In May of 2004, Kyle Garner will graduate from IU Bloomington with a triple major in French, German, and Spanish, but nearly half of his undergraduate days will have been spent nowhere near the Bloomington campus. In fact, he will more than likely spend graduation in Freiburg, Germany, after completing his second academic year abroad as an undergraduate. His first year-long program was in Aix-en-Provence, France, where he studied in 2001-2002.

"The two programs fit perfectly into my personal plans and my academic career," says Garner. He had originally planned to do them back-to-back, but it proved impractical. "The year in between helped me reflect on what I learned, and now I feel better collected and more excited to endeavor another experience abroad," he said before leaving for his second stint this fall.

To meet requirements, plan out coursework, and realize his dream of spending two academic years abroad was quite a challenge. According to Kathleen Sideli, director of the Office of Overseas Study, Garner is one of only five IU undergraduates who have ever spent a total of two academic years studying abroad.

"Amazingly enough, it felt like spreading melted butter on toast," says Garner. "However, I feel privileged and blessed, above all, to have the drive, the opportunity, and the means to experience two full years abroad. I know it’s not to everyone’s taste."

Garner’s study of languages began at Warsaw Community High School in Warsaw, Indiana. He took four years of Spanish and one year of French. While in high school, he became good friends with exchange students from Venezuela, a brother and sister, Miguel and Andrea Rondón, and he kept in contact with them after they returned home. "One day I was talking to their parents on the phone and boldly asked, ‘So, I’ve been talking with your daughter and—is it OK if I come down?’" Following up that conversation led to Garner to spending eight months in San Cristóbal, Venezuela, before his freshman year at IUB. He lived with Miguel and Andrea’s family and attended two private schools there, El Colegio Metropolitano and El Colegio Judith James. "When I went to Venezuela, it really opened my eyes to different possibilities and the importance of knowing other languages," Garner recalls.

What had been most important to Garner up to that point was playing the piano, an instrument he has played since he was 10 years old. "I originally wanted to be a piano major during my senior year of high school," he said. "I had been training for three years with that in mind." His trip to Venezuela and several conversations with his stepfather changed his mind. "He just kept asking me questions about what I wanted to do with music. He recognized how good I was in Spanish and encouraged me there."

Garner began noticing how he would rather spend time with friends than practice the piano. "I realized I wanted to do something more social, and the idea of knowing other languages and traveling was interesting, more so than spending six hours a day practicing the piano." So playing the piano turned into a hobby, and when he began at IU in the fall of 1999, he started off as a double major in French and German, with Spanish as a minor. "When I was in Venezuela, I had a best friend there who was German, and I thought it’d be neat to learn German, an important European language."

Eventually, he made Spanish his third major because he didn’t want to “lose the language” while still continued on page 24
Indiana University South Bend's School of Business and Economics will offer an international business concentration in the Bachelor of Science in Business degree program beginning in the fall of 2003. Dean Bill Schwartz worked with the business faculty and IU's Office of International Programs to develop the concentration.

The program provides students with extensive background in international business issues such as finance, law, marketing, accounting, and economics. Students have numerous curriculum choices, so they may tailor their degree to their own area of emphasis. For example, once a student takes the required courses listed above, they may fulfill the remaining requirements with more economic, finance, marketing, or management courses. Students who concentrate in international business will be required to take 6 credit hours of international courses outside the school of business to help them develop an expertise in a particular geographic area or culture. For example, a student may take Europe in the Twentieth Century, Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East, Central or Latin American Politics, to name but a few alternatives.

Business and economics professor Raman Muralidharan, who helped develop the proposal and whose area of expertise is strategic management within multinational corporations, says, "The environment of business is increasingly global for all organizations—big or small. While the large corporations have been global for quite some time, smaller firms have increasingly begun to market their products overseas." In addition, all firms, including those that are essentially local in their scope, face increased competition from international companies.

Raj Kohli, associate professor of finance and chair of the curriculum committee, says, "The program includes a full complement of courses addressing various functional dimensions of international business. Faculty designed the concentration to facilitate students who wish to double major in an existing business discipline and in international business."

According to John Withey, assistant dean and professor of marketing at IUSB, the program will offer a wide variety of courses in international business, marketing, management, law, economics, and cultural history to ensure that graduates possess the background in all these areas to be successful in the international business arena. "It's a business school degree, but the non-business courses are every bit as important as the business ones," says Withey. "This major will prepare business students with the kind of cultural grounding so significant to success in global business."

For more information about this program, please contact Dean Withey at (574) 237-4310 or jwithey@iusb.edu.

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pursuing his goal of studying abroad. "I knew I wanted to spend time in both a French-speaking country and a German-speaking country, and I wanted the most out of the experience. So it made sense to spend an entire year in each place, and it worked out nicely for me. Of course, you don't know how things are until you go through it, and now, I can't imagine not having done two years. And being able to speak the languages makes it just so much more practical."

For Garner, even German, French, and Spanish are not enough. He studies Dutch and Norwegian on his own, and his goal is to learn a total of eight languages by the time he is 30. He also sees graduate school in his future and more than likely in the field of international relations. "I either see myself in Europe or doing something that involves traveling and using my languages," he says.

To Garner, the possibilities for the future are endless, a lesson he has learned from studying abroad. "If you think you want to do something," he says, "go for it, even if it sounds a little crazy or is going to take a lot of time, but just remember it takes work."

—Rosie Piga Pizzo
Office of Overseas Study