UNH choirs shine in prestigious European competition

by William Kempster, associate professor of music

Professor William Kempster, associate professor of music, traveled to the Czech Republic with members of the UNH Concert Choir and UNH Chamber Singers to participate in the International Bohuslav Martinů Festival and Choir Competition.

Along with Antonín Dvořák, Bohuslav Martinů is the most revered composer in his native land, now known as the Czech Republic. Little wonder, therefore, that a competition bearing the composer’s name draws the best choirs in the country, as well as from abroad, to the town of Pardubice for the International Bohuslav Martinů Festival and Choir Competition. This year in June, at the 6th such staging of the competition, choirs from Finland, Serbia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Israel, Estonia, Belgium, Slovenia and the USA joined with numerous Czech choirs, not only to compete against each other, but also to celebrate singing as a transcendent art form bringing people from all cultures together.

On this occasion, the sole representative from the United States was the University of New Hampshire. The UNH Concert Choir, a group of 24 singers, and Professor William Kempster, associate professor of music

From the director

China an area of focus for coming year

As we prepare for yet another academic year, it is with a feeling of accomplishment that I look back at 2009. This past academic year has been a great one for the International Affairs (IA) dual major program. A self-study group proposed IA curriculum reforms which the University Committee on International Studies approved unanimously. Among the changes to be implemented in AY 2010-2011 there will be a required micro/macro economics course and the addition of a geography module. We shall keep you updated on our progress.

UNH and the University of Ghana recently signed a memorandum of understanding, sealing fruitful collaborations between researchers and creating exciting student exchanges. Our second UNH team will leave mid-September for Accra and Cape Coast to continue the work started earlier this year. The goal for summer 2010 is to run a pilot program in the performing arts.

The number of students we sent abroad last year increased by over 5%. By promoting short-term faculty led trips and January term programs, we are moving forward with our goal to increase study abroad options which will accommodate a greater number of students. In the past year, the University Committee on Study Abroad also made significant progress in the area of health, safety and risk management procedures, in line with the recommendations of the recent UNH audit of study abroad programs.

In the coming year, China will be an area of primary focus for UNH. Chinese scholars Yunshun Liu and Xiaoshu Zhu have arrived from Chengdu University to teach language and culture courses in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and to participate in outreach activities with area schools. The New Hampshire International Seminar (NHIS) se-
Model UN group recognized at annual New York event

by Jacob Sneeden ‘12

Jacob Sneeden is a dual major in international affairs and political science from Exeter, NH.

The Model United Nations conference takes place annually in New York City and is the largest of the many Model UN events in the world, with over 4,000 delegates from five continents participating. Each delegation is assigned a country whose position they represent on a number of committees, addressing international issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, trafficking of nuclear material, implementing technology and science in educational and social development, regional solutions to regional conflicts within Arab nations, external trade and micro-financial assistance to developing countries, and the role of trade agreements in the international trading system.

This year’s UNH delegation, comprising 15 students from an array of majors, represented Andorra and Palestine. Students prepared by writing position papers on their assigned topics and by gathering background information to give a proper portrayal of their country’s position. Once at the conference, students worked with their committees to formulate resolutions. It is an exercise in diplomacy, cooperation, compromise and ingenuity, as students labor tirelessly to create solutions for today’s problems. It is an incredible opportunity and, as UNH student Sarah Cattin noted, “truly demonstrates how difficult it is for so many countries to agree on an issue and work together.”

On the bus down to New York, I was unsure of what the conference held in store. We began our formal sessions the night we arrived, and it was like nothing I had ever been a part of before. Unsure about the parliamentary meeting regulations and surprised by how serious participants were, I was at first hesitant but, after the initial shock, I became more engaged and the process began to enthrall me. It is difficult to describe the conference atmosphere. There is a level of seriousness to the tone, as students from around the world give speeches on significant topics. Once you conquer your initial nervousness, you learn so much, not only about the issues addressed and the way the UN works, but also about international perspectives. Sasa Tang, a sophomore majoring in international affairs and political science, described it as “a study abroad trip in the States.”

Throughout the week UNH students strived to create resolution papers that represented the interests of Andorra and Palestine, then caucused and gave speeches to gain support for their resolutions. The UNH team did a remarkable job representing and voicing the positions of these small countries, and for their efforts the Palestinian delegation was awarded “honorable mention” at the closing ceremonies.

The benefits of the trip to New York went beyond the conference. The UNH delegation was able to meet with a deputy ambassador from Andorra who explained the intricacies of representing such a small country at the United Nations. He also helped the students prepare by explaining some of the issues important to Andorra. Along with this meeting, students were also able to attend ceremonies inside the UN building; it was quite a powerful experience to be inside the General Assembly Hall looking at the podium where so much history has been created. Speeches were given by Ambassador B. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Sir John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General, on the significance of the Model UN and the importance of learning to interact with people from around the world at a young age. The perspective gained from being involved with this international program will set the tone for my future, and I am sure the other UNH students feel the same way. (See page 8 for a large group photo.)

Interested Students

Students who are interested in participating in UNH Model United Nations activities in the coming year should contact Professor Alynna Lyon at alynna.lyon@unh.edu.
Through UNH EcoQuest program student discovers practical applications and “a new level of being”

by Kirsten Lindquist ’10

English and environmental conservation studies major Kirsten Lindquist spent fall semester 2008 on the UNH EcoQuest program in New Zealand.

I was terrified. My heart beat madly and my brain struggled against panic mode. I’m scared of deep, dark water—and there I was in my snorkel gear, poised to slip into the watery abyss from the back of a deep sea charter boat. And yet, I was determined to follow my curiosity, piqued by our recent classes on marine ecosystems in New Zealand. I gripped my friend’s hand nervously as we simultaneously slid in the cool, briny water off the Poor Knights Islands. And was I glad I went under; it was beautiful, fascinating and exquisite in an alien way down there in Nursery Cove. I truly felt as if I had just discovered a new world. It was by holding sea salps — flickering a myriad of neon colors, seeing up close the spines of a lionfish, and swimming with the blue maia maia that I truly understood the importance of the marine protection area policy we’d been studying in the classroom.

That moment of connection is much of what I feel EcoQuest is about. There, learning is not just about what you absorb in the classroom. It’s about experiencing hands on the real-world implications of concepts learned in lecture, and seeing how that knowledge can be applied to make a positive difference. My directed research project—monitoring the Hochstetter’s frog in different pest control zones within the Hunua Ranges—was not only an amazing adventure of shimmying up waterfalls and hiking up rivers in search of a cute and elusive amphibian. It was the first time a school project actually had implications beyond a grade; the population data collected by our team are now available to the New Zealand Department of Conservation to help them in future pest management decisions. I was ecstatic that what I did at school was making a difference!

At Ecoquest I also discovered learning as a new way of life and a way of interacting with and appreciating others. There is a classroom on campus; a room that also functions as a living room, dining room and study room. But our lessons were not firmly tied to class, or even field trips. Class may have ended before dinner, but I would find myself in an impromptu constellation tutorial come nightfall. And I was surprised to find that walking on the beach and watching the colors of the Firth of Thames shift with the tide and the day was inspirational and crucial to my learning experience. No class at UNH had ever promoted such space for reflection and immersion in the landscape. This, for me, was a new level of being.

As I write this, the newest EcoQuest team is getting ready for their flight to Auckland. I still reel at how much has changed in my life since I made that same trip a year ago. Of course, I am also envious. My memories of EcoQuest and New Zealand still remain distinct and vivid after these complicated months of readjustment to school, to home. That is what happens, I think, when you live and learn fully; what happens when you allow a place and its people to make an imprint in your mind and heart. It is what happened to me at EcoQuest. And this vibrant state of being is its greatest gift I keep with me, one that is ever growing in how I think, how I see and how I exist.

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UNH students and alumni engaged in service abroad

In recent years, the Center staff has noticed that increasing numbers of UNH students and recent alumni are spending a period of time abroad involved in volunteer and service activities. What motivates them? What do they gain from the experience?

Acclimation to the kingdom:
Life in Thailand

by Jacob Howard ’07

When my girlfriend Emma and I graduated from the University of New Hampshire with our international affairs dual majors, I never imagined I would soon be dodging traffic in a shirt and tie while riding a motorbike through the pouring rain on my way to teach a class of rowdy Thai five year olds. Now it is a simple morning routine, just part of my extremely flexible reality. Although I am not happy to arrive at work dripping wet, I am content. One of the best things about Thailand is that everything is an adventure, and I have quickly learned to take the good with the bad. Our whole experience has been a wild ride of culture shock and acclimation.

Emma and I have been in Thailand for seven months. We arrived planning to travel for a couple of weeks before putting our new TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certificates to use. We quickly found out that the school term was just ending and would not start again until late May. Scrambling for an alternative situation, we managed to get positions volunteering for an NGO in Chiang Mai called Wildflower Home.

Wildflower Home is a wonderful organization that supports women in crisis. It consists mostly of young pregnant women or women with newborns who have no means of support. We spent three months living in this communal environment teaching English in the afternoons and working in the nursery or on the building site in the mornings. It was at Wildflower Home (HOWARD, continued on page 5)

Three win national awards for study, research abroad

This past spring, three students from UNH were named winners of prestigious national awards to do academic work abroad during the 2009-10 academic year.

Andrew McKernan ’09 was awarded a Student Fulbright Scholarship to conduct research in Moscow, Russia. His topic is “Temples to the Soviet Regime: The Politics of Soviet Construction.” He will spend this academic year doing library and archival work at the Russian State Library and Shchusev State Museum of Architectural History, attending lectures at the Moscow Architectural Institute, and conducting personal study of the buildings constructed prior to Stalin’s death.

A resident of Bow, NH, McKernan received his B.A degree in May with a double major in Russian language and linguistics. McKernan was also a member of the UNH Honors Program.

Michelle Walsh, a PhD candidate in zoology education, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct flatfish stock enhancement research with leading scientists at the Maizuru Fisheries Research Station in Japan. Though flatfish, which include flounder, halibut and sole, are among the most desirable fish for human consumption, they are especially vulnerable in their early life stages, and their populations have steadily declined in the past few decades. The spawning and rearing of fish in captivity for later release to natural populations is one of the few tools available to fisheries scientists for conserving, managing and restoring natural fish populations. Walsh will study the strategies that contribute to successful flatfish stock enhancement in Japan with the hope of transferring what (AWARDS, continued on page 8)
Philanthropy

For Bill and Martha Jackson, personal experiences sparked idea for study abroad scholarship endowment

In 2004, UNH alumni Martha and Bill Jackson established the Martha L. Foley ’76 ’96G and William S. Jackson ’75 Fund for International Studies. At CIE’s gathering for Boston area international affairs alumni in May, the Jacksons spoke about their UNH experiences and their decision to create a scholarship that would make a difference for some deserving UNH students.

Five years ago Bill and Martha (Foley) Jackson established an endowed scholarship designed to enable UNH students from New Hampshire with significant financial need to study abroad.

Martha, originally from Plymouth, NH, and a 1976 UNH graduate with a degree in French, remembers her own UNH junior year abroad in Dijon, France. “In those days, most everyone who studied abroad was a language major. I think it’s great that now so many students study abroad irrespective of their majors. My year in France was one of the best experiences of my life.” Martha remembers a fellow French major from her class who was unable to go to Dijon simply because she didn’t have enough money. That memory stuck with her and was one of the major reasons why she and Bill established this scholarship.

Bill, a 1975 UNH Whittemore School graduate from Franklin, MA, attended UNH on a full financial scholarship. He served as a resident assistant in Williamson Hall. Bill didn’t study abroad due to financial shortcomings. However, during his 26-year career with Tyco International, Ltd., he traveled abroad extensively. Bill comments on the value of an international experience in this global world, “I think all young American adults should try to spend a semester, or, better yet, an academic year abroad. Immersion into the culture of a foreign nation will lead to at least two ends: an appreciation of where you came from, and, an appreciation of how your homeland is viewed from the perspective of your host country -- very important these days!”

Others engaged in service abroad

Nic Tanner ’08 (international affairs and Spanish) is currently serving in the Peace Corps in Kyrgyzstan. He is teaching English in a village of about 6,000 people and living with a host family. Says Tanner, “It was the notion of living in an entirely unknown environment that brought me to this country. I wanted to be shocked and confused and amazed. As luck would have it, there is no shortage of shock for an American living in Kyrgyzstan. But, ultimately, it is when the novelty of a new place and people fades that a Peace Corps volunteer is truly challenged... it has been attempting to overcome the more substantive challenges that has made the whole experience worthwhile.”

Rachel Kelly-Martin ’10 (international affairs and outdoor education) just returned from spending the summer working with genocide survivors at an orphanage in Rwanda. In spite of the horrors the Rwandan people have endured, she remarks, “I was truly humbled by the humility, generosity, and joy that these people bring to every day life.”

(HOWARD, cont’d from page 4)

where I learned that, in Thailand, a hard life is nothing out of the ordinary and certainly no reason to be unhappy.

Four months into our adventure a new term started, and Emma and I got hired to teach kindergarten in Nakon Sri Thammarat, a city of 130,000 on the South Eastern coast. Three months into our year-long contract, we are really settling in. We have rented a three bedroom house and the islands are a quick boat ride away. As for teaching, classroom management can be difficult, since the children only understand little of what we say, but we and the kids are learning quickly. The job takes lots of energy, but seeing quick improvement makes it worthwhile.

Living in Thailand I feel as though I am learning as much as I have ever learned before. Having never spent any time in a non-western society, I feel as though I am constantly gaining perspective and insight that I could never pick up without living here. Although I am technically working in the field of education right now, it is much more than that. I am learning about myself, the world, and how to be an effective teacher all in a very hands-on, enjoyable way. What could be better?
Excellence award goes to research professor Changsheng Li

Changsheng Li, research professor of the of the UNH Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space, is the recipient of the 2009-10 UNH Award for Excellence in International Engagement.

Professor Li, who came to UNH in 1992, has made rich contributions in environmental research which have affected the work of scientists around the world and involved environmental efforts in at least 17 countries. His development of a state-of-the-art biogeochemistry model, DNDC, has most often helped environmental groups develop regional or national greenhouse gas emissions inventories for agricultural lands. In recent years his model has also been extended for use with forests, grasslands, and wetlands.

Dr. Li returns frequently to his native China to work with colleagues at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences on environmental problems facing that country, including its serious pollution challenges.

His international collaborations have also involved work with scientists in Germany and other members of the European Union, Australia, Japan, the UK, and Canada.

(CHOIRS, continued from page 1)

the ten-member UNH Chamber Singers each competed in two categories. All 33 fifteen-minute performances given by the individual choirs at the competition were judged by a jury of seven of the most pre-eminent figures in choral music in Europe, and choirs were awarded either a Gold, Silver or Bronze “zone” for each complete performance, based on an overall averaged mark out of 30. Both UNH groups received one Gold and one Silver in their two respective categories.

In addition, we were awarded a Special Jury Prize for the best interpretation of a Czech work by a foreign choir for our performance of Dvořák’s Napadly písně v duši mo. It is a tremendous honor to have this kind of recognition for our interpretation of a piece which – as we have learned this week – is so well-known here, and so very near and dear to Czech choristers.

The Concert Choir also placed first in Category G, making them eligible to compete for the Grand-Prix at the competition. Although there were seven categories at the competition, the Gold “zone” was not awarded in all of these, so just four choirs were asked to “sing-off” for the Grand-Prix prize of CZK50,000. Besides the UNH Concert Choir, those competing included two choirs from the Czech Republic and one from Serbia.

The winning choir was the renowned JITRO girls choir from Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, a group that has established itself as one of the world’s great choral institutions over the past 20 years. Their performances at Pardubice were an inspiration to all, and were particularly appreciated by the members of the UNH group, who saw every one of their performances at the festival, as well as those of the younger – but also outstanding – ‘feeder’ group JITŘÍČKO.

After the competition was completed, all four of these choirs were invited to perform at a special concert in Polička, where Martinů made his home, and where his body is buried. Due to travel complications and the need for two of the choirs to get home, only JITRO and the UNH Concert Choir were able to perform at this prestigious concert, which was attended by a large audience, and presided over by the current mayor of Polička, a direct descendent of Martinů himself. To be on the same program as JITRO was perhaps the highlight of the trip for many of the UNH group.

The UNH groups also participated in a concert performance in Pardubice, and presented a full program at the renowned Cathedral of St. Barbara in Kutná Hora, near Prague, on their way back to that city after the completion of the festival and competition.

The tour was not all work for us. When not rehearsing we enjoyed the sights sounds, smells and tastes, not only of Pardubice, a regional capital, but also of Prague itself, one of the great cities of the world. Overall, both musically and culturally, this was a trip of a lifetime for these students, and they represented themselves, their country and their university, not only with great distinction – as the competition results confirm – but also with pride, decorum and honor. Many friends were made and relationships for the future forged!
IA alums in Boston: An opportunity to “reconnect”

“Thank you for giving us all an opportunity to reconnect... IA and Hood House are such a strong, valuable part of my UNH experience.”
~ Myra Khan ‘07

On May 29, International Affairs alumni gathered with CIE staff, faculty and special guests for a memorable evening at the historic Parker House Hotel in downtown Boston. IA alumni in attendance, who represented 12 graduation classes from 1987 to 2009, enjoyed conversation and good food with old friends and new.

In Attendance
IA alumni attending were Michael Allard ‘07, Chelsea Amato ‘08, Sara Arnoudse ‘08, Raul Bernal ‘03, Michelle Bower ‘09, James “Skip” Burns ‘04, Stephen Calcavecchia ‘06, Nicole Chalifoux ‘07, Erin Fisher ‘05, Rebecca Foote ‘05, Darragh Gallant ‘97, Michelle Giguere ‘06, Danielle Griffin ‘04, Katrina Elyse Ingraham ‘09, Myra Khan ‘07, Sophia Koustas ‘96, Michelle Ouellette ‘96 and Zach Tinsley ‘98.

Next for IA alumni: 25th Anniversary celebration in 2010!
This fall, CIE staff, faculty and IA alumni will begin to make plans for the 2010 celebration of the International Affairs dual major’s 25th anniversary.

In addition to a reunion gathering, we are considering a variety of other possibilities which could involve our alumni -- as conference participants, seminar speakers, other? If you have ideas, let us know!
The Center for International Education publishes its newsletter once each semester. You can contact the editor, Sheila McCurdy, by phone at (603) 862-4788 or via e-mail at sheila.mccurdy@unh.edu. The newsletter can be viewed in electronic format at http://unh.edu/cie/newsletter/index.html.

Model UN group

(Duration, continued from page 1)

This year, the Model UN group will also highlight China this year, so keep your eyes open for the NHIS poster announcing the fall series. The first event on September 17 will feature Harvard professor Shigehisa Kuriyama speaking on Chinese medicine.

Together with the University Honors Program and the Hamel Center, the Center is happy to welcome Chris Reardon as Hood House Professor for the coming academic year, and looks forward to the close collaboration that such a position will allow.

Finally, let me remind you that I will be teaching at the University of Burgundy in the spring semester of 2010. Professor Stacy Van Deveer will step in as CIE interim director until I return in the early summer.

I send you my heartfelt wishes for a wonderfully productive and happy new academic year!

Yours sincerely,
Claire Malarte-Feldman

Jeanna Diorio will spend her sophomore year on a National Security Education Program (NSEP) Boren Scholarship studying Arabic language in Egypt. She was selected as one of 130 students nationally to receive an award from a pool of 896. A resident of Kingston, NH, Diorio is a dual major in international affairs and political science with a minor in history and a focus on the Middle East. Diorio first became interested in the Middle East while participating in the Model United Nations program in high school. She has continued her involvement with the organization at UNH, recently participating in the international Model UN competition in New York City for which the UNH Palestine delegation received an Honorable Mention.
Each year, the Center for International Education awards competitive grants for faculty international activities from funds provided by the vice president for academic affairs. Below are recipients’ reports for spring 2009 activity abroad.

**Lynette Hamlin, associate professor and chair of nursing**

Professor Lynette Hamlin traveled to Mexico in March with a group of students to initiate a new cross-cultural nursing program.

The nursing program has launched an exiting new program this semester. It is NURS 794/894: Special Topics: Cross-Cultural Nursing in Mexico. This course introduced 17 nursing students to transnational health issues through international student and faculty exchange with the University of Guanajuato and the University of New Hampshire nursing departments. Students had the opportunity to critically examine the interaction of culture, race, geography, economics, and political environments and their impact on the health of the citizens of Mexico. Communication strategies to promote cross-cultural understanding were stressed. Course objectives include: 1) compare and contrast similarities and differences of nursing practice in Mexico and the U.S., 2) develop skills to provide culturally competent care, 3) develop, implement, and evaluate a cross-cultural

Despite a steady cold wind and a snow shower, I welcomed spring in Montreal, Canada, while attending the Philosophy of Education Society (PES) Conference. PES, the primary association for my field of educational philosophy, has historically been focused on issues of American education. In recent years, the society has made an overt effort to engage with scholars abroad to expand American views on good education, to learn about innovative educational techniques elsewhere, and to initiate conversations about growing interest in global education initiatives. Hosting the conference in Montreal was indicative of the society’s efforts to expand American theorizing on education. Participants worked alongside Canadian and other international representatives to consider topics like Quebec’s Ethics and Religious Culture Program and Cosmopolitan Accents in Philosophy and Education.

My research has two aspects (theories of democratic education and explorations in social justice along lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality) united by philosophical work in the concept of political agency. At the conference, I presented some of my most recent work on the democratic virtue of political dissent. I described how American teachers are currently struggling to express their frustrations over high-stakes testing movements and how their experiences also limit the development of dissent

**Sarah Stitzlein, assistant professor of education**

Professor Sarah Stitzlein traveled to Montreal, Canada, in March to present a paper at the annual Philosophy of Education Society Conference.

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Ahmad Etebari, professor and chair of accounting and finance

Professor Ahmad Etebari spent spring 2009 involved in a number of academic initiatives in New Zealand.

On sabbatical leave from UNH, I spent the spring semester of 2009 at Canterbury University (UC) in Christchurch, New Zealand. While there, I participated in the UC business school’s weekly economics and finance seminars, worked on an existing research project, and initiated work on a new joint project with a colleague at UC (currently in progress). I also met with my former colleagues at the University of Otago in Dunedin and Waikato University in Hamilton, where I had previously been a visitor, as well as Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in Auckland.

In support of travel within New Zealand I received a faculty grant of $500. The grant funded most of my travel expenses to Dunedin and Auckland. In these trips I met with my colleagues at Otago and AUT in regard to the possibility of starting a student exchange and/or study abroad program with each university. I am currently working with the international programs staff of UC and AUT on a study abroad program for our students at UNH. From what I gather, most universities in New Zealand (as well as those in Australia, such as Bond University, where I have been a visitor previously) would welcome student study abroad arrangements directly through us rather than deal with specialized agencies, such as Butler or Acadia.

This was my sixth semester-long visit to New Zealand. My previous visits there were in 1988, 1995, 1996, 2002, 2003, and 2006. These visits have been highly beneficial to my teaching and research. The CIE grant enabled me to strengthen my ties to New Zealand and continue my long-standing engagements in research about the international capital market. It also provided support to take a first step in establishing a formal study abroad program with universities in New Zealand and Australia.

(STITZLEIN, continued from previous page)

within students. I offered suggestions for civics pedagogy that traced their roots to founding American principles and the efforts of contemporary dissidents. I was joined by scholars who described how dissent is cultivated within public schools across America and abroad. Conversations with colleagues sparked ideas for a symposium related to my research in a major journal in my field. I also chaired a panel on recent movements to determine controversial educational policies through voter ballot initiatives. This panel investigated examples like ballots overturning affirmative-action in education to consider potential hazards in the balance between democracy and justice.

Finally, I was proud to work alongside my colleagues to chart a new future for PES. Our society has historically been composed of mostly white men. In an effort to expand the perspectives included in our organization and to encourage scholarship in issues of social justice in schools, a small group of us met to form a new Committee on the Status of Race and Ethnicity in PES. I am hopeful that this group can help make our organization more inclusive and more creative.

In between conference sessions, I enjoyed polishing my French in local cafes and exploring the old port part of town. I especially enjoyed visiting the grand basilicas of Saint Patrick and Notre-Dame. I am thankful for the support of the Center for International Education.

(HAMLIN, continued from previous page)

service learning project, 4) learn about the health care system in Mexico, and 5) develop Spanish speaking skills.

This year’s students were the trailblazers and the experience met our expectations beyond what could have been anticipated. We traveled to Celaya, Mexico, March 10 through March 23, 2009. Three faculty precepted 17 nursing students who had clinical experiences in labor and birth, community health, psychiatric mental health, pediatric oncology, and general adult health. Students were also able to participate in nursing classes with our University of Guanajuato student colleagues and one group of UNH students presented two classes on therapeutic communication skills – translated to Spanish. I precepted students in labor and birth and, across five days in the clinical setting, students were able to participate in more than 20 births – one day we assisted with 10 births in six hours! Sophomore to senior nursing students were able to learn new clinical skills, practice current skills, and observe significant differences in care across cultures.

Student feedback has been very positive and students and faculty both experience the growth of our future nurses as a result of this experience. Our colleagues from the University of Guanajuato plan to visit us October 2009 and we are planning for our return visit March 2010.
Dora Chen, assistant professor of family studies

Leslie Couse, associate professor of education

Professors Dora Chen and Leslie Couse traveled to China with three undergraduates from the Departments of Family Studies and Psychology for a month-long visit to Chinese preschools to explore cross-cultural influences on the teaching/learning process.

At the core of the guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) is the importance of providing an environment in which children feel safe and secure and have ownership of their learning experiences. Two of the ongoing issues concern its cultural relevance (does it apply to classrooms serving children from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds?) and implementation (what can it and should it look like in actual practice?). This trip was part of a larger research effort to explore how notions of developmentally appropriate practice may be salient across different cultures and the development of a classroom observation instrument to facilitate teacher training for the implementation of the principles of DAP.

The majority of the available early childhood classroom observation tools are predicated on examining best practice from the perspective of the teacher, or deliverer of instruction. However, the teacher is only one critical element of a classroom environment; the children comprise the other. Assessing the effectiveness of DAP in classrooms must include consideration of its impact on children. This involves taking a bottoms-up perspective (Katz, 1995) of looking at program quality from the standpoint of the experience of children. This means that teacher training should focus on helping teachers consider the what’s and how’s of teaching in relation to the children they are teaching. Thus, teachers must be able to observe and understand children from diverse backgrounds and cultures, including those who do not speak English. Learning to “read” the children is a critical first step in effective teaching of young children. This is especially important in our increasingly diverse nation where classrooms are made up of children from ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse backgrounds.

On this trip, we collected data in six classrooms across three preschools in Beijing and visited an international school and three other preschools in Hohhot (Inner Mongolia), all serving children from various socioeconomic backgrounds. We observed children in their naturalistic classroom settings and interviewed teachers. From the classroom observations, we asked ourselves: How can we tell when Chinese children are feeling safe, taking ownership of their learning experience, and are in the process of developing conceptual understanding? Can we read Chinese children in the same ways that we read children in our preschools? From our teacher interviews, we asked: How do you know when children are feeling safe, taking ownership of their learning and developing conceptual understanding?

Observing children enabled us to begin the process of learning to read Chinese children in their own cultural setting. Although for most of us, the language barrier posed a great challenge in the beginning, it has forced us to learn to tune in to children’s non-verbal expressions and behaviors, yet to be conscious about jumping to conclusions. Another interesting observation that came through was that watching Chinese children was not all that different from watching preschoolers in our own UNH Child Study and Development Center (CSDC). The opportunity to talk with teachers has enabled us to confirm and disconfirm our prior conceptions of notions of DAP. Based on her classroom observations and the teacher interview discussions, Katrina Junkins, a student researcher, began revisiting her thinking about engagement, using this to clarify her thinking about the notions of safety, ownership, and conceptual understanding. These reflections provide critical insights into ways we could fine tune the draft of our observation instrument.

Thanks to the support of the CIE and the Family Studies and Education Departments, this trip has provided an invaluable opportunity for institutional-level collaboration by allowing us, two faculty from two different colleges at UNH (CHHS and Liberal Arts) to work together in our shared discipline, seeking to enhance our knowledge about the teaching and learning process by deepening our knowledge of how culture influences approaches to teaching and learning for young children. It has also supported the efforts for continuing cross-cultural collaboration between preschool educators in China and the US initiated by Dora Chen two years ago.

In spite of the tight weekly school visit schedules, we were able to make time on the weekends for several experiences of a lifetime. These included an unforgettable climb on the Great Wall of China, tasting scorpions in Beijing, a most interesting camel ride in the Gobi Desert in Inner Mongolia, and an all too short two-day glimpse into the markedly westernized city of Shanghai, the Water Village – also known as the Venice of China, and the silk factory and private gardens in Suzhou.
CIE $1,500 Faculty International Engagement Awards

Nadine Bérenguier, associate professor of French

Professor Nadine Bérenguier spent the 2008-09 academic year on sabbatical leave in France.

I am very grateful to have received a CIE grant to help fund the trip that took me to France for a sabbatical during the academic year 2008/09. I lived in Aix-en-Provence where I had contacts at the university. I spent most of the year working on the manuscript of my book Conduct Books in Eighteenth-Century France: Girls’ Education and Enlightenment Discontents. This project investigates conduct books in eighteenth-century France, outlines the problematic status of a genre targeting a readership that was slowly acquiring the right to read, and also sheds light on the reception of such texts in periodicals of the time, on the status of their authors in early literary histories as well as on their legacy in the nineteenth century. It is under contract with Ashgate Publishing and will be published in the course of 2010.

Smaller projects also took up some of my time, especially contributions to two collaborative projects: Dictionnaire des femmes créatrices—spearheaded by Béatrice Didier and Antoinette Fouque and Le Dictionnaire des femmes des Lumières, edited by Huguette Krief (Université de Provence) and Valérie André (Université libre de Bruxelles). With Huguette Krief, faculty member emerita at the university of Provence, I have discussed my future participation in yet another collaborative project that she is coordinating: the publication of the correspondence of Constance de Salm, a female writer and poet who published at the end of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. This is very exciting for me, since Constance de Salm was a French writer who spent parts of her life in Germany. I have been looking for an opportunity to investigate the relationships between French and German cultures in the eighteenth century and this project will allow me to investigate this relationship.

For full report visit http://www.unh.edu/cie/faculty_travel_reports/nadine_berenguier.html

Serita D. Frey, associate professor of natural resources

Professor Serita Frey spent part of this academic year in Costa Rica to work on a number of projects related to her research.

I spent two months of my sabbatical during AY 2008-2009 in Costa Rica and Guatemala. I had three goals for this trip: (1) develop collaborations and explore potential research projects assessing the effects of global change on tropical soils, (2) develop a short-course for UNH students focused on tropical soils in Costa Rica, and (3) develop a training program in the environmental sciences for K-12 teachers in Guatemala. My research examines how global change (i.e., climate warming, nitrogen deposition, biodiversity loss, land-use change) is altering nutrient cycling processes in forest soils. On this trip, I visited with scientists at several universities and research stations to learn what research is being done in this area and what opportunities exist for collaborative research projects. During my visit to Costa Rica I also collaborated with Gabriela Soto, a soil scientist at the Center for Tropical Agriculture (CATIE) whose expertise is in tropical agricultural soils. Together we developed a two-week course on tropical soils and agroecosystems for UNH students. We traveled to potential field trip locations and put together a tentative itinerary and syllabus. The course will likely be offered during winter break and is tentatively scheduled to be offered for the first time in January 2010. Ms. Soto is an expert on organic agriculture/agroforestry and organic certification, and she has several ongoing research experiments on organic coffee production. Given that the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA) is currently developing a strategic plan and academic program in sustainable agriculture, this course should be of interest to many of our undergraduate and graduate students. For full report visit http://www.unh.edu/cie/faculty_travel_reports/serita_frey.html