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Studying abroad... does it help or hinder?

Kristina Heflin
Staff Writer

According to a recent study by a group within the University of Georgia system, students who study abroad have improved academic performance, higher graduation rates, and improved knowledge of cultural practices and context.

Dordt College offers 30 different off-campus programs. Though the thought of traveling to exotic locales and absorbing another culture through sheer submersion is appealing, some and daunt to others, many see it as an opportunity to boost one’s education in more ways than one.

Critics of the University of Georgia study say that going abroad could potentially put a student behind in their regular studies, regardless of cultural experiences gained. This is a legitimate worry that often keeps students from trying to fit an off-campus program into their schedules.

In fact, until recently, it was nearly impossible for Dordt engineering and nursing students to participate in these programs. This year, however, Dordt has seen its first engineering student, Danielle DeBoer, travel overseas without falling behind in classes. She is currently studying in South Korea.

“One of our goals here is to make off campus studies available to all majors,” said Linda Van Wyk, Dordt’s coordinator of off campus programs.

A veteran of international studies herself, Van Wyk agrees that any risk of falling behind in classes should be weighed against the benefits gained by experiencing a different culture.

“I don’t feel like you miss out if you schedule it at the right time,” she said. “We only approve program with worldviews and academic rigor that meet Dordt’s standards. That way, it’s not competing with your classes, but rather, enhancing them.”

The cultural enhancement gained by traveling abroad is one of the major factors in favor of the programs. As mentioned before, the study abroad program at the University of Georgia system found students who went overseas to be more well-rounded than their stateside counterparts.

Erica Lieuwen, a Dordt biology major, participated in the Creation Care Study Program (CCSP) in New Zealand.

“The cultural perspective is priceless,” she said. “The only way to truly evaluate your own culture is to step out of it for a time. By being in another culture, you realize that people do things differently and act differently than what you expect.”

These differences in culture can be a refreshing change for some, but for others, it is more the cause of anxiety than excitement. Much of the worth in study abroad programs rests in the individual students who choose to participate.

During spring 2011 students traveled all over Europe on the SPICE program. “It takes a bit of an adventurous person to head out to a foreign country,” Lieuwen said. “[But] I haven’t heard anything but positive from anyone who joins their semesters abroad.”

At Dordt, there are certain requirements that each student must meet before they are approved to travel abroad, including recommendations, applications, and interviews for some of the programs.

“A student also has to have flexibility, a willingness to become independent and learn from others, as well as a sense of adventure,” Van Wyk added.

Other considerations must be taken into account to ensure that students are prepared to travel abroad.

Online or offline?
A look at Dordt’s stance regarding online classes and programs

Kristin Janssen
Staff Writer

In a time period so saturated with the latest technologies, Dordt is seemingly following the trend. Dordt campus’ classrooms are outfitted with smartboards, projectors, and other of the latest technological learning tools.

However, while online course programs are proliferating across the continent, Dordt is only in the experimental stage. Besides a Master’s in Education program moving to extensive online instruction, Dordt does not have an established online degree program.

Dordt’s Provost, Erik Hoekstra, shared that one of the aims of learning in a “comprehensive campus community of Christian discipleship” is for students to grow and change intellectually, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically along each other. This is one reason why Dordt has not developed an online degree program.

However, Dordt has been experimenting with various online structures that Hoekstra calls “innovative course delivery methods.” Many of the experiments exist because of course scheduling issues, both with student and professor conflicts, while some innovations are driven by instructor expertise available outside of the traditional face-to-face delivery method.

Classes in the nursing program often experience course scheduling issues due to conflicting clinical schedules. Junior nursing major Marissa Rieckhoff said, “A lot of the nursing majors wish that there were online courses offered for our senior year so that we could get into the nursing profession but still finish our bachelor’s degree under-neath Christian advisors.”

Nursing majors are certified as Registered Nurses after the completion of their junior year and therefore, they are able to begin working after their junior year.

One opportunity for an online class has already been created. Nutrition, a course required for all nursing majors, is taught online. Craig Stiemers explained that the course, only meets with the students a couple times during the semester.

“It is nice to have nutrition online,” Rieckhoff commented. However, nurses like Rieckhoff may benefit from a semester or full year of online courses. Another course that nursing requires, sociology, is also scheduled to be on-line in the future.

One example being discussed but not currently implemented is simultaneous video conferencing. This technology would allow upper level courses in departments such as philosophy to expand discussion and resources. Since many of these upper level courses are small, Dordt classes would interact with similar courses taught at other colleges. By video conferencing in the advance of the discussion with these classes, students from different backgrounds, as well as a higher number of students, would be involved in the same learning process.

In the Business Department, an E-Marketing course is currently being taught by a Dordt graduate currently working in web analytics for Redbox in Chicago. This hybrid course allows Dordt students to learn first-hand from a professional in the field they are studying.

A final online possibility the college is exploring the possibility of offering Core 399 in other venues—it be online or simply small groups. Schedule challenges regularly create conflicts for first-hand, from a professional and seniors, but the course profits immensely from students with a wide variety of majors.

However, we do want to be open and explore innovative course delivery methods to enhance our current offerings.”
Politics on Dordt’s campus

New political studies professor Jeff Taylor hopes to excite Dordt students about politics

Kelly Zatlin
Editor

Much is happening in politics right now, not only because of the upcoming Iowa presidential caucuses, but also because the political studies department at Dordt has welcomed a new professor.

Dr. Jeff Taylor joined the Dordt College faculty this fall as a professor in political studies, with the goal of exciting more students on Dordt’s campus about politics.

“Our hopes for this year are to build on the successes of the past, while trying to increase enrollment in classes to attract more political studies majors,” said Taylor.

He is also currently the faculty sponsor of the Political Actions Committee at Dordt and is hoping to work with them on getting more students involved in politics on campus.

“My goal is to let them do their thing but provide assistance and guidance where they need it,” said Taylor. “I’m looking forward to that.”

Taylor recognizes that interest in politics among college students is often low to nonexistent, but he has higher expectations for Dordt students.

“The voter turnout between 18 and 20 year-olds is the lowest of any age bracket, so there’s widespread ignorance and apathy there,” said Taylor.

“I’m assuming that Dordt students are at a higher level of interest and knowledge, though. I think things are a little bit elevated, at least on our campus.”

Taylor says some recent presidential campaigns have sparked more interest among college students, such as President Barack Obama’s campaign, as well as that of Ron Paul.

He feels that since both candidates are running again this year, there will be more energy channeled from the college community in those directions.

Taylor is also hoping to see more political candidates stop through Sioux Center and even Dordt throughout this year as candidates prepare for the Iowa Caucuses in January.

“I expect that there will be more candidates coming to Dordt, but I don’t know for sure yet,” said Taylor. “The Political Action Club is trying to attract the candidates to get here. I’d be surprised if we don’t get one or two more appearances.”

Emily Rens, political studies major and member of the Political Actions Committee, says that, “PAC this semester is working towards getting presidential candidates to come to Dordt for ‘round table’ discussions and is working on getting Kristi Van-Sack and Steve King [both will be running for representative this coming election cycle] to stop at Dordt.”

Because of Sioux County’s conservative reputation, Taylor believes this will be a prime stop for Republican presidential hopefuls.

“It’s an appealing location for candidates wanting to reach an audience,” said Taylor. “At least for the Republicans, this would be a likely stop sooner or later. If not on campus, somewhere in Sioux Center.

Though Taylor is hoping to see more involvement outside of the classroom, he is also looking forward to teaching politics in the Christian environment that Dordt has to offer, especially after teaching at public institutions.

“To take that Reformed perspective of the idea that as members of the church or as part of God’s kingdom, we can be involved in all areas of life including politics, is something that we can help improve upon and transform,” said Taylor.

Students go “independent”
Starting this year, digital media majors are required to take on an individual study

Bryan Visser
Staff Writer

Starting with this year’s freshmen, digital media majors will be required to undertake an individual studies course, but this semester’s students promise to set a good example.

“This year, for the first time, incoming freshman into the digital media program must do an independent study at some point in their four years, normally their junior or senior year,” digital media professor Mark Volkers said.

This semester Tim Morgan is doing an animated short of Jeff Smith’s graphic novel “Bone,” Zac Edens and Jacob Buss are working on an original screenplay by Edens, and Jason Stuhrenburg is doing a documentary on the damaging effects of pornography.

Volkers explained that these studies, as well as the studies digital media freshmen and future students will undertake, begin with proposals for a project that he approves, supervises, and evaluates at the end, when their works are shown at the public screening.

“I think an independent study in a field like this is very important because generally, you’re going to pick a topic that you’re really passionate about, something that you feel strongly about,” Volkers said.

“Tailor the study to what you’re interested in doing, on a topic you can ‘jive’ with - something you can engage with through your major (i.e. sexuality through digital media). This is where you see what you can do in those converse ly, see where you can grow in skill or character,” Stuhrenburg said.

Stuhrenburg’s documentary began with a theology project he did last semester, and he is now putting that research into a film for which Volkers has high expectations.

“The independent study for Jason has the potential to go much further. I could see a curriculum being written to accompany this film, a curriculum used by men’s bible study groups or small groups around the country--marketed and sold,” said Volkers.

Other students are excited for different aspects of the projects.

“I always love having that moment where you take the sound effect or music cue at the right moment, accentuating a scene perfectly,” said Morgan.

According to Volkers, Smith has already told Morgan that he would like to see his animated short when it is completed.

Edens is preparing his screenplay on a day in his character’s life, while Buss acts as his producer.

Buss explained that his role as producer was to make sure things were finished.

“I’m going to make sure actors are at shoots, get actors together, and get cameras,” Buss said.

When asked if they had any advice for students undertaking individual studies, Morgan and Edens responded that preparation was a key point.

“Get planning. Plan, organize, collect knowledge for what you want to do,” Morgan said.

“Pre-plan. A lot of preparation helps,” Edens said.
Alumni weekend traditions and festivities

Rachel Mulder
Staff Writer

Alumni weekend, an annual event on Dordt’s campus, provided two full days of activities that offered food, fun, and fellowship for the young and the old. The Pops concert, held every year over alumni weekend, and the Steve Green concert on Saturday seemed to be the main attractions.

The BJ Haan was filled with students, parents, and alumni who came to listen to the sounds of the wonderful world of Disney. Not only did the audience hear music from the best of Disney, but the characters brought to life the many stories, while this year, Green sang family friendly songs.

Despite the chilly weather, Defender fans and alumni came to support their football team. Although they lost 14-37, the Defenders started strong by scoring the team’s only touchdowns in the first half. The halftime show was also something to see. Teams of high school students, college students, and alumni competed at football leapfrog by running and throwing a football down the field. This exciting game resulted in the college students taking the win.

The alumni lacrosse game was a good time as well, with a win by the alumni team. "It was super low-key so nobody was beating up on anyone else too bad... but I know the alumni won," said Andrew Deelstra, who participated in the game.

New faces, fresh places

Dordt welcomes new staff and faculty members to its campus

Dordt's new faculty and staff
Alex Updike
Staff Writer

In case you haven’t noticed, there are quite a few new faces on campus besides the huge freshmen class. That’s because Dordt’s administration hired 22 new faculty and staff members from all over the United States.

From Professor Donald Roth, who moved with his wife from Washington D.C. to teach both criminal justice and business administration, to Dr. Darren Stoub, who came from Florida with his wife and two children to teach Chemistry, to Jon De Groot, who came from Sioux Falls to take over an administrative position in the campus ministries department, Dordt has shown its willingness to grow and improve as an academic institution. According to Provost Erik Hoekstra, there are multiple reasons for the myriad of new hires on campus. Departments such as agriculture, engineering, and nursing are growing ever year, causing a need for expansion.

Other departments simply needed replacements due to retirements and other personnel changes, such as engineering, political studies, and even volleyball. One of the more interesting hires, however, came in the economic department, where Dordt recently filled a position that had previously been vacant for an entire year with the hire of Dr. Jan van Vliet.

"As you can tell," Provost Hoekstra said, "we’ll only hire when we believe that we have a person who is a committed Christian, who is committed to teach and lead from a Reformed world-view, and who shows promise for excellence in their work.”

Dordt is growing, both in student enrollment and in staff and faculty. “We are one of the colleges that continues to grow and these hires all support our commitment to teaching excellence and to carry out our mission of equipping our students and the broader community to work for Christ-centered renewal,” Hoekstra said.

“If we hire only those types of folks, we believe our students will thrive and our programs will grow—but in size and in quality.”
In Ae Seo, a sophomore from South Korea remembered that “it was a little bit hard at first because I am from a totally different background than students here. I couldn’t understand when the students talked about their high schools or their idiomatic and cultural jokes. That made me feel like I was left out sometime. But later I found that it takes time to understand and learn culture, and I should be a little more patient.”

“As for me, this Dordt experience has grown me a lot. At first, I had a hard time with many new, unfamiliar things that made me lonely and helpless. Going through this phase, I could hold God’s hands tighter and only hope for the help from God because there was nothing I could handle by myself,” In Ae Seo said.

“Don’t worry if at the beginning things seem to be hard. You don’t know how to do all the homework you get, and people seem to not understand what you are saying or maybe even doing- it is all a process. Don’t be afraid of talking to new people. Don’t be afraid of sharing your culture. Don’t be afraid of making mistakes, because it is through them that you learn… Remember that God brought you here on a purpose, and that He won’t ever give you something that He knows that you will not be able to do,” Giovanna Romero Sarubbi said.

“I went to a personal space. People here do, which I respect and no longer take offense in,” Wendy Gomez Matamoros said.

“I chose Dordt because of the mission they have. I remember the first thing that I read on their web page was ‘Find your place in God’s world’, and that was the type of college that I was looking for. One that can help me growth in my faith and in which I could serve the Lord. Also their academic and sports program were very interesting to me. I heard about it through my teachers,” said Giovanna Romero Sarubbi, a second year student from Paraguay.

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“Don’t worry if at the beginning things seem to be hard. You don’t know how to do all the homework you get, and people seem to not understand what you are saying or maybe even doing- it is all a process. Don’t be afraid of talking to new people. Don’t be afraid of sharing your culture. Don’t be afraid of making mistakes, because it is through them that you learn… Remember that God brought you here on a purpose, and that He won’t ever give you something that He knows that you will not be able to do,” Giovanna Romero Sarubbi said.

“I went to an international school called Nicaragua Christian Academy, and the director and many teachers are Dordt graduates. I was interested in education and my teachers recommended Dordt,” said Wendy Gomez Matamoros, a fourth year student from Nicaragua “No one in my school wanted to go to Dordt because it was where our teachers went, and it was in Iowa; but I decided to try it out. God opened doors, and hence, here I am.”

“Interacting with people was something that took me a while to adjust. I am used to hugs and kisses when greeting and when saying goodbye instead of a handshake, high five, or nod. In hispanic culture, we honestly don’t have much of a personal space. People here do, which I respect and no longer take offense in,” Wendy Gomez Matamoros said.
Senioritis

A Tree & Its Roots

Did you know that some tree’s roots are the same size as the actual tree itself? So, if a tree is 10 feet tall, its roots go 10 feet deep, 100 feet tall, and 100 feet deep. You get the idea. Well, going off that, I learned a pretty neat analogy this summer that I’d like to share with you.

Tree #1: You’re not learning anything. You’re actually feeling pretty feeling content with your life. You’re pretty busy, but at least you go on your annual Serve trip and help out in the church nursery. Those are your branches. That’s what others see of you. But now let’s take a look at your root system. You go to church on Sunday, you try to catch some peaches and Praise & Worship at least every once in a while, and you try to read a quick devotional every night. See a correlation? Small root system, small tree.

Tree #2: You’ve read the Bible and other books about being “radical”, so you’re stretching yourself as much as possible to do great things for Christ. You try to get involved in as many things as possible. You really do enjoy loving God through loving others, but sometimes, you wonder if you’re doing something wrong. Is life always going to be this stressful, or am I eventually going to get it figured out and settle down? The disciples never had any time to rest, did they? Well, now let’s look at the root system. You’re not really spending a whole lot of quality time with just you and God because you’re so busy doing stuff for Him. You know there’s importance in daily prayer and Bible times, so why not find yourself rationalizing that as long as you’re doing “Christian” things, that counts as your God-time as well.

Tree #3- You’re not procrastinating. Being completely productive is like reaching nirvana: tempting, but ultimately unattainable unless you have the mental fortitude of a Buddhist monk. So, since we both know you’re destined to procrastinate, let’s take this time to learn how to do it effectively. Don’t just sit on the couch; sit on the couch and craft a piece of modern art out of lint and human hair. Sit on the couch and see if you can compose a love poem using only words on the Coke bottle next to you (good luck making sodium benzoate sound sexy).

Look, there’s procrastination, and then there’s creative re-prioritization. The first one is bad for your study habits, the second one – well, the second one is pretty bad too, but you’ll probably feel less guilty about it.

Life-changing Factoid #4: Get to know your professors. When you think about your grandparents, do you really think about the sacrifices their generation made? Do you think about the countless moments in which they put their lives and families on the line? My grandparents, like many of yours, were willing to sacrifice everything in order to fight for true justice. Some of our grandparents hid Jews, many fought in wars, and many risked everything they had to better their families’ lives and may have even sacrificed their own lives in order to stand against injustices.

There is much to learn from their actions; sadly, our generation has rarely taken the time to listen or learn. Yes, the circumstances and situations may be different, but the courage and honor they showed in order to look death in the face and say, “I dare you”; honor to call those you do not even know, brothers and sisters. Is that the same today? Would we be willing to risk everything in order to save an innocent life?

If, heaven forbid, an innocent ethnic group began to be persecuted, would we be the ones to stand up? If the Hispanic panic right next door is getting masked or pushed around by others because of their or her ethnicity, would we try to stop it or would we join in the laugh? If the Middle Eastern man is being mocked because of his country of origin, would you stand up next to him and say, “Brother, sister, we are in this together”? If not, why? Do you really think the past generations before us took the time to ask if they were Christian or would they hesitate to accept help? No, they didn’t care because they stood for something higher than their own comfort. They did not bother to find out their personal beliefs or their political views. They stepped up when others would turn away. It seems that we as Christians have forgotten our role as Christian Americans. How many times have we said, “They don’t deserve to be in America? Who are we to judge or would we join in the laugh at their expense?” How many times have we said, “Those people don’t deserve to be in America?”

We sit at our table and discuss an example are we setting? But nonetheless, what kind of role model our place as Christian Americans. Would we be proud of our actions, or would we join in the laugh? Are we really doing that? Would our grandparents be proud of our actions, laughter, and ridiculous? I myself have forgotten my place and the fact that we deserve NOTHING. We need to re-member our place as Christian Americans. What’s our priority in life? Would you be willing to hide a person in your wall, even if a gun was held against your head asking if anyone was there? Do we have courage and honor? Are you living the legacy of your grandparents’ courage?

Wrestling for a Blessing?

School is in high gear, everything going as planned, eh? Maybe? Maybe not?

We all wrestle to keep the balance in our lives. Don’t worry, good things await those who wait—long enough.

Ladies, I’m sorry. I’m no Jack Johnson, so “Sitting, Waiting, Wishing” doesn’t apply here. Not a chance.

But patience is a talent that we all should develop further. Think about your level of patience—now think of it as a talent.

You’ve all heard the saying, “A positive outlook yields a positive outcome,” although maybe not exactly that way. Amidst the madness of your busy life, you still have some control.

Buckle down, make a plan, put your plans in action, and then, take the time to reflect on what you can do better. We all can do better.

After you have wrestled with the things that once seemed impossible, don’t hesitate to take the lead and help others out.

Trust me; there is light at the end of the tunnel. I have wrestled throughout my college career to keep balance between work and play.

The daily tussle to be on time when my motivation runs low is a simple task that tests my discipline continuously. This might sound crazy, but I do find comfort in staying busy.

I found myself battling my ego, wondering, “Was I good enough?”

Learning to wrestle through the things you simply don’t like to do reaches the things you wish for: is something you’ll have to sort out on your own.

Grab a hold of all things, wrestle through them, and pin them down. I wish you luck.

Until next time, remember to say, “Please and Thank You.” Peace and Blessings.
Lacrosse team plays alumni

Jordan Harmelink
Staff Writer

With all of the alumni weekend festivities taking place this past weekend, the lacrosse team continued its tradition of hosting the annual alumni game, pitting current team members against past players.

A total of nine alumni varying from graduating classes of 2001 to 2010 made it to the game. The founder of Dordt lacrosse, a 2001 graduate of Dordt College, Matt Nuiver also made the trip.

“It can be hard to get guys to come out for this game. At times we graduate from Dordt, they scatter around the country,” Sowers head coach Paul Hoogendoorn said.

The game featured a few sibling rivalries as well. Junior Jeremy Van Dam suited up against his older brother Josh. I myself got to suit up against my older brother as well, Josh Harmelink.

After only a few weeks of practice with full gear, the Sowers were eager to get out on the field and gain some valuable game experience.

After a scoreless first quarter, Nuiver took advantage of a defensive miscue by the Sowers defense to score a goal for the alumni. Hoogendoorn would score again on one of his three goals in the contest in the second quarter.

Assistant coach Greg Johnson suited up for the Sowers and scored a goal in the same frame to make the contest 2-1 at midpoint.

Senior Tyler Buys and freshman Nate Weigel each scored a goal in the second half to give the Sowers a total of three goals for the contest. Unfortunately, the young Sowers squad was not able to keep up with alumni as they were defeated 7-3.

“This game showed that we have things to work on,” junior defensive man Jordan Shaffer said. “I have no doubt we will fix and be ready to roll for our final fall game. Then it’ll be time to work for when it counts -- spring ball.”

At press deadline the Sowers were planning on hosting another game during Parent’s Weekend, October 22. The opponent is yet to be determined.

Ask an Athlete

Shanna Braunschweig
Staff Writer

For round two of “Ask an Athlete,” I decided to interview a female with personality and spunk. Although she did not attend Dordt, she enjoys not drinking smoothies from 55th during the time of the interview. She still gave us some answers that we laughed over for a long time.

Her name is Megan. Her sense of humor is all-natural.

What is your full name? Jessica Noelle Jelasma

Where are you from? Lansing, Michigan.

What sport do you play, and what is it that you are most proud of in this sport? My favorite sport is soccer. I am most proud of winning a Omni Sports contest. Unfortunately, the contest was an opportunity to come out on the field with the Sowers.

Weren’t you a baller from birth?

Yes. From the age of two I played soccer, basketball, and baseball. I was the only girl on all of them. I even remember when I was young I played on a little league team.

Do you sleep with a teddy bear?

No. Although I did have one when I was in kindergarten, though.

What is your favorite food?

That would be pizza. I love pizza. I could eat it every day of the week.

What is your favorite color?

It would definitely have to be blue. I love all of the colors in the blue color family;

What is your favorite color?

I don’t know why. I guess it is because of how I feel when I wear that color.

What is your favorite flower?

I don’t think I have one. I just like all flowers.

What is your favorite animal?

That would have to be a lion. I love the way they move and how majestic they are.

What is your favorite movie?

I love seeing people de- velop. You really get to see how much people grow, especially in coaching. And you can really emphasize God’s love and plant a seed in the kids. I would love to teach in a public school where I could make a big difference. So many kids just need a hug every morning. A P.E. teacher is one of the teachers kids come up to when they need to talk about their problems, so I’d love that.

If you don’t already know Jessica, I would highly encour-age you to get to know her! She is the “bom.com.” And yes, I borrowed that quote from her too.
in the music industry since the release of his first album back in 1984. In these 27 years since then, he has been able to sell three million albums worldwide through 33 studio albums between his normal work, children’s projects, and Spanish-language albums. Thirteen of his songs have reached No. 1.

His ministry has been the same since Steve Green Ministry’s beginnings: “to give rational, compelling and clear instructions into essential elements of Christianity.”

Through Green’s music, his goal is to give a recount of the gospel telling of the Biblical account of creation, the fall of man, the redemption through Christ’s death, and the new creation that is to come. This gospel sets Jesus Christ above as the living life whom we need to place our trust in. “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” “In the Storm,” and “How Can I Keep From Singing Your Praise.”

Green has been active in supporting them.

Some songs included or featured piano, while other songs also included a chorus made up of eleven people. Some songs that he played included “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” “In Christ Alone,” and “How Can I Keep From Singing Your Praise.”

“Wonderful World of Disney”

Hannah Rodgers
Staff Writer

From the first note to the last, the audience at the pops concert was swept away on a Disney journey through all of the classics from the unforgettable Mary Poppins to the stormy seas of Pirates of the Caribbean.

The Dordt band and orchestra played songs from all the characters to life in the city slums. The Dordt band and orchestra played songs from Aladdin to Fantasia. Even with costumes ranging from the wonderful world of Disney to the stormy seas of Pirates of the Caribbean.

The musicians brought all the characters to life with costumes ranging from Aladdin to Fantasia. Even some little kids in the audience came dressed up to support them.

The hosts of the show, Matt Wieromma and Alex Updike, were fun, quirky comic reliefs between songs and connected well with the audience.

Students plan film trip to poverty stricken areas in Mexico

Digital Media crosses borders

Hannah DeVries
Staff Writer

Ten students from the Digital Media Department are traveling to Mexico over Christmas break to capture life in the city slums.

Professor Mark Volkers, Digital Media Production Instructor and professor of the Advanced Film/Video Production class has been hired by Christian Reformed World Missions to produce a film showing life in the less-wealthy cities of Mexico and the work CRWM has been doing there. A few of the cities he and his students will be traveling to are Tiawanna, Cuidad Juarez, Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Yucatan Peninsula.

The documentary itself is called “The Fourth World,” and its focus is global poverty. The goal is to show what life is like in the slums of Mexico. The students themselves will have a great influence in the making of the documentary.

“I look at this as a service project,” said Voekers. “But we’re not slinging paint, we’re slinging cameras. It’s an opportunity to expand our skills but also to expand the kingdom.”

“I’m definitely hoping to greatly expand my own film making experience through this trip, especially when it comes to documentary filming and filming for a major production,” said Digital Media Major, Jayson Korthuis. “I think the trip will be very beneficial in that way.”

This great opportunity to experience a new culture was not lost on sophomore Nate Ritschard. “I am super stoked,” he said. “Mexico is such an interesting place to go…Ciara Leon, China.” said Volkers. “It’s kind of a rotating cycle…next time it might be Nige- ria.”

“I find that every time I get to travel abroad, I learn so much about the world, God, and myself,” Ritschard said. “Basically, it’s gonna be awesome!”

“Can’t come away from a situation like this unchanged,” Voekers said. “There are more songs to record, more people who need to hear God’s truth and more segments of our culture who need to be redeemed for God’s glory.”

“Instantly [you’re] brought deep inside a city a tourist trip,” Voekers said. “There are more songs to record, more people who need to hear God’s truth and more segments of our culture who need to be redeemed for God’s glory.”

“Can’t come away from a situation like this unchanged,” Voekers said. “There are more songs to record, more people who need to hear God’s truth and more segments of our culture who need to be redeemed for God’s glory.”
classy. In all honesty, the state our great country progress to in what would Texas leading forth exploiting Mexico for cheap huge! Plus, you could start Robert E. Lee and you have just Imagine that you are General of everything that would be the capital and becoming the source United States: Texas housing our said, that is, the gravest danger if.' Yes, but they don’t talk always talks about that ‘what y’all (because that’s how we Civil War. Now, I know what here, the South had won the . . . VIOLA! - I can come up with something semester, so maybe - just maybe - I think about why the Ok, I underestimated the criminal justice! But I digress. I am taking a Fessler course this semester, so maybe - just maybe - I can come up with something . . . VIOLÀ! What if, and stick with me here, the South had won the Civil War. Now, I know what y’all (because that’s how we would have to talk now) are thinking: “But Alex, everyone always talks about that ‘what if’.” Yes, but they don’t talk about what really needs to be said, the true, the greatest danger that could have befallen the United States: Texas housing our capital and becoming the source of everything that would be the United States of ‘Merica (insert low pitched hillbilly accent). Think about it for a second. Imagine that you are General Robert E. Lee and you have just won the Civil War. The obvious choice for the hub of your new country because it’s huge! Plus, you could start exploiting Mexico for cheap labor right away, since the south was into that sort of thing - kind of sketchy if you ask me. But what would Texas leading forth our great country progress to in the following years? First, our state bird would have never been the bald eagle. People in Texas have beautiful majestic things; they’re too classy. In all honesty, the state bird would have probably been a buzzard. Now, at first that doesn’t seem like a big deal, but what is one of the first things one thinks of when thinking about the United States and its goats of freedom? That’s right, a big ol’ bald eagle! Without that bad boy representing us, we just aren’t as intimidating to other countries, and the Middle East probably would have attacked and taken us over by now since our military would only have consisted of overweight men wearing wife-beaters and carrying 12-gauge shotguns. This leads nicely into my next point. High blood pressure. Approximately 80% of a typical Texas diet is fried, and I’m pretty sure that’s a low estimate. With Texas leading the way during crucial development of the U.S., this high fat diet would have been a killer - literally. The Wright Brothers die of a heart attack before ever dreaming of inventing flight and Texas’ leading scientists (little oxymoron for you there) spend the next 50 years trying to figure out how to make a go choco-choo. Flight doesn’t get invented until the 1970’s, and by then, everyone is so overweight from eating fried everything that they all have to buy two seats to accommodate their “largeness.” Airplane companies are forced to shut down due to bankruptcy because they can only fill half of every flight, and anyone who attends college and lives more than 200 miles away can never go home for holidays. Family structures break down completely, and the world deteriorates into what can only be described as Gears of War on steroids. Finally, let’s talk about what the real bar in our collective saddles would be. Yes, I’m talking about accents, and unless you’re Carrie Underwood, don’t try telling me that the southern accent is cute; however, if you are Carrie Underwood, I live in SV504. Have you ever talked to anyone with a southern accent for more than 10 minutes? If you aren’t cringing right now, then you probably haven’t. The real problem, however, manifests itself many years after the Civil War. As more and more people develop draws and our speech becomes draws and drwailer, until one day, our speech is so incomprehensible that we’re ‘Merican citizens are the only ones who can understand each other. Foreign relations break down completely, and we become the laughing stock of the international community. We are forced to sit in the back during the G8 summit, and nobody takes us seriously because they can’t understand what the heck we’re saying. Let your mind wander from here; I don’t even want to fathom the possibilities... So there you have it. Another ‘what if” that we can thank God Did a country engineer it? Was a country engineer it? I mean EVERY issue . . . come . . . well . . . the second one is . . . well . . . the first one is think about why the . . . cryin’ out loud! All I do for the introduction and a fairly obvious “what if?” I’m a Psychology “what if.” But now I actually was a country engineer it? I mean EVERY issue . . . come . . . well . . . the first one is think about why the . . . cryin’ out loud! All I do for the introduction and a fairly obvious “what if?” I’m a Psychology “what if.” But now I actually "what if?" I’m a Psychology... What if, and stick with me here, the South had won the Civil War. Now, I know what y’all (because that’s how we...