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English Professor Explores Jordan

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English Professor Explores Jordan

March 12, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University Associate Professor of English and English Department Chair Alison Sainsbury was one of 12 professors selected nationally from schools in the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) to participate in a State Department-funded seminar on “Teaching Islam and the Middle East” in Amman, Jordan in early January. Sainsbury was accepted to attend after completing a competitive application.

The event was hosted by the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) and sponsored by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), the CIC and the Department of State.

The American Center of Oriental Research is a private, non-profit academic institution dedicated to promoting research and publication in the fields of archaeology, anthropology, art and architecture, history, languages, religious studies and other aspects of Near Eastern studies. Since its founding in 1968, ACOR has served as a liaison between Jordanian institutions, both academic and governmental, and international scholars interested in working in the Near East.

“It is helpful to attain this more immediate understanding of a very complex and nuanced society,” said Sainsbury. “You gain an intellectual appreciation of the culture and integrate those experience back into the classroom.”

The focus of the weeklong convention was furthering international diplomacy and enriching college curriculum by obtaining a view on the Middle East from Jordan’s perspective. There were several sessions led by specialists in a wide variety of fields including politics, education, archaeology and law, with addresses by Matar Saqer, the head of the United Nations Relief and Works Association (UNRWA), and Zaki Ayoubi, vice chair of the International Chamber of Commerce in Jordan. Other convention activities included tours of Amman, King Hussein Park, eastern desert castles, and a trip to the city of Petra.

At Illinois Wesleyan, Sainsbury teaches post-colonial literature, British imperialist discourse in the late 19th and early 20th century, women’s studies, creative non-fiction, hypertext and hypermedia, and Gateway Colloquium.

For questions or additional information, contact Sainsbury at asainsb@iwu.edu.



Alison Sainsbury

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