Dear Students:

We congratulate you for your work done abroad and wish you luck during the final stages of your classes.

You might have had some difficulties at the beginning of your term abroad adjusting to your new environment, an experience that is generally called “culture shock”. That was not unexpected. What might be news to you is that upon returning to the US, some people experience difficulties in “re-adjusting” to the US. One could label it “reverse culture shock”. Now, this is not meant to depress you. Often people assume a great degree of familiarity with the country they were born in. What they fail to realize is that they might have changed during their time abroad in their thinking, habits, and expectations. Also, in coming back to Clark, you are getting closer to finishing your degree, creating a number of serious academic and/or professional demands. So, be prepared. Be patient with yourself and with your family as well as with your friends at Clark. Consider getting involved in advising students who are interested in going abroad and be prepared to incorporate your abroad experiences into your classes.

Upon your return to Clark please stop by the office to say hello and to talk about your experiences abroad and any re-adjusting difficulties you might encounter. We will want to update your student file with your new address and phone number at Clark. Also at the beginning of the coming fall semester there will be a Homecoming celebration for all Clark Students who have been abroad during the spring semester.

The Office goes Abroad

Director Adriane van Gils and David Medlar conducted site visits in the UK during the spring break week in early March. They managed to squeeze in as much as possible in such a short period. It was a very productive trip, not only checking to see how the Clark students are doing but also strengthening relationships between universities and programs.

In the beginning of the week in London they visited several internship placements meeting with students and their supervisors. Clark students are really enjoying their internships and are busy completing interesting and stimulating assignments all across the city. Students are working at such diverse places such as in Parliament, art galleries, and magazine publishing. Adriane also met with...
contacts from the London School of Economics and Birkbeck College.

Later in the week Adriane and David took the two-hour train ride to Norwich to visit the University of East Anglia. They met with students in the morning, took a tour of the campus, and met with UEA faculty. Then it was off to Scotland after a short flight. They were glad to see that students were enjoying their experiences at Stirling. The campus was as beautiful as the pictures, and it was indeed quite a breathtaking view atop the William Wallace Monument.

Adriane and David look forward to hearing more about your experiences abroad upon your return to the Clark campus in the fall.

Office Abroad Continued

New STUDCO Elected

From the Scarlet,
by Ryan Kelly

Garret Abrahamson ’07 was elected president of Student Council by a four-vote margin over Nicholas Weeks ’07 as 44.3 percent of undergraduate students went to the polls.

Brian Burns ’07 was voted into the vice president position with only a six-vote margin after the first instant runoff was conducted. Bethany Williard ’07 and Monty Kaplan ’09 won their races for secretary and treasurer respectively with much more comfortable margins.

The new executive board will take office on March 26 although there is some controversy concerning whether Vice President elect Burns should fill the Vacant office immediately. There is currently no vice president following Kevin Ready’s resignation as president last month, as Vice President Brian Rennekamp has take his place.

Rennekamp did not appoint a replacement for himself. He is not able to appoint Burns directly, as the council’s constitution requires his appointee to be a voting member.

A complaint was filed by Brian Werbeloff regarding the vice president position. While the judiciary committee’s results will have little effect on matters this semester, Werbeloff hopes to clarify the rules for the future.

The 899 ballots cast in the election on Feb. 23rd represented a slight decrease in voter turnout to 44.3 percent from 45.2 percent in last year’s executive board elections.

The results were officially ratified at Sunday’s Student Council meeting, and in accordance with the election bylaws, the candidates will take office four weeks from that date.

In light of the extremely close margin in the presidential race, Weeks filed a complaint with the judiciary committee asking for a recount. A recount, Weeks says, would provide added legitimacy and validity to a very close election.

“I accept that I lost,” Weeks said. He is asking only for verification from an independent source, unattached to council. A recount, Weeks recommends Sociology professor Bob Ross.

Although disappointed with the results, Weeks is grateful for the experience running in the election gave him and the people it helped him meet. He promised to stay involved with student groups on campus, and pointed to several activities Garret (far right) is not only the newly elected Student Council president, but also a Jazz enthusiast.

“Abrahamson happy with the turnout at the election”
EMS, MassPIRG secure funding

STUDCO, from page 2

He is helping to coordinate for later this semester.

Abrahamson commented that he was happy with the turnout at the election. Given his slim margin of victory, he promised that he would listen to all points of view regarding the issue before him.

Clark Emergency Medical Services was guaranteed funding from the student activities fund. A ballot measure to allocate $6 per student to the group was approved by a prodigious margin with 92 percent of votes in favor. As a result Clark EMS will receive an approximately $12,500 budget for next year.

“I think it’s a huge step in the right direction for EMS,” Mindy Laprade, co-president of EMS, said. “With this money we can add more EMTs to the squad and serve the community more efficiently.”

MassPIRG was also assured funding through a ballot measure, although that vote was much closer. A slim 52 percent of voters approved MassPIRG’s request, allocating $8 per student for the next year, or a budget of approximately $16,500.

The thin margin of support MassPIRG received is representative of a dwindling support over the past three elections. In the spring 2004 election, MassPIRG’s initiative was approved with 62.6 percent of the electorate voting in favor. That number dropped in spring 2005 to just 54.5 percent and fell again to 52 percent this year—a margin of just 43 votes.

Program Spotlight on Dijon —by Michele Berry

It has been interesting to witness the protests and strikes against the CPE in France. For four weeks the students have voted to block the main university building, it is impossible to get into so no classes have been held there for four weeks. My host mom thinks it is all completely foolish and explains that the French just don’t want to work and that most of the students don’t even understand what they are protesting. Others I have talked to are completely sympathetic to the protesters and think the strikes and protests should continue until the CPE is retracted. I am just amazed at the time and effort some students are willing to put into protesting the law. I can’t imagine anything like this happening in the US or lasting for so long.

French university classes tend to be really large and the teachers are really strict. When they say “not bad” that really means very good but not quite perfect. The students are also very different. There is next to no socializing before or after class, they seem very business minded about the whole education thing so if you want to talk to them you need to join a club or meet them someplace else. When you do talk to them outside of class they’re usually very friendly. The French student who lives across from me invited me out with his friends and we went wine tasting and then watched a movie at their apartment. I had a really good time and when I didn’t understand something they would slow down or re-explain it. My favorite thing about being abroad and traveling is the different people you meet and how small the world becomes.

I went to Geneva for a day and met two US students who were studying in Spain, one was from Smith and knew some of the same Clark students I did and the other was from a town in Texas not too far from mine. -Michele Berry
Stories from Spain –by Jeremy Shulkin

One weekend our program (all of us Clark kids) and our director took a trip to Candelario, a small pueblo of about 1,000 people located at the foot of a tiny mountain range three hours away from Madrid. The town was beautiful, especially with the snow-covered mountains as a backdrop and colorful ‘batipuertas’ (a second front door on every house that people would stand behind to protect them from/allow them to kill bulls that were paraded down the streets by the meat industry) lining the streets. We also happened to arrive on the weekend of a fiesta for the town’s patron saint. The people there loved having us as visitors, and we were excitedly welcomed into the celebration. We drank a drink called quemada (which was lit on fire), enjoyed traditional live Spanish music provided by bands of the townspeople, and danced the chicken dance with plenty of elderly women (who offered us their single granddaughters and grandsons).

By the end of the weekend we had spoken more Spanish than English, made many new friends, learned a lot about Candelario’s history as well as many problems that small pueblos are facing in modern times, and realized that a small town can be just as fun and exciting as a big city.

–Jeremy Shulkin

Contributing Editors:
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Australia Program Starting Fall 2006

The Study Abroad Office has opened a new program in the Land down-under. With a total of nine Clarkies embarking on the inaugural Fall 2006 semester to Perth, Australia, we are looking forward to the kick-off of what should be another great opportunity for Clark Students to study abroad.

Located in the state of Western Australia and in the suburbs of Perth, Murdoch University benefits from being part of Australia’s cleanest and most environmentally attractive city. Additionally, being situated on the west coast of Australia invites a more cultural experience and provides access to many of the great natural wonders of the country, like the karri forests.

Particularly strong in the scientific, biomedical, agricultural, business and communication fields, Murdoch University has built a reputation that attracts students from all over. Aiding its reputation is the university’s international recognition for its environmental science schools. Research conducted at Murdoch has lead to beneficial chances in policy and society regarding plant disease control, animal health, clean air, waste treatment and environmental technology.

We are very excited to welcome this new study abroad program with a university that can offer students a variety of opportunities and in a country that can provide an assortment of cultural experiences.