Indiana University Bloomington's international living-learning center, Foster International (FIN), is a special undergraduate residential hall that brings together U.S. and international students who have an interest in learning about other cultures, languages, and ways of thinking, sharing cross-cultural experiences, and forming unique friendships. Of the 200 residents, about two-thirds are American and one-third international, many of whom are exchange students from IUB's partner institutions.

Typical programming at FIN includes special courses on cross-cultural awareness and current international topics, occasional international guest speakers, monthly international coffee hours, and field trips.

Guided by long-time faculty co-directors Rita Naremore (Speech & Hearing Sciences) and Joseph Miller (Business) in collaboration with Residential Programs & Services, the Office of International Programs, and the Office of the Bloomington Chancellor special projects coordinator Inge van der Cruysse, FIN is expanding its international focus with several new programs. The first is the integration of the residents of IUB's "Language Houses" in French, Spanish, and German into FIN for the fall of 1999. Japanese and Russian houses may be created the following year.

Residents of language houses focus on improving their foreign language proficiency. They communicate daily with each other as much as possible in their respective languages. Some also participate in the weekly language tables sponsored by the language departments and held at the Ashton Center. The move of the language houses will imply renovating current FIN facilities to include the latest in foreign language learning technology and multimedia materials.

A bold and innovative concept already underway is to eventually turn Foster International into a truly "international college," where its residents can take a concentration of multi-disciplinary courses devoted to real international and global issues. The first academic component of such a college is the new International Studies Minor Program offered by the Center for the Study of Global Change, which will be inaugurated at FIN.

In January 1999, the initial course, "Introduction to International Studies," will be taught in a Foster classroom and is expected to attract a large number of Foster residents, in addition to non-Foster undergraduates. Those minoring in International Studies can choose to concentrate in one of several tracks (see description in October 1998 OIP Newsletter). An especially attractive feature of the college at FIN is the fact that many its prospective students are already living in a diverse but close-knit community united by common academic interests in international studies.

The idea of building an international college at FIN, first envisioned by Dean for International Programs Patrick O'Meara, has had the enthusiastic support of top IU administrators. In April, IU President Myles Brand paid a courtesy visit to Foster to meet the students. In November, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

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ICIP Conference Considers the Future of International Studies

Each year, the Indiana Consortium for International Programs (ICIP) holds two conferences focusing on different aspects of international education. The fall conference, which took place Nov. 6-7 at Brown County State Park, dealt with "Global and International Studies: the Future?"

Organized by IUPUI's Giles Hoyt (Associate Dean, International Affairs) and Richard Fredland (Political Science), with an opening lecture by Dean for International Programs Patrick O'Meara, the conference brought together some 50 educators from Indiana institutions large and small such as Indiana University (Bloomington and Indianapolis), Purdue University, Butler University, Franklin College, Goshen College, and Rose-Hulman School of Technology to discuss a range of topics such as international curricular needs, specific area studies programs, and the growing internationalization of professional schools.

The conference's featured guest was Sheila Biddle, former program officer of the Ford Foundation, and currently senior research scholar at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. She described her recent work surveying how U.S. universities are restructuring and reorganizing their international agendas in preparation for the future. She stressed that "there is no necessary opposition between area/regional studies and global studies." The different kinds of knowledge each contributes should complement one another. Moreover, U.S. international researchers need to be informed by the knowledge bases being created by colleagues abroad. Of great concern to her is that Americans become "culturally competent" about the rest of the world and acquire the "nimbleness" of intellect to understand and cope with the changing world around them.

The theme of the spring 1999 ICIP conference, scheduled for Mar. 27-28, 1999, will focus on teaching about India and the Asian subcontinent.

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and Bloomington Chancellor Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis was hosted by Foster International, and spoke of the great promise of the new developments. D. Brian Winchester, director of the Global Center, is equally pleased to see a program that he has been working on over the past two years finally nearing realization.

Finally, FIN is the site of the new student-run English Conversation Club, which pairs international students from all over the campus with American "student teachers" or partners drawn largely from FIN residents. Through weekly meetings, international students with varying degrees of English ability can increase their spoken fluency in an informal, friendly environment, while U.S. students gain personal exposure in two-on-one groups with members of other cultures. The idea for such a club, says founder Harvey Beasley, a sophomore at FIN studying Japanese and business, came naturally to him while tutoring English at one of the residence halls this past summer. Beasley has signed up 60 international students and about 30 teachers. He is enthusiastic about the results he sees already, citing the informal setting as the key to the students' success.

-RMN