

## State and Local

# Study Abroad Office sponsors Overseas Day to invite students

By Cindy Milton  
Staff Writer

To someone walking through the MSC Tuesday, it might have seemed like just another day, but to those students who paid attention to the display tables in the main hall, it was an opportunity to tempt curiosities and world interests. And the students who took advantage of the opportunities may find themselves in a foreign country within the next year.

Tuesday was Overseas Day, sponsored by the Study Abroad Office at Texas A&M. Representatives of the program offered information to anyone interested in traveling overseas for credit or work programs.

Mona Rizk-Finne, director of the study abroad office, said the purpose of the event was to recruit students for upcoming summer courses offered overseas and to familiarize students with the many study abroad opportunities offered at A&M.

Rizk-Finne said the study abroad office this year offers 12 programs, including six-week summer courses, full semester courses and yearlong courses throughout the world. Students have options to go through A&M and other American schools to travel and spend time in other countries and get credits that fit their degree plans at the same time.

The mission of the office, Rizk-Finne said, is to provide students in all fields of study a wide range of educational experiences abroad.

A&M has affiliations with several universities overseas, such as Tübingen University in Southern Germany and the University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

Students can completely immerse themselves in foreign cultures by spending whole semesters at a foreign university, or they can go overseas on a shorter program taught by A&M professors.

Kathleen Gossman, assistant professor in the Department of Speech Communications and Theater Arts, spent part of last summer in Italy teaching a theater arts and civilization class to a group of Aggies. She, along with 23 students and two other



Photo by Sam Myers

A&M students learn of the opportunities available in the Study Abroad program Tuesday in the MSC.

teachers, stayed at La Poggerina, located 30 minutes south of Florence.

The study abroad program, she said, provides an opportunity for students to meet humanities requirements in a fun way. She said the students became close because they spent so much time together in the classes and learning about Italy.

"We took a survey of the students at the end of the summer," she said, "and most of them felt like they had seen the stars for the first time. We all became very close and we're making efforts to get together now that we're back at A&M."

Rizk-Finne said that last year more than 400 A&M students went overseas through the office's programs, but there still seems to be a

lack of awareness of the opportunities the office offers.

The office provides almost any kind of information to anyone interested in going abroad, she said.

"We have quite an extensive resource library and we have information on criteria for the programs, financial aid and the kinds of credits that can be transferred," she said. "We can coordinate students and show them all sorts of options to go places."

Rick Lockett, a senior majoring in German history and literature, recently returned from Germany where he studied at the Universität Tübingen for a year through the study abroad office. He said he, as an American, experienced life as a German student would.

"The education for American students abroad is the best you can achieve," Lockett said.

Rizk-Finne said Lockett returned from his year in Germany a totally different person. The worldly knowledge a student gains by spending time in other countries is more than what can be taught on any campus in the United States, she said.

Lockett said most students think traveling overseas for classes is out of reach financially, but that is a misconception, he said.

"No matter where you are, you'll have to pay for food and rent," he said. "The only thing extra you pay is the travel expense, and by the time you've experienced being overseas, it will all pay off."

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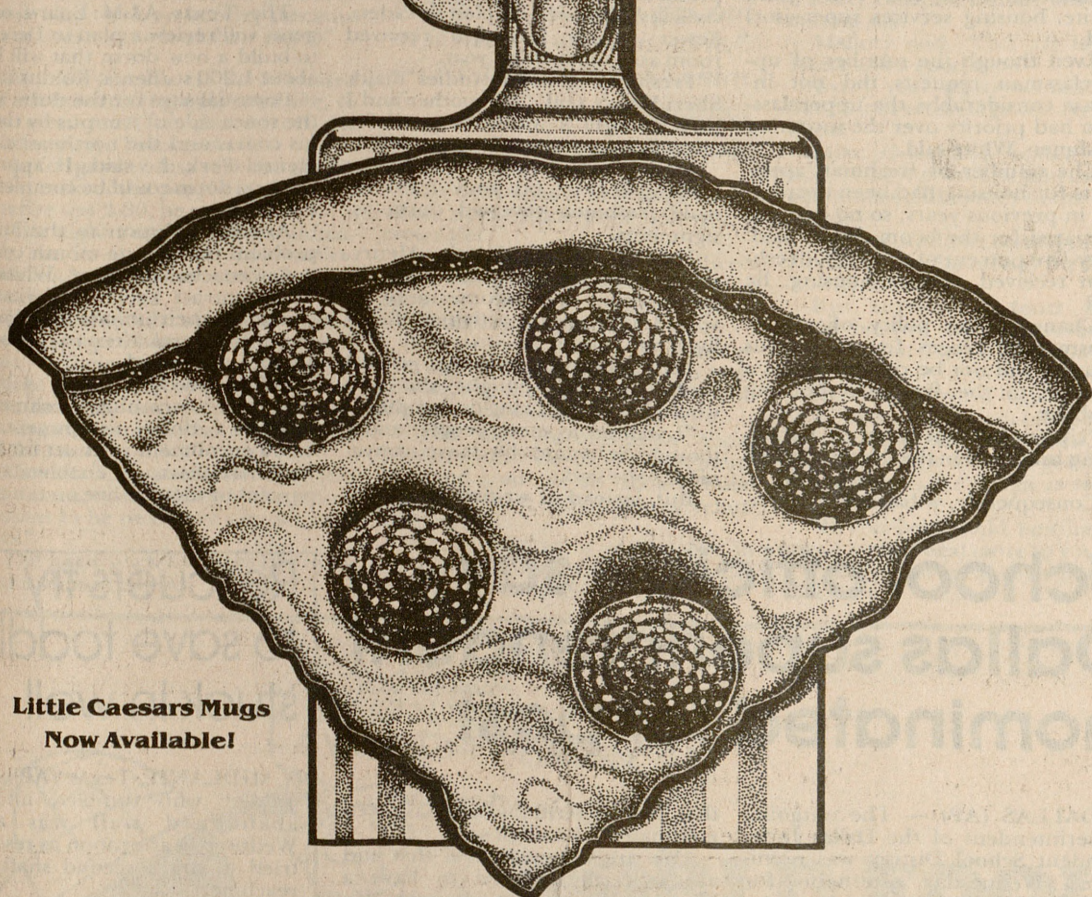


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