



Foreign Language Newsletter

University of Montevallo

Glenda Conway in Brazil.

During August 2008 I traveled to Goiânia, Brazil through the US-Brazil Arts and Culture Initiative. The highlight of my journey was the opportunity to teach two credit-bearing mini-courses for the Universidade Federal de Goiás—one on the teaching of writing for a group of 20 undergraduates, the other on rhetorical analysis of texts for 12 graduate students. At UFG, my students called me Profesora Glenda; between classes I drank thicker-than-espresso coffee; and when I walked on campus, I always watched for monkeys. (The UFG campus is populated with capuchin monkeys.)

I was continually struck by the remarkable hospitality shown to me in Goiânia. My colleagues took me on excursions to Brasília (the national capital), to the

Cidade de Goiás (which preceded Goiânia as capital of the state of Goiás), and to Pirenópolis (a beautifully preserved colonial town founded by Portuguese gold miners). I also was hosted in a colleague's home for Brazilian Father's Day and in a student's parents' home to celebrate his imminent departure to study in the United States—at Gadsden (Alabama) State Community College.



What impressed me most in Brazil was the sincere desire to learn I witnessed among the students. The students at UFG love going to college; they know they are recipients of great privilege and opportunity; and they look forward to the ways they will be able to use their educations in the future to help improve the lives of others.

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Montevallo in Avignon!: Stacey Ayotte

This past May 2008, I took a group of six students to study in Avignon, located in the south of France, near the Mediterranean Sea. This was my first opportunity to lead a study abroad, and it was incredible! I selected Avignon because when I was an undergrad in Michigan, I traveled abroad to Avignon, where I studied French and lived for 5 months with a host family. I fell in love with the city, the people, and the food. So when I was organizing this study abroad for UM, I decided that my students just had to experience the marvels of Provence! We journeyed to surrounding cities: Nîmes and Arles, both known for their Roman influence. We took a tour of Cassis, an old fisherman's village located on the Sea. Students enjoyed tours of local museums and grand palaces. Of course, we spent time in the classroom too—studying contemporary French culture! But the greatest part of the trip for me was seeing the students acquire more French skills. They improved drastically on the oral speaking skills as the immersion experience 'forced' them to only use French: at home with their host families, in restaurants, in public places, and in the classroom. They developed better reading and writing skills, and their pronunciation became more accurate. One of my most memorable experiences of the trip was the day we decided to have a picnic outside of the *Palais des Papes*, before touring both the palace and the famous bridge of Avignon. The *mistral* wind was so strong that day, that all of our food, our plates, our hair- everything was flying in all different directions! We shared delicious cheeses, homemade French bread, fruits and yogurts, and sweet pastries. Then we took a guided audio-tour of the palace and danced together on the bridge (a tradition that must be done while in Avignon)! Because of the strong wind that day, we nearly were blown off the bridge. We spent a wonderful month abroad and I can't wait to take more students in the future!



Montevallo en Mérida!: July 2008

Nine Montevallo Spanish majors and minors participated in the 2008 Montevallo in Mérida summer abroad program between July 9 and August 9. Professor Eric Vaccarella lead the program this year. During the one month stay, students took two classes, taught by Dr. Vaccarella at the Instituto de Educación de la Comunicación de Yucatán in Mérida, Yucatán. As in past years, students stayed with local families during their time in Mérida.

The 2008 program included excursions to several Prehispanic archaeological sites, including the Mayan cities of Ux-

mal and Chichén Itzá. Students also traveled to the state of Chiapas, visiting the colonial city of San Cristobal de las Casas and its environs as well as the important Mayan city of Palenque. In addition, students enjoyed two days on the Caribbean beaches of Isla Mujeres, near Cancún.

The trip was an unforgettable month of learning, fun, and adventure. Dr. Vaccarella is looking forward to the 2009 Montevallo in Mérida program, which will run between June 10 and July 11.





Mallory Daugherty

Since middle school when I took my first French class, I wanted to go to France. Even better, I wanted to live, study and be a part of the French culture. I finally got the chance to spend a month studying abroad in the south of France my senior year of college. It was new, different, scary, exciting and most of all a very rewarding experience. It took me completely out of my comfort zone and forced me to adjust accordingly.

One of the most memorable days in France was a day trip I took with my host family to the Mediterranean village of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. Before I left for France, a wonderfully eccentric Montevallo professor told me if I had a chance

to go anywhere in France, I *had* to go to Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. She then began describing wild, majestic white horses that run through marshes – fields of rice farms – the vivid colors of the countryside – and that was just the view on the way to the village. I was definitely intrigued but I have to admit, I wasn't so convinced about the majestic horses.

When my French “mother” asked if I'd like to go to the beach one Sunday, it was quite a coincidence that she suggested the same town I'd heard so much about. The drive there was more incredible than it had been described. The countryside looked as if it were straight out of an impressionist painting, complete with vi-

brant colors and bright blue skies. I even saw beautiful wild flamingoes, and yes, the majestic white horses. The beach village was just as impressive. It was ideally simple, yet charming. We relaxed on the Mediterranean beach for several hours that day, taking in the beautiful sunny weather while my adorable French “little brother” built sandcastles. I remember feeling completely relaxed and at peace that day. That feeling is something I will always treasure about my experience in France.



UM-Brazil Exchange Students

Melina Minaya, Karen Faraco, Ian Ferreira, Thiago Moyano were the Brazilian students who studied at UM during the Fall 2008 semester. Melina and Ian came from the Federal University of Goiás, and Karen and Thiago came from the Federal University of Viçosa.

Devin Lilly, Mercedes Jones, and West Finlayson will be studying at the Federal University of Goiás during the Spring 2009 semester. David Allen will be studying at

Federal University of Viçosa.

The program is scheduled to continue through the 2009-2010 academic year.

Upper row: Ian Ferreira, Mercedes Jones, David Allen, and West Finlayson. Lower row: Melina Minaya, Karen Faraco, and, Devin Lilly.



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Study Abroad at The University of Montevallo

The University of Montevallo offers various opportunities to study abroad. Please contact the following program directors:

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