

## LA/W/S Plans to Offer Two New Majors

Written by Dr. Sharon Meagher

After years of extensive planning, the Department of Latin American Studies and Women's Studies has received approval from the faculty senate, the CAS dean's conference and the Provost to offer two new majors, one in Latin American Studies and one in Women's Studies.

The department now awaits the last and final step—review and approval of the University's Board of Trustees. The major proposals were on their February meeting agenda, but the meeting was snowed out. The Trustees will review both majors and vote at the end of April. If approved, the majors will be in the catalog effective Fall 2010, and current students and incoming freshman will be able to declare the majors.

Latin American Studies is a multidisciplinary program designed to advance students' understanding of Latin America. It seeks to provide both broad, general knowledge of the Latin American region as a whole and an in-depth knowledge of specific countries, regions, and cultures. Students will take a range of courses, including social science, historical, philosophical, theological and natural science perspectives on Latin America, in

addition to completing language requirements in Spanish and/or Portuguese. Dr. Lee Penyak, Director of Latin American Studies and Professor of History noted that "this new major will help all members of the University community better understand this neighboring region of supreme importance to the United States. Students will acquire skills to examine their own society and prepare them to confront the responsibilities and challenges of our increasingly interdependent world."

The Women's Studies Major provides an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to understanding the social and cultural constructions of gender that shape the experiences of women and men in society. The curriculum offers a solid foundation in women's studies, facilitating graduate study and careers involving gender justice and preparing students for leadership roles in diverse workplaces and communities.

The Women's Studies Major requires that students take two foundational courses, one in social science and one in philosophy that will provide them with an understanding of the diversity and complexity of feminist theories and so-

cial movements. Students then choose from a wide range of courses, taking at least one course that focuses on history, one that studies issues from the perspective of social and behavioral sciences, and one that examines the representation of women and women's issues in arts and literature.

"We are excited about the possibility of offering a major in women's studies," stated Dr. Sharon Meagher, Chair of LA/W/S, Director of Women's Studies, and Professor of Philosophy. "While all students will find personal enrichment if they better understand the complexity of gender issues, women's studies also prepares students well for work in a wide range of fields."

*Students interested in pursuing a major in Latin American Studies should see Dr. Lee Penyak, penyak12@scranton.edu, Director of Latin American Studies. Those interested in majoring in Women's Studies should contact Dr. Sharon Meagher, meaghers1@scranton.edu.*

## LA/W/S Hosts Talk about Indigenous Rights in Latin America

Written by: Ashley Michini

This February, the University was pleased to welcome guest lecturer, Dr. Farid Benavides of the University of Massachusetts as part of the LA/W/S Series of Programs about the Indigenous peoples of Latin America (see article p.3). Benavides has degrees in Philosophy, Political Science, and Law, so he is well-versed in policy as well as theory.

Benavides spoke about the history of the struggle for indigenous rights in Colombia. Additionally, he spoke of indigenous movements in surrounding countries, and discussed how each movement differed. He elaborated on how the shifts in the elected leaders and their politi-

cal ideologies (spanning from very conservative to leftist) affected the indigenous. He continued to explain that the indigenous have had some successes in securing their rights, but still lack some today. "It was a very informative talk. It's so necessary to keep in mind that the indigenous are still fighting for their rights" remarked Allison Carey, a Sophomore International Business major with a Latin American Studies Concentration. She continued, "This is their civil rights movement, it's comparable to the U.S. in the 1960's. The indigenous deserve their rights, and we need to support them in their pursuit. I think they have a bright future ahead."

## Women's Studies in Collaboration with the Office of Equity and Diversity Welcomed Dr. Shirley Randell to the University

Written by Ashley Michini

The University was privileged to welcome Dr. Shirley Randell for a lunchtime lecture, "Women Saying Yes to Power." Dr. Randell reflected on her own life, and then made connections to her observations of the experiences of women in Rwanda and of exceptional women leaders in the global community.

Randell argued that her own life experiences have taught her the importance of saying "yes" when offered opportunities. She noted that women are often reluctant to accept positions of power, worried that they will not be able to do the job. But Randell noted that her fears were unwarranted and that she was able to obtain the education and credentials she needed to continue to grow.

A wonderful woman, Dr. Randell is a driven leader who has led an extraordinary life thus far, and still has plans for her future.

Her passions have brought her all over the world. She has worked in places such as Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka and Rwanda, working on various projects connected to education improvements and economic development. She has particularly focused on women's issues in this regard.

She is founding Secretary General (2006-8) and mentor of the Vanuatu Association of Women Graduates and the Rwanda Association of University Women. Currently, she is the Director of the Center for Gender, Culture and Development Studies, Kigali Institute of

Education in Rwanda, and has established a Master's Program in Gender Studies there.

A mother of four and a grandmother, Dr. Randell is living proof that women can say "yes" to power and also raise a family. The Women's Studies program is currently working with Dr. Randell to develop a partnership that would include a travel course to study women and development issues in Rwanda. They are in the earliest stages of planning, so be on the look out for more exciting updates!

The event was co-sponsored by Women's Studies and the Office of Equity and Diversity.



From left to right: Dr. Shirley Randell pictured with Rosette Adera, Director of Equity and Diversity

## Scranton Unite— Take Back the Night!

Written by: Ashley Michini

The flowers are blooming and there is activism in the air! The Jane Kopas Women's Center is preparing for the 20th annual Take Back the Night! Take Back the Night is a globally recognized rally to end gender-based violence. The rally will take



Students rallying at the 2008 Take Back the Night

place on April 29th from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the Dionne Campus Green. U of S clubs will show their support by setting up tables with interactive activities which raise awareness about gender-based violence and social justice. At 7:45 we will gather in the Linden Circle and meet up with the Women's Resource Center of Scranton, and together we will march to the courthouse on Spruce St. The rally consists of local music, a Speak Out where people who have experienced violence share their stories, and a candlelit vigil to honor those who cannot attend. All are welcome, so please join us for this very moving night as we demand justice and call for an end to gender-based violence!

Anyone interested in volunteering to help set up Take Back the Night, please contact Hope Smith, Program Coordinator of the Jane Kopas Women's Center at [smithh6@scranton.edu](mailto:smithh6@scranton.edu).

## Pro-Peace Art Series and Art Show

Written by: Ashley Michini

The J.U.S.T.I.C.E. Club, Art and Spirituality Club, and the Jane Kopas Women's Center have come together to host a series of Art Nights in anticipation for the upcoming Take Back the Night rally. These Art Nights will each revolve around a theme, and will be used to spread a positive message into our community. The first night of the series took place on Thursday, March 25 in the 2nd floor DeNaples Student Forum.

The following are the dates and themes for the rest of the series:  
 Tuesday, March 30- Justice  
 Tuesday, April 6- Unity  
 Tuesday, April 13- ENOUGH!  
 Join us from 7-9pm in the 2nd floor DeNaples Student Forum for a night of good conversation, relaxation and creativity to raise awareness of a worthy cause. We will be experimenting with different media throughout the series. Feel free to bring your own art supplies, music, etc.

On Wednesday, April 14 we will bring all of the pieces downtown to the Vintage Theater at 119 Penn Avenue. We will then host an art show on Friday, April 16th from 6 to 8 pm. It will be free and open to the public, and will remain on display over the weekend. Saturday, April 17th there will also be a 1960's themed party to celebrate women and an end to violence, the cost will be \$5 and all proceeds will benefit the Women's Resource Center of Scranton.

## Patricia Oakley and Tyler Nye Share their Experiences of Studying Abroad

### PATRICIA OAKLEY:

University, classes, and extracurricular activities:

"I studied at the University of Buenos Aires and FLACSO, which is the study abroad agency that facilitated the trip. My course at the University of Buenos Aires [UBA] was especially challenging because the students were Argentinians and the teachers spoke so quickly that I had difficulty understanding everything at first. The content was also heavy with theory. My FLACSO classes were more manageable since I was placed with other American students and the classes were taught by language level. My course at UBA focused on protest movements, which was run out of the sociology department. My courses at FLACSO focused on Spanish grammar and literature. I also took an additional course on gender and sexuality and completed a service language program which included volunteer work with the "Madres," an organization dedicated to helping families find loved ones who "disappeared" during the military dictatorship in Argentina from 1976-83."

Living accommodations and travel opportunities: "I lived with an Argentinean family that was very hospitable. The meals were amazing. Family members answered and addressed all of my questions and concerns. One of my favorite trips was the weekend I spent in nearby Uruguay. I traveled by boat from Buenos Aires to Colonia and then made a side trip to Montevideo. I loved having the opportunity to socialize and listen to music in clubs. And, of course, I drank lots of mate, the local tea."

Recommendations and advice for other students thinking about studying abroad: "Do it. You won't regret it!"



### TYLER NYE:

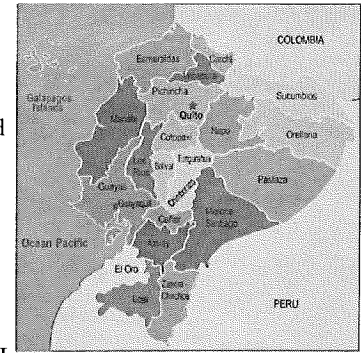
University, classes, and extracurricular activities:

"I've had several study abroad experiences. During my sophomore year I studied at Loyola of Chicago's John Felice Rome Center campus; Rome and then in Barcelona at the Universidad Antonio de Nebrija during the summer of 2008. During my junior year I attended classes at the Universidad Espíritu Santo (UEES) in Guayaquil, Ecuador. My classes were challenging due to the fact that they were offered in a foreign language. But this did not discourage me because I had the privilege of taking courses and participating in excursions that I knew I

could not get elsewhere, such as studying the history of Ecuadorian culture and going on trips to pre-Columbian archaeological sites throughout the Andes. UEES also provided me with the opportunity to volunteer by translating for Hogar de Cristo, a Jesuit foundation which offers micro-crediting to Ecuador's nearly 1.8 million homeless, and teaching English at Sor Dominga Bocca, a foundation for abused and neglected orphans.

Living accommodations and travel opportunities: "I lived with the Cevallos family whose son did his undergraduate and master's in business administration at the University of Scranton, so they were quite familiar with our university and area. In fact, the Cevallos family had hosted Scranton students and even faculty before. My Ecuadorian father, Mr. Cevallos, was 17 years old when he participated on an exchange program to the United States and he still keeps in touch with his host family, as I now do with him and his family. Studying in Ecuador provides an opportunity to experience non-European cultures. I spent many weekends in the highlands of Ecuador and Peru, enthralled by the local language, Quichua. The highlight of my time in Latin America was making the 50 hours round trip from Guayaquil to Machu Picchu, an extensive and well-preserved archaeological site located in one of the most inaccessible regions of the Andes.

Recommendations and advice for other students thinking about studying abroad: LAS presents students with the opportunity to personalize their concentration by selecting a region or country. LAS students can acquire unique knowledge about history, geography, politics, and language by taking advantage of the various universities in Latin America with which Scranton has consortia. I highly recommend studying in Ecuador. Despite being the smallest of the Andean countries and located right on the equator, it is one of the most geographically diverse countries in the world. Ecuador has a large tropical rainforest, snow-capped mountains of the Andes and pristine beaches on its Pacific coastline. Guayaquil is a mere 1-hour flight from the Galapagos Islands and a 2-hour flight from Lima. Not only is Ecuador located within the Eastern Time Zone which makes calling home easier, but it also uses the U.S. dollar which eliminates the hassles of exchange currencies. The U.S. is home to nearly 2 million Ecuadorians and I always love it when I meet someone from Ecuador, especially a Guayaquileño, and can use the colloquialisms which are unique to my home away from home."



## LA/W/S Awarded Diversity Grant

Written by: Dr. Sharon Meagher

This spring LA/W/S has been hosting a series of events on indigenous rights in Latin America; the events have been supported by a diversity grant awarded by the University of Scranton's Office of Equity and Diversity. The grant was written by Dr. Lee Penyak and Professor Yamile Silva.

Penyak and Silva proposed a series of events focused on indigenous peoples of Latin America, beginning with a speaker, Dr. Farid Benavides, continuing with the theme in the film series sponsored by the Latin American Studies program, and ending with an indigenous musical program featuring Inka Wasi, an acclaimed musical group specializ-

ing in Andean educational and musical performance. The concert will be held on Thursday, April 29, from 6:30-8:00PM in Redington Hall.

The purpose of the grant is to provide students, faculty, and members of the greater community with a better understanding of the challenges faced by indigenous peoples and a greater appreciation of their rich cultural diversity.



Members of the Inka Wasi musical group

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## LA/W/S Calendar of Events

### Tuesday, April 6

- Take Back The Night Art Night  
*2nd floor DeNaples Student Forum, 7pm-9pm*

### Wednesday, April 7

- Women's Studies Steering Committee  
*STT 560 4:30pm-5:30pm*
- Take Back the Night Workshop  
*DeNaples Ballroom, 7pm-9pm*

### Tuesday, April 13

- Take Back The Night Art Night  
*2nd floor DeNaples Student Forum, 7pm-9pm*

### Wednesday, April 14

- Latin American Studies Steering Committee  
*STT TBA, 11am-12pm*

### Thursday, April 15

- Latin American Studies Film Series  
"Scars of Memory"  
*Brennan 228, 7:30pm*

### Friday, April 17

- Pro-Peace Art Show  
*The Vintage Theater, 119 Penn Ave., 6pm to 8pm*

### Thursday, April 29

- 20th Annual Take Back the Night Rally  
*Pre-rally on the Dionne Green, Rally outside the courthouse on Spruce St., Pre-rally:4:30-7:30pm, march: 7:45pm, rally: 8pm*
- LA/W/S presents Inkas Wasi Musical Group  
*Redington Hall Auditorium, 6:30pm-8:00pm*

### Sunday, May 2

- JKWC and Women's Studies Banquet  
*The home of Dr. Sharon Meagher, 6pm*

### Wednesday, May 5

- Women's Studies Steering Committee  
*STT 560 4:30pm-5:30pm*

### Thursday, May 6

- Latin American Studies Banquet  
*STT Provost Conference Room, 6pm*

### Tuesday, May 25

- Women's Studies Faculty Retreat  
*DeNaples 405, 9am-1pm*

For more info on Latin American Studies, Contact Dr. Lee Penyak, [penyakl2@scranton.edu](mailto:penyakl2@scranton.edu)  
Interested in Women's Studies? Contact Dr. Sharon Meagher, [meaghers1@scranton.edu](mailto:meaghers1@scranton.edu)

Have exciting news about Latin American Studies or Women's Studies?  
Contact the editor, Ashley Michini, [michinia2@scranton.edu](mailto:michinia2@scranton.edu)