Events

Upcoming Wesson Weekend

Over the weekend of April 6-11, 2005, Professors Pat Anderson and Lynn Garrioch and several honors students will embark on the first annual Wesson Weekend to explore Seattle, Washington. The Wesson Weekend is a fully funded educational enrichment opportunity for students in the Wesson Honors Program to enjoy an intensive, full-immersion exploration of an American city under the guidance of one or more members of the Colby-Sawyer faculty. Visits, normally four days long, will permit a thorough, on-site study of the history, culture, and life of a chosen city.

Seattle has been chosen to be the first Wesson Weekend because, albeit the physical landscape is stunningly beautiful, with ancient trees, clean water and majestic mountains, Seattle has undergone a renaissance of sorts during the last decade to become an energetic center, with many retail, financial, and cultural activities. "[Seattle] is located in a part of the country quite unlike the northeast and the weekend] will give our students an urban experience which will be unique for them. It will expose them to a city many are probably unfamiliar with and with the rich cultural resources available there, ranging from Native American to Japanese and Chinese to Nordic, the city itself is very ethnically diverse and the students will encounter a wide diversity of individuals during our time there," reveals Professor Anderson.

"Seattle is simply beautiful; the panoramic view includes rainforests, clear water and majestic mountains. Within an hour east, north or south of the city there is wilderness. Despite the indisputable beauty, Seattle offers more than just a stunning backdrop; Seattle has been deemed America’s most livable city for the last four years in a row. I think this city has earned this honor because it is environmentally friendly, full of cultural diversity and it has an interesting pop culture scene with a thriving business community to boot. It is a booming commercial city that maintains a sense of community, culture and..."

Continued on page two....

The Coordinator’s Nanosecond

First year professor Craig Greenman is teaching a first time honors course entitled “Philosophy in Literature.” With his background in philosophy, Greenman was required to look outside of his field to teach an honors course, and with a significant interest in literature, the subject was a sensible choice.

"Philosophical ideas are usually abstract, and it’s useful to have a concrete situation or a set of characters to help understand them. Novels and other forms of literature do that. They give you a way into philosophy," articulates Greenman.

The class meets two days per week as a seminar format. In the first few weeks Greenman introduced the topic and his plans for ample discussion, and now with the course well underway, the class is directed by pairs of students. Each class, two different students present and lead the class based on their observations and "what they think is important."

The goals of the course are to present the critical notions of the text and open them to class discussions. Greenman hopes the students will develop a way to talk about not just their personal lives, but concepts such as freedom, justice, and love. The intention of the text is to initiate conversations of ideas while testing and pushing each other to think philosophically.

"Philosophy is about conversation, and for it, dialogue is a process that’s an end in itself, not just a means to an end. [Robert] Musil represents that well in his novel [The Man Without Qualities]. In fact, the way we create ideas in literature parallels the way we create them in philosophy or other walks of life. So philosophy and literature are eminently compatible," extends Greenman.

Greenman is enjoying instructing the course and would be happy to offer the class again in the future.

The Pilgrims traveled in "showres soote" to Canterbury to pay homage to the “holy blissful martyr,” Thomas Becket. The cow went over the moon and so did Cyrano de Bergerac in his lunar flights later to be repeated by all manner of astronauts. And the bear went over the mountain to see what he could see. Annie Dillard went to Tinker Creek and walked “upstream and down, exultant, in a daze, dancing, to the twin trumpets of praise.” Virginia Woolf’s Clarissa Dalloway stepped out of her house in London and declared “What a lark! What a plunge!” and immortalized that day in a novel still alive with movement and insight. Travel unfolds the multiplicity of the outside world to us and promises also to show us how to travel inward to find how to in Milton’s words “trip the light fantastic.” Travel well Wesson Honors scholars.

Ann Page Stecker - Professor of Humanities

More Happenings in the Classroom

Pictures and words by Timothy Bradley. Template designed by Kathleen Corr.

Wesson Honors Program Newsletter

February 24 - 7:00 pm
SLAM Poetry Event & Contest
Charlie Bethel
Wheeler Hall

March 1 - 8:00 pm
Quartetto DiVenizia
Wheeler Hall

March 2 - 7:00 pm
Poetry Reading
Wesley McNair
Wheeler Hall

March 3-5 - 8:00 pm
Spring Play
“The Curious Savage”
Sawyer Center

March 4 - 7:00 pm
Human Rights Watch Film
Wheeler Hall

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Continued on page two....
First Annual Wesson Weekend

Continued from page one...

environmental awareness. Seattle is a great exemplar of a healthy, modern American city,” states Professor Garrioch.

Students and the professors will be staying a few blocks from the infamous Pike Place Market, established in 1907. It is a nine-acre historic district wherein hundreds of people operate commercial businesses, sell their farm goods, handmade arts and crafts, or perform live. The market is also home to 500 people who live in a progressive cooperative housing community. One place that Professor Garrioch would like to visit is the Wing Luke Asian Museum. This museum encourages the Asian Pacific American community and the other racial groups to investigate the historical and contemporary issues related to culture, politics, and art of Asian Pacific Americans. The hallmark of this museum is an exhibition that depicts the 200-year story of immigration and settlement of Asians and Pacific Islanders to Washington/Oregon region. This particular exhibit includes stories of the Cambodians, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotians, Pacific Islanders, South Asians and Vietnamese who have made America their home. It integrates these groups’ diverse experiences into a comprehensive, cohesive story of determination, survival and success in America.

Professor Anderson has done work in researching Native American cultures in the recent past (including on-site work in the Seattle area) and is most looking forward to introducing the students to some of the people and sites encompassing his work. These include a Makah woman, who directs the Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center in Seattle, and a “basketmaker,” the great-great-grand-daughter of Chief Seattle, who lives on Bainbridge Island.

The student/faculty group will plan collaboratively and extensively before the trip to make the experience the richest possible for all involved. Though the format has not yet be decided, upon return the group will participate in a special event open to the college community in which it will talk about the highlights of the visit by showing pictures, telling stories, and discussing how perspectives were heightened, or changed as a result of visiting Seattle. Articles might also be written for the campus newspaper as well as the Alumni magazine. “And certainly some of this will make its way into the courses we’re involved in,” extends Professor Anderson.

Professor Garrioch concludes, “Though Professor Anderson and I have visited Seattle many times, we both agree that each time we visit we have a novel experience.”

Who’s Who in the Honors Program?

Meet Christelle Kamaliza. As a transfer from Lynn University in Boca Raton, FL, Christelle is new this semester to the Wesson Honors Program. Christelle lives in North Sutton, NH and is a first year student Business Administration Major.

While taking all honors courses last semester at Lynn, Christelle decided to leave Florida for Colby-Sawyer because she felt Lynn’s curriculum wasn’t academically challenging and stimulating for her, and the honors program was “just too informal.” Christelle chose to attend Colby-Sawyer for its intimacy and more personal atmosphere. “That and for the snow and cold,” she says sarcastically.

As a transfer student, Christelle missed the first year pathway course “The Coming of Age Narrative,” but is looking forward to participating in the “Stepping-Stone” set of courses and to joining the sophomore “Coming of Age” seminar in the spring.

Christelle works for the business department and is a member of the Cross Cultural Club and the Peace and Justice Club. She really enjoys the former and hopes to continue raising awareness of other cultures in the Colby-Sawyer community.

Christelle is looking forward to meeting other members of the Wesson Program and is also very enthusiastic about the upcoming Wesson Weekends and hopes to partake in at least one. The Wesson Honors Program welcomes Christelle!

Happenings in the Classroom

The Coming of Age Narrative

The students in this sophomore seminar pathway of “The Coming of Age Narrative” have recently completed the readings of Lewis Hyde’s “The Gift” and Italo Calvino’s “Six Memos for the Next Millennium,” as well as film discussions of Giuseppe Tornatore’s “Cinema Paradiso.” The following are responses to two of Calvino’s “memo’s:”

When Calvino refers to the concept of quickness, he means the sense of rhythm in a story, the motion by which the story moves. While many stories can be drawn out and cyclical, it is important to keep things moving; life can’t very well stop and neither can literature. Calvino’s purpose by this essay is to make clear the importance of clear, concise writing to give a story its full potential. –Kate O’Neil

Lightness is something that we should all be working towards throughout our lives. It can be learned about in the writings of many authors like Shakespeare, Cavalcanti, and Emily Dickinson. Most describe lightness as a combination of melancholy and humor, a pairing of sadness and comedy. This seems to me to be a very unlikely pairing, but this may be why people work so hard to achieve this attribute. Lightness is a quality that is very difficult to acquire, but it seems to be a very important quality for people to be able to say that they have. –Amy Janiak

When and where will you write yourself on the wall?

What impertinent questions will you need to ask to write yourself on the wall?

Stay tuned for more Wesson Weekend offerings next fall...

Graffiti, pl. graffiti: a drawing or inscription made on a wall or other surface, usually so as to be seen by the public.

Photo Courtesy Ann Page Stecker while traveling in Mexico City.