enlightenment, but to a higher salary. For students currently studying abroad at the Dong-Ah Broadcasting College located near Seoul, South Korea, such words seem to flow easily when they talk about their experiences as students and guests. Through an exchange agreement established by the Department of Communication’s Professor Jong Kang, six students are earning academic credit in broadcast production at an institution with world-class broadcasting equipment and facilities. The classes are taught in English, making the opportunity available to any highly motivated communications major. Students are housed in the college’s residence halls, and a chef skilled in both American and Korean food preparation provides meals. As our ecstatic learner puts it, “I have never been treated like royalty until now.”

Spring participant Jenea Leonard writes, “Since we arrived, I have constantly been amazed and impressed by the facilities at this college. Once we toured the campus and actually saw the facilities, I fell in love with the school. The school offers so much hands-on experience in broadcast production, and the professors seem to work very closely with the students.” That hands-on experience includes rigorous involvement in the production of a half-hour daily news show. According to Dong-Ah’s recruitment catalog, the institution’s goal is to educate specialists in the broadcasting industry by focusing on “cultivating specialties and artistic senses by vigorous field training” and “educating new intellectuals who possess artistic senses as well as technical skills.” The enthusiasm of our students indicates that their approach is both appealing and stimulating. Jenea is so excited by the opportunities this program offers that she is “already trying to figure out how I am going to pay for coming back in the fall...Coming here this spring delayed my graduation, and that means that it will delay my graduation again if I return in the fall. The fact of the matter is that I like Dong-Ah so much, and feel that I will benefit by returning in the fall, that the delay is the last thing on my mind and I really don’t care.” When’s the last time you heard a student say THAT?

The six spring participants on departure day.

Wondering how the tragedy of September 11 affected international education? Only two students changed their study abroad plans in response to the event, and our study abroad numbers for spring 2002 —while reflecting a lower increase than we’d had the year before—still increased 17% over spring 2001. Summer study abroad participation is projected to be about the same as last year’s. International students continue to be attracted to ISU’s service-oriented environment, and their numbers increased 9% from spring 2001 to spring 2002.

International Events Attract Crowds

The spring semester of 2002 has been very busy for the students of International House. In addition to many major Global Review Presentations (the weekly current events forum sponsored by I-House), the Chinese Students and Scholars Association worked together to put on a very successful Chinese New Year Celebration that was attended by over 800 people. International House kept up the momentum when it quickly followed up with its annual offering of the International Fair.

The Chinese New Year was a very successful collaboration of three ISU. Registered Student Organizations—CSSA, Taiwanese Student Association, and the Asian-Pacific American Coalition—as well as local business and cultural groups in the community. Members of the Chinese community who work at State Farm, Caterpillar, and Heartland brought families and students together to celebrate this most important Chinese tradition.

As it does every year, International Fair brought out 1500 paying customers to sample food, look at cultural exhibits, and see traditional performances ranging from fashion shows to dances. Not only does this festival bring together one of the most diverse audiences of any student-sponsored program, it provides countless opportunities for student growth and development. It takes 300-400 people to present this two-day festival.

The semester finished with a Thai night sponsored by the Thai Student Association in April, a Games Day and the production of a year book for International House residents. Look to the fall newsletter to learn about upcoming events like the fall talent/variety show, Gala Nite, other Global Reviews and a Trick or Treat for UNICEF campaign.
Hiring International Employees

Departments and hiring units will be happy to learn that the employment of international employees has become a bit easier. Canadian citizens can easily obtain a TN employment authorization based on a job offer, provided that the job is temporary in nature and the individual maintains a Canadian residence. J-1 and F-1 Students who have recently completed a degree may be eligible to take advantage of a one year benefit of Optional Practical Training work authorization. For tenured or tenure-track positions the individual will probably ask ISU’s help in obtaining an H-1B employment authorization. The really good news is that universities, as employers, are now exempt from the numerical cap associated with seeking an H-1B employment authorization for a qualified employee. The H-1B process still takes nearly 5 months to complete but we no longer have to submit our applications before March 1st to secure a numerically assigned H-1B. This means that if you are considering hiring an international employee, you should count backwards 5 months from the intended start date to see if we can successfully complete the H-1B process.

Inviting International Visitors to Campus

International scholars frequently contact ISU faculty with similar academic interests to request an invitation to Illinois State University. We should feel honored to be “asked,” but at the same time exercise caution about extending an invitation to someone who is virtually a stranger. VWB: Visa Waiver for Business or B-1: Visitors for Business - According to the February/March 2002 issue of USA Trade World – Illinois, “Due to a growing number of individuals who would like to come to the U.S. and stay, fraudulent visa applicants are increasing. Even legitimate business visitors have skipped on visas, making it difficult for those that follow. The Consular Office in the U. S. Embassy must have proof that the applicant does not plan to stay in the U.S.”

More and more often we are being asked to provide the unknown international visitor with a letter of invitation. By writing such a letter you are in fact telling the U.S. Department of State that you are vouching for this individual and that you will be responsible for that individual while they are visiting in the U.S. Therefore, we recommend that no letters of invitation be issued when solicited by an unknown individual.

Instead, we recommend that you provide letters of invitation only to individuals that you know personally or professionally and that you follow the established guidelines of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. The J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is administered by the U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Illinois State University has been designated as the sponsor to administer programs for the categories of Student, Professor, Research Scholar and Short-term Scholar. Becky Goekner is the responsible officer and should be contacted if you or your department wishes to invite a professor, research scholar or short-term scholar to Illinois State University.
“Studying abroad was one of the best experiences of my life...when I think back to everything I saw and did, chills run down my spine. It was a life-changing experience!” comments of a student who studied in Canterbury, England

Students have more choices in study abroad destinations these days. A new semester program in Limerick, Ireland has garnered a lot of interest, and our new program to South Korea, highlighted in this publication, has won high praise from student participants. New summer programs include an exciting experience in orchestra, chorus and opera performance at the Lucca Music Festival in Lucca, Italy; a field course in geography in London, England; Master’s level literacy and research in Lancaster, England; and business studies at the highly respected Ecole Superieure des Sciences Commerciales D’Angers in Angers, France.

Marilyn Boyd was awarded the Strand Diversity Achievement Award at the Founders Day convocation on February 21. During her twenty years as program coordinator of International House, Marilyn has dedicated herself to creating exceptional intercultural learning opportunities for both international and American students. Her international “family” extends the world over, and she unfailingly brings this sense of personal connection to all of those who attend or participate in the kaleidoscope of programs she coordinates. Our office is delighted that she has been honored for her contributions and is prouder than ever to have her on staff.

Sarah Jome has been appointed Associate Director as of July 2001. While she continues her role as advisor to international students, her new responsibilities include administering, monitoring and evaluating existing linkages between ISU and universities abroad. She is also in charge of our Office’s new International Teaching Assistant Program, which will offer training to new international student teaching assistants.

Kelly Mirsky, the coordinator of Study Abroad programs, will soon be able to call herself “author” as well, with the publication of her book Study Abroad: How to Make the Most Out of Your Experience. She and former Illinois State University Foreign Language professor Michele Dowell are working feverishly to meet Prentice Hall’s deadline for a book they have written to enhance and enrich students’ experiences before, during and after they study abroad.

The Normal Rotary Club presented Becky Goeckner with the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow Award. The award was given by the club “in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of a better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world.”

Elizabeth Kosuth, National Student Exchange Coordinator and assistant to Kelly in the area of study abroad, was awarded her Bachelor’s Degree summa cum laude in December 2001.

Marilyn Boyd and David Strand

**STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
ILLINOIS STATE ATTRACTS FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

Our campus currently has the honor of hosting nine international Fulbright scholars. These individuals are carefully selected by Fulbright Commissions in their home countries from among a pool of that nation’s up and coming students and professional leaders. The placement agencies of the students we are hosting are the Institute for International Education and LASPAU: Academic and Professional Programs for the Americas (affiliated with Harvard University). Fulbright scholars provide intellectual, cultural and academic diversity to our campus culture, and our office is pleased to introduce two of these special individuals:

**Nicky Virgil** joined our campus community two years ago when she left Trinidad and Tobago to pursue a Master’s degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. While Ms. Virgil was not familiar with our university before the Fulbright organization suggested Illinois State University to her as a destination, she readily agreed to come here after she had done some research on what we had to offer. The location appealed to her, as she felt that the Midwest offered a cultural experience that embodied values that are more authentically American than can be found in a large city and campus environment. In addition, she was impressed by the practitioner-scientist focus of her master’s program and its student-to-faculty ratio. Nicky likes to challenge herself. She is one of the very few Fulbrighters who chose to take on a graduate assistantship (at the University Center for Learning Assistance) while studying here. She is extremely active and involved on campus and has taken on many roles, such as a departmental representative in the Graduate Student Association and serving on her Departmental Council. One of the highlights of her accomplishments was as keynote speaker at the International Women’s Day breakfast hosted by Soroptomist International and the Association of University Women in March of 2001. Her experience at Illinois State has been “wonderful, it has exceeded my expectations….I would like to give many, many, many, many thanks to all the extraordinary people here who have made me feel so valued and welcomed.”

**Raogo Kima** thinks of Illinois as his “home state,” since his first experience in the United States was through participation in a summer institute program in Chicago in 1998. When the Fulbright Scholar program offered him an opportunity to study either at Michigan State or Illinois State University—in spite of the perception of prestige associated with the Michigan school—he chose Illinois State for several reasons. In addition to his sense of personal connection with the state of Illinois, he felt that this campus reflected a greater degree of commitment to diversity, as evidenced by the many international programs—including International House—offered here. He was also very impressed with the range of university programs and found the focus on teaching very attractive. Raogo is currently working toward earning his doctorate in English studies, and is interested in how the cultural values embedded in literary theory can be used to enhance understanding of English when taught as a foreign language. When he returns to Burkina Faso in West Africa with his doctoral degree, he hopes to utilize the broad range of perspectives he’s gained here at ISU—such as the critical literary theories of mainstream feminist, African American and Native American scholars—to broaden his students’ understanding of American culture and language. He has found the English Department’s program to be outstanding, offering a great deal of flexibility and opportunity with a supportive and welcoming faculty.

In addition to these two remarkable students, we have seven other Fulbright’s here with us with equally impressive goals and accomplishments. They are: Komi Ameganvi, Applied Economics; Fausto Canela, Educational Technology; Fredy Cardona, Agribusiness; Philbert Crossfield, Educational Technology; Sinclair Dauzal, English Literature; Dorothy Mtegha, Educational Administration; and Jean-Eric Rokotoarisoa, Biology.

The Office of International Studies is pleased to be a part of this valuable program, and are thrilled to announce that in the coming year, we will have even more Fulbright Scholars on our campus.
SPECIAL PROGRAMS DRAW A CROWD

American Studies-Education Seminar

On February 15, Hokkaido University’s Professor Kuzushi Maeda and eight students arrived from our Sister City – Asahikawa, Japan to visit Illinois State University as participants in the 6th Annual American-Studies-Education Seminar. This Seminar is a 4-week program coordinated by the Office of International Studies and Programs. In addition to sitting in on ISU classes offered within their academic area of interests, students also visited Metcalf School, the Japanese Saturday School and schools in Bloomington and Normal. A special thank you to all of the faculty and staff at Illinois State University who assisted us in planning this seminar!

American Studies Seminar

Twenty-nine students and Professor Don Turner from Universität Gesamthochschule Paderborn, Germany participated in a 4-week American Studies Seminar August 27-September 21, 2001. The students had a full program of lectures, field trips and experiences in the community. Most of their days were spent on campus attending American Studies lectures and sitting in on some classes within their academic areas of interest. A day trip to Springfield and New Salem provided students with Illinois history, while two 3-day/2-night trips to Southern Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri and Chicago, respectively, offered a taste of regional culture and big city glamour. Thank you to ISU faculty who provided lectures and allowed the students to visit their classes.

Training Program for Chinese

Nine participants have been selected by the China International Publishing Group of Beijing, China to attend a 3-week training program in communication and editing. CIPG has requested that the Office of International Studies and Programs provide training in the basic knowledge and principles of communication. Of special interest to the Chinese are how American reporters, editors and news editors do their jobs and also how much American people know about China, Chinese magazines, newspapers and newsagents. They have asked that the training be conducted May 18-June 9.

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Although the responsibility of OISP as a whole is in the hand of its director and immediate staff, recognition of the office’s strengths, defining the office’s strategic goals, and setting the office’s priorities must be the joint effort of the various administrators, faculty, staff and students at ISU. My staff and I welcome this challenge, and invite you to work with us in meeting it.

—Momar Ndiaye

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES:

International Student and Scholar Services
International House
Study Abroad
National Student Exchange
Management Development Institute
International Teaching Assistant Program
International Grant Proposal Development
Unit for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
Unit for African Studies
Unit for Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies
Fulbright Scholar Program
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