

The Independent

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University of Louisville

Liberal Studies Program

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Jackie Roe Cobb Woodcock Medalist and Outstanding Liberal Studies Graduate

As a double major in Liberal Studies and Spanish, I have had the opportunity to study a wide variety of interests over the past four years here at the University of Louisville. My Liberal Studies major, entitled "International Relations," not only allowed for me to study politics, business, and

writing, but also gave me the flexibility I needed to study abroad four times during my university career! As exciting as it is to have won the Woodcock Medal, my true feelings are best expressed by Socrates: "The only thing I know is that I know nothing."



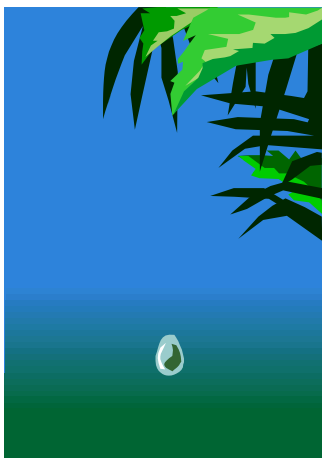
Congratulations to our 15 May degree applicants!

We are thrilled that 12 are participating in commencement!

I am so happy for our graduating seniors, but you should know I 'm sad to see you go. PLEASE let us know what's next for you. It is so encouraging to us, and to the continuing majors, to hear from our graduates.

I hope you'll consider joining the alumni featured on our website. If you're interested in participating in this, call or email me and I'll fill you in.

Additional congratulations to our degree applicants who will be graduating with honors and to [Jackie Roe](#), the Woodcock Medalist and Liberal Studies Outstanding Graduate.





Where is Colin? Vol II. By Colin Ogilvie

Program: Environmental Studies and Activism

When last we saw Colin, he had just missed his flight to Rio de Janeiro. I've been worrying about this since December...

I was put on the next flight to Rio, leaving only an hour later. However, when I arrived in Rio, I had no clue where to go next – no hotel name, no phone number, nothing. I asked around to see if any messages had been left for me, and found only people trying to sell me cab rides. I had two minutes left on my phone card, so I called a contact at U of L, and started off a chain reaction of phone calls traversing several area codes in two continents. The program contact at U of L called a student in São Paulo, who in turn dialed a professor in São Jose do Rio Preto (the 'home base' city of the program in Brazil), who called Dr. Medina in Rio, and the whole thing went in reverse. The second time I called, to obtain the information that the contact had received, I had a mere 40 seconds of time left – as it turned out, only enough time to get down the hotel name. With no other option, I took a cab to the hotel, and to my delight, heard a chorus of “Colin?” coming from the front door as I was unloading my bags. I had finally caught up with this elusive group of fellow students!

As you would probably guess, this was not the end of my mishaps. I have a terrible curse upon me that seems to manifest itself whenever I am most vulnerable (e.g. traveling!). However, I did not intend to write this article about the curse of absentmindedness (or spontaneous imbecility, whichever you'd like to call it). I intended in this story to chronicle my trip to Brazil, and while the paragraphs above make it sound like an endless string of mishaps, it was really a fantastic voyage, full of unique opportunities, amazing memories, and powerful lessons.

In São Jose do Rio Preto, where our partner campus, IBILCE (part of the São Paulo state university system, UNESP), is located, some of

us stayed with host families, while some stayed with students. I was in a student apartment with three other guys – two Brazilians and one Angolan. Alessandro, my official 'host brother' is a linguistics student. His primary mode of transportation is by *moto*, so I spent a lot of time clinging to the back as we cruised around town.

We witnessed an interesting phenomena at UNESP – the students were on strike! While we, the studious and hard-working *gringo* students diligently attended lectures and wrote papers, the Brazilian students held rallies (complete with live bands and cheap beer – sounds like a *party* to me) to protest what they felt to be the state's mishandling of higher education funding. Needless to say, the campus was just about empty as we trudged in every day. Our lectures varied in subject, from the history of Brazilian music to discussions of Brazilian politics and economics. The lectures were most often delivered by Brazilian professors who all proved to be witty and entertaining, and passionate about their subjects. One lecture, in São Paulo, ended in us learning, or attempting to learn, how to samba, followed by a visit to one of the famed samba schools.

Our group toured orange juice and sugar cane factories, two major staples of the São Paulo state economy (especially sugar cane, which is produced *en masse* to provide for the ethanol that is so popular among Brazilian automobile operators. I had the fantastic opportunity of spending a day with a regional operator of IBAMA, the Brazilian equivalent of the Environmental Protection Agency. I talked with the Environmental Police, went behind

the scenes at a zoo, and learned about the complications of protecting the environment in Brazil. In addition to our mini-vacation in Rio, where we visited several beautiful sights, famed beaches, and Christ the Redeemer (the gigantic statue of Christ that watches over the city), we spent a weekend in Salvador, Bahia, a city renowned for a culture rooted in African traditions and vibrant music and cuisine. We also had the opportunity to visit another UNESP campus, at Araraquara, to learn about Afro-Brazilian heritage and history.

At the end of the school trip, in São Paulo, we visited museums, climbed a mountain to get a view of the city of 17 million inhabitants, and even showed our new found patriotism at the state holiday parade. While the rest of the group, for the most part, traveled home, I stayed a couple of extra weeks. My solo journey would include a mini-internship with the Water Department in São Jose do Rio Preto, where I struggled through long meetings and presentations delivered in formal Portuguese with a lot of new vocabulary, a week relaxing with more old friends in Ribeirão Preto, a visit to old colonial cities with Alessandro in his home state of Minas Gerais, and more time exploring São Paulo with Manuella.

While I got off to a rocky start, and my adventures contained a few nerve-racking moments (many unchronicled here), it all smoothed over, and the trip was a magnificent experience. I made a lot of new friends, took an ungodly number of pictures, and learned more in a month than I thought was possible.



Maya Lin, Artist and Architect

For Liberal Studies, April 15th this year was more than tax day. It marked the first visit to the University of Louisville by artistic pioneer [Maya Lin](#), an architect and creative landscape artist who is most famous for designing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC. For an hour that afternoon, Maya Lin held an audience of 600 enthralled as she showed images of her many projects, ranging from works inspired by ancient Indian Mounds to memorials along the Lewis and Clark trail in the American west. Next day Maya Lin continued her work as a Liberal Studies Distinguished Visiting Scholar when she met with A&S students who are interested in pursuing careers as artists, and shared with them the story of her own creative journey.

The Crow's Nest

John R. Hale, Program Director

Back in 1982, when Maya Lin was a 19-year-old architecture student at Yale, she took a course on monuments that commemorate the dead. The students decided that their class projects should take the form of hypothetical entries for an important national competition: a design for a new Vietnam Veterans Memorial that would display all the names of those who had died in the war – more than 57,000 Americans. At the last minute, as the school year was ending, she decided to submit her design for a simple black stone wall cut into the earth to the jury.

The chair of the jury was a Louisville native, Grady Clay, who had acquired fame as a humanist and an urban philosopher. By the second day of the reviewing the thousands of entries, Clay and his colleagues had unanimously settled on the entry that showed the simple black wall, one end of which pointed to the Lincoln Memorial and the other to the Washington Memorial. At that point, no one knew that the artist was an undergraduate of Chi-

nese descent – all assumed that the entry had come from a professional architectural team. The resulting controversy embroiled Maya Lin in more than a year of criticism and reproaches, but in the end the memorial was built as she envisioned it, and it remains one of the most-visited and most-beloved monuments in America.

Here in Louisville, Maya Lin urged students to learn about as many fields as possible, regardless of the career path that they are following. She showed how her own art required study of geography, geology, mathematics, history, anthropology and engineering in order to bring her visions to reality. It was in truth the perfect Liberal Studies message.



Two Updates

Your voices have been heard! Because of your suggestions that we increase our efforts to publicize the program and improve the website, we're adding three short, informative videos to the site. These videos address prospective majors' most frequently asked questions about the program, the admission process, and LBST 300/ENGL 309.



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Liberal Studies Program

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For those of you considering studying abroad in the next year



The Arts & Sciences Office of Advising and Student Services sponsored the Study Abroad Photo contest in March 2008. A&S study abroad participants from 2007 shared their experiences and memories of traveling and studying abroad

via photographs.

Winning photos were selected by University of Louisville students who voted via ULink ballot in March. More than 35 photos were submitted for the contest and can be seen here: [A&S Study Abroad Photo Contest 2008](#)

For those of you studying abroad in the next year, this contest will be held again next spring!

“You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.”

Steve Jobs/CEO of Apple Computer and PIXAR/Stanford commencement speech

His speech is so inspiring; for full text, please go to <http://news-service.stanford.edu/news/2005/june15/jobs-061505.html>