SPEA Establishes Study Abroad Program at Oxford University

The School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) at Indiana University will begin offering IU at Oxford, a new summer program for undergraduates in July 2006.

The program at Oxford University, directed by SPEA's Kenneth Richards, will run from July 8 to August 5. The courses will focus on public policy, bring in guest lecturers from the Oxford faculty, and include possible field trips to the Oxford Museum, the British Parliament in London, and the museum that houses one of the original copies of the Magna Carta.

"This is going to be a great program for IU undergraduates," said Richards. "Oxford University is such an inspirational setting, and the faculty members there are outstanding. The field trips, which should be a lot of fun, are also designed to complement the course content."

IU at Oxford comprises two SPEA courses: Decision Making in Public and Private Contexts: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly; and Governance of Private and Public Organizations: Herding Cats. Both courses, according to Richards, are designed to be useful not only to SPEA students, but to anyone who wants to explore how organizations, including government, are run.

"We will be looking at how individuals and groups make simple decisions and how they make far more complex decisions. We will draw on economics, political science, psychology, law, and anthropology to develop an overall understanding of decision making. And the second course, the study of governance, is a perfect complement to the study of group decision making," said Richards.

The program is open to all IU undergraduates. Richards hopes to attract IU students who are studying political science, journalism, and business as well as SPEA students. "We worked very hard to keep the program affordable," Richards explained, "but we did not want to compromise on quality. We are going to be living right in the city of Oxford and enjoying a wonderful variety of meals. There will lots of great activities. It is an ancient city but with all of the modern amenities."

The school maintains continuing relationships with a large number of public agencies at all levels of government; public and private hospitals and health organizations; and nonprofit organizations and corporations in the private sector. SPEA has earned national distinction for innovative educational programs that combine administrative, social, economic, financial, and environmental disciplines.

For further information about the program, contact the IU Office of Overseas Study; telephone: (812) 855-9304; e-mail: overseas@indiana.edu.

—Jenny Cohen, SPEA