



DR. CHAD DAVIDSON TAKES UWG STUDENTS ABROAD

JAMIE COCHRAN
Contributing Writer

This summer, 15 UWG students will embark on a four-week journey to Spoleto, Italy, a tiny hilltop town in the heart of Central Italy, to immerse in a new culture and language.

Dr. Chad Davidson, Director of the School of Arts and English Professor, has coordinated the study abroad trip to Italy since 2013. He describes Spoleto as a small yet vibrant town with many cultural opportunities for students to experience new foods, traditions and a social atmosphere.

According to Davidson, Spoleto is an ancient city that dates back to the Pre-Roman Era in 241 BC. Students will explore Italy's rich history and culture and dive into some famously divine Italian food.

Students earn six course credits during the program. However, Davidson explains how the education component isn't the only reason students choose to study abroad.

"It is a much more globalized desire than fulfilling a requirement for their major," said Davidson.

While on the trip, students will have the opportunity to explore the surrounding areas. Students will visit Perugia, the capital city of Umbria,

Photo Courtesy of Dr. Chad Davidson

in central Italy this year. Davidson explains how Italy is known to have some of the world's most impressive art, architecture, food and scenery.

Although the classes are accelerated, students will have plenty of downtime to travel.

"Students will live immersed in a tiny culture for a month, with plenty of time on the weekends to travel on their own," said Davidson. "In the past, students have visited Venice, Pompeii and Naples. In addition, they have traveled all over the peninsula, which is easy to do with a nationalized train system that can take you anywhere.

"Studying abroad can be a life-changing experience that opens their eyes to a different way of life," Davidson continued. "The experience allows students to escape their comfort zones, navigate a foreign city and experience other cultures and customs. Four weeks of exposure to another culture and language will often change the student's life forever."

Film Professor Deon Kay will be joining for the first time even though he lived in Italy 20 years ago. Kay knows where all the hidden gems are. He is excited to go back after all this time.

"Italy is a small country compared to the United States but is incredibly diverse," said Kay. "There is so much growth for learning and emotional development by just being immersed in a different culture, and I am excited to share this with the students."

SEPARATED FROM THE PACK: LIFE AS A MUSLIM WOMAN AT UWG

MARIA JESUS MARTINEZ
Contributing Writer

Jarahi Barry is a 22-year-old Muslim woman majoring in Speech Language Pathology at UWG. She works as a Resident Assistant for Housing and Residence Life. On the outside, she seems like the rest of her peers as she works, studies and hangs out with friends. However, she also feels like a stranger as her beliefs make her live and think differently from the rest of the students at UWG.

Barry was born in Guinea, but is presently living in the United States. When she was a baby, her parents got their visa and moved to Atlanta. Barry lived with her grandmother until she was old enough to get her visa at age fifteen.

Barry knows some Muslims in the university. However, it's not the same as back home where most of its citizens follow Islam.

"Literally in the whole school I am the one with the hijab," said Barry. "There are some people here that if I am not friends with them, I won't know that they are muslims unless they tell me.

"Same thing with boys, there is no dress code where you can see them with the hijab," Barry continued. "But if you see me with the hijab, no doubt I am a Muslim."

UWG does not have many things to offer when it comes to her religion. When Barry was a freshman, there was a Muslim Student Organization run by senior Muslim Students, but the organization stopped existing as soon as those students graduated. She also does not have a place nearby to worship God.

"There is no Mosque here in Carrollton," said Barry. "If I want to go to pray, I have to go to Atlanta, which is an hour away."

Barry needs lots of time to pray as she also does Salat, the five daily prayers that Muslims do in dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset and night. She religiously follows this routine, whether she is working or in class.

"Everytime I get a new job I tell my boss that I have to pray five times a day, the moments that I use for prayer and to please allow me to stop and pray," said Barry. "Just like when I am in class. When it is time to pray, I tell my teachers to let me pray.

"They are genuinely nice and they tell me of course, that I should go pray or that I don't even need to ask me," continued Barry.

Following Allah is not simply about praying, it is also about not doing things that God believes is harmful. As a strongly religious Muslim, Barry does not drink, smoke, show her skin outside, go to parties, or swim unless she is wearing her body suit. She especially does not date the same way her friends do.

"As a Muslim, I am not supposed to date somebody like a girlfriend and boyfriend," said Barry. "I am not even allowed to talk to a boy on a phone if they are not my dad, my brother, my uncle or grandpa."

If she sees a man that she likes and he is Muslim, Barry goes to her parents and tells them that she is interested in him. If her parents approve of the man, they will go talk to the suit-or to tell him about how their daughter feels. If the feeling is mutual, they can start to hang out with each other in public or in their households, as long as a third party is with them at all times. They also have to keep distance between each other at all times until they get married.

For Barry, this way of finding a partner is not compatible with the way she has been approached by guys at the university.

"A scenario is when I work at the service desk and some boys come

in a playful way and tell me that I am pretty. I would say thank you, but they come again," said Barry. "Sometimes they ask for my instagram or sometimes they try to shake my hands.

"I don't have a problem when they tell me that I am pretty, but I don't want them to come again," continued Barry. "I also explained to them how I don't shake hands. At first they were in shock but they understood later."

Her faith can fluctuate at times. For instance, sometimes she may listen to music at an event and dance to it. However, this is prohibited by Islam as they are related to satanic sways. Barry also used to eat non-Halal food, any food or goods that are not prepared according to Sharia Law. That is when they torture or do not take care of an animal appropriately before killing it.

"Now I think that if God tells me don't eat it, there are other places where I can get Halal Food," said Barry. "If they have chicken in the Dine West, I can have fish, rice or a veggie burger to full me up."

After all and no matter what it takes, for Barry God comes first.

"My goal is to please God, I don't care what people think," said Barry.

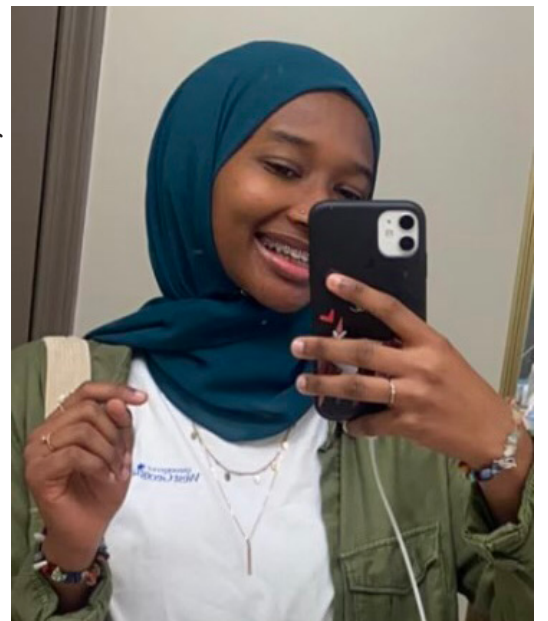


Photo Courtesy of Jarahi Barry

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LIVING WEST

UWG STUDENTS EXECUTE PRESCRIBED FOREST FIRES IN THE NAME OF CONSERVATION

JANNETTE EMMERICK

Feature Editor

Smokey the Bear, Disney’s “Bambi,” and a plethora of other fire suppression movements stigmatized and alienated fire’s vital role in nature. In recent years, due to devastating forest fires, forest management has realized the need of fire for healthy ecosystems. At UWG, Biology Professor Dr. Andrew Edelman teaches a Fire Ecology class encompassing the necessity of prescribed forest burns, offering on the field experience where students visit private land and execute supervised burns. Since 2011, Edelman has worked with Conservation Biologist Jonathan Stober, who is now Chair of the Northeast-Midwest (NE-MW) Regional Prescribed Fire Council Coordinating Committee and a Liaison for the Coalition of Prescribed Fires Inc. However, it wasn’t until 2013 that they began collaborating to lead prescription fires with Edelman’s fire ecology class. “[We] just started having them come here. To the farm, to help me with burns that we do here,” said Jonathan Stober, “Which is a lot less red tape, but it exposes them and gives them experience to deal in prescribed fire management.” Stober leads the prescribed burns on his family’s farm land and neighboring properties. Before 2017, Edelman and Stober used to bring students to Talladega National Park, but because of all the permissions needed, they shifted gears to helping private landowners in the community and allowing UWG students tangible application for their in-class learning. “One of the things about prescribed fire management, or really any discipline, is that you can do a lot of book learning, where you learn how to do something by the book,” said Stober. “But in the field, things often do present themselves differently.” Edelman equips students with knowledge and Stober enforces field applicability. “They go through weather, fire behavior, containment, contingency, fire ecology, fire perception, and he rolls all that up in the classroom,” said Stober. “And then we come to the field here where we have a pre-

scription, or a plan that we have for the fire event, and we wait for the weather conditions to align, and then we execute a fire.” Stober also helps with “learn-and-burns” with private landowners. “In 2019, before the Pandemic, we had a learn-and-burn where we had private landowners, [and had] Georgia Forestry Commission come out and help us execute a prescribed fire to show land owners the steps you go through,” said Stober. “[A prescribed fire requires] all these different combinations of elements of the fuel and how dry it is, the atmospheric conditions, meaning what the relative humidity is, how many days since rain, and it’s also about how you’re firing the unit,” continued Stober. A prescribed fire needs not just good conditions but also general knowledge to keep safe and how to control the fire before they can ignite the “black line,” which is the starting point of the prescribed fire. Fire is a necessary element for a healthy ecosystem, with many states in the Western United States now reaping the devastation of fire suppression. This is why prescribed fire efforts have amped up there, but also a revitalized necessity in the South. “[Prescription fires are] also used, particularly in the southeast, as a tool to manage ecosystems and ecosystem imperative, creating habitat and structure for all the native species and wildlife in the Southeast,” said Stober. “Because the Southeast is kind of the epicenter of fire dependent species.”



Photo Courtesy of Dr. Andrew Edelman

ESPORT COURSE EXPANDING TO WEST GEORGIA? HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT

MYLES WILLIAMS

Contributing Writer

Esports are competitive, organized video games in which competitors from different leagues or teams compete in the same game. The most popular games that people have been playing are Fortnite, Apex, League of Legends, NBA 2K and many more. Over the past few years, the Esports market has grown exponentially. According to NewZoo.com, Esports has increased their revenue from \$1.1 billion in 2021 to nearly \$1.38 billion by the end of 2022. The global attendance has also been growing yearly, with a projected audience of 640 million by 2025. As the field grows more lucrative, many students are eager to gain knowledge and experience and UWG professor Dr. William Jang is leading the way. Jang developed several Esports courses such as Intro to Esports Management, Playing & Watching Esports Games and others. The Georgia Film Academy now offers several courses of their own, such as fundamentals of Esports and Digital Entertainment & Esports Creative Development. These courses will put you on the right track towards entering

the Esports field. Students will have options for online or in-person classes to meet their schedule. “I’m teaching both online and in-person esports classes,” said Jang. “XIDS-2002: Esports Games & Events is an in-person class, and SPMG-4685: Introduction to Esports Management and SPMG-4685: Esports Management classes are online.” Along with the courses, an Esports minor will be offered soon. As for now, the School of Film, Media and Communication is still building this program. “The Esports minor will be provided for all UWG students interested in esports and require 15-18 elective course credit hours,” said Jang. “Esports minor provides multidisciplinary studies based on four themes. The approved courses will provide classes throughout Communication, Film, and Media, Computing, Interdisciplinary Study, Marketing and Sport Management at UWG.” If students take 18 credit hours of the three GFA digital entertainment, esports and game development courses students can achieve the esports minor and the certification with hands-on experience. If students want other concentrations, students can take 15 credit hours at UWG to achieve the esports minor. Classes such as game development, business aspects of the esports industry, or digital cre-

ative & casting will be offered. “The Esports minor will be offered as a new curriculum regarding esports at UWG,” said Jang. “[Over] the last two years, the UWG Esports program has been developed dramatically based on the hard work of the Esports Advisory Council. Not only brand new esports courses, but we also have an esports varsity team with a coach, more esports spaces, UWG esports twitch channel, an official esports website, esports events at the campus, and esports research.” The experience from taking an Esports class will definitely be worthwhile. “Esports will not only be its own self-contained video gaming entertainment but also be a model for other sports industries looking to welcome more fans,” said Jang. “In this given phenomenon regarding esports, understanding the inner workings of Esports and its business is essential for sport management students. In my Intro to Esports Management and Esports Management courses, students will experience learning business management in the Esports context and understanding background knowledge regarding esports to apply marketing and management strategies.” Students should continue to keep an eye out for these new Esport minor courses. With the popularity of Esports on the rise, those courses may fill up quickly.

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LIVING WEST

UWG PUSHES THE BOUNDS WITH INTERNATIONAL FAIR

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The Student Activities Council hosted the Explore West annual event on Tuesday, March 28 from 4 to 7 p.m. Located on the Campus Center back patio and Grassy Triangle, the event was centered on international cuisine.

The food was mainly served by the Dine West Catering, which included a variety of dishes from countries such as Taiwan, China, Jamaica and other countries located in Latin America. Specifically, they served several main dishes such as jerk wings, garlic yuca, fried sweet plantains (tostones), General Tso’s chicken, kung pao chicken, fried rice, pernil (roast pork), and empanadillas. The desserts offered included tres leches and Chinese doughnuts, along with a non-alcoholic mojito as a special drink.

There was also food from the Philippines from Me Lumpia Long Time, the only vendor

there on campus which dished up lumpia (filipino dish rolls), which could be sided up with sinigang (garlic fried rice) and pancit bihon (filipino thin noodles).

“With our contract with Dine West, there are not many chances to get many vendors on campus, but they do provide a good variety of different cuisines that we can offer for students to try,” said Graduate Student Dejora Curry.

Students were received in two check-in stations which were serving popcorn, M&Ms and travel imitation souvenirs like flight tickets and an ID badge holder. The Students Affair were expecting between 200 and 300 students and faculty staff to attend, but that number was greatly surpassed. 365 students participated in the event.

For Curry, the event was about creating cultural exchanges.

“Our goal is to make sure that we have a good amount of cultures that reflect some students here,” said Curry. “At the same time, we also want to curate a new experience for them to grow, un-

derstand and create that cultural competency, especially when it comes to traditions and foods.”

The event also had a DJ, a caricature stand where students get drawn on their own or with another friend, a henna tattoo stand and a variety of games, such as a human-size Domino, Connect Four, Corn Hole and Spike Ball.

The Student Affairs hosts this event along with Dine West every year between the months of March and April, whether it is inside one of the Dining Halls or at the Campus Center.



Photo Courtesy of the Student Affair Division

UWG ATHLETIC PROMOTION JUST GOT EASIER WITH INFLCR

EMMA WORLEY

Contributing Writer

To create greater promotions for athletes and their teams, the Gulf South Conference has partnered with a software called “INFLCR”. Jared Boggus, UWG’s Sports Information Director, has met with three sports teams this fall to soft launch the program and it will be used for all the teams during the 2022-23 year.

“The new INFLCR software will be a vital asset as it will allow us to deliver content directly to our student-athletes, so they can better market themselves, which in turn helps us better market their respective teams,” said Boggus. “Improved marketing ultimately puts that team in front of more eyes and more people which in turn in-

creases attendance, revenue, and support for those teams.”

This new program allows both UWG Athletics and athletes themselves to share content on the platform. Now, the content is able to reach a larger audience.

“The goal of the INFLCR is to assist student-athletes in marketing themselves as a student and an athlete,” said Boggus. “This helps the student-athletes create a social media presence and following that could help them both while in college and their professional lives after college. It also creates a symbolic relationship between our department and the student-athletes.”

When new photos from team events are taken, they are put into the software and it runs facial recognition to tag the specific athlete. This photo then can be seen by the athlete through their

“my media” tab under “explore more content”. From there they can link it with their Twitter or Instagram. Athletes can also save the photo to their camera roll.

Boggus explained the new software to the teams who are currently using it as a trial for next season. New photos are added after each home event unless a team specifically has hired a photographer to travel with them.

This new program is opening up a new world for the athletes. Currently they rely on a staff member that manages their sports social media page to post content. Each team manages their social media pages differently, but INFLCR gives each athlete the equal opportunity to market themselves and their team.

UWG’s athletes will now be able to post schedules, fun photos and more with ease thanks to this new software.