

# Abroad Education



FALL 2003 VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1 ■ DIRECTORS' TAKE

## New Developments

**D**URING THE PAST YEAR, we have made major changes in our Schools Abroad, moving our offices and classrooms out of the Instituto Internacional in Madrid and Reid Hall in Paris and into premises where we are the only American program. We made this decision, despite deep historical links to both institutions, in the strong belief that, in order to honor our commitment to the Middlebury Language Pledge, we owed it to our students to cut our ties to institutions where English was increasingly becoming the *lingua franca*. Convinced as to both the symbolic and the practical pedagogical value of immersing students in an environment where the target language is the sole language spoken, we concluded that we had no other choice. To the same end, this past year, we also opened two new sites—at the Université de Poitiers and at the Freie Universität in Berlin, both of which are offered

**In order to honor our commitment to the Middlebury Language Pledge, we owed it to our students to cut our ties to institutions where English was increasingly becoming the *lingua franca*.**

to students who will, of necessity, be able to live completely immersed in a host language environment. While this was the primary motivation in the case of Poitiers, France, in Germany we already had such a site in Mainz. By adding Berlin we hoped to offer an exciting cosmopolitan alternative while also appealing to highly qualified and independent

students. These new sites now join Ferrara, Italy, and our multiple locations in Russia and Spain outside the capital cities to offer students an experience far from the temptations to speak English that characterize more traditional study abroad locations. Finally, our new School in Latin America, located in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Montevideo, Uruguay, has just completed its first year. We are already working towards opening a new site outside the capital in Argentina, one in Mexico, as well as sites for Portuguese language students in Brazil. Thus our recent innovations are focused on enhancing Middlebury's traditional commitment to creating the best possible language learning environments for our students, whether in Vermont or overseas.

DAVID MACEY  
DIRECTOR, OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

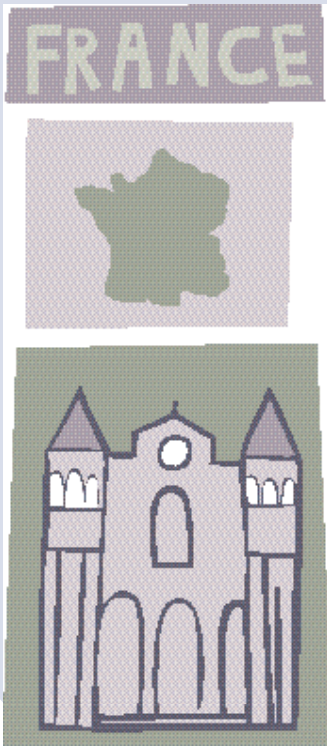
MICHAEL KATZ  
DEAN, LANGUAGE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS ABROAD

## Office of Off-Campus Study

Sunderland Language Center 129  
Middlebury College  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
tel: (802) 443-5745  
fax: (802) 443-3157  
schoolsabroad@middlebury.edu  
URL: www.middlebury.edu/~sap

David Macey, Director  
Liz Ross, Associate Director  
Stacey Woody Thebodo, Assistant Director  
(non-Middlebury programs)  
Julie Good, Coordinator (Middlebury  
Schools Abroad)  
Mark Lilienthal, University Relations  
Coordinator  
Nicole Canfield, Program Assistant

*Abroad Education* is published twice a year by the Office of Off-Campus Study at Middlebury College. The editor is Mark Lilienthal. The designer is Pamela Fogg. Illustrations are by Maranda Maberry. Please direct questions or comments to schoolsabroad@middlebury.edu or (802) 443-5745.



### School in France

■ AFTER MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AT REID HALL, the School in France has relocated. Students in Paris during the 2003–04 academic year will study at le Centre Madeleine on Paris’s Right Bank. Located in the *quartier* named for the Sainte-Marie-Madeleine church, the Centre is near the starting point of the Grands Boulevards and the Place de la Concorde. The area features an array of boutiques and restaurants and the chic rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. Le Centre Madeleine is within walking distance of the ornate Palais Garnier (Opera House), the Louvre, the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, the Tuileries Gardens and the Parc Monceau, and the Grands Magasins.

**Because Middlebury is the only American program in le Centre Madeleine, we will also be able to meet the goal of creating an all-French environment.**

Four metro lines, a commuter RER stop, and at least seven bus lines are near the new headquarters, making it easy and convenient for students to get to and from the Centre and their classes at the French universities on the Left Bank.

The decision to move was not easily made, but, simply put, our expanding numbers made Reid Hall facilities inadequate. Although moving will be a

dramatic change, we will now be able to accommodate better the needs of our students. In addition, because Middlebury is the only American program in le Centre Madeleine, we will also be able to meet the goal of creating an all-French environment.

DAVID PAOLI  
Director, School in France

### School in Germany

■ THE SCHOOL IN GERMANY’S NEW SITE at the Freie Universität in Berlin opened in the fall of 2002 and provides an exciting opportunity for self-sufficient and out-going students with advanced language skills.

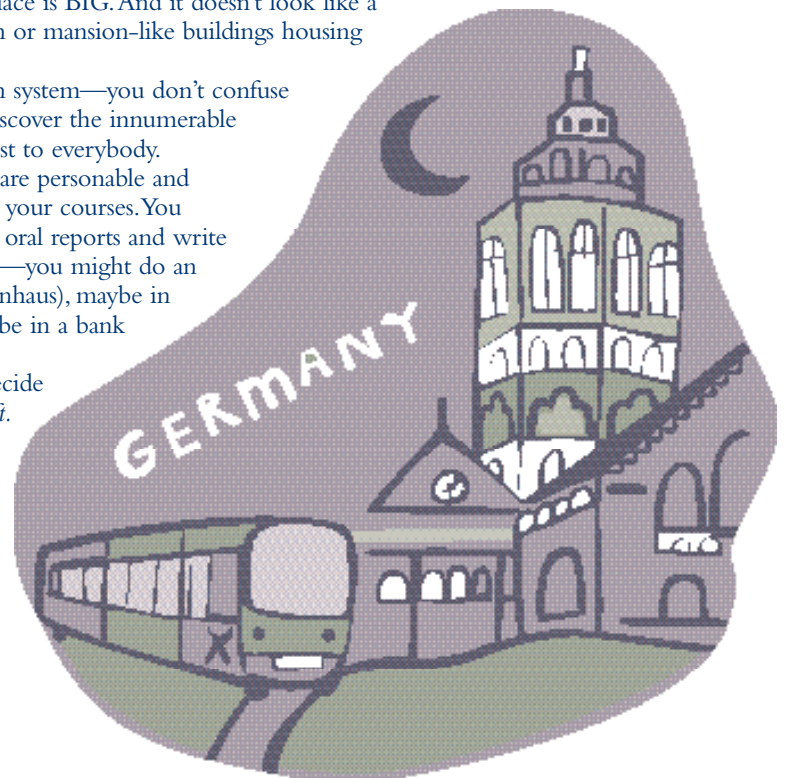
The “campus” tour will surprise you—though you’ll only visit the most important buildings, you’ll be on your feet at least three hours. For the first time, you realize this place is BIG. And it doesn’t look like a “normal” campus—beautiful, private villas alternate with modern or mansion-like buildings housing different departments.

Soon, you become an expert on Berlin’s public transportation system—you don’t confuse S-Bahn or U-Bahn directions anymore—and you continue to discover the innumerable museums, art galleries, and theaters that offer something of interest to everybody.

After talking to prospective professors and realizing that they are personable and willing to meet with you even outside of office hours, you select your courses. You conquer a different library system. You prove that you CAN give oral reports and write those papers in German. So you start looking for new challenges—you might do an internship, maybe in the House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus), maybe in an art gallery, perhaps in one of the prestigious museums, or maybe in a bank or newspaper agency.

You might become fond of a different part of the city and decide to move in with a group of German students in a *Wohngemeinschaft*. You might do an independent study project with one of your professors; perhaps you will go sailing on the Wannsee or join one of the local soccer clubs. Whatever your interest, the opportunities are unlimited—time isn’t. That’s what you realize on your last day, when you wait in line to check in and go home—to your home outside of Germany, that is.

HEIKE FAHRENBERG  
Director, School in Germany



## The School in Italy

■ AS THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL IN ITALY, I appreciate the opportunity to share a little of my background. As a child of Italian parents living in Canada, I was brought up in a household adhering to Italian cultural traditions. I have spent more than half my life in Italy and consider it as much my home as North America. My love of Italy led me to specialize in Italian Studies at the University of Toronto; I completed my M.A. in 1993 and in 2002 earned my Ph.D.

I initiated my collaboration with Middlebury in 1998 as an intern at the Italian School, a great introduction to the Middlebury philosophy and Language Pledge that are in effect both in Vermont and Italy. I immediately felt comfortable in the immersion environment, partly because I grasped its importance during my own study abroad at the University of Perugia, and partly because I had instilled the same “Italian-only” rule in my classrooms while teaching at the University of Toronto.

I returned to the Italian School in 1999 as Assistant to the Director and then moved to Florence as student life coordinator. My experience with the summer language program helped me better understand students in the School in Italy. As the program grew, I assumed new roles, including the establishment of our new program at the Università degli Studi di Ferrara. In Florence, I helped orchestrate the School’s move to our new *Sede* at the Palazzo Giugni, in the heart of the university district. Now, I am eagerly anticipating another exciting year as the programs in Florence and Ferrara continue to develop and mature.

ROSA CUDA  
Administrative Director, School in Italy



## School in Latin America

■ THE INAUGURAL YEAR OF THE SCHOOL IN LATIN AMERICA WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL. South American university life can be quite a shock for U.S. students, with its heavy emphasis on theoretical approaches, deep social involvement, and extensive reading—in Spanish! And our students were, indeed, challenged, both at Universidad de la República in Montevideo as well as at the smaller, private universities there and in Buenos Aires.

In both cities, our students were very well received both by Argentineans and Uruguayans and mingled easily with classmates and friends, quickly learning the local habits of studying in groups over rounds of *mate*, discussing *fútbol*, or debating ways to fix national and world politics. Home stays were also generally successful, with dinner functioning like a daily workshop, where seemingly insurmountable situations became less daunting.

There are many moments that remain in my memory, including one student’s surprise at her unexpected education on local politics. As she left her internship at the Buenos Aires municipal offices, where she was learning about the decision-making process at the city level, she found herself swallowed up in daily political demonstrations protesting Argentina’s economic crisis. Or there was our students’ surprise at the effusive ways in which families, classmates, and friends showed affection to each other with kisses, hugs, and hands knitted together.

**Personal boundaries  
are defined in a  
different, inviting way.**

Clearly, personal boundaries are defined in a different, inviting way.

Our initiative in South America has, meanwhile, only just begun. The famed *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* of Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina, with its top-notch faculty and tumultuous, curious student body, has just joined our program. Soon, we hope to expand the program to Tucumán, a more traditional Spanish and Native American city in Argentina’s heartland, to Guadalajara in Mexico, and to sites in Brazil for Portuguese language students.

CLAUDIO GONZÁLEZ-CHIARAMONTE  
Director, School in Latin America

## The School in Russia

■ ONLY FOUR YEARS AGO, mainstream university classes at the School in Russia were an exception in the academic program. In spite of our belief that these courses provided the best-possible academic, linguistic, and cultural challenge to upper-level students, less than half enrolled in these classes.

As a result of an active campaign to promote mainstream courses and to prepare students better for them, during the 2002-03 academic year, almost 70 percent of our participants enrolled in mainstream courses, and, for the first time, all of our yearlong students took them during the spring semester. This campaign has also resulted in a dramatic increase in the variety of courses our students pursued—a particularly exciting development since many students seek to expand their language skills into a wide range of disciplines.

But the most surprising development has been the shift in the students' own impressions of their experiences. When a recent group was asked to explain why they enrolled in these classes, they almost unanimously responded that mainstrems were an important and *desirable* aspect of their academic program. "I wanted to get real-life, practical experience in Russia, to expand my vocabulary, and to comprehend the Russian educational system," said one student. Another student explained, "This is why Middlebury has the best program—it allows you to be a student not only of Middlebury College in Russia but of the Russian State Humanities University [or Irkutsk, Voronezh, or Yaroslavl State Universities]."

AMY ALLINGTON  
Director, School in Russia



## The School in Spain

■ FOR 50 YEARS, the School in Spain was housed in the historical landmark known as the Instituto Internacional. The increased use of English within the building, however, jeopardized the Middlebury Language Pledge. Thus, last year we moved into the Sede Prim, a turn of the century building on Calle Prim, in the heart of Madrid.

The neighborhood is fascinating. Constructed mostly during the nineteenth century, recent redevelopment has transformed this area into one that hosts a wide choice of lifestyles, where ecology, rainbow coalitions, music, theater and art intermingle with centuries-old taverns and market-places and some of Madrid's most exclusive boutiques and restaurants. The city's museums and cultural institutions are all within walking distance of the *Sede*.

**The atmosphere now makes students aware that communicating in Spanish can and should be a natural habit.**

The Sede Prim is still a work in progress. This coming year will see some additions in equipment and decoration, and particularly the attempt to create something that was never possible at our previous site: a dynamic program that will bring Middlebury students in contact with a diverse population of Spaniards through social and academic activities that give them the possibility of a richer linguistic and cultural experience. Most important, we have already observed the effect of the new *Sede* on students' linguistic and cultural learning goals. The atmosphere now makes students immediately and completely aware that communicating in Spanish all of the time can and should be a natural habit.

KIM GRIFFIN  
Director, School in Spain

## France

Director: David Paoli

Paris:

Centre Madeleine  
Université de Paris III  
Institut d'Études Politiques  
L'Institut Catholique  
Poitiers: Université de Poitiers

## Germany

Director: Heike Fahrenberg

Mainz: Johannes-Gutenberg Universität  
Berlin: Freie Universität

## Italy

Administrative Director: Rosa Cuda

Acting Academic Director:

Sandra Carletti

Florence: Sede

Università degli Studi di Firenze

Ferrara: Università degli Studi di Ferrara

## Latin America

Director: Claudio González-Chiaramonte

Buenos Aires, Argentina:

Universidad de Buenos Aires

Universidad del Salvador

Universidad Torcuato di Tella

Montevideo, Uruguay:

Universidad Católica del Uruguay

Universidad de la República

Universidad ORT

## Russia

Director: Amy Allington

Irkutsk: Irkutsk State University

Moscow: Russian State Humanities

University

Voronezh: Voronezh State University

Yaroslavl: Yaroslavl State University

## Spain

Director: Kim Griffin

Getafe: Universidad Carlos III

Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja

Madrid: Sede Prim

Segovia: Universidad Internacional SEK

