

International Studies

Ambassador Newsletter



Message From the Director - Dr. Garth Massey

I'm sometimes accused of boasting too much about the students in international studies. This year, however, I have much to boast about. The first-year international studies students are as good as I've ever seen. The graduate cohort is filled with highly impressive individuals doing great things. And our graduating seniors are amazing! I'm not exaggerating. They are talented, smart, hard working, and headed in the right directions. I'm too proud of them to apologize for boasting, so bear with me.

For the fourth year the seniors are taking a capstone course as the culmination of their work in international studies. It is my good fortune to be teaching this class for seventeen of our students. They write a great deal, grapple with material from across the disciplines, are challenged to think theoretically, and do a major research project in three stages: description, analysis and policy. Their work is the basis for our assessment of student learning and the extent to which the International Studies Program is meeting its educational goals. From what I can see thus far, things are going very well.

I hope you enjoy reading about our students' accomplishments in this issue of the Ambassador. And I want to thank all of you who have contributed to the International Studies Program this year and in past years. Believe me, it is money well spent.

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Five International Studies Majors Are Among College of Arts and Sciences Top 20 Outstanding Graduates

Each year, the College of Arts and Sciences honors twenty of its best students. It is a very special honor. This year, five of the Top 20 Outstanding Graduates were international studies majors, an unprecedented number in the history of this award and a testament to the quality of students in our program.

Students are nominated for the Top 20 honor by a faculty member, along with supporting letters of recommendation. Applications are screened by a faculty scholarship committee that evaluates academic accomplishments including internships and study abroad, campus leadership and co-curricular activities, and community service. In addition, most students chosen as a Top 20 Outstanding Graduate have a GPA of 3.9 or better, on a 4 point scale.

Rachel Crocker (Cheyenne) majored in international studies and has a second, self-design major in ethnomusicology, with a Russian minor. Study Abroad: Russia.

Angela Granum (Casper) majored in international studies and minored in Spanish and political science. Study Abroad: Guatemala.

Michelle Neumann (Worland) majored in international studies and English. Study Abroad: South Africa.

Kate Olson (Laramie) double majored in music and international studies and has a journalism minor. Study Abroad: Slovakia.



Kate Olson

Brian Stauffer (Gardnerville, Nevada) majored in international studies and minored in history and Spanish. Study abroad: Mexico. (Not pictured)



Left to right: Michelle Neumann, Rachel Crocker, Angela Granum

Majors Invited to Join Sigma Iota Rho National Honorary Society

Why do nearly all scholastic honorary societies have Greek letters when only twelve percent of all words in the English language have their origin in Greek? It must be to emphasize the importance of the honor of being selected. This spring 22 international studies majors have been invited to join Sigma Iota Rho (ΣIP), the international studies national honorary society.

The University of Wyoming's ΣIP chapter is the fourth in the nation and has a long tradition of distinguished members, including many of our alumni. Selection is made to juniors and seniors who have at least a 3.5 GPA. This year's group of inductees is the largest in recent memory, and a wonderful group of students. An induction ceremony, complete with refreshments, will be held in the Wyoming Union on May 2nd at 4:00 PM.

Phi Beta Kappa Inductees

Four International Studies students have been invited to wear the key of the most prestigious honorary society in American colleges and universities: Phi Beta Kappa. They are **Rachel Crocker**, **Kate Olson**, **Brian Stauffer**, and **Michelle Neumann**. These are superior students and outstanding student leaders.

Honored for Excellence in Internationalization

Jessica Nape (*see story, pg. 4*), graduate student in the Peace Corps-Masters International Program, and **Josie Maus**, President of the International Studies Student Club, have been honored by the International Board of Advisors. Jessica and Josie were selected for the Outstanding Graduate and Undergraduate Student Awards for Excellence in Internationalization. This award will be conferred at the meeting of the International Board of Advisors this Spring.

International Studies Majors Making the Grade

Forty-two international studies undergraduates, over a third of all majors, made the honor roll in Fall 2005: the President's List; the Vice President for Academic Affairs Honor Roll; the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's List. Eight students were named to the President's Honor Roll with a perfect 4.0 GPA, twenty-six students made the Vice President for Academic Affairs Honor Roll, and eight students were named to the Dean's List. In addition, eleven international studies graduate students had a perfect 4.0 GPA in the fall.

Study Abroad

Last summer and this academic year several international studies majors chose to participate in a Study Abroad experience. Two students went for a full year. **Stevie Ryerson** went to Spain and **Lindsay Olson** traveled to Costa Rica. A large number of students spent a semester abroad: **Melissa Allen** - Spain; **Casey Cleary** - Ireland; **Anna Guyton** - France; **Andrea Harokopis** - Chile; **Melissa Hess** - China; **Jason Legg** - China; **Jahna Locke** -Spain; **Bryan Watt** - England. Other students chose a summer short course abroad.

A very popular summer course is Shanghai: Past and Present taught by international studies adjunct faculty member **Dr. Yarong Ashley**. Four international studies students participated in this course last summer: **Anne Gasper**, **Charles Heidbreder**, **Jennifer Jaramillo**, and **Sarah Parker**. **Anna Guyton** traveled to France by taking the course European Comparative Studies taught by international studies adjunct faculty member **Dr. Ed Bradley**.

Students receive credit hours for studying abroad that can be applied to their UW degree requirements. In many cases, students satisfy a large portion of the language requirement for the international studies degree by studying abroad.

Two International Studies Majors Nominated for Spitaleri Award

The Rosemarie Martha Spitaleri Award is a prestigious award honoring UW's outstanding female graduate. The award is based on academic excellence, contributions and service to the university community, active participation and leadership in co-curricular activities, and demonstrated character and citizenship. This year two international studies majors have been nominated: **Ava Bell** and **Angela Granum**.

Ava Bell (Laramie) has been on the cross-country ski team all four years she has been at UW. During that time Ava has been an Academic All American garnering a 3.67 GPA.



Ava Bell

Ava has also been active in campus and community activities, in particular the International Studies Club, the Nordic Ski Club, and her church's campus group.

Angela Granum (Casper) is one of the College of Arts and Sciences Top 20 Graduates (*see story, pg 1*). In addition to earning a 3.9 GPA, Angela



Angela Granum

has served in ASUW and as a student representative on the College of Arts and Sciences Central Committee, which is responsible for many critical college decisions for faculty.

Ava Bell and Angela Granum are the kind of young people that make UW a unique and wonderful institution. They have taken advantage of everything UW has to offer but have given back in great measure and enriched UW in ways only our very best students can.

Alumni News

Beginning with the Fall 2005 Ambassador newsletter, we are trying to regularly devote space to the comings and goings of our alumni. This is a good way to keep in touch and to facilitate our alumni keeping abreast of what their classmates are doing now.

Please send us information about yourself that you would like to share with other international studies alumni and adopted alumni—students we've worked with closely who may not have gotten an international studies degree but took many of their classes with international studies students and were supported by international studies faculty.

Kim Henry, B.A. '05, is working on a masters in international relations at Old Dominion University.

Kenna Maughan, B.A. (Political Science) '04, is working as a Policy Officer for Stirling Council, the local authority in Central Scotland.

Chelsea Peil, B.A. '04 did an internship after graduating and has recently been considering a degree in international development at the University of Oregon. Her recent real world experience is working at the Maps and Globe store and starting a kitchenware business in Ashville, N.C.

Ashley Wilms, B.A. '04, spent a summer in Guatemala as an intern for a social development agency, Speak Shop. She is currently completing a masters in international business administration at Thunderbird.

Durand Duin, B.A. '03 is living in San Francisco and working as the accounts coordinator for Google's advertising segment. Two years on, he still loves the city.

Kristen Edwards, B.A. '03 will complete a masters degree at George Washington University this May. She plans a July wedding in Encampment.

Jen Smith, B.A. '03 left UW for Alaska and ended up in Russia working for the American consulate. After traveling in Asia she returned to work and is currently in Seattle with Progressive Insurance. Jen has applied to UW's Law School for fall 2006.

Darren Sudduth, B.A. '03, is completing a MBA at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh.

Matt Nisselius, B.A. '99, is a Training Project Designer for Berlitz, Japan. Matt started out with Berlitz as an English instructor in 2000, moved to the sales department, and now works in the product and service development division. He lives in Japan.

Geoff Paine, B.A. '01, will complete his studies in law at George Washington University in May and plans to begin working for a major defense contractor after passing the Maryland bar exam. Geoff and his wife, Amy, are expecting their second child in June.

Kathleen Laya, B.A. '90, earned a masters in foreign service from Georgetown University and is currently director of public business for GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). She lives in Rio De Janeiro. (see story 2006 Winter UWYO magazine)

What Can I Do With an International Studies Degree? by Michael Hartman B.A. '95

I graduated from UW in December of 1995 with a B.A. in international studies. I was motivated to respond to Dr. Massey's e-mail solicitation of what alumni are doing now with their international studies degree while sitting in a meeting last week with three people—two from India and one from Taiwan.

I, like many, pursued a degree in international studies with the romantic notion of working in a foreign country. While I did a Study Abroad in Monterrey, Mexico, attended private Spanish language school in Quezaltenango, Guatemala, and taught English in Seoul, South Korea, I never fulfilled my romantic notion of a life spent working for a company "over seas." However, by staying state side, I discovered the less romantic, but more practical side to a degree in international studies.

Upon returning from South Korea, I went back to school and earned my masters degree in computer information systems.

I now work for Corporate Express, an office supply company that is owned by Buhrman, a Dutch company. I spend my days working in the software development department with people from three different continents.

I know from giving campus tours at UW it can be difficult to sell students on a degree that seemingly has no tangible job associated with it. However, as a former student, I have no regrets about the time and money spent earning a degree in international studies. My masters degree started me on my career path, but my degree in international studies is helping me be successful in an industry that is not restricted by political or cultural boundaries. As the world shrinks with globalization, an understanding of the larger world around us, and an ability to function in this new reality has become an important asset.



Ava Bell and Justin Daraie:
All American Skiers

This month at Sugarloaf, Maine, the University of Wyoming ski team captured first place in the US Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association Championship, with the men's team finishing first and the women's team finishing second. It was a great win for the students and for nordic ski team coach Rachel Watson.

Competing with the team were **Ava Bell** (Laramie) and **Justin Daraie** (Casper), both international studies seniors graduating in May. Justin earned All American honors following the meet. Three-time Academic All American Ava Bell is expected to be honored a fourth time for her skiing and academic accomplishments. These are two great students and great individuals.

Peace Corps-Masters International Student Attends World Youth Summit

Jessica Nape is a UW Peace Corps-Masters International candidate. She first journeyed to Africa when she was a 17 year-old high school student and was overwhelmed with the experience. She knew she would return one day.

Jessica's opportunity to return came when she was chosen to attend the inaugural Global Kimeeza: US/Uganda Youth Summit, a conference at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda on conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, women's issues, and internally displaced persons. The conference took place January 2-14, 2006. Jessica was among 24 other Americans who teamed up with 25 Ugandan students for the two-week conference.



Jessica first learned of the conference opportunity through a departmental e-mail sent on behalf of the conference sponsor, the Global Youth Partnership for Africa, a non-governmental organization that links American students to young leaders in Africa.

"I checked out the web site and it sounded like something I really wanted to do," Jessica says, noting that, in the end, the e-mail campaign drew more than 100 qualified applicants nationwide.

Leading up to the conference, reading lists and web sites about the state and history of Uganda were provided. The background was essential, but the real learning began when the plane touched down. "It's one thing to sit in a classroom and talk about the issues in Africa, it's another thing to see it happening fist-hand and to actually contribute to a possible resolution."

The students were given three conference objectives. The biggest responsibility for the American students was forming relationships with their Ugandan counterparts in the relatively short time allotted for the visit. "We needed to find out some workable way to increase relations with them and also help people who have been affected by the war in the north of Uganda. I was surprised at how easy it was to become friends with the Ugandan students," Jessica says.

The newfound friendships, however, had their share of somber moments. The American students were given two extra days to "do the tourist thing" at the conclusion of the conference. Nearly half of the Ugandan students were from one of the regions in northern Uganda—an area of intense civil war that has taken thousands of lives and displaced tens of thousands more. The Ugandans told the Americans that by seeing only the southern part of Uganda, they did not have a complete picture of the country. To round out the experience, several of the American students planned a short trip to the north to visit the Ugandan students at home, although they were strongly encouraged not to go due to safety concerns. Jessica said "It was really hard to be told it wasn't safe to see the homes of the people with whom you just spent a week and a half becoming friends."

To continue the relationships, the students have decided to publish a quarterly newsletter to keep the communication open among the conference participants. "A newsletter doesn't sound like a big deal, but it is. The biggest obstacle was trying to figure out how to keep in touch with the people in Uganda upon our return, because the communication standards there aren't what they are in the states."

Whether it was the political unrest of Uganda's north or the absence of personal computers with Internet connections, on a daily basis Jessica was reminded of the inescapable differences between the Ugandan students and herself, differences, she says, which ultimately formed a bond. "I don't know how you could go somewhere like Uganda and meet such amazing people, and then see some of the conditions and not want to do something about it, not feel some sort of responsibility to do what little you can to help."

The students also have teamed up with some Ugandan women to help them expand a profit-generating project that benefits education, health care and housing in Uganda. The project, BeadforLife (www.beadforlife.com), employs about 90 Ugandan women bead makers who otherwise would be crushing rock in a nearby quarry for \$1 a day. "We will continue to work with the Ugandan women and raise awareness by focusing specifically on one program that is making a difference," Jessica explains.

A final objective was to create a recommendation document for peace in northern Uganda. The Ugandan student representatives will present the document to the Ugandan government while a group from the U.S. delegation will present it to a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. The paper addresses conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, and women's issues in the area. Nape says the students hope to stimulate awareness in the U.S. about Ugandan issues. "The first step is to get the ball rolling, get people talking about the issue. Then we'll go from there."

According to the requirements for the Peace Corps-Masters International degree, Jessica will complete her coursework in her first year of candidacy, finishing up this semester. She will enter the Peace Corps this fall and serve 27 months. At the end of her service she will return to UW and complete a thesis based on her Peace Corps field work.

Portions of this article were taken from a February 8, 2006 UW News Service article with Jessica Nape.