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Loca Antiqua

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Loca Antiqua: Italia

By Melanie Vanderkolk

This May, eleven students from various disciplines will be taking part in *Loca Antiqua 2003: Italia*, a two-credit study abroad course. The trip will be 17 days long and will allow students to experience first hand historical sites and monuments that they have only read about and seen pictures of in books and in lectures. In essence, the ancient world will come alive and become a real experience for the first time.

Before students could begin packing, though, the Classics Department, the department in which the *Loca Antiqua* is run, has required students to take either the *Women in Antiquity* course, or the *Eternal City* course, both of which have been preparing students for the trip. Furthermore, students have been required to attend the joint meetings of the two courses to discuss joint readings regarding topics such as religion and history, and to ask/answer questions regarding the trip, as well required to finish a Final Project for either of the courses. This final project will aid each student with his/her Site Report, a presentation given at a site along the trip.

While most of the time will be spent in Rome, students and their professors, Drs. Jacobsen and Fronda of the Classics Department, will also make visits to Pompeii, Ravenna, and Florence. Once in the cities, trips will be made to the many fora, baths, churches, houses, temples, and triumphal monuments, all the while taking in the sights and sounds of the people. A final exam will take place on the Vatican Museum, San Pietro, and Citta di Vaticano.

One obvious concern for this year's trip has been the war in Iraq and its effects on the world. Though most have been confident throughout the semester that the trip would take place, the insecurity and instability of the world's political opinions has continued

to take a place in the back of everyone's minds. Dr. Fronda, who traveled to Italy over this year's Spring Break to research locations the students will visit, felt no more hostility towards the war than he did in his own neighborhood, comforting the minds of students and their families. What has also calmed worried parents has been the fact that the primary fighting in Iraq is finished.

Amidst the site-seeing and first hand learning, students are looking forward to taking in the fun that is sure to be offered when they have free afternoons. For many, though, true excitement is for getting the opportunity to study abroad and to add a stamp of unforgettable experience to their passports.