

ELP STUDENT NEWS

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ACADEMIC SUCCESS PROGRAM for International Students

University Counseling Services and the Office of International Education at VCU provide an opportunity to help international students to be more successful in academic classes.

Studying in a foreign country is an exciting and a challenging experience. Students will receive practical information and skills to improve their academic success.

Free food will be provided at
the end of each workshop!!

For more information, call Jinhee Kang, Ph.D. at 828-6200 or e-mail jkang@vcu.edu.
University Counseling Services, Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services

“ELP Student News” is on the INTERNET!!

http://www.vcu.edu/oie/elp/elp_student_news.html

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Adjusting to Living in the USA

By: Bo Yun Chang (S. Korea) and
Sokunthy Ea (Cambodia)

Everyone who moves to another place, especially to another country, will have to deal with hardships. Because everything is going to be completely different from what they have experienced, the first emotion they usually comes across is “homesickness.”

“Homesick” is defined with the word “miss.” When I first moved to the US, I felt like I did not want to do anything because I missed everything from my country. I felt so uncomfortable speaking English. Because I was a beginner, I tried to express my feelings, but it was too hard to explain my meaning. I gave up trying to say something. I missed my country’s food because there is nothing that tastes like the food from my country. Even though there are restaurants where I can eat my country’s food, it is not the same. I missed going to many places with my friends by taking the transportation such as the bus, train, and subway and sometimes just walking. However, here, the places that I can go are limited. Without having a car, it seemed impossible to go and hang out with friends. The only places that I used to go were the shopping mall and the movie theaters during weekends. Because of that, I spent most of my time at home, which made me more sick.

To adjust myself to living in the US, I had to find out things to do that are fun. Instead of just staying and spending time at home, I had to go out and learn about American culture. Missing home never can be erased from my mind, but it can be reduced somehow by learning about the new things here. I used to go out with my cousin who was born in the US, and who knows many things about America. She took me to the place that I can enjoy and learn the new things, and explained lots about American culture to me. Having more friends also helped me get relief from missing home, too. Friends can always share things with me even when we are sad and happy.

Homesickness is a problem that we cannot avoid. Moving to another country is challenging, but we can reduce our homesickness by finding fun things to do instead of thinking of home. It is difficult to adapt to the new things and to forget about the things that used to be there. However, we still can adapt to it step by step. Make some friends and go out. Explore American culture and you will feel better.

Byrd Theatre

by: Seva Lobanov (Russia)

There is a beautiful movie theatre in Richmond. The name of this movie theatre is "The Byrd." It is located on Cary Street, which is one of the central streets in the city, and it is not so far from VCU.

The movie theatre is located in the historical part of the city. This area is about a hundred years old and has old fashioned buildings that are very nice looking. The Byrd Theatre is old but it is very nicely built and in pretty good condition.

The spirit of this theatre makes me feel like I just went in 1930s because of this old fashion style of interior. If you decide to visit this movie theatre one day, there will be real organ music to listen to before the movie. When I went there for the first time, I didn't know about the organ music, and I was in shock at first because I didn't expect that. However, it was a very exciting part of the movie and made Byrd Theatre even more original and interesting because of this old fashion style.

Also, the Byrd Theatre is not expensive -- it costs just two dollars per movie. Compared to regular movie theatres, this is a few times cheaper. Visiting the Byrd Theatre is a good and exciting idea.

**Free For You!**by: Bhadrak Patel (India) and
Eulalia C.E. (Spain)

Every student needs to use the computer to print-out things. Students also need to eat. Isn't it true? Are you interested in getting these things free?! Yes, everybody wants these things free.

First, in the Language Lab, located in HIBBS, 4th floor, you will find computers, internet access, and you can print out things for your language classes at no cost. Moreover, you will be welcomed by the people at the language learning center. They will be glad to help you.

Second, every Wednesday afternoon during the ELP session, you can enjoy free food and become familiar with other international students. Come and meet people and have fun conversations in person, instead of staring at your computer and chatting on internet.

These are some of the opportunities which are free for you...why should you miss them? Be smart and save your money. VCU is always helping you!

Crossing boundaries: Living in America

Do you have an idea about crossing boundaries that you would like to share with readers of *The ELP Student News*? Then write a proposal.

A proposal (n.) is an idea for a plan.

Do you know anything about living in another country? Of course you do! You're living in another country now! VCU's School of World Studies is hosting the 10th annual International Student Research conference. This year's conference will address "crossing boundaries." Crossing boundaries means "a passage or a trip past your limits." In other words, moving to the U.S. to go to college is a crossing boundaries experience for you.

If you would like to write an article on an issue that addresses "crossing boundaries," then e-mail a proposal to btarnold@vcu.edu. Proposals should be 1-2 paragraphs and are due by **December 1, 2004**.

Go to the conference and hear what others have to say...The 10th Annual VCU World Studies Student Research Conference will be in the Student Commons on Thursday and Friday **October 14 and 15, 2004**.

What are ELP students doing this fall?

Each ELP session, Student Services provides ELP students with things to do. Here are some of those things:

International Coffee Hour

- Every Wednesday from 12:30-2:00
- VCU Student Commons
(Commonwealth B Ballroom)

October 16

- The Annual Richmond area International Student Luncheon
- University of Richmond

October 15-17

- Fall camping and caving trip
- Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains

November 15

- Governor's International Education Week Luncheon at VCU
- Sign up to have Thanksgiving Dinner with an American Family

December 17

- Tentative Holiday Party
- In an American home

Do you have questions about our activities?

Please contact Bob Wood (rawood@vcu.edu) Pam Haney (pohaney@vcu.edu) or call them at 828-0808.

American History: A Country is Born

A Treaty of Alliance with France

by: Andy (S. Korea), Kim (S. Korea), Paweena (Thailand) and Seo Hee (S. Korea)

On May 4, 1778, the Continental Congress discussed two treaties with the French that had been signed in Paris by American and French officials on February 6, 1778. This alliance with France was the most important turning point in the American Revolutionary War. The country that we know today as the United States of America was locked in a war with Great Britain in 1778.

France began providing aid to the colonies in May, 1776 when it sent 14 ships with war supplies to the American colonies. In fact, most of the gun powder used by the American armies during the American Revolution came from France. After Britain's defeat at Saratoga, NY, France saw an opportunity to seriously weaken its ancient enemy (Great Britain) and to restore the balance of power that had been upset by the Seven Year's War (also called the French and Indian War). On February 6, 1778, America and France signed two treaties with the American colonists: a Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. The Treaty of Amity and Commerce recognized America as a country and offered trade concessions.

It's better that France helped the American people to fight for our rights. It helped them to create a new life. Many people were depressed from the bad situations created by the American Revolutionary War. After many years of fighting, finally France offered the colonists the freedom. The French helped the colonists to have the rights that people living in America enjoy today. The agreements with France helped to encourage the American people to win the fight with Great Britain.

All of the colonial people of America eagerly welcomed the alliance with France. It helped to brighten the future by giving the colonists new sources of courage and strength. Thus, the British Army was defeated and the United States of America became a country.



DATES TO REMEMBER

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO
MIGHT WANT TO KNOW
THE ELP SESSION INFORMATION?

Sessions	Placement Test Dates	Class Start - End Dates
Winter 2005	January 10, 2005	January 18-March 4, 2005
Spring 2005	March 15, 2005	March 21-May 3, 2005
Summer 2005	June 20, 2005	June 27-August 5, 2005
Fall I 2005	August 17 & August 24, 2005	August 29-October 13, 2005
Fall II 2005	October 19, 2005	October 24-December 9, 2005

ELP Teacher Profile: Lisse Hildebrandt

Lisse was born and grew-up in Detroit, Michigan. She received a bachelor's degree in French and a master's degree in linguistics from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

After finishing college, Lisse moved to Arizona with her husband where she taught English as a Second Language at Thunderbird International Graduate Business School. After several years in Arizona – “where it was really hot” – she moved to Richmond, Virginia.

Lisse Hildebrandt started teaching at VCU's ELP in 1991. In addition to being the Speaking, Listening, and Pronunciation Committee chair, she has taught almost all of the skills at ELP “at one time or another.” Lisse's favorite class is pronunciation because “it's the most fun!”

Her favorite thing to do is to bake cookies, and fall is her favorite time of the year because “the weather is more comfortable and the leaves change to such beautiful colors.”

Lisse lives in Richmond – in the West End – with her husband, daughter, and cat. To learn more about Lisse, visit her profile at http://www.vcu.edu/oie/elp/elp_meet_the_faculty.html.

Lisse is a valued member of the ELP faculty, a dedicated, hard working instructor, and an interesting person to get to know. When you see Lisse again, take a moment to chat with her.

ELP Staff Profile:

Haley Underwood

When you visit the ELP office, Haley is usually one of the first people that you will meet. Haley is one of ELP's student assistants, and she often works at the front desk in the ELP office in room 204. She's one of the people who asks you to "sign-in" when you come to the ELP office for an appointment. But who is Haley?

Haley was born and raised in Midlothian, Virginia. She's a senior at VCU, and she hopes to work on a master's degree in Social Work. In the future, Haley wants to "work with young adults and high school aged children after school."

In her free time, Haley enjoys reading, playing musical instruments, drawing and painting. She plans to travel soon too. "After I graduate, I want to take a tour of Europe." She also likes going to museums and coffee shops, seeing bands, and spending time with friends.

How Much Can You Get From Reading A Book?



By: Laura Garcia (M_xico)

A beautiful, strong and smart woman is condemned to wear a scarlet letter, the letter "A", all her life. What does "A" mean? She has committed adultery. This punishment changes her life and the life of people around her. This is the story of the scarlet letter. It was written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1849 showing the Puritans' beliefs at that time when they had arrived as new settlers in the "New England". This book has a lot of symbolism mixed with a rich

description of the story. During last summer, ELP students read the book in advanced reading and vocabulary class. How much can you get from reading a book? We learned about our own reactions while reading the book and also about the reactions from each other. Nevertheless, the book is so rich that we could continue thinking about it. Here you have this short summary of each character, but always it is possible to get many things else from this book.

First, let us introduce quickly the most important characters on the book. *Hester* is condemned to wear the scarlet letter, she is beautiful and young woman and it is amazing how she will show many other qualities during the book's story. *Dimmesdale* is the minister of the town who everybody reveres because of his knowledge and wisdom. He has committed adultery with Hester but he doesn't dare to say it openly. *Chillingworth* is the former husband of Hester, "the physician". He has always looked for scientific knowledge, and when he learned of Hester's adultery, he wants revenge; he expends his energies in thinking how to torture Dimmesdale. *Pearl* is Hester and Dimmesdale's daughter, she is fascinated about the scarlet letter on her mother's bosom. She is smart, and she has a special sense to perceive what is happening around her. The townspeople say she is from "evil origine" since her mother has committed adultery.

Hester Prynne

Hester has such a gift to make, from everything, something beautiful. When she was walking toward the scaffold, the place where she will be sentenced, she does it with dignity. She has to wear a scarlet letter, but she made it so beautiful that the people looked at it as a perfect letter. Later on, when people see in Pearl, Hester's daughter, an evil origin, she looks at her as God's tenderness for her. Hester could have changed her place and moved to another place since she disagreed with many of the ideas that people believed in that town. She could have avoided all the humiliations from the townspeople, but she remained there to make, from her punishment, something worthy. Indeed, through her charity without conditions and for everybody, she taught the town another way of doing penance, erasing and transforming "the sin" to a virtue. Finally, she transforms Dimmesdale's heart, which was closed in itself, painful and without the capacity of forgiving or forgetting. She gave him strength and light to do the right thing and be free. At the end, Hester was more minister than the minister since she advised him what to do. Besides that, Hester is able to have a strong experience of God's mercy in her own life, which Dimmesdale doesn't have yet. She was purer than the Puritans because she didn't hide herself behind masks of any kind. She was wiser than the physician since she used her abilities to think about her life and Pearl's life, and not to think about useless revenge. All of these qualities for one reason, she always looked for giving life and color where darkness, sadness, or fanatic thoughts without reason and justice were. This open mind could teach us a lot. Hester is a good example of trying to do everything we have to do with passion, so life will have a goal and a motivation each day even though the environment around may be against us or not very friendly.

Pearl

Pearl has to suffer social rejection since she was a baby because of something she never did. The best examples for her are Hester and the scarlet letter. Even though she is a little child, she has strength and a special capacity to perceive the situations around her. Often she has not the courage to show her feelings to tenderness in the right way, perhaps because society has not shown it to her. She is the speaking mind of Hester, that is, what Hester doesn't dare say, Pearl does. Sometimes Hester is afraid of Pearl, maybe because she discovers her own wild soul in Pearl's presence. At the end, Pearl finds freedom when Hester and her go to live to Europe, far away from that town and environment that torment her. She had a marvelous example of womanhood, Hester. Pearl is a good example of how society can affect someone's life since she learns to act in a rebel way because she has experienced the rejection of the townspeople for her and Hester. Pearl never found some sign of affection, tenderness, or acceptance from society, with exception of Hester, and sometimes, from Dimmesdale. The irony is that Pearl never did anything wrong, but everybody thinks of her as an "evil origine". Pearl has to bear and face all of those fanatic thoughts, and she answers to it with a rebel behavior. It is clear in her character how society can affect someone's life.

Dimmesdale

Dimmesdale is another example of how society affects our life. He cannot say the truth in public because he feels he spiritual responsibility of the town. If he says the truth, people will not believe in the minister's role as spiritual guide of the community. Therefore, the guilt tortures him and makes him sick. He loses his strength and happiness, until

the point he cannot make decisions by himself. He is helped by Hester to decide to escape from the town, and it is in this moment when he finds peace, strength, and he can think better. He feels the energy to say the truth, he experiences the true freedom by facing his own truth. It is in this inner freedom that makes him to experience God as someone that is merciful. It seems like Dimmesdale had a lot of rational knowledge about God, but he needed to experience God in himself. Curiously, it is on the scaffold, where he says the truth, that he is really a minister. Indeed, it is on the scaffold where he can show to everybody his own spiritual experience and not just spiritually from books.

Chillingworth

Chillingworth's character appears in the story not only as the former husband of Hester, but also as a symbol. He is the physical representation of Hester's and Dimmesdale's guilt, but moreover Dimmesdale's guilt. Indeed, his character appears in the right moment when Hester is being condemned. Later, Chillingworth gets to live near Dimmesdale. When Chillingworth realizes that Dimmesdale is who he is looking for, Chillingworth tortures him through psychological tools, like questioning him about personal things. Chillingworth tortures Dimmesdale just with his mysterious presence. At the same time that Dimmesdale becomes sicker, Chillingworth's shape becomes uglier and more deformed as an external sign of the revenge that he is doing and the inner feelings that it is causing in him. At the end of the book, Chillingworth tells Dimmesdale, "you could not find a place where to hide yourself from me, but the scaffold". This last sentence means that there was no place where it could be possible for Dimmesdale to escape Chillingworth's revenge. Since Dimmesdale says the truth (it was he who committed adultery with Hester) on the scaffold (before everybody and openly), there was no secret to avenge. This phrase is an irony since the scaffold is a public place, so Chillingworth is talking about the "secret", or sin, which is the cause of Dimmesdale's guilt. Chillingworth died quickly after Dimmesdale's death because he has no more motivation to live. His revenge could not be possible anymore; there is no more guilt.

Finally, if you read the book, you'll reach your own conclusions and you can answer by yourself the question, how much can you get from reading a book?