Summer HMT Ecotour to Costa Rica open to adventurous spirits

Travelers with a sense of adventure might want to check with Dr. Lynn Woods, associate professor of Family and Consumer Sciences, about a summer eco-tour to Costa Rica. But be warned, this trip is no luxury resort get-away; it is an active participation itinerary of jungle hikes, river safaris, snorkeling and wildlife excursions. The trip is open to students, faculty/staff and the community.

The trip, course number HMT 4260 Cultural Ecotourism Study Abroad, will take place the third summer session June 24-July 14.

“This is a brand new course,” Woods said. “Right now, the trip, including room, two meals per day, all ground transportation, all Spanish classes and all sightseeing activities, such as ziplining through the rain forest, snorkel lessons, arenal volcano horseback ride, Meringue Salsa dancing classes, are included in the $2,100 trip price.”

What is not included is the third summer session tuition fee and airfare.

The course is a study abroad, which is designed to acquaint participants with the experience of living in a foreign country for three weeks. Participants will learn first-hand about the host country’s culture, tradition, language, cuisine and major tourist attractions. Excursions will include but are not limited to snorkle lessons, a sunset sail, a mangrove safari, a Costa Rican cooking class, a tour of San Joaquin, a butterfly farm visit, Irazu volcano visit, a river safari to Rio Sarapiqui, salsa/meringue dance classes, ziplining and a canopy sky-walk through rain forest, a hike to San Luis waterfalls, a horseback ride to Lake Arenal, a beach bar-b-que and a turtle watching excursion.

Woods has coordinated tours of Europe and major American cities for the last several years. Participants should know ahead of time that her trips are fast-paced with a lot of walking and exploration of off-the-beaten-path attractions and activities. In 2008, she will lead a group on a tour of Scandinavia.

“The prices are so competitive because we do not stay in luxury hotels. We carry our own bags,” she explained. “You are riding buses and you are in close contact with the students, so you should be prepared ahead of time to deal with that.”

For a syllabus with a complete list of activities included with the Costa Rica trip, as well as things you need to know before you go, e-mail Woods at llwoods@nsula.edu.
GRE practice test, graduate open house dates announced

Northwestern will offer a free GRE practice exam at the Shreveport campus at 1:30 p.m. Friday, April 20, according to Misty LaCour, assistant director of recruiting for Graduate and Adult Studies.

“The practice GRE allows individuals the opportunity to take an alternative form of the GRE and receive an unofficial GRE score to help prepare for the actual GRE,” LaCour said.

The practice exam will be administered and scored by Kaplan.

“The GRE will change drastically after July 31,” LaCour said. “After this date, the GRE will be more difficult and will be offered only a few times a year. If you are considering graduate school at any point in the future, take the GRE before July 31.”

Northwestern will also hold a Graduate Student and Transfer Student Open House beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 21.

“This day allows students to attend an admissions forum, meet with advisors, submit application materials, register for classes, meet with student services and take a tour of camp, among other things,” LaCour said.

To sign up for the practice test or to RSVP for the Open House, contact LaCour at lacourm@nsula.edu or call (318) 357-6000.

NCATE

Dr. Paula Furr, Dr. Kimberly McAlister, Dr. Cathy Seymour, Dr. Brenda Hanson, Connie Melder and Dr. Vickie Gentry, from left, presented “The Perfect Marriage: Institutional Preparation and the On-Site Visit for NCATE Continuing Accreditation” as a three-hour pre-conference workshop at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) recently at the New York Hilton. Seventy-five participants attended the workshop, which demonstrated how creating a linkage between the institutional report and the exhibits room, between Standards 1 and 2, and between Standards 3 and 4 provides clarity and simplicity for NCATE Board of Examiners team members. Participants learned how using the culture of the teacher education unit, the university, and the community serve as frameworks for visit preparation makes for a more organized and complete visit.

Sympathy

Mr. Lee Roy Nugent, husband of Debra Nugent (Motor Pool) passed away Saturday, February 24. Services were held at Hickory Grove Methodist Church in Robeline.

The College of Business sadly announces the loss of a colleague and friend, Dr. Pamela Anders Miller, who passed away Saturday, February 24. Services celebrating her life were held Tuesday, February 27 at First United Methodist Church.
Outlook for NSU positive following SACS team visit

A four-day visit by a team from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as part of the reaffirmation of accreditation process at NSU concluded last month with optimism that NSU will receive a positive report.

“We were able to make Northwestern appear as fine an institution as any for a student to attend,” said NSU President Dr. Randall J. Webb. “We sought to demonstrate that that Northwestern was a very special place that adhered to the standards of the Commission on Colleges of the the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.”

The review, which takes place once every 10 years, is part of the procedure that determines if the university is reaffirmed as a quality institution of higher education. Northwestern was initially accredited by SACS in 1923.

Within two weeks of the visit, Webb was expected to receive a draft report from the review team. The university will look over the report for any content areas. Several weeks later, the team will release their official report. Northwestern will have just over five months to examine the official report and respond to the recommendations of the team. The university hopes to receive reaffirmation of accreditation in December.

“It was obvious to them we have a learning centered university and we are serious about students being successful,” said Webb, “There is a concern here about students succeeding. The team said that they found the faculty and staff love Northwestern and that speaks volumes about the people that work here.”

The team also reviewed NSU’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that focuses exclusively on student success in academic pursuits as well as career planning. Under the plan, proposed Academic and Career Engagement, or ACE, will be an improved way to enhance student learning and academic achievement as well as provide students with knowledge about the career fields they are preparing to enter. The advising and counseling initiatives are intended to put students on an academic track aligned with their interests and goals while exploring field-specific information and resources.

Pending approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the program will begin with the Fall 2008 semester, as first-time freshmen will receive strong academic and career counseling as part of the collegiate experience.

“The team said our QEP could be a model for other institutions to follow,” said Webb. “The Quality Enhancement Program plugs into the highest priority and initiatives planned on the state and national level.”

Webb praised the work of the faculty and staff on reaffirmation of accreditation led by Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Patrice Moulton.

“This was a long, tiring process for many of our people, but it was an opportunity for us to learn what is really important,” said Webb. “This makes us even more committed to being a student centered, responsive institution that serves our students and the people of Louisiana.”

Student, faculty volunteers needed for HHP event

The Department of Health and Human Performance is sponsoring a second health fair at the Martin Luther King Recreational Facility in Natchitoches. The event will be on June 14 from 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Due to the date of the event, very few students and faculty will be available to assist with its implementation.

Individuals interested in volunteering or needing community service hours are asked to contact Tara Gallien at 357-5199 or email at tarag@nsula.edu.
HealthFest: Time to get proactive about health

The Department of Health and Human Performance will present HealthFest 2007, Natchitoches Parish’s largest community health fair, on Thursday, April 12. The event will be held at Prather Coliseum from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Exhibitors from Natchitoches and other surrounding communities, including Alexandria and Shreveport will be available for participants to visit and ask questions about various health topics and services. Many health screenings will be available as well. For example, participants can get a blood profile, which includes total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and glucose. There will be four cholesterol screening stations this year. Other screenings include body fat analysis, flexibility, colon screening (using a take-home fecal occult blood test [FOBT] kit), blood pressure, and height and weight.

“The health fair is a perfect opportunity for individuals to be proactive about their health,” said Tara Gallien, HealthFest director. “HealthFest brings health information, services, and screenings together at one central location to accommodate community members’ busy schedules. The HealthFest committee encourages all students, faculty, and staff to set aside at least one hour to attend the event. More time may be required if participants decide to get several screenings.”

In addition to health-related exhibits, participants can enjoy watching various fitness demonstrations, including martial arts and tap-dancing.

“Something a little different this year is the chance to participate in some of the demonstrations,” Gallien said. “For example, participants can try belly-dancing, Zumba, Nia, or Pilates.”

For more information about HealthFest, contact Gallien at 318-357-5199 or e-mail at tarag@nsula.edu.

HealthFest Schedule

NSU faculty and staff with an interest in personal health issues should take note of the following screenings, demonstrations and lectures.

Screenings:
1. Blood lipid profile (includes total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, glucose, and triglycerides) at a charge of $5. There will be five testing machines this year, as opposed to only one last year.
2. Blood pressure
3. Body fat analysis
4. Spinal assessment
5. Vision screening
6. Eating disorder assessment
7. Fecal occult blood test - a take-home screening for colon cancer (for individuals 40 and over).
8. Cardiovascular disease risk assessment
9. Blood sugar (glucose) – This test can be administered free of charge if not associated with blood lipid profile

Demonstrations:
9 a.m. - Martial Arts (Kung Fu, Tai Chi, Qi Gong)
10 a.m. - Belly Dancing
11 a.m. - Zumba
11:30 a.m. - Nia (taught at the WRAC)
Noon - E Muzeki Band
2 p.m. - NSU tap dancers (Susan Hussey, instructor)

Lectures will be 30 minutes each. They will include:
• Prostate Cancer Awareness (Us Too Program) by Tara Gallien
• Food and Mood by Rebecca Boone

“Traditionally faculty have not been very involved. I would like to see them at least attend the event for personal health awareness,” said Tara Gallien, assistant professor of Health and Human Performance.
Two major demolition projects began on campus in March. The automotive/grounds shop was dismantled. Rapides Residence Hall will be dismantled over the next three months.

Automotive/grounds shop was constructed in the 1950s to house the ROTC program. It has since been used for several decades as a shop to house the grounds equipment, trucks and tractors. It’s removal will allow the university to continue to enhance campus entrances. A landscaped green space is planned for the area.

“This is part of a campus plan for the university to bring all of its facilities service operations into one complex and out of the core of the academic areas of the campus,” Sampite said.

Rapides Hall was built in the 1960s as a men’s dormitory and was closed two years ago as part of a plan to replace old dormitories with modern, apartment-style complexes to better meet the needs of today’s students, according to Physical Plant Director Chris Sampite.

“Rapides is one of the older facilities that was outdated,” Sampite said. “It lacked elevators and many other amenities that students are demanding in new campus housing today.”
Sixteen Proposals Funded by the NSU Enrichment Fund

Sixteen of the twenty proposals submitted under the three NSU Enrichment Fund (NEF) Grants Program were recommended by the NSU Research Council and given final approval for funding by Provost Hanson and President Webb. Faculty members whose projects will be funded include:

- **Professional Development**
  - Dr. Paul Nagel — Education
  - Dr. Kioh Kim — Education
  - Dr. Kim McAlister/Dr. Brenda Hanson — Education

- **Liberal Arts/CAPA/Music**
  - Dr. Malena McLaren
  - Dr. Andrej Kurti

- **Science and Technology/Biological Sciences**
  - Dr. Rae Osborn — Science and Technology/Biological Sciences
  - Dr. Darrell Fry — Science and Technology/Chemistry/Physics

- **Scholars’ College**
  - Dr. Rondo Keele
  - Dr. Shirley Stave

- **Liberal Arts/Journalism**
  - Dr. Jung Lim

- **Business**
  - Dr. Subhash Durlabhjii/Dr. Marceline Fusilier

- **Science and Technology/Biological Sciences**
  - Dr. Francene Lemoine

Undergraduate Student Research

Congratulations

Mr. Joe Morris, Criminal Justice Program, Department of Social Sciences, College of Liberal Arts, received notification of a $75,000 award from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement for “Human Trafficking.” Daphne Levenson and Polly Snell are collaborators.

Current Activities

Dr. Sally Cook, College of Nursing, submitted a proposal to the Human Resources and Services Administration for the continuation of “Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship Project.”

For more information regarding funding opportunities, visit ORSP’s website at www.nsula.edu/orsp.

Northwestern’s 20th Annual Research Day

Wednesday, April 11, 2007
Location: NSU Student Union

Watch Messenger or call ORSP at 5222 for further information
Golf tournament will benefit CJ scholarship funds

The NSU Criminal Justice Program will host the second annual Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament to raise funds for the Frank C. Kyle and Glen Denning Devanie Memorial Scholarships. The tournament will take place beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 14.

Individuals, businesses and organizations are invited to participate in this tournament. Teams are encouraged to enter the tournament and to challenge friends and colleagues to do the same. Businesses, organizations, and groups are encouraged to support this charity on an even more personal level, providing donations and prizes toward these worthy scholarship charities in addition to playing in the tournament. Donations and sponsorships are tax deductible.

The Kyle scholarship was established to recognize the professionalism in criminal justice that embodied the character of a deceased faculty member of the NSU criminal justice program. The Devanie scholarship was established to honor the legacy of a criminal justice major and an Alexandria deputy marshal killed in the line of duty.

To find out more about the golf tournament, visit the website for information, entry forms, and donations forms: http://www.nsula.edu/criminaljustice. For more information, call 6967 or 357-5505.

Dr. Nikita Fitenko, professor of piano, and Dr. Doug Bakenhus, conductor of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony, performed a youth concert with the Northeast Texas Symphony for 900 students in third through fifth grades in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

“We performed the Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 2, Rossini’s Barber of Seville Overture, a piece by American composer Russell Peck called “The Thrill of the Orchestra,” and Haydn’s Finale to Symphony No. 88,” Bakenhus said. “The kids loved the program and were impressed with Nikita’s very fast and exciting piano playing. Also performing in the orchestra as principal flute was NSU flute professor Dr. Dennette McDermott.”

This picture was taken at the entrance to the Hopkins County Civic Center in Sulphur Springs. From left are Nikita Fitenko, Dennette McDermott, Doug Bakenhus, and two friends of Nikita’s who came to the concert from Dallas.
The endowment fund for athletic scholarships at Northwestern State University reached the $1 million milestone as a result of 2006 year-end gifts totaling close to $250,000. Interest income from this endowment fund, which is managed by the NSU Athletic Association, is utilized annually to help fund the cost of athletic scholarships for all of NSU’s 14 Division I intercollegiate sports.

NSU Director of Athletics Greg Burke noted that the cost of athletic scholarships has increased by over $500,000 in four yet NSU remains committed to offering the full complement of scholarships, in all sports, allowed under NCAA guidelines. The cost of athletic scholarships—tuition, fees, room, board, and books—for the 2006-07 year is projected to surpass the $1.5 million mark. That scholarship balance is underwritten by a combination of designated funds in the Athletic Department budget, annual donations to the NSU Athletic Association fund drive, and endowment income.

“The NSU Athletic Department, including its coaches and student-athletes, is truly grateful to so many individuals whose generosity has enabled the endowment fund for athletic scholarships to exceed the $1 million benchmark. This is a wonderful step forward for the NSU athletic program,” said Burke.

Burke added that the continued growth of the NSU Athletic Association’s scholarship endowment fund will play an important role in giving the Athletic Department the latitude and comfort level to continue budgeting full scholarship limits in all sports.

“The challenge of keeping up with the recent spike in scholarships costs—and this is a national trend—has put athletic departments under a tremendous amount of stress to seek funding that will offset those scholarship increases. In fact, smaller Division I athletic departments like NSU often find themselves torn between working hard to balance the annual scholarship budget with finding time to undertake other initiatives (i.e. facility projects) which are necessary and will make a difference for the program,” he said.

The advantages of offering the full complement of scholarships are many. The student-athlete who is awarded the last available scholarship may turn out to be an all-conference or All-American performer and, conversely, if that scholarship was not available at NSU because the scholarship budget had been cut, that individual would go elsewhere. From a competitive perspective, coaches will confirm that having a full roster of scholarship athletes gives them the best chance to be successful. Most importantly, every scholarship offered provides a young person with the chance to earn a college degree which will benefit them (and many others) for the rest of their lives and will also make them an NSU alumnus capable of helping their alma mater in a number of ways.

Most noteworthy among the 2006 year-end donations are a gift of $185,000 from the estate of Edwin Schroeder, who played football for the Demons in the mid-1950’s, and a gift of $40,000 from 1958 alumnus Bryant Lewis and his wife, Heloise. Lewis, owner and operator of Magnolia Pulpwood in Haynesville, played offensive line for NSU in the late 1950’s.

“While reaching the $1 million mark is nice, this accomplishment must be treated just like an on-field success—with a level of satisfaction but, at the same time, with a burning desire to achieve at an even higher level. That ‘higher level’ in the case of athletic scholarship endowments is to continue increasing the fund total at a fast pace.”
Black History presentation focuses on educational and cultural aspects of the African continent

Dr. Augustine M. Amenyah, College of Education, was the speaker for a Black History Month presentation sponsored by the Office of Cultural Diversity as part of the Leadership and Legacy Series. Amenyah’s focus was “Africa: The Landscape of Troubling Contradictions.” Amenyah is a native of Africa and earned his undergraduate degree at University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

Amenyah led a discussion about African leadership crises and suggested ways of addressing problems and finding solutions.

“Though there are pockets of progress and developments in all spheres of life on the African continent yet there are also economic, social, and political problems every where. What you see, read, and hear about Africa is true in most cases however, what you don’t see, read, or hear is equally true,” Amenyah said. “This is because everywhere on the continent ordinary people are striving to make changes in their conditions of life for the better. In that respect, the struggle for social justice, economic security, and inclusion mirrors what pertains in any community in America. As you all know, no one can change your conditions except you.”

Amenyah outlined several points of interest regarding Africa. It is the only continent in which all major languages of the world are spoken and has experimented with all major forms of government, from Monarchical rule to parliamentary democracies, military rule and at times, no government at all. All climates are represented on the continent and there are vast unexplored oil and mineral reserves there.

Education in Africa is a legacy of colonialism; almost all former colonies operate models based on that of the colonists. British models tend to dominate English-speaking countries and French models tend to dominate French-speaking countries.

“The irony is that even after political independence, most countries failed to completely overhaul their educational systems to reflect national culture and aspirations,” Amenyah said. The typical African child must contend with their basic needs of finding food and water before they attend school, learn both the national and local language and meet mandatory tuition payments through elementary and middle school. Most countries operate with a boarding school system at the high school level. Higher education is available, but graduate opportunities are very limited.

The consequences of this educational structure leads to a high rate of illiteracy, deteriorating institutions, urban rural divide, lack of planning and extreme poverty. Amenyah also discussed the current leadership crisis in Africa with a view to understand how to help foster cooperation and development on the continent with lessons learned from Black history in America. “The following great sons and daughters of Africa who came to the Americas made great contributions to conditions of their people and eventually the world: Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey, Harriet Tubman, Ralph Bunche, Thurgood Marshall, Martin Luther King Jr., W.E.B. DuBois, and many others not mentioned here. They were visionaries, they were great communicators, they were ethical and spiritual, they were voices of morality, they inspired people to reexamine their situations, they were all big dreamers, they came from very humble beginnings and finally they strived and achieved in the face of adversity and in some cases gave up their lives,” Amenyah said.

“Please take advantage of the leadership training opportunities here at Northwestern State University and strive for the best in whatever you aspire to. Be a big dreamer, and think big for a brighter tomorrow,” Amenyah said.

Dr. John Dollar, Dr. Michael Moulton and graduate students from the Sport Administration program presented research at the fifth annual national conference of the National Association for Girls and Women in Sports, held in Shreveport on Feb. 16.

Dr. Dollar, Dr. Moulton and students Amanda Aguilar and Kristen Davis presented research “Economic Impact Analysis of Northwestern State University Women’s Basketball Team Camp.” Dr. Dollar, Dr. Moulton and graduate students Ciara Perry, Bob Austin and Haley Blount presented “A Running Tab: Economic Impact of a State Cross-Country Meet on the Local Community.” Dr. Dollar, Dr. Moulton and students Stefanie Rodgers, Victoria Dupreez and Natalie Swick presented “Economic Impact of a Collegiate Home Soccer Match on the Local Community in 2006.”