German Exchange Student Recommends IUPUI Experience

Following a rewarding year of study at IUPUI, Thomas Betten, a graduate student from Oldenburg University in Oldenburg Germany, wrote to his classmates back home and suggested they follow in his footsteps. His letter was such a hit, it was published in Oldenburg University's newsletter, Cavete. The following is an adapted translation of the letter.

So, friend, are you going to Indianapolis? Isn't that where every year they hold that mega-auto race? Yes, that's it for the whole month of May. Basketball fans perhaps know this city as the "home of the Pacers." But, if you look in the Oldenburg University Catalogue under international cooperation agreements, you will find a further reference: Indiana University, IU.

Indiana University, which belongs to the "Big Ten," consists of eight campuses. That is, Indiana University has eight branches spread throughout the state of Indiana. The campus in Indianapolis is known by the acronym IUPUI, which stands for Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

Why take off for distant places when so much (seemingly) good stuff is nearby? A majority of students appear to believe staying close to home is best. Only 6 percent of our fellow students in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1995 had spent at least one semester at a foreign university. So why take the trouble to study abroad?

Thanks to the emergence of global markets, students of business administration, motivated by their need for international mobility, might see international experience as a building block in a career.

The IU Medical Center on the IUPUI campus is world famous, but that is more a matter for medical students. For nonmedical students, it at least means that great medical care is available right on campus.

The unbelievably varied opportunities for sports in Indianapolis would certainly appeal to any student of physical education (as would the fascinating subculture of Indy sports bars to everybody else).

But, what could make a student of the social sciences, such as myself, give up to live in the "provinces" (at least it wouldn't be permanent) and experience life as a foreigner? It is reason enough to find out what it means for you, with your not-always-conscious prejudices, to live, and not just vacation, in another "system."

In spite of many similar cultural patterns and norms in the USA, it is the small nuances that provide new experiences of all kinds on a daily basis—endless participatory observation.

And, whoever thinks that his or her school English isn't quite good enough or has become too rusty should know that IUPUI offers unusually good ESL instruction. A facility for foreign languages is tremendous advantage.

The poet Goethe's astute observation that one experiences as many lives as one has languages is not a point of discussion here, but in the real world good knowledge of a foreign language is increasingly seen as a prerequisite to employment. The day will come when you have to step down from the ivory tower and enter the world of work and wages.

Those of us who are social scientists generally are not prepared for a clearly defined profession, but we are in competition with graduates who are. Proficiency in a foreign language could then prove to be a point in our favor. In addition, a long period of residence abroad reflects a high level of flexibility and a certain willingness to adapt.

Doubtless, study abroad increases your sensibility towards another culture and willingness to participate in other spheres of life and work. This can open up completely new perspectives for the social sciences. Study abroad promotes personal growth and prepares you for life after school.

IUPUI is an excellent place to learn, to experience. IUPUI offers

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— Thomas Betten

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excellent and comprehensive programs of study.

Services for foreign students at IUPUI are exemplary, well organized, and characterized by a willingness to help, especially during the first part of your stay.

Good, inexpensive housing is available close to campus. And Indianapolis offers all the advantages of a large capital city with none of the disadvantages. The cost of living is low and the rents astoundingly low, perhaps because the real unemployment rate is about 1 percent.

The opportunities for recreational activities offered by a city such as Indianapolis are too numerous to be listed. There is so much more to do than time to do it in.

Study abroad is advantageous to your studies, career, and personal development. IUPUI as a partner university offers, within a very positive framework, excellent opportunities to Oldenburg students who would like to try studying abroad.

USDE Workshop
On Japanese Language Held

The second of a two-part series of workshops for enhancing secondary school Japanese-language education was held on the Bloomington campus, June 30 to July 30.

The first workshop was held in Bloomington last summer, and most of the 1995 participants, all of whom were secondary school teachers, returned this year.

Upon completion of the workshop series, which included designing teaching kits, the teachers received graduate credits from IU. The teaching kits will be distributed nationally.

The workshop also hosted the first conference for secondary school administrators and counselors on July 10 and July 11 for the enhancement of Japanese-language instruction in secondary schools.

The workshop was co-directed by Yasuko Ito Watt of IU and Akiko Kakutani of Earlham College.

Guest speakers included Walter Bartz, the foreign language consultant for the state of Indiana, Anne Thompson, a foreign language supervisor for the Gary School Corporation, and Patrick O'Meara, dean for International Programs at IU.

George Wilson, director of the East Asian Studies Center, and Richard Rubinger, chair of the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department gave opening remarks.

African Studies Program
Wednesday Night Seminars

Invited speakers will consider how expatriates living in Africa—including American and European peoples—create music, dance, theater, and visual arts in their communities. The speakers will address how Africans living as expatriates in other parts of the world perform and enjoy the arts.

Among the questions that will be explored are: Are the arts in expatriate communities unique in any way? Are there common themes among African expatriate and American-European expatriate arts in their respective settings? What special knowledge about performance can we gain from studying the arts in expatriate communities?

September 11
Donal Constantino, UCLA
"Imagine Heaven: Africans in Haiti"

October 2
Kazadi wa Mukuna, Kent State University
"The Ox and the Slave: A Music Drama in Brazil as Social Statement"

October 9
John McCall, Southern Illinois University
"Their Theories and Ours—Beyond Intellectual Apartheid in the Study of Arts in Africa"

November 6
Rachel Fretz, UCLA
"An Ethnographer's Journey: Transported Through Reciprocal Storytelling"

November 13
Mellonee Burnim, Indiana University
"African American Music in Cross-Cultural Comparison"

November 20
Phyllis Martin, Indiana University
"Expatriates at Leisure: Cultural Brokers, Role Models, or Distant Companions"

7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Distinguished Alumni Room, Indiana Memorial Union