

Zuheir Sofia Endowed International Faculty Seminar (ZSEIFS) 2015 South Africa.

[Flight attendant makes announcement]

MICHAEL STOKES, PH.D. *Biology, Ogden College of Science and Engineering, Faculty Leader*: “The purpose of ZSEIFS is to take a group of faculty to a country of interest as part of our International Year Of... program. The faculty are expected to learn about the country, to hopefully build contacts within the target country, and to bring information about the target country back that they can incorporate into their courses.”

CHRISTINA NOEL, PH.D. *Teacher Education, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences*: “I was in my second year for this project and it really helped me get in a new and exciting line of research that I would not normally have had. And it really helped me to meet colleagues in different colleges and parts of campus that I would never come in contact with.”

KRISTIN WILSON, PH.D. *Educational Administration, Leadership, and Research, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences* (in car): “It is a good day to be in South Africa!”

MICHAEL STOKES (in car): “It is, isn’t it?”

KRISTIN WILSON: “I had a lot of meetings with university administrators. A couple of them stand out in my mind, but one I’ll mention is with Dr. Muthwa at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and when we were talking to her about her institution, she said ‘The name is important, and the name Nelson Mandela carries with it responsibility.’ ‘So,’ she said, ‘every time the chancellor, the vice chancellor or I speak to a group of students we tell them if and when you graduate from this university you’re responsible for the name Nelson Mandela.’ And she said, ‘It means embodying the philosophy of *Ubuntu* so that you understand that it’s not just about you, that you are because of others. It’s about really understanding that you wouldn’t exist without the other people, the other animals, the ecosystem, that you are truly part of something and you need to make that something better.”

MICHAEL STOKES: “One of the things we’d really like to see out of the ZSEIFS are longer-term relationships with and within the country of interest.”

[Song plays in background: “Wake up this morning, this is Africa calling...Wake up this morning...this is Africa calling...”]

SAUNDRA ARDREY, PH.D. *Political Science, Potter College of Arts and Letters*: “My previous experiences had been in developing countries in Africa, so, even though I knew it was going to be beautiful, I was really not expecting it to be as developed as it was. And I think it impacted me even more so because it was so developed on one side of the street, and then on the other side of the street—such devastating poverty.”

“When you travel, don’t go just as a tourist, don’t go just on the tours; get out and meet the people. Because here is your opportunity to share what it means to be an American, but to also broaden your perspectives to know what it means to be a global citizen. And being a global citizen means being aware and sensitive to other cultures.”

[Boy sings about Soweto]

SAUNDRA ARDREY: "Well it's been almost forty years since I was a student on my first study abroad, and I think I had forgotten how scared I was because I was outside of my comfort zone; and so I was in the position of being like my students. And this experience, I think, is going to make me a better faculty leader."

[Boys sing South African national anthem *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*]

MARGARET GICHURU, ED.D. *Teacher Education, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences*: "Children can tell a lot about a country, and so visiting the schools, meeting with the children in the schools, meeting the teachers in the schools helped me have a very good understanding of South African education and at the same time have an understanding of opportunities that can arise that will help me carry out some research with faculty in Africa. And at the same time, opportunities where our students can go out through a study abroad project or student teaching. So I believe that was an avenue of bringing Africa to Western Kentucky University."

"Early childhood education is relatively a new field. It's relevant in America, but in other parts of the world and, specifically, the African continent there's a need to really grow this field, to be able to have a better foundation for young children to go to school, and therefore this was an opportunity for me to learn more about early childhood and see how we can collaborate with professionals in the field. It helped me open my mind more to what goes on in other countries. Anybody would think I knew better because I'm from Africa. No; I learned so much."

ANDREW MCMICHAEL, PH.D. *History, Potter College of Arts and Letters*: "I went in intending to add content to my existing history courses. I went in intending to establish some connections between administrators there and perhaps here, and to do some exchanges, both of knowledge and maybe of people. And something unexpected came up but everything was so flexible that I could quickly incorporate it into what I wanted to do. We're doing some set-up with local schools where we're gonna connect schools in Bowling Green in Franklin/Simpson County and hopefully also in Meade County with schools in South Africa. That's a project that will launch this year, but that hopefully will be around for many years to come, there's a lot of excitement by the teachers here and in South Africa to do something permanent."

CHRISTINA NOEL: "It allows us to cast a wider net into the Bowling Green community by reaching out to local schools, but also keeps it close to home because our WKU student teachers are going to be involved in the gallery walk and they're gonna learn about the new cultural competencies that they'll be required when they step into the classroom."

SAUNDRA ARDREY: "Before we went, we had to study South Africa. I learned about things outside of my discipline, and it was so wonderful because I had all this new knowledge, and I had all new energies. It helps you get outside of your discipline silo."

PHIL LIENESCH, PH.D. *Biology, Ogden College of Science and Engineering*: "It was great to be back in that student mode and be able to take into the information from the program, but also, just to hear about what my colleagues on the trip, what their experiences were."

[Shouts from rugby team]

PHIL LIENESCH: “Probably the highlight of the South Africa program for me was going to the South African Institute for Aquatic Biology, which was a research center that was set up by the first scientist who identified an important fish in, in the study of fish, ichthyology, called the *Silacan*. The museum contains about 900,000 samples. Another goal that I had was to talk to researchers in South Africa. Currently they’re facing a lot of the same challenges that we face here in the United States. So I think when the students hear about these case studies from other countries where they’re using the same basic ideas and theories that the students are learning in class to apply to Kentucky, it helps them realize that these are concepts that are worldwide.”

ANDREW MCMICHAEL: “I didn’t know a whole lot about what was going on with the history of alcohol in South Africa in the southern part of Africa, um, so this kind of opened up a new, a new area of study for me. We stopped at the University of Stellenbosch. Of course Stellenbosch is a wine region. It was a very helpful thing because that was a big hole for me. That turns out to be something I’ll incorporate pretty easily in my teaching and actually into my research as well.”

“One way that I’ll use it in my teaching is to look at the culture of masculinity in drinking, which is a really fascinating area of research that they’re doing there. And then, in terms of the 20th century, I’ll use the stories of South African Brewing (SAB) in the post-World War II era, and the relationship of SAB to apartheid. “

MICHAEL STOKES: “As you travel from the very Europeanized southern coast of South Africa, move up through the central part of the country which is heavily agricultural, and then eventually you come into the northern part of South Africa, where University of Limpopo is located. From the perspective of science and technology, South Africa is easily the most developed country in Africa.”

FRED DEGRAVES, PH.D., DVM *Agriculture, Ogden College of Science and Engineering*: “The main thing for me and the people I’ll be staying in contact with will be the people I met in Limpopo because they have such a strong ag. program, and agricultural is everything for that region. I would like to get a research effort over there primarily promoting the small cattle producers.”

MICHAEL STOKES: “We’ve already had one faculty member who was a participant apply for a Fulbright to do some work at University of Limpopo. We have at least four study abroad trips in progress, in the planning progress, for South Africa for next year as well.”

CHRISTINA NOEL: “So I really think of the ZSEIFS experience as being 25% of my time spent in country and the large majority of my time spent before in preparation to go and then after in synthesizing all of our information and embedding it into coursework.”

[COMMANDER: Eyes front. Left turn. Quick march.]

MICHAEL STOKES: “South Africa’s home to the world’s most spectacular wildlife, hands down. These animals exist in other places in Africa as well, but you can see more species in a shorter amount of time in a smaller amount of space in South Africa than you can in most African countries.”

CHRISTINA NOEL: “This ZSEIFS program was so hustle and bustle. During the day, we all kind of went our own separate ways and were trying to meet people and see things and get a lot accomplished and one

of the real treats of the program is then at night we would all come back together over a delicious dinner and just get a chance to hear about what the other people learned and get new perspectives and make friendships.”

MICHAEL STOKES: “I was really privileged to lead the ZSEIFS to South Africa. I got to know some of my fellow faculty that I didn’t know well before. They were a fantastic group of people. We had wonderful staff along. Probably they’ve all grown professionally as part of it. I know that I certainly have.”