Students study in Morocco

By Davie Moore
Staff Writer

Union students may soon have the chance to experience Moroccan culture as a part of their undergraduate studies.

Union is initiating a student and faculty exchange program with Mohamed I in Morocco.

“The goal of this program is to set up intensive language study programs for students to learn how to both teach and speak in a submersion setting,” said Phillip Ryan, assistant professor of languages and coordinator of the ESL program, who has visited with the faculty of Mohamed I in hopes of beginning an exchange with the university.

“The faculty at Mohamed I are delightful people who are really dedicated to their students,” said Ryan.

“Our university would greatly benefit from a long-term relationship not only as two great schools converging, but it will also help to break down barriers and misunderstandings between our culture and Arabic culture.”

According to Ryan, this program program will greatly benefit those students wanting to teach English as a second language.

If the program is approved, students majoring in TESL will have the opportunity to spend up to a month in Morocco. They will participate in and develop conversational English classes.

“It’s such a wonderful experience to have the opportunity to practice in an authentic foreign environment,” said junior Renita Hendrick, TESL major.

Hendrick spent the month of January in Morocco. While she was there she was able to spend two and a half weeks teaching English at Mohamed I University.

“I think it’s not common to find a bachelor’s program which offers overseas teaching experience. Most students can’t get that kind of experience until they receive their graduate level studies,” said Ryan.

While Hendrick experienced TESL hands-on, Ryan conducted a workshop on teacher-exploration for university faculty and for secondary English teachers. He promoted the idea of students-exchange between Union and Mohamed I.

“This short-term language school is just one of many facets to a long-range relationship, according to Ryan. In the future, he hopes that the program will include not only language students but also other field specific areas of study, such as business and nursing.

Ryan hopes to one day share not only language, culture and tradition with Mohamed I, but to share in business and technology as well.

Ryan says he believes that a successful partnership with Mohamed I is very likely, however, it is still in the early stages of development.

The next step will be for members of Mohamed I’s faculty to visit Union and see if they are interested in forming a partnership with the university.

Ryan is in communication with the university about this visit, but, no date has been set at this time.

Upper level students, majoring or minoring in the participating fields, will have the opportunity of studying and teaching in Morocco and may use this new program as a part of their undergraduate requirements.

The first few days will be spent in an area of the rainforest virtually untouched by damaging human hands, the Blue Creek Rainforest Station.

While at this location students will have the opportunity to experience the forest first hand by taking a guided tour of the forest, including an examination of the forest canopy by taking a rope walkway located 80–100 ft. above the forest floor.

Students will also visit some of the existing Mayan villages, as well as the ruins of an ancient Mayan village.

The second half of the trip will be spent off of the shore of Belize. Students will study at a marine station on South Water Caye, an island located in the Caribbean.

Students will focus on island ecology including a study of a coral reef.

Services, facilities and personnel for his trip are being provided by International Zoological Expeditions. This company has provided services in Belize for many years.

International students set goals of work and missions

By Kasey Carty-Campbell
Staff Writer

“If you go from Tennessee to Montana there will be cultural differences,” said the University of Tennessee to Bosnia,” said sophomore Hursin Mulic, digital media studies major.

Mulic, a Bosnian resident, and the other international students at Union are able to see these differences the moment they step off the plane into their home countries.

As the school year approaches its end, these students plan summer’s as colorful as their countries.

Like many students, freshman Bambi Chau, biology major, and resident of China, will be on a mission trip this summer. Her mission field will be her friends and family in Taiwan, while visiting her grandmother.

“I have a month to overcome the stereotypes that my friends have of me, and to show them that I am not the horrible person I was before. I was a very bitter and I did not show people everything. I was not considerate of people, and to show them that I am not the horrible person I was before,” said Mulic.

Like Mulic, sophomore Lada Mujkic, psychology major, will also share a part of their culture in the United States.

Mujkic and Mujkic, residents of Sarajevo, Bosnia, will experience military life and the hot Louisiana sun at Fort Polk, from June 1-19. While overseas they will have the opportunity to practice in an authentic foreign environment.

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Biology students travel to rainforest for hands-on learning

By Chad Carlson
Staff Writer

Biology students will take advantage of the opportunity to travel to the rainforest as a part of their tropical ecology course.

Twelve students and three graduate area teachers from Union’s biology department will travel to Belize, South America in completing their tropical ecology course.

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“This opportunity is really a surprise. This is really good. I would have to work anyway at home, and this is such a good opportunity, first of all, to do the training, but we will also be introduced to what they are going to do in my country,” said Mujkic.

Luau Laughs: Sophomore Roy Lance, physical education major, and freshman Steven Yzaguirre, engineering major, play water balloon volleyball at the luau. McAfee commons held an outdoor luau on Thursday, April 26. Residents enjoyed a cookout, games and the Elvis movie “Blue Hawaii.”

Photo by Tim Wiesman