Finding a Global Vision

Study Abroad Students Visit South Africa

Philosophy in the Community

Study Abroad student Melissa Armstrong poses with a unique bronze sculpture of South Africa’s late pop diva Brenda Fassie. More on Page 4
Fresh Faces & Ideas on Dean’s Executive

DEAN JO-ANNE R. DILLON

At every post-secondary institution each new academic year brings with it an exciting array of opportunities, challenges and changes. I look forward to tackling these opportunities—our student advising review, first year curriculum review, governance changes and the Clarion Project—with a Dean’s Executive team that has many new faces and fresh ideas.

Harley Dickinson (Sociology) has returned from administrative leave and re-assumed his position as Vice Dean for the Division of Social Science. The College will benefit from Harley’s infectious energy and passion for his work. At the same time, I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Dirk de Boer for the excellent work he did as Acting Vice Dean for the Social Sciences in Harley’s absence. Dirk proved to be a natural leader and we have benefited from his perspectives on a range of issues. Dirk has now returned to his previous position as Head of the Department of Geography and Planning.

In the Division of Science, Peta Bonham-Smith (Biology) has assumed the position of Acting Vice Dean while Kevin Schneider is on administrative leave for one year. Peta has already introduced several innovative ideas and I am confident the College will benefit significantly from her leadership over the coming year. She represents our commitment to nurturing leadership from within and providing the support and encouragement to foster future leaders. Art Davis will serve as the Acting Head of the Department of Biology while Peta serves on the Dean’s Executive.

Some exciting changes have taken place in the Division of Humanities & Fine Arts. The former Vice-Dean for this division, Peter Stoicheff, will be taking on the position of Dean when my term ends in March 2011. I would like to thank Peter for his excellent work in Humanities & Fine Arts over the past five years, and for being such a team supporter.

David Parkinson was selected as the new Vice-Dean of the Division and assumed his responsibilities in July. David is a longtime Professor of English at our University and was also the inaugural Director of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Culture and Creativity. David has served on a broad range of administrative committees during his academic career, and has already demonstrated that he is amply prepared to take on this critical role in the College.

Finally, Gordon DesBrisay (History) is the College’s new Associate Dean of Students. Gordon’s main task in the coming year will be moving aggressively to reform, expand and improve student advising in the College and to fully develop the mandate of the student office. The first phase of these reforms will target first-year students advised at the College level, but his overall aim will be to coordinate and improve the advising experience for all our students at both the College and departmental levels. He will also be working closely with the College’s First Year Curriculum Review Steering Committee to ensure that we emerge from this process with streamlined and innovative course offerings for students.

Gordon’s predecessor, Tom Steele, successfully introduced and helped streamline a wide variety of critical projects in the College’s Undergraduate Office. Tom has now returned to the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics to concentrate more fully on his role as a distinguished researcher and teacher. I would like to thank Tom for his outstanding work with the Undergraduate Office over the past eight years; his vision has significantly improved our student experience.

I look forward to working with our entire team on the important initiatives outlined in our integrated plan, and, in turn, promoting a greater sense of identity and community for everyone throughout the College.
A committee looking at the College’s first-year course offerings is putting the finishing touches on a survey and the objectives that will shape its final report, due in January 2011.

The First Year Curriculum Review Steering Committee (FYCRSC) has been busy scheduling College-wide consultations and facilitating lectures from several North American scholars in recent months.

The final lecturer, David Helfand, President of Quest University, will present on Monday, Nov. 1, in the Neatby-Timlin Theatre from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

The committee has also developed a set of eight objectives (see below) to guide the recommendations outlined in their upcoming final report. Lesley Biggs, chair of the FYCRSC, said these objectives will be outlined in greater detail during a Town Hall meeting for faculty, likely towards the end of October.

“These objectives will help us answer the question, 'What do we want a first-year student to know at the end of their year?'” said Biggs.

The committee also will be looking to incorporate more skills-based learning into the course requirements for first-year students. Biggs said that grooming students’ skills in concrete areas such as writing, group work and oral communications will make them more attractive to employers once they graduate.

The committee is also nearing completion of a survey for first and fourth-year students in the College. The survey—which will be longitudinal—will give the committee and future course developers more detail on who Arts & Science students are and what they need from the College.

“Are they pre-professional, do they enter with a major in mind, are they arts students or science students or some combination? In part, these are the types of questions this survey will focus on,” said Biggs.

The FYCRSC is basing its work around Gateways to Your Future, which is centred around the idea that students come into university with a wide range of needs and interests. Biggs explained that because Arts & Science serves a unique student population—some of whom are pre-medicine, some of whom are exploring their options, some of whom are interested in the sciences, or fine arts, for example—the Gateways concept is particularly well-suited to a curriculum review in this College.

“This really is innovative in terms of recognizing that there are different needs,” said Biggs, adding that the committee may possibly recommend core curriculums for different student groups.

“Some other universities have single entry points where students take a general education, but I think the idea of having multiple entry points is quite new (nationally).”

The committee hopes to have all its consultations completed and data collected by the end of December. After the final report is tabled early in the new year, interested faculty members will be appointed to develop the new curriculum, which Biggs said she hopes will be implemented by the fall of 2013. For more information, see the First Year Review Steering Committee’s website: https://wiki.usask.ca/display/FYCR/home.

The College of Arts & Science First Year Programme Objectives

- Promote Students’ Personal Development and Growth
- Prepare Students to Be Engaged in Inquiry-Based Learning and Critical Thinking
- Engage Students in Creative Processes
- Prepare Students to Communicate Effectively Using Multiple Forms of Expression
- Prepare Students for Civic Engagement as Educated Citizens in a Global World
- Gain an Understanding of Aboriginal Peoples and Recognize the Unique History and Sociocultural Positioning of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.
- Prepare Students to Take Responsibility for Their Thoughts, Words and Actions
- Gain an Understanding of Science and Technology
Professor Simonne Horwitz (History) led both the development and delivery of the course—History 399.6: South Africa: History, Politics and Society—which took place from May 4 to June 8. It consisted of six distinct units outlining the origins, apartheid, culture and education of a population that has undergone dramatic changes in the past two decades.

Although Horwitz was the main instructor, other ‘recurring faculty’ also provided instruction to the students during their time in South Africa. With Horwitz hailing from South Africa, her academic connections in the country helped facilitate the participation of several domestic faculty throughout the course.

In addition to daily core lecture times, experiential learning formed a large component of the course’s content. The students visited several museums, universities, game parks, local markets and government buildings to procure a hands-on experience of the diverse country.

“We visited different townships, cultural facilities and… even farms that were formerly (during apartheid) white and black-only areas,” says Horwitz.

Wildlife reserves and World Cup fever served as the backdrop, but it was much more than mere sightseeing for a group of 10 students who took part in the College’s first study abroad course in South Africa this past spring.
owned,” explained Horwitz. “It gave the students a real opportunity to see what they study. It was important to show them both the good and the bad.”

The students were also excellent ambassadors for both the University and Canada as a whole, as Horwitz said she received many positive comments regarding the students’ educational engagement during their various tours. In addition, the students were also required to utilize a personal talent for the benefit of the people they visited while in South Africa.

For example, Alice Collins, a member of ‘def SOL Crew’—a nationally-recognized hip-hop dance crew from Saskatchewan—led dance classes for various youth groups in the country. Melissa Armstrong, a member of the Canadian women’s softball team, conducted a softball workshop for interested youth and young adults.

Horwitz said that it remains to be determined whether History 339.6 will be a yearly or bi-annual course offering. Regardless, she is looking forward to a return trip and inspiring the next generation of leaders to explore a culture as dramatic as it is diverse.

“South Africa is remaking its history, and (seeing this) really helps inspire students to consider graduate studies,” she said. “The students learn that there are lots of universal problems—such as farming, the wealth gap and education—and that really helps to put history as a whole into perspective.”
Visitors asked to pick the highlight of a trip to China would probably remember the Great Wall or the Forbidden City. Not Christine Foth, a fourth-year Economics student who recently participated in Global Vision’s Junior Team Canada Economic and Trade Mission to China and Malaysia. The high point for her was locating a manufacturer of LED lighting for one of her trip sponsors, a local Saskatoon trucking company who will be using it on their trucks and trailers.

“I called my sponsor that night and said, ‘Guess what I just did?!’ And they said, ‘I don’t know, probably something touristy.’ And I said, ‘No, I found a manufacturer for your lights!’ It was really cool…to be a part of a business transaction. That was just fantastic.”

Last August, Foth travelled to Beijing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur with a group of 45 students from across Canada to meet with leaders in the business, government and education sectors. The brainchild of businessman Terry Clifford, Global Vision is a non-profit organization that has been taking students on international missions for 20 years to give young people a better understanding of the international business opportunities available to them.

Each year Global Vision holds Global Leader Centres in major cities to get to know interested students and test their leadership and networking skills. The students attend a follow-up event in Ottawa—the National Youth Caucus—that features speakers and sessions on international relations designed to help them better understand Canada’s place in the world.

Foth attended a Global Leader Centre held in Saskatoon last March and the National Youth Caucus in May.
“It was really valuable to be able to network with my peers from across the country and also to learn from... Canadian leaders on where our country stands and where we are going in the future.”

To finance their overseas excursion the students each raised $5,500 in sponsorship money from government, business or education, “someone who believed it was worthwhile to sponsor you and perhaps had a mandate for you to do while you were there.” In addition to sourcing a lighting manufacturer for the trucking company, Foth also looked into educational and exchange opportunities for several U of S deans and departments, meeting with educational advisory agencies that assist students who want to study in China. She also met with Karen Slaughter, Executive Director and Associate Dean of the University of Western Ontario’s Richard Ivey School of Business Executive MBA program while in Hong Kong.

“She said that Canadian universities need to work together. We can’t send the U of S for two days and then three weeks later, the University of Alberta arrives. Australia sends all their universities at the same time for one week. They work together and put their money together to do advertising and promotion. You’re able to get more people out.”

Beijing, the group’s first stop, was “dirty, smoggy and crowded,” Foth said. “The air looks like it’s cloudy or smoky all the time except just after it rains. But it’s interesting and exciting, always something new. We went to Tianemen Square one morning and there were 10,000 people there to watch the flag being raised to honour Chairman Mao.”

From Beijing, the group of 45 split up into three teams: one team went to Chonqing and Chendu, one to Kunming, and Foth’s team went to Hong Kong and Guangzhou. It was in Guangzhou that Foth met with the company that is helping her to meet her sponsor’s mandate.

“Ten years ago Guangzhou was a city of 250,000 people and today it has a population of 10 million. You literally see things being built over night there. It’s in the manufacturing centre of the world—the Guangdong province. There’s so much money there. Just their stimulus spending for the recession was half a trillion dollars and that’s not even their regular budget. It’s just astounding.”

The students met with the Canadian consulate in Hong Kong to learn about growth and opportunities there. “In a population of 7 million, there are a quarter of a million Canadians living there... they really want Canadians to come over. They really like the education we’ve got and our leadership skills and the way Canadians think. They want our management skills there.”

The three groups reconnected in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the last leg of the trip, which was sponsored by Talisman Energy with the aim of getting youth active in the oil and gas sector. They were encouraged to express their opinions on sustainable growth, corporate social responsibility and where they wanted to see the oil and gas industry going.

Foth credits the experience with giving “a physical presence to news stories,” including those close to home about the potash, oil and gas industries. It gave her a taste of how business is conducted in Asia and the professional etiquette required to be successful there. It also helped to strengthen her leadership skills and teach her to work with people from different backgrounds, which will be valuable to her in achieving her goals in the workforce and in politics.

“I see a lot of global power shifting toward China, with their rising standard of living and the money being created there, and they’re becoming more open to North America. They are going to be powerful in the coming years. I think Canada should be looking toward Asia rather than United States to focus some of their trade. If we were more diversified it would provide more stability for the country.”

While the trade mission succeeded in expanding Foth’s global vision, she thinks it might have the most lasting impact right here at home.

“I would like to go into provincial politics some day so you have to be able to promote your province to the outside world. (Participating in Global Vision) expands you and makes you excited for opportunities out there and especially to be able to promote Saskatchewan. I love this province. I want to see us grow more, I don’t want us to be stagnant but push forward and expand ourselves to the world.”
A unique partnership between the University and Saskatoon Public School Division is giving some of this city’s brightest young minds opportunities to get a genuine feel for the rigours of academic research.

Ivan Vendrov, a 16-year-old Grade 12 student at Bedford Road Collegiate, spent approximately two hours a day from March to June conducting research and experiments in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics as part of the Saskatoon Public School Board’s Academic Work Placement Program. Vendrov was the only student in the program placed in the College of Arts & Science, although several others were accepted into the College’s of Kinesiology, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

Although any Grade 12 student is able to apply for acceptance into this program, it is highly competitive and spots are reserved for students who demonstrate a strong potential for and interest in academic research careers.

Vendrov was supervised by Akira Hirose—Professor of Physics and Engineering Physics and Canada Research Chair in Plasma Science—as well as Yuanshi Li, Hirose’s research associate.

“Ivan is extremely advanced for his age,” said Hirose, who also noted that Vendrov was permitted to skip two grades in secondary school. “We (were) very impressed with his knowledge and the research he has done.”

Vendrov’s work in the Physics Department included conducting several experiments in the Physics Plasma Laboratory—such as synthesizing diamond film on various substrates—and also reading research papers to help him comprehend what life as an academic entails.

Vendrov entered the College of Arts & Science this fall and said that while his future plans aren’t yet set in stone, his experience in Physics and Engineering Physics has certainly compelled him to strongly consider an academic career in the sciences.

“The whole experience (was) really excellent. It allowed me to actually see how research works and the people here have been great in allowing me to do some really interesting hands-on experiments,” he said.

“It’s definitely a program I would recommend to other students. Now I’m just looking forward to learning as much as I can and, who knows what the future holds, but I’m definitely interested in getting more involved in Physics now as a university student.”
It was standing room only in the basement of St. James Church, where a diverse mix of people gathered for the start of the sixth season of Philosophy in the Community.

The lecture was entitled “The New Atheists: Threat or Menace?” and the irony of discussing atheism in a church basement was not lost on coordinator Emer O’Hagan (Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy) as she thanked the Refinery for “all they do to make our community alive.”

The evening’s presenter, George Williamson (Department of Philosophy sessional lecturer) gave a 50-minute talk on provocative “New Atheist” authors such as Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins. “Philosophy at its best is a careful consideration of all sorts of arguments for and against a position,” said Williamson. “I’m aiming at giving you a more journalistic overview of the literature, rather than an in depth treatment or argument.”

Coffee, cookies and a lively discussion followed the talk, with the crowd clearly embracing the spirit of philosophical inquiry. They both asked questions and offered comments.

Philosophy in the Community is a lecture and discussion series organized by the Philosophy Department “so that we may share the rewards and pleasures of philosophical reflection with the members of our community.” It takes place on the second Wednesday of each month from September through April in the basement of St. James Church and is free to the public. It is held off-campus to allow greater community participation for what is essentially a public service. Topics are wide-ranging, and past lectures have included everything from “Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Reflections on Philosophy and Food” to “What is Love?”

When the series began in 2005, its organizers expected about 20 people to show up. Instead, it has consistently drawn an audience of 50 or more. “It was clear from the start that there was a real interest,” said O’Hagan. “Even people in big cities are impressed that we get 50 people out to a philosophy lecture when it is -40 C outside.”

In addition to her coordinator duties, O’Hagan has contributed several talks herself, most recently, “The Moral Necessity of Self-Knowledge” (2009), a topic she has published on.

“Think about the phrase, ‘Know thyself.’ Why is that so important? The first duty to oneself is to know what your will is… Kant thought that you couldn’t be a good person or a fully moral person unless you know what your self is actually like, not what you want it to be.”

Many of the series’ speakers are faculty members, sessionals and graduate students from the Department of Philosophy and St. Thomas More College, as well as faculty members from other departments who have something philosophical to share. Said O’Hagan, “I ask people and I try to find something that they are interested in sharing.” For example, former Premier Allan Blakeney gave a 2008 lecture entitled “Politics and the Philosophy of Democracy.” “It was really good because it was right during the prorogation issue and who better to explain the whole thing.”

“Philosophy is a critical analysis of the world we live in and the concepts we use to understand it and ourselves…It is in one sense absolutely interdisciplinary.”

The results of a recent survey show that the public just wants more of the same. “They like having the opportunity to discuss things that come up in everyone’s lives,” she said. “It is great to get the chance to share (philosophy) with members of the community who value it and also think it is part of good citizenship for us to expose ourselves to ideas, points of view, and possible objections. I think it’s important for the life well-lived so I want to share it with others.”

For more information: www.usask.ca/philosophy/community/
**Mosasaur Unveiled at the Natural Sciences Museum**

On Sept. 22, the Natural Sciences Museum unveiled the fossil skeleton of a Mosasaur, an extinct aquatic reptile that was the dominant marine predator during the last 20 million years of the Cretaceous Period.

The Mosasaur skeleton was recovered in the 1960s near Lake Diefenbaker. A replica was donated to the U of S. Evan Nordquist, a recent graduate of the U of S Paleobiology program, painstakingly assembled the skeleton over the past year.

**Hearing Our Voices is Top Story**

“HEARING OUR VOICES: How the Findings of a Study about Aboriginal Women’s Healing from Drug Abuse are shared through Song and Music Video” by Colleen Dell (Research Chair in Substance Abuse, associate professor, Sociology & School of Public Health) has been selected as one of the Institute of Gender and Health’s (IGH) Top 10 Success Stories in Gender, Sex, and Health. It will be featured in a commemorative issue of the IGH’s newsletter, *Intersections*, celebrating 10 years of the IGH and a decade of achievements in the field of gender, sex, and health research. It will also be circulated at the IGH’s 10th anniversary conference, Innovations in Gender, Sex, and Health Research, on Nov. 22–23 and disseminated widely across Canada.

**Poelzer co-author of FCM report**

Greg Poelzer, director of the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development (ICNGD) and associate professor of Political Studies co-authored (with Ken Coates) a report entitled *On the Front Lines of Canada’s Northern Strategy* for The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Released in Iqaluit, NU on Aug. 31, the report states that Northern communities lack the infrastructure needed to support its families and businesses, or to achieve the objectives of Canada’s Northern Strategy. It finds that Canada has failed to make the ongoing investments needed to sustain northern development while Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the U.S. steadily strengthened their northern presence. The situation is growing more urgent as a warming climate melts the ground beneath Northern communities. FCM is calling on the federal government to commit to a long-term plan to improve northern infrastructure, make the North a global leader in adapting to climate change, and coordinate military and municipal investments wherever possible.

**Sculpture unveiled at Habitat for Humanity ReStore**

Andreas Buchwaldt (BFA’10, Art & Art History) unveiled his wall-mounted sculpture, *Habitat ’10*, on Aug. 12 at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Saskatoon. The sculpture project was a joint initiative between Habitat for Humanity ReStore and AKA Gallery & Artist Run Centre.

Buchwaldt was chosen for the project because, he said, “Todd Emel from AKA knew that I used recycled materials in my work so thought I would be a good fit.”

For the work Buchwaldt recreated an actual Habitat for Humanity home built in Saskatoon using the original blueprints. He designed a computer model of the piece using Google Sketch-up software and fabricated it from plywood and cedar using a digital cutting process.

Buchwaldt received Saskatchewan Arts Board funding for the project, which took approximately a year to complete. He expects it to be up until it biodegrades on its own. He recently moved to Toronto to begin an MFA program at York University.

*Left: Andreas Buchwaldt with Habitat ’10 (Photo: John Penner)*
Art grad wins art competition

Janice Weber (BA ’10, Art & Art History) was the Saskatchewan recipient of the 2010 BMO Financial Group’s 1st Art! Invitational Student Art Competition, which celebrates the creativity of art students from post-secondary institutions across Canada. A distinguished selection committee chose a national winner and one winner from each eligible province and territory. All winning entries will be on display at the 1st Art! 2010 exhibition, held at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in October.

Larry Weinstein Retrospective

The College of Arts & Science and several of its departments are co-sponsors for a three-day film retrospective with Larry Weinstein, the acclaimed film director and producer whose most recent film, Inside Hana’s Suitcase, has been widely billed as a must-see Holocaust documentary/drama.

Taking place Oct. 21 to 23, Weinstein’s visit to Saskatoon will include screenings of several of his films as well as a Master Class, “Depicting Music on Film—One Filmmaker’s Personal Obsession,” in the Arts Building.

Weinstein has become one of the world’s most recognized and awarded directors of music documentaries and performance specials. Many of his films documenting the lives and musical creation of 20th century composers have been screened at major film festivals around the world and won top awards in cities including Toronto, Los Angeles, Paris, Tel Aviv and Melbourne.

For more details on the Larry Weinstein Film Retrospective, please visit the Arts & Science online events calendar at artsandscience.usask.ca.

Water Scientists featured in Canadian Geographic

U of S water scientists feature prominently in the October 2010 issue of Canadian Geographic. An article by alumnus Allan Casey on the drying South Saskatchewan River cites research and reports by Canada Research Chair in Water Resources and Climate Change John Pomeroy, who directs the Centre for Hydrology, and Associate Professor of Economics Joel Bruneau, who was co-author of “Climate Change and Water Resources in the South Saskatchewan River Basin.” Also featured in the article for her work on the development of THREATS (The Healthy River Ecosystem Assessment System) is Monique Dube, Canada Research Chair in Aquatic Ecosystem Health Diagnosis. The article calls the U of S “a major centre of water research in Canada...Some 65 faculty positions are linked with water science and, arguably, the best collection of water-research facilities in the land.”

To read the full article online, visit: www.canadiangeographic.ca/magazine/oct10/south_saskatchewan_river3.asp.

RUP Students at City Forum

Ryan Walker—Assistant Professor and Chair, Regional & Urban Planning Program (RUP)—along with several students, participated in the Saskatoon Speaks City Summit. Said Walker, “They are participating in the initiative because they’re interested in the future of their city as young citizens, and because as planning students they will one day lead processes like these themselves as part of their professional work.”

Two senior RUP students are also conducting practicum placements with the Saskatoon Speaks project through a partnership between RUP and Urban Strategies Inc., the consultants working on behalf of the city.
Decades after first arriving at the University of Saskatchewan to pursue an education in the Department of Music, Bob Xiaoping Xu and Ling Chen returned in October to express their gratitude and appreciation one million fold. Xu and Chen, who are now married, established the David L. Kaplan Music Scholarship with a $1 million gift that will fund numerous new scholarships for future music students, both undergraduates and graduates. The gift was formally announced during a ceremony in Convocation Hall on October 7.

Xu and Chen established the scholarship fund to honour David Kaplan, a longtime professor in the Department of Music who they viewed as both a mentor and friend after arriving at the U of S as foreign students. Both Xu and Chen graduated with a Masters degree in Music at the U of S, Chen in 1990 and Xu in 1992.

Dean’s Dinner & Alumni of Influence Award Ceremony

Please join Dean Jo-Anne Dillon for the second annual awards ceremony as we honour our Arts & Science Alumni of Influence

Friday, November 19, 2010 at 6:30 PM
Delta Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon

Reserve your tickets today for faculty and students
Single tickets $50 / tables $350

For more information please call 966-2097 or contact cdar@artsandscience.usask.ca

Donors Help Make Beautiful Music

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Left: Bob Xiaoping Xu and Ling Chen hold their Masters theses. Right: Xu, Chen, David Kaplan and President Peter MacKinnon at donor ceremony. (Photos: Kirk Sibbald)