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A Fulbright Summer

06.24.2009 | Faculty, Education  A University of Dayton education professor has advice for how young people can prosper in these tough economic times, and he will share his lesson with about 50 international students this summer in Bulgaria.

"Young people need to learn how to focus on life in a little different way than we did in the past," said Timothy Ilg, an associate professor in the University of Dayton's department of educational leadership. "What types of skills are needed to survive in today's business world? It takes more than just technical skills, but also personal skills, like adaptability and being a team player."

Ilg received a Fulbright award — his fifth — to teach a course at the Fulbright International Summer Institute Aug. 10-22 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The topic of his course is "Prospering in Tough Times: How Does a Young Person Summon Up the Compassion, the Focus, the Strength, and the Wisdom to Launch New Careers during These Difficult Times?"

Ilg said he was inspired to address the economic crisis and how students can prosper after stopping at a restaurant on a recent vacation in the U.S. The two men who served him at his table were both trained lawyers.

"That hit me hard," he said. "You spend all that money and time in school and you can still end up waiting tables."

This will be Ilg's fifth summer teaching at FISI, an academic and cultural program created by the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission in 2002. FISI offers one-week intensive courses in a wide variety of subject areas: politics and international relations; business and economics; law, communication, education, science, social studies, art, culture and Bulgarian studies. All courses are taught in English by distinguished professors from the U.S., Europe and Bulgaria, most of whom are Fulbright grantees or alumni.

Ilg became involved with the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission through a partnership in 2001 between the University of Dayton and the University of Sofia in Bulgaria. He helped the University of Sofia create an educator's leadership training program and develop courses and curriculum.

The University of Dayton has a long track record of participation in the Fulbright Program. Three recent graduates received Fulbright scholarships to teach English in Germany and South Korea for 10 months beginning in August. Anthropology professor Kristen Cheney received a scholarship last year to research the lives of children in Uganda who lose parents to AIDS, and law professor and former dean Francis J. Conte also received a scholarship last year to teach law in Poland.

The U.S. Department of State sponsors the Fulbright Program to provide funding for students, scholars, teachers and professionals to undertake graduate study, advanced research and university teaching. It is the flagship international educational program of the U.S. government and designed to increase mutual understanding between people in the United States and other countries.

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