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Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Global Issues Honors Consortium

Summary: An exciting new program at UMM will offer students a global experience ranging from courses in a UMM classroom to collaboration with other students nationwide and culminating with a travel abroad opportunity.

(January 23, 2007)-An exciting new program at the University of Minnesota, Morris, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, will offer students a global experience ranging from courses in a UMM classroom to collaboration with other students nationwide and culminating with a travel abroad opportunity.

UMM students Nathan Giles, Jacob Croonenberghs, Bobbi Smith, Ingrid Avendano and Katie Warner have been selected to be part of the Global Issues Honors Consortium (GIHC).

The GIHC is a two-year honors program for students of color that "prepares bright and motivated undergraduate students of color for graduate or professional study with an international focus." Bart Finzel, faculty coordinator for the GIHC, explained that the program "seeks to inspire while providing skills and training for a group of people who will be strong advocates for social justice."

"The whole purpose of the GIHC is to develop an international experience in whatever area students choose to go into for a career," said Croonenberghs who is interested in studying international law at the graduate level.

In October, interviews were conducted with sophomore college students from the campuses of the University of Minnesota, Morris, the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Tougaloo College and Dillard University to select the first GIHC cohort. Students will attend seminar classes at their respective colleges during the academic year to study topics such as the one the students are currently enrolled, "Global Encounters and the Making of the Contemporary World." They will then come together during summer "workshops." The first seven-week workshop will be held this summer on the campus of the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and will focus on "Critical Debates in the Making of the Contemporary World." A community-based learning course and an intensive research and writing course lead to a study-abroad experience workshop in summer 2008. Students in this cohort will travel together for a six-week experience in South Africa. At the end of the two-year program students will present a final research project at one of the participating colleges reflecting their two years of learning.

This is the first year for the program and also the first year that the University of Minnesota, Morris has participated in a program similar to the GIHC. Fang Du, administrative coordinator for the GIHC, explained UMM's involvement: "We were chosen because of our Twin Cities connection and also because of our successful retention rate for students of color." Du believes in this program because "it is important to prepare students to become the next generation of leaders."

Photo by David Nieves '10, El Paso, Texas. Left to right: Nathan Giles, Ingrid Avendado, Jacob Cronnenberghs, Bobbi Smith and Katie Warner.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.