



News Release

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FOREIGN STUDIES OPPORTUNITIES EXPAND FOR WESTERN STUDENTS

St. Joseph, Mo. —Jan. 3, 2005—Dr. Tim Holian, associate professor of German at Missouri Western State College, said that often, as he and his students are heading to the airport to return home from a two- or three-week travel/study abroad trip, a student will say, “I wish we weren’t leaving. I was just beginning to feel comfortable.”

Now, he said students have the opportunity to extend their visit and enjoy a greater cultural immersion, because Dr. Holian, along with Dr. Susan Hennessy, associate professor of French; have established student exchange programs with French and German universities.

Two Western students, Melina Paden and Aylesi Bobo, spent their spring 2004 semester studying at the Universite d’Angers in Angers, France, and a student from that university is currently attending Western. This fall, a student from the Otto-Friedrich-Universität in Bamberg will attend Western, and a student from Western will begin studying at that university in the spring of 2006.

“My experience in France was the best thing I have ever done in my life. I learned a lot about myself, and I am no longer afraid of asking questions, going to new places or meeting new people,” said Paden, a senior French major from St. Joseph. “I learned French so well I can now speak it without thinking about it, and I can understand the language so much better.”

Paden believes the extended stay offered a lot more benefits compared to a shorter visit, and she would definitely recommend a semester-long program to her fellow students.

Dr. Holian noted that when Western students in the exchange program attend the foreign universities, they are expected to fluently speak and understand the language of the country they are visiting, which makes the experience more meaningful to them.

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“We want them to use all the skills they have acquired in the classroom,” he said. “This is a life-changing experience. It’s an exciting opportunity for anyone who has an interest in a foreign language and really wants to use it.”

“I tell others if they really want to learn a foreign language, they have to study abroad,” said Paden. “I learned things I could never have learned in a classroom.”

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.