





**(Continued from previous page)**

The school building was practically brand new, as the building was completed shortly before it was closed down. As I walked into my room, I found the student desks with some chairs pushed in and some left out, the way kids leave them in a hurry; books on the bookshelves; a math quiz completed by the students a day before the school closed; and papers filed away in the filing cabinets. It felt as if someone had died, and their spirit still occupied the space. I got those creepy goose bumps you see in horror movies *right* before a ghost appears. I walked around the room and tried to convince myself it was mine, and it was okay to move everything to a new location, but in my heart it felt wrong to disturb anything. Eventually I convinced myself to start making it my own. I began with the bookshelves, pulling off plastic wrap and wiping down everything. Then I arranged the classroom in a “kid-friendly” layout, just the way my professor Denise Probst taught me.

Over the next three weeks I made signs to hang on the walls, found the nametags and “Second Graders are #1” pencils I had thrown in my carry-on, and hunted for all of the missing second grade materials. I would go to work squeaky clean in the morning and leave covered in dust and dirt from hunting in the basement storage locker or cleaning out the second grade storage room. Materials were scattered throughout the school, and each day proved to be a new challenge. When the first day of school arrived, I had 10 textbooks, 10 desks, 10 chairs, 10 nametags, 10 pencils, and 10,000,000,000 excited nerves pulsing through my body. I remember greeting my students as they walked through the door and then standing in front of them with the same feeling I had on my first day alone with my student teaching group: *What the heck do I do now?* The realization kicked in that these 10 small children and their parents were expecting *me* to know what to do. I hadn’t even found the entire second grade curriculum yet, and I had to teach them?! That’s when all of my training kicked in. We did some fun “getting to know you” activities, set the class rules together and signed them, took a campus tour, read about fifteen books, and did many other fun activities.

As the year went on, I faced the challenges of being a first-year teacher in a newly reopened school. We had to design our reporting system, restart the sports programs and the PTA, recreate traditions that were once held near and dear to everyone’s heart, and so much more. As a first year teacher, I had to learn my new curriculum, create assessments and units practically from scratch, manage a classroom of students of eight different nationalities, and overcome the cultural differences that come with moving to a foreign country. In my second year of teaching, I am *still* figuring out my curriculum, because we finally adopted a new one at the end of last year. I am *still* trying to manage a classroom full of students – twelve boys and only two girls. I am *still* writing new units practically from scratch. And I am *still* learning.

I would not have been able to overcome so many challenges thrown at me so quickly over the past 18 months if it had not been for the support and preparation given to me by so many people. I was taught by some of the best teacher-turned-professors out there who had years of experience and the

ability to relate to my “generation”. Many experienced teachers, including some with whom I work, struggle at this. My professors were able to teach not only older methods that worked long before technology was even an idea, they also taught new methods that are friendly to the technology-saturated children I currently teach. My literacy class with Susan Hart was one of my favorites. She taught us both print-and technology-based strategies and activities. Working in a school where we have limited technology access, it has been wonderful to have resources that are not all computer-based, and I don’t even need a computer to set them up. We did many such projects in all of my classes, and I have used most of them in one way or another for my teaching.

The best class I had during my tenure at UK was my literacy methods class with Dr. Kristen Perry. Her experience teaching overseas and working with English language learners really influenced me and how I look at literacy in the classroom. As part of her class I completed my practicum in a fourth grade classroom at a local elementary school with an interesting population. The majority of my fourth grade class was upper class with every opportunity in the world laid out in front of them, but there was a small group of four students who taught me. They were fourth grade ELLs, but their literacy levels ranged from first grade up to third grade. Working with them intrigued me, but it was also a very big challenge. Luckily Dr. Perry was at arm’s reach ready to provide activities and resources for those four students. Throughout the semester we met one-on-one during office hours to go over new strategies to push them ahead and also to talk about her time spent abroad. The more I heard, the more I knew I just *had* to go overseas and stay there.

When my semester with Dr. Perry ended, my international student teaching semester quickly arrived. Fortunately I was able to complete my teacher training at the John F. Kennedy School in Berlin, Germany under the guidance of Melissa Hill. During my time at JFKS, I sat in on many student support meetings, weekly team meetings, assisted on field trips, and participated in parent-teacher conferences. In each of these situations Melissa was a stellar role model. She taught me to deal with unexpected situations and challenges in the classroom with composure, grace, and a smile on my face. She had an answer for everything and made classroom management a breeze. Melissa gave me new ideas and creative ways to take minor, daily problems and teach the students to work out the issues themselves.

**Continued at the bottom of page 4**

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## International Student Teaching: Two New Partners



Gaoxin No. 1 High School in Xi'an, China

This campus of 3 middle schools and 2 senior high schools is noted for its scientific and technical innovation programs.

Katedralskolan in Linköping, Sweden

"The Cathedral School" offers social and natural sciences curricula at the secondary level.

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### (“From Kentucky to the Middle East...” cont’d)

My cooperating teacher treated everyone – students, parents, staff and faculty – with respect and kindness. Most importantly, she taught me how to handle cultural differences in the classroom without blinking an eye. Half of her class was German, and the other half native English speakers; so she provided materials in both English and German. For students who struggled using English, she used her German to answer their questions and explain as best as she could, and when that failed, she had a student with stronger bilingual skills explain. I have taken away many lessons that I observed in her class about teaching in an international classroom, and I use them successfully in my own classroom.

Had it not been for my professors' hard work, time, and attention, as well as my experience in the international student teaching program, I wouldn't be where I am now. I would not feel confident in handling all the differences in my multicultural classroom. I would not be able to read and write curriculum. I would have let down twelve boys and two girls instead of pushing forward, determined not to let down all the people who trained me at UK. And I would not be sitting at my computer writing to you from a part of the world I never imagined I would visit. Our pasts certainly shape our futures, and I am proud to say I “bleed blue” not only on the basketball court and football field, but also in the classroom.

## Learning to Teach and Live in South Africa

By Lara Walker, Secondary English Education

I was nervous and almost afraid to travel to the southern hemisphere for five months to complete my student teaching requirements. I didn't know anybody there and had never lived outside of North America. However, I eagerly sought the opportunity and adventure that awaited me across the Atlantic Ocean. White sand beaches, choppy waters busy with kayakers, and wind surfers reminded me I was no longer in Kentucky's black-fenced countryside. I was in the slow-paced, small coastal town of Port Elizabeth, South Africa!

I remember very clearly my first glimpse of Pearson High School, the Afrikaans school where I was assigned for student teaching. Pearson resembled what I'd seen of European boarding schools in movies: Hogwarts from *Harry Potter* or the academy in *Dead Poets Society*. The campus was outfitted with tennis courts, squash and cricket fields, a water polo pool, and weight training facilities overlooking the Indian Ocean. Teatime and sports seemed to be two of the most valued activities at Pearson. Their sports teams traveled internationally for competitions, and all of the school staff members took two tea breaks during the school day. I will never forget the kindly teachers and administration at Pearson. Immediately upon arrival at this beautiful school I sensed an affable, comfortable atmosphere. Several mentors helped me hone my practices, and after four months of teaching, many of the teachers became good friends. I was blessed by their company and influence as they taught me to teach.

My first Sunday there, I walked to a church around the corner from my flat. Many of my adventures began at St. James church, because I met most of my friends there. Together we went surfing at Jeffery's Bay--one of the best surfing spots in the world, visited a lion park, snorkeled for sea treats, celebrated weddings and birthdays, cheered Iron Man participants, went on a canoe/camping trip, rode horses through a game park, sailed on the Indian Ocean, and shared many special Braais (South African barbecues) together.

One memorable experience in South Africa happened when one of my Afrikaans friends took a group to his family's farm a couple of hours from Port Elizabeth. This was a traditional Afrikaans farm covering acreage that exceeded the size of the town! We had Afrikaans stew with kudu (meat), hiked up mountains, chased rabbits in the back of a bukie (truck), and went flying in wide open spaces on micro-light airplanes 500 feet above the ground! These adventures were enriched by the friendliness and incredible generosity of the South African natives. I dearly miss the people and landscapes of South Africa, and I want to return to this beloved country soon.

Learning to teach and live in another country was worth every penny and every hesitant step it took to make it happen. Never hold yourself back from an adventure over fear of leaving familiarity and comfort, because you might find that you have another home, far away on another continent.

## Course Announcement

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### EDC 724: Guiding and Analyzing Effective Teaching

2012 Fall Semester  
(August 22 - December 14)  
*Meeting pattern & location TBA*

This course is designed to assist educators interested in supervising teacher candidates and intern teachers.

Course participants will examine theoretical principles, research findings, and develop techniques to critically analyze practice.

Through class activities, participants will be introduced to National Board Certification requirements and will be certified to serve on KTIP committees.

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## Spotlight on Dr. Willis Jones

By Brad Duncan, Senior Information Specialist

The College of Education is pleased to introduce another new faculty member this year: Dr. Willis Jones in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation (EPE).

Jones came to UK from Vanderbilt University where he received his doctorate in Higher Education Leadership and Policy. During his time at Vandy, from 2006-10, he was a teaching assistant for courses such as "Systematic Inquiry: Intro to Social Research Methods" and "Advanced Organizational Theory." Prior to Vandy, Jones received his master's degree in higher education administration at the University of Arkansas and his bachelor's degree in history at the University of North Texas.

"I was really attracted to the nature of EPE," Jones said about choosing the UK College of Education. "Being in a department with historians, philosophers, anthropologists, and lawyers all examining issues related to higher education provides an intellectual atmosphere which I thought would be exciting and stimulating."

A main area of Jones' research involves how institutions of higher education are affected by various factors. One of his studies looks at the effect of diversity at the student, faculty, and administrative levels on the institution's success in areas such as retention rates, fundraising, prestige, enrollment, etc. Another study focuses on how successful, high-profile intercollegiate athletics programs impact an institution's ability to attract potential students.

Please help us welcome this new addition to our community who brings expertise that will surely enrich our collaborative endeavors.

## Self-Discovery Through Student Teaching Overseas

By Cassandra Criscillis, Elementary Education

I discovered many underlying qualities in myself during my international student teaching experience. I think these qualities have always been there, but I have rarely been aware of them, because I am usually surrounded by family and friends in familiar venues carrying out routine activities. When I arrived in New Zealand, I knew nobody, and I barely knew anything about the country; I was thrown out of my comfort zone. At first I found myself to be shy, and I just sat back and gave myself a chance to observe the people I was encountering. Eventually I discovered that I was more outgoing and more willing than ever before to embrace my environment with positive energy.

I found myself striking up conversations with strangers while out and about. As a result I gained many perspectives on this world and on life that I otherwise would have never discovered. I was also surprised by the answers that I gave when asked about my own beliefs, culture, and country. I was impressed with my comfort level and ease when answering what were some of the hardest questions I have ever been asked. I think I discovered more about my own beliefs and how strong my morals are ingrained in myself than ever before. This experience made me realize how open and accepting I am to new people, places, and things.

## Collaborative Connection: Sharing Ideas

One way to sustain the collaborative connection between university and school-based partners is to share ideas about teaching and learning. In your experience, what works and doesn't work to promote quality teaching and foster student learning? What changes have you made; what challenges have you experienced that colleagues might find interesting or helpful?

Please send your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, concerns, etc., to Mary Hrabak at [mrhrab0@uky.edu](mailto:mrhrab0@uky.edu). We welcome your contributions!

## Cooperating and Resource Teacher Tuition Waiver Program

Senate Bill 77 stipulates that state universities will provide a tuition waiver for 6 credits to a cooperating teacher who supervises a student teacher for a full semester. Teachers supervising for only 8 weeks will be eligible for 3 credits. Resource teachers can also receive a tuition waiver for up to 6 credits for each intern supervision they complete.

### To qualify you must:

- enroll within one calendar year after completing the supervisory assignment,
- gain admission to the university and be a student in good standing,
- complete the tuition waiver form prior to each semester you plan to enroll,
- and submit the waiver to the Associate Dean's office prior to the first day of classes for the semester of enrollment.

Information and application are available at:

<http://education.uky.edu/ADeanRI/students/sb77-tuition-waiver>

If you have questions, please contact:

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## Upcoming Events

January 9	Program Coordinators pick up Student Teaching packets
January 10 9:00-12:00 Noon	Student Teacher Orientation Meetings - Taylor Ed. Auditorium
January 11	First Day of Student Teaching
January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 20	Last day to apply for a May 2012 graduate degree (online in myUK)
February 28	Last day to apply for an August 2012 undergraduate degree (online in myUK)
March 5	Dual placement students begin 2nd half placements
March 27 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Kentucky Teachers' Network Career Fair UK Student Ctr. Ballroom
April 2-6	P-12 Spring vacation (in most counties)
May 4	Last day of student teaching. <b>Final evaluations must be submitted to Student Teaching Office - 107A TEB.</b>
June 25	Last day to apply for an August 2012 graduate degree (online in myUK)
June 30	Last day to apply for a December 2012 undergraduate degree (online in myUK)

University of Kentucky

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