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From the Director...

Spring, 2002
Susan Bacon, Editor

This is the first issue of *Compass Points* in quite some time, and we're glad to be back. As before, we will try to provide you with interesting and useful news about UC's international activities.

Our goals have changed somewhat from before, however. When *Compass Points* first started in 1998, we were primarily interested in bringing news of UC's Globalization Initiative to faculty and students, and getting people interested in participating.

We don't really have to do that any more. In the past several years, we've seen enormous growth in international programs on this campus, with more and more students and faculty joining in. UC now has several dozen of its own education abroad programs, going to virtually every corner of the Earth. Some of these are highly innovative, and have been written up in the national press. At the same time, the number of students

from UC going overseas has soared, nearly tripling in the last five years.

We're well on our way, in other words, to becoming the internationalized campus that all of us envisioned not so many years ago. It's a never-ending process, of course, which is one reason that *Compass Points* is back: we'd like to showcase some of the best of the international work that students and faculty are doing, and use what we learn from those efforts to do more in the future.

As someone recently pointed out, whatever you think led to the events of September 11, it wasn't an excess of cross-cultural understanding. UC has recognized for some time that extending our awareness and understanding beyond our own shoreline is an essential attribute of an educated citizenry. *Compass Points* will, we hope, contribute to that effort.

We're back, and we're looking forward to helping UC continue to extend itself internationally. We hope you are, too.

Riall Nolan, Director, IGSA

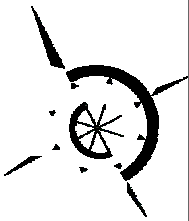
News from Abroad

Spring Break in Rio!
A lesson well
learned



During the Spring Break of 2002, students and faculty in the Portuguese language program in the department of Romance Languages and Literatures and from the African American Studies program embarked on a study tour to South America. We chose Brazil and the city of Rio de Janeiro as our destination to study multiculturalism.

With its exotic and often contrasting beauty, and a culture that perfectly balances its Latin-European and African traditions, Rio embraces modernity without losing sight of its past as the former capital of the nation. Brazil was the first experience abroad for most of the students who took part in the trip to Rio. Brazil, for them, proved to be a paradoxical place: a site of both unique natural beauty, and cosmopolitan vibrancy. While in Brazil, UC students had the opportunity interact with the local culture, listening to the sensuous sounds of "Bossa Nova," visiting the emblematic sites that have



become postcards of Rio, such as the Sugar Loaf and the statue of Christ at Corcovado, or simply observing Brazilians and their way of life. Although surrounded by beauty, the city of Rio also illustrates the grave social differences that afflict this South American nation, the 7th largest economy of the world. A trip to the *favelas*, housing projects of Brazil that are part shanties and part concrete buildings, proved to be a moving experience. Many of the students had never confronted such poverty, which made observing the struggles and unbelievable good humor of the *favela* residents at times overwhelming. But above all, the participants of the Brazil Study Tour gained understanding that will be part of them for the rest of their lives and will certainly reflect on their future in different ways: knowledge, awareness and respect for diversity. For UC students, Rio was a well-learned lesson in beauty, nature, cosmopolitanism, and above all, *saudade* (an appreciation for their home culture).

Sandro Barros, Dept. of Romance Languages & Literatures



CBA Students Visit Querétaro, Mexico

Instead of spending Spring Break in typical college fashion, on the beach, a group of 25 CBA seniors and I traveled to Querétaro, Mexico for a week unlike any we had experienced before. The purpose of the trip was to tour Mexican companies such as Cemex, Mabe-GE, P&G, and Kellogg's and learn about Mexican business culture. The weeklong journey ended up encompassing more than I could have ever expected.

After the 12 hour trip, the entire group was exhausted. Everyone's lethargy and anxiousness soon subsided when we were greeted with smiles and hugs from our new *familias*.

Living with a Mexican family was the highlight of the trip for me. Experiencing first hand the language and everyday interactions in a new culture was a thrilling challenge. It amazed me how well even those students that spoke no Spanish were able to communicate and learn from their host families without words.

In addition to our school work, we used the weekend to travel around central Mexico. Guanajuato and San Miguel de Allende were our two destinations. Both are beautiful cities that further allowed us to experience Mexican culture firsthand. Most of our time in Guanajuato was spent walking through the subterranean streets and visiting the mines and mummy museum that

are popular tourist attractions of the city.

In San Miguel de Allende our group set out on a mission to find a restaurant rumored to be owned by a UC graduate. The hour it took us to find the restaurant was well spent browsing and bargaining with the street vendors that line the plazas. Hungry and tired, we finally were able to sit down to a delicious meal at Harry Bissett's and, much to our delight, watch the UC basketball game.

When the week concluded there was a unanimous feeling of disappointment that the trip was coming to an end. The city, weather, and people we encountered provided an experience that is irreplaceable. As a result of this trip, I have decided to return to Querétaro this summer and look forward to being reunited with the friends I made while I was there.

Leah Polaski, CBA

UC Summer Programs

Japan
Germany
France
Britain
Spain
Italy
Thailand
Chile

www.uc.edu/global

News of Note...

New Grant Program for Faculty
Special Globalization Grants offer \$800 to encourage the creation of courses that support the University of Cincinnati's Globalization initiative. Any full-time UC faculty, administrators, or part-time faculty with recurring appointments may apply. See instructions and application form on our web site:
<http://www.uc.edu/global>

Photo Contest for Students & Faculty
Cash and other prizes for original photos from an education abroad program between Spring, 2001 and Spring, 2002. Deadline for entries, May 3, 2002. See our web site for instructions and prizes.

Web Site Devoted to Safety Abroad

The U.S. Department of Education and the University of Southern California have collaborated to produce a web site with helpful information on maintaining student and faculty safety abroad.

www.usc.edu/dept/education/global/studentsabroad/

See also the IGSA web site for an orientation manual for students and faculty going abroad.
www.uc.edu/global

Jungle reflections at Rancho Grande, Brazil

Rancho Grande is located in the Brazilian state of Rondonia, one of the most deforested areas within the Amazon Basin and near the Brazil-Bolivia border. Rancho Grande was created 20 years ago when the Schmitz family, like thousands of other families at that time, accepted the offer of free land by the Brazilian government with the condition that the forested areas be converted into and maintained as farmland for a period of 5 years. Twenty years later, Rancho Grande now has four large houses, 8 small cabins, a swimming pool and bar area, electricity and all the modern amenities you could want.

My advisor, Helmut Elsenbeer, discovered Rancho Grande by chance on a research trip six years ago. Since that time, he has been sending students from all over the world to conduct research at this location every summer. I am earning my Ph.D. in Hydrology under Helmut, and I have been fortunate to have had two field seasons there and am preparing for my third and final field season. Needless to say, Rancho Grande holds a special place in my heart.



Field course participants from last summer including Sarah (U.S.), Pilar (Peru), myself, Maria (Ecuador), and Helmut

After the field course participants went home, I remained to conduct my research. I was alone in the jungle 99.9% of the time. In order to pass time during experiments, I drank a sweet type of coffee popular in Brazil and, consequently, became a coffee junkie.



Among other adventures, I had five encounters with a 10 foot long 'baby' boa constrictor. In fact, one day when I was conducting an experiment, the snake was watching me from within an armadillo hole, and the damn thing was only six feet away from me. I couldn't move because I was taking measurements along a transect, and I had to stay on the transect for the methods to be valid. Please believe me when I say that my machete stayed close to me at all times.

There are many more experiences I would happily share with anyone interested (including having a pack of obnoxious monkeys throw sticks at me and being chased up a tree by a pack of wild boars), but I will end my story here. Hopefully you have found the lifestyle and activities at Rancho Grande interesting. If you have any questions, please contact me at: sobierj@email.uc.edu.

Joe Sobieraj
Civil & Environmental Engineering

Next IGSA grant application deadline July 19, 2002 for activities beginning after Aug. 4.

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