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Rachel Hatch

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Illinois Wesleyan Student Offered Fulbright Grant

June 6, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Rachel Slough, a 2007 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, has been offered a Fulbright grant to travel to Chile to teach English.

Operating in 150 countries worldwide, the Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Envisioned by U.S. Sen. J. William Fulbright in 1945, the program promotes a mutual understanding between people of the United States and other countries of the world. Since its inception, nearly 103,000 Americans have studied, taught or researched abroad with the program.

Slough received a grant through the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Program to help improve English language abilities and knowledge of the United States abroad. “I’m very excited to work with students and have the chance to continue my research,” said Slough, who will leave in March 2008 and remain in Chile for 10 months.

An English and Hispanic studies double major from Charleston, Ill., Slough will be assigned as a language-learning assistant at one of eight host universities in Chile.

Depending upon her destination, her duties could include teaching, tutoring and encouraging students to communicate in English. As part of her assistantship, Slough also will continue her research.

“I’ve been studying how detective novels evolve in Hispanic countries after the end of dictatorships,” said Slough, who wrote her Illinois Wesleyan senior honors research project on the subject. “Detective novels are typically a way for authors to voice their protests. The genre is particularly insightful because it employs popular culture and is read by a wide variety of citizens. Through the novels we can conceptualize the magnitude of change from dictatorship to democracy and the effects of this on daily life.”

Slough became interested in the subject while taking an IWU Spanish course that included a discussion of detective novels and films. While spending five months in 2006 studying and teaching English in Salamanca, Spain, she explored detective novels written after the reign of Francisco Franco. “I’m interested to see the similarities and differences between the novels in Chile and Spain,” she said of her plans to delve into novels of Chile written post-Augusto Pinochet.

Slough is no stranger to teaching, whether giving instruction on the violin or assisting students as a peer-writing tutor at Illinois Wesleyan. While at IWU, she also wrote for the student newspaper, *The Argus*, and was a member of the Methodist Student Fellowship, the Spanish Club, the Illinois Wesleyan Civic Orchestra, the English honors society—Sigma Tau Delta—and the Hispanic studies honors society—Sigma Delta Pi.

Ultimately, Slough hopes to pursue a career working in a university library. Until she begins her assistantship in Chile, Slough will be working toward dual master’s degrees in Latin American studies and library science at Indiana University. “I know my time with the Fulbright Program will better my research skills and give me an understanding of other cultures that I can take into my career,” she said.



Rachel Slough