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Georgia Southern University Honors Students Travel to Middle East for Unique Study Abroad Experience

DECEMBER 20, 2010

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A dozen Georgia Southern University honor students will spend two weeks in the Middle East during a unique study abroad experience in January.

The twelve students will depart for Egypt January 4, 2011. During their time abroad, the students will study their lessons, which are designed to have a profound impact, outside of the traditional classroom at the cultural and historic sites they will visit. This is the first Georgia Southern study abroad trip to the Middle East.

"This trip is about much more than simply studying about the Middle East," explained Georgia Southern University Honors Program Director Steve Engel, Ph.D. "During this time, our students will be immersed in the culture as a way of learning about it first-hand. We are also including an opportunity for the students to volunteer at a children's cancer center while in Egypt, which we believe will impact them in a way that nothing simply read in a book or studied in a classroom ever would."

The trip will be lead by Krista Wiegand, Ph.D., who is a professor in Georgia Southern University's political science department. Wiegand has lived and traveled extensively in the Middle East and has conducted extensive research on the region.

"The students on this trip will visit sites, interact with people, and have opportunities while in Egypt that a typical tourist would not have," said Wiegand. "Georgia Southern University and the Honors Program encourage our students to pursue a global education and a very important component of that is delving beyond the tourist attractions and getting a true feel of how people in a country work and live."

Upon their return to the United States, the students will complete a research project on their trip. The students will receive three credit hours for their work. More than 40 students applied for the 12 available spots on the trip. The students selected are:

- Elijah Anderson, Marietta, Georgia
- Katie Brookins, Beaufort, South Carolina
- Kelsey Decker, New Braunfels, Texas
- Jackie Gardner, Jacksonville, Florida
- Christian Gibson, Beaufort, South Carolina
- Kristen Grantham Jesup, Georgia
- Molly Laughlin, Warner Robbins, Georgia
- Allyson Lumpkin, Bainbridge, Georgia
- Steven Mayfield, Dacula, Georgia

Michael Palmese, Martinez, Georgia
Tanya Ramnauth, Dacula, Georgia
James Zimmer-Dauphinee, Conyers, Georgia

All of the students are excited to travel to the Middle East and learn about a country and a culture that they have only read about. They also see the trip as an opportunity to develop their global perspective, a foundation of the University Honors Program experience.

"I have had a long desire to go to Egypt and believe that going there with Dr. Wiegand will lead to a far richer experience than if I went there on my own or with a tour group," senior History and Creative Writing major Katie Brookins said. "I hope to gain a deeper understanding of Egypt's role in modern and regional world politics as well as to interact with people of that culture."

Steven Mayfield, a junior Accounting major, added, "I want to have a world experience in college, and I know that going to Egypt will help me have a better perspective on that."

The University Honors Program at Georgia Southern University provides a small college atmosphere in the context of a large comprehensive university. The program is designed to foster the development of a critical sense of inquiry, a spirit of creativity, a global perspective and an ethic of civic responsibility. The program also advises students from across the university in their pursuit of national and international competitive scholarships. <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/index.php>

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University, offers 114 degree programs serving more than 19,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built

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"O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree..." 🎄🎵#TBT to circa 1964, when a tree in front of the Williams Center was decorated for the holidays.



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