

study abroad: an enriching experience

by Shula Nussbaum

For those who always had the urge to take a year off from school and travel, but didn't want to lose a year's worth of academic credit, there is now a happy medium. SUNY-Binghamton offers three study abroad programs which incorporate travel with academic credit.

Edward Weisband, director of the office of international studies and a published scholar in Political Science, explained, "These programs are for individuals who are independent in their thinking and who want to be challenged by a different culture and different values."

He said that if approached in the proper way, the foreign society itself becomes the classroom. "It provides experiences that enhance your ability to imagine the reality of others, and challenges your own assumptions which are often based on a limited experience of different cultures."

Weisband was quick to note that these programs were not mere "tourist jaunts" and that academic standards were high.

Mediterranean Studies, the largest and most

interesting of the SUNY-Binghamton programs, is very unique in that it is multi-country and cross-cultural. It is also inter-disciplinary in that it is offered for students of both the Social Sciences and Romance Languages.

Beginning in Malta, an island in the heart of the Mediterranean world, the program moves on to southern Italy and Sicily. For the spring semester it branches off with the Social Science students going to Tunis, and the Romance Language students going to Barcelona or Aix-En-Provence in France.

Weisband feels that a student cannot learn about the Mediterranean world by going to one country only. This program offers a unique opportunity to experience both Islamic and Christian cultures.

Americans are warmly received in Malta, and the Royal University of Malta is very helpful in adjusting the students to a new environment. Safia Mohsen, the Ombudsperson, travelled to Malta several times in order to establish such congenial relations with the university there.

The cost of the program is \$2,300 plus SUNY tuition for a year, and \$1,500 plus tuition for a semester.

SUNY sends special staff to assist the students, and on that staff, Weisband noted, is a former Binghamton student, Mary Jane Berman, who went on this program and married someone from Malta.

Another program offered by SUNY is a semester in Graz, Austria. Students take a full academic program consisting of German history plus their choice of other courses offered by the host institution. A prerequisite for this program is fluency in German, and the cost is \$1,500 plus SUNY tuition.

The third program offered is a summer seminar in West Africa which lasts six weeks and explores African history and culture through the medium of the performing arts. The summer is spent in the University of Liberia in Monrovia, and in the University of Ife in Nigeria.

All these programs incorporate travel to historic sites as well as other extra-curricular activities.

"The good thing about a study abroad program," related one satisfied student who participated in one last year, "is that you're not just a tourist on the periphery of the culture you are visiting, but you get a chance to really live it."

In the planning stage is a program in England, and a program in International Management which might take place in the Soviet Union or the Middle East.

Weisband related that there were plans well under way for a program in Chile, but that the recent coup there made the plans obsolete.

Other SUNY campuses offer programs in countries such as Denmark, Israel, and the USSR.

Weisband will hold an informational session later in the year for interested students. For further information one may go to the Office of International Students in room 707 of the Administration Building.

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PSYCH SERVICES OPEN TO COUNSEL STUDENTS

by Richard Lishner

Things are tough all over. When life at SUNY-Binghamton really starts closing in on you, it's time to head over to the Psychological Services Office, on the second floor of the administration building.

There you will find three dedicated psychologists: Program Director R. David Kissinger, Michael Peter, Ann Herich, and Joan Stein, who specializes in sex counselling.

The office conducts psychotherapy and counseling programs concerning personal and social problems. Stein works with students who need information about birth control, abortion and other sexual difficulties. In addition, Herich teaches one class in the school of nursing, an introduction to counselling.

The office works closely with

High Hopes, in that the drug counselling center will sometimes suggest that a student contact Psychological Services.

Kissinger is very concerned about public relations. As a patient, you will be speaking to doctors; this doctor-patient relationship guarantees confidentiality. NO ONE has access to any records except the student and his doctor.

During the year, some ten to fifteen percent of the student population will come down to

talk with one of the counselors. Kissinger feels that group therapy programs are particularly effective. Anyone who walks into the office will get an interview within 48 hours.

As the year progresses it tends to become difficult to set up a regular therapy relationship. The important thing to remember, though, is that you will have someone to talk to. The doctors

are convinced that this is all most students need.

Since the office is manned by psychologists, the staff cannot hospitalize anyone, nor can they prescribe shock treatments or drugs.

Kissinger has been at SUNY-Binghamton since 1964. He feels that the excitement of dealing with his college-age patients more than compensates for the lost economic benefits of the usual private practice. The doctor doesn't agree with the popular complaint that the "quality of life" is going down at SUNY-Binghamton. He feels that an increased number of students brings greater diversity to the University population, making for a more exciting college experience.

Kissinger just wishes that he could get six more staff members so that even the occasional 48 hour wait would be a thing of the past.

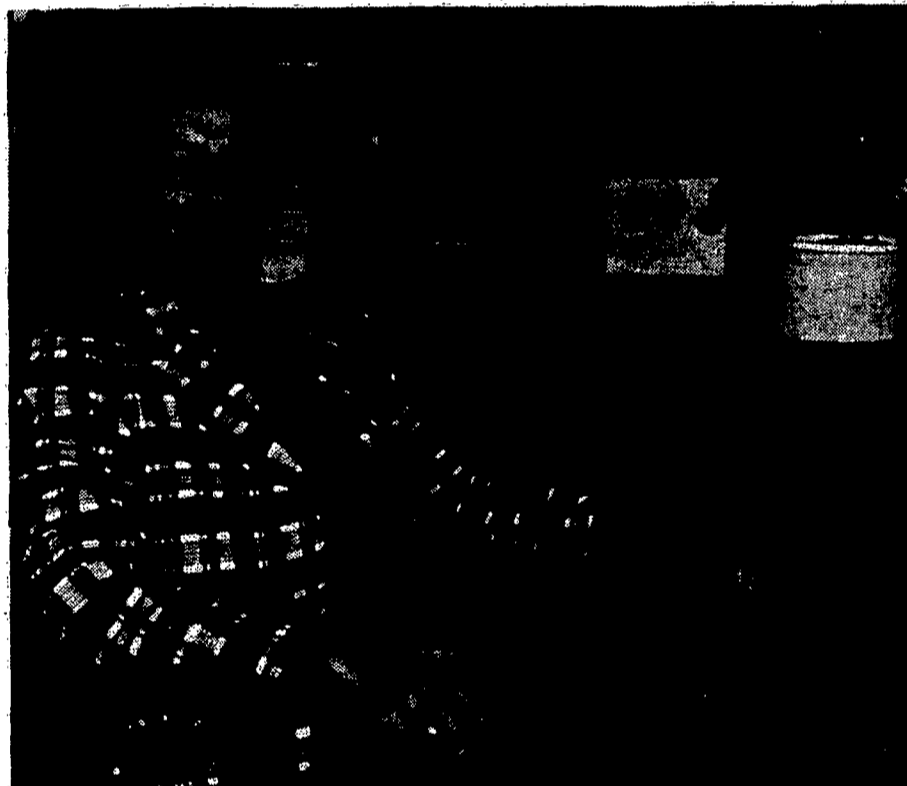


photo by alan rosen

BECOME A MAVEN IN JUDAIC STUDIES

by Helen Lipman

A certificate program in Jewish Studies should be available to Harpur College students within the next few weeks according to Stanley Isser, Coordinator of the Judaic Studies Program. The requirements for the proposed certificate were debated yesterday at a meeting of the Judaic Studies Committee, chaired by Isser.

He favors making the requirements more stringent than those already proposed, but predicted that a compromise will soon be reached.

Proficiency in either Hebrew or Yiddish, up to the 104 level will be the language requirement of the Program.

Core courses in history, philosophy and other relevant areas will also be included but, as yet, the requirements have not been decided.

Harpur College Council (HCC), has approved the basic concept of a certificate program in Judaic Studies. It has yet to approve the new Judaic Studies courses and the certificate proposals, to

be submitted by the Jewish Studies Committee. However, Isser is confident that the program will be approved.

There are approximately 25 students registered for each of the new Judaic Studies courses being offered this fall. These courses are: The Philosophical Meaning of the Holocaust, taught by Professor Leon J. Goldberg of the Philosophy Department, and an Introduction to the Intellectual History of the Jewish People, (up to the Moslem conquest), taught by Isser.

An Introduction to Medieval and Modern Intellectual History of the Jews will be taught in the Spring. Related sociology and literature and composition courses are also in the planning stage.

"There is currently a sufficient number of courses which can be used for a certificate program," said Isser. "Jewish History and the Hebrew language are well covered at this University, but we needed something dealing with Jewish thought," explained Isser.

Only freshmen were able to pre-register for these new courses, because they were

not announced as of last May. All other students had to add the Judaic Studies courses this fall, Isser noted.

The extent of student response to the program will determine whether a major program will be offered in Judaic Studies. "We must demonstrate a justifiable demand," said Isser.

He anticipates that all of the Judaic studies courses will be filled, but does not know how many students will want a certificate. "Upperclassmen have already chosen majors, but lowerclassmen may want the Jewish Studies Certificate," he said.

The Judaic Studies Certificate Program will receive a budget pending its approval by HCC, but Harpur College Dean Peter

Vukasin has told the Committee to investigate other possible financial contributors, from outside SUNY-Binghamton.

It is generally acknowledged among Committee members that History Professors Norman Cantor and Helen Rivlin, and Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences Daniel Fallon were among the most influential members of the University community in forming a Judaic Studies Program.

Dan Krakow, a student at SUNY-Binghamton and a member of the Judaic Studies Committee, cited a petition that advocated the formation of a Jewish Studies Program, as influential in establishing the Certificate Program.

