Welcome to the first issue of UWRF COST Newsletter. In this issue you will find a letter from the coordinator, notes from Abroad, HELP! (Q&A), and Bulletin Board.

FROM THE COORDINATOR

The intent of this newsletter is to help us stay in touch with COST participants, and provide a means of sharing experiences and ideas for future overseas student teachers. Please drop us a line and let us know about your current professional life. If you have special photographs to share, send them along as well. I’m hoping to hear from you soon. Until then, enjoy your journey.

Trici Clottey
COST Coordinator
Teacher Education Department Chair

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Australia — While in Australia it opened my eyes to how differently other people live and work. It was interesting to see how easy going life was in Perth. The people were so laid back and it was a nice atmosphere to be in. Along with the atmosphere of the people the area was just beautiful and the weather was amazing the entire time I was there.

In my school I had the opportunity to experience a different method of teaching. It was hard to get used to at first, but my cooperating teacher was very helpful and understanding that I did not have any experience using these methods. The school I was at used the Amelia Reggio approach and International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program. It was neat having these two approaches to teaching in action as it gave me two different methods to incorporate into my classroom someday. — Miranda Pogulis, Spring 2008
I have found that teaching in Year 3, at Flixton Junior School, has been an incredibly wonderful experience. The biggest achievement in my teaching career is that I am looking at two things when I teach my lessons, which I feel sometimes as a teacher, you might usually forget, because you are so wrapped up in your curriculum guidelines. I learned that you should always ask yourself “what am I teaching?” and “What am I looking for out of this lesson?” Two questions that are quite simple, yet if you keep these two questions in mind when you teach, your lessons will be a success!

I have also enjoyed meeting new people, traveling around England, making new friends, and enjoying the culture of Manchester. I have met so many different people and I feel that my experiences here are worth every penny. I learned to use the subway, bus stations, trains, and every mode of transportation, which we take for granted in Wisconsin. I never knew how to get around anywhere except driving my car, so it was a feeling of independence and confidence I love. I also have loved seeing the sights of the city and trying all the different types of cultural food, Indian, Thai, Chinese, and British. It has all been surrounding me, with great hospitality from my host parents and my friends. I do miss home, but I know I will miss Manchester even more.

— Meera Patel, Spring 2008

New Zealand — I had the most amazing experience student teaching in New Zealand. I became an independent person who is more culturally aware. I gained insight on other parts of the world and respect for my own country. . . .

Advice: Get a list of other people from the US going to your same city. You can get this from your COST Coordinator. Look those people up. I met two people from Michigan, two from Louisiana, and one from Ohio. My trip wouldn’t have been the same without traveling with these new friends.

— Anna Parsons, Fall 2007
HELP!

Q What about the FBI background check; how do I get one, when should I do this?
A It is important not to get your background check done too early so that it is still pertinent for the time you travel, however it takes about three months. About 5 months before you are to leave you should have this done. Be sure to use the COST background check form. You can either pick this up by stopping in WEB 257, or ask to have one sent to you. You must take the card to a jail to have your fingerprints recorded and the have form sent from there (you do not send it in yourself).

Q How do I get credit for my COST experience?
A We have two different very important evaluation forms:

1. UWRF Student Teaching Observation form
2. COST Participant Survey form

These forms will be given to you physically, as well as sent to you electronically as back up copies. You must take them with you to your COST placement site. The UWRF Teaching Observation form and COST Evaluation of Student Teaching Experience form are used to generate your grade for the semester. In order to receive credit for the overseas experience you must evaluate your COST experience using the COST Participant Survey.

Q Who do I contact in case of emergency?
A The Global Connections Office emergency number is: 715-425-4891, after hours: 715-425-3133

BULLETIN BOARD

A message from the Director of Student Teaching
The Cooperating Teacher completes the evaluation in the binder OR the pink or blue sheets labeled as midterm and final evaluation. The University Supervisor may use any form from his/her home institution or simply write a narrative of the observation.

When you return from your COST experience, please make an appointment with Mike Martin to find out about certification requirements. During that same visit, ask Barb Franzen for the forms you need to fill out at the end of student teaching. Your student teaching grade will not be submitted until those have been completed and submitted to the student teaching.

Money Tips for Safe Travel
As you plan your trip overseas review these financial safety travel tips to keep your money safe and secure.
- Limit the amount of plastic you take with you. No more than two credit cards or one credit card and one debit card (for cash withdrawals) are recommended.
- Notify your financial institution that issued your debit and credit card that you are traveling.
- Carry traveler’s checks. These are great for back up if your credit and debit cards are lost or stolen.
- Get foreign currency. If you are traveling abroad, get $100 in the currency of the country you are visiting. This will cover expenses such as taxi fares, etc. before you have the chance to change money.
- Safely carry your money. If you don’t have a hotel safe, keep your money, credit/debit cards, passport and airline tickets on you at all times. Don’t carry everything in a purse or backpack, use a money belt.
- Leave behind valuables. Keep your valuable jewelry, family keepsakes and Social Security Card at home. Also leave behind store membership cards that you won’t need.

Meetings
COST Meeting for Fall 2008 & Spring 2009
3:00 p.m. September 25, 2008, 106 WEB

Please be sure to let us know when you plan to leave for your destination, when you arrive overseas, and let us know when you return from overseas. Use the address from which you receive e-mails to contact us.

Stay in touch and be sure to send us digital photographs of you with your students (be sure to receive permission in writing for student photos to be used for newsletters and marketing). You may find yourself on new marketing materials!

Send us your stories, photographs and questions for the next newsletter!

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