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Global perspectives: Students expand career opportunities, cultural awareness

□ The international studies degree program offers a diverse curriculum in Latin American, Asian, World and European studies.

By Elizabeth Todd
THE BATTALION

Recognizing career opportunities for graduates familiar with international issues, Texas A&M created the International Studies Program, INTS, four years ago.

Under the direction of Dr. Victor Arizpe, an associate professor at the English Language Institute, the program currently has about 285 members.

Arizpe said international studies students gain a worldly view of society.

"The International Studies degree program was put together to provide students with a global perspective," he said. "We ask INTS students to become very aware of what is happening internationally."

Since an INTS degree is intercollegiate and interdisciplinary, students in the program receive a broad sampling of courses from various departments.

Initially, students focus on one track of area studies, choosing from Latin American, Asian, World and European studies.

After choosing a track, students later choose an 18-credit-hour minor. A 24-credit-hour foreign language requirement, Arizpe said, also makes the students more attractive to prospective employers.

Students also must participate in an in-



ternational experience, which may be fulfilled by spending a Fall, Spring or 10-week summer semester outside of the United States, usually in an area where the student is fluent in the language. Students often have study abroad, internships, volunteer projects or work-related experiences to fulfill the international requirement.

Arizpe said the demanding requirements of the international studies curriculum, which has courses in political science, history and economics as well as the foreign language and international experience requirement, ensure that the students are well-rounded.

Students participating in the international studies program often earn a double major because they take such a diverse course load, Arizpe said. He explained that once a minor is added, the credit hours are usually enough to fulfill another major.

A number of students also obtain two degrees, such as a bachelor's degree in international studies and another bachelor's degree in biomedical science.

Another trend has been students' tendencies to pass over semester-long international experiences in favor of those lasting a full year.

Corey Pride, a senior international studies major and marketing minor, returned from a year-long stay in Mexico at the Monterey Institute of Technology, then interned with the school.

Pride was enthusiastic about his experience in Mexico.

"When you throw yourself into a foreign environment, you find out a lot about you and human nature," he said. "That's what Mexico made up for a lot of lost time."

"I would really encourage spending a year [in the other country]," he said.

Some international studies students have an opportunity to immerse themselves in Mexican culture this summer as study and work in public relations.

Dr. Douglas Starr, a journalism professor, will travel to Mexico City in June 1994 with 15 students, teaching two courses in international public relations.

Five students will stay south of the border and work for Mexican corporations.

Starr said the Mexico trip could only enhance A&M's reputation.

"This is a way to really put Texas on the international scene," he said.

Starr said the program is especially important because the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which opened the Texas-Mexico border to a free flow of information and trade.

"We have a close alliance with Mexico," Starr said. "Spanish is no longer a foreign language here, especially in Texas. I don't know why we haven't done this before."

Program offers chance to broaden horizons

□ The international business program offers certificates to students who complete cultural and language classes with training abroad.

By Melissa Keerins
THE BATTALION

Business majors searching for a more global spin on their education can find it at the Center for International Business.

The center helps students enhance their degrees and improve their understanding of the international market. The A&M center is one of only 27 university programs like it.

Dr. Kerry Cooper, director of CIBS and international business professor, said the program is growing. The College of Business does not offer a degree in international busi-

ness, but Cooper said the college does not want a degree program in that field.

"We feel that every business is an international business, so there is no real field," Cooper said. "We offer a certificate if students want proof that they have an emphasis in international business."

Interest in international business is increasing each year, and the classes are listed separately in the class schedule books available for registration for the first time this semester.

"There is a real demand for the international business classes," Cooper said. "Almost every class that is offered fills up."

Monica Her, an adviser for certificate programs, is working toward a doctorate in international business.

"I would like to teach after my degree, but I don't want to be limited to that," Her said. "I am from Taiwan, and I would be interested in working in businesses worldwide where Chinese are, or where Americans have an interest

in working with the Chinese."

Cooper said students can do only so much in the classroom, but the center offers specific classes and courses about Mexico, China and Russia.

"We offer special courses, but there's no substitute for learning to interact with other cultures," Cooper said.

The requirements for an international business certificate are one cultural and three international business classes, two semesters of a foreign language and international experience.

Dr. Kelly Murphrey, CIBS assistant director and certificate program adviser, said international experience can be an internship abroad or study abroad program, and students utilize language skills and other skills learned in classes.

"Since the certificate program started a couple of years ago, there has been an increasing demand for international business degrees," Murphrey said.

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