A Look into Haiti

Haiti, also known as the Republic of Haiti, is located on the island of Hispaniola next to the Dominican Republic. The total area of Haiti is 27,750 sq. km., approximately the size of Maryland. Port-au-prince serves as the country’s capital and largest city. Although French and Haitian Creole are the official languages, only a handful of Haiti’s population can speak French fluently. Roman Catholicism is considered the official religion in Haiti; however, many Haitians practice voodoo widespread throughout the country. Voodoo is based on beliefs of family spirits who protect and heal people from their illnesses.

Many Haitian traditions start in the month of February. One of the traditions celebrated is the Haiti Carnival, which marks the beginning of one of the holiest times of the year. Carnival also known as the Meat Farewell, dates back to the Middle Ages from the Roman Catholic Church tradition of Lupercalia, an ancient Roman festival held in observance of health and fertility. The Meat Farewell is a period in which Roman Catholics indulge in all the fats and drinks before the temperance of Lent. After this, they are not to consume any meats during the 40 days of Lent leading to Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Similar to Mardi-Gras, Carnival is considered to be the biggest cultural celebration in Haiti. One of the most important aspects of carnival is music. People dress up in costume and travel the streets with their floats and music. Traditionally, it is a time for people to come together to dance, sing, parade the city, and let go in celebration of freedom.

For more information on how UWG is helping assist earthquake relief efforts go to: http://www.westga.edu/diversity/index_12322.php

Source: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/251961/Haiti
http://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Haiti.html

Dare to Declare Interdisciplinary Studies?

Interested in natural science, social change or issues within the global community? Are you an independent learner? Before entering college, some students already have an idea of what they want their major to be. For others, it is not that easy. During this time, if you are unsure what your career goals are, you can take classes that appeal to you.

Interdisciplinary Studies offers three major degrees in Environmental Studies, Environmental Science, and Global Studies. These majors build on knowledge from multiple viewpoints and give personal meaning to environmental issues and social problems in society. They provide students flexibility, a cutting edge and the opportunity to connect with new faculty. Students are able to choose a particular interest that best fits them and blend different perspectives together with a specific thematic focus. Students are also given the opportunity to work individually and take courses that best fit their needs to prepare for careers in areas such as the private and corporate sector, global business, international development, environmental impact and the public civil servants work sector.

For more information on how to declare as a major, contact Dr. Aran S. MacKinnon at 678.839.6038 or visit http://www.westga.edu/xids/.
South African native, Reynard Van Tonder is currently the Distance Learning Testing Coordinator with Distance Education. Reynard came to the U.S. five years ago. “I enjoy being in the U.S. I like the freedom of being able to do things by myself without being governed by my parents or government.” He says one thing that reminds him of home is Georgia’s rain.

An alumnus of the university, he recently received his BBA in Accounting in 2009. During his tenure, Reynard had the opportunity to be on the Dean’s List and hold office as the Secretary of the International club. Some of his greatest accomplishments are graduating, and maintaining a good GPA.

Reynard is an active member of the International club. While at UWG, he plans to inform and diversify the campus. One thing that makes me unique is that I am a people person. With my job, I am constantly communicating with students, instructors and testing facilities.” In his spare time, he likes to travel, eat and visit family in Atlanta.

Reynard’s motto is “failing to plan is planning to fail. Be organized and stay on top of things.” He says within the next two years, he plans to obtain a Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) or Master’s of Professional Accounting and travel within the U.S.

Ashley N. Lewis

Ashley Lewis is currently a senior majoring in Pre-med Biology. She is a member of Phi Sigma Pi National Honors Fraternity and MAP Mentoring. Some of her greatest accomplishments consist of being able to graduate in four years with Honors, and becoming a member of Phi Sigma Pi National Fraternity. She says her experience here at UWG keeps increasing. “The more organizations I join and fill my time with productive things to do, the better the experience.”

Ashley is no stranger to hard work. Aside from academics, she devotes much of her time giving back to her community. Ashley volunteers at Tanner Hospital in the Breast Health Department, Women’s Battering Shelter in Atlanta and co-coordinates Feed The Hungry events with her brother. Despite her busy schedule, Ashley always makes time to travel. “I love to travel. Some of my favorite places have been Savannah, Panama City, Miami, and anywhere there’s a beach.” Outside of traveling, Ashley also enjoys exercising, designing clothing, writing music and poems, drawing and connecting with friends on Facebook.

Her motto is “mind, body and soul. One isn’t complete without all three.” She says “being a well-rounded person is what people should strive for. Working on all three will get you to a point where you will feel comfortable about yourself. Without all three, you will be an unbalanced person.”

In the near future, Ashley plans to continue her education at Emory University in hopes of one day working for the Center for Disease Control. “UWG has given me a chance to grow up. My advice to other students is, confidence is important and you can get through anything with faith in yourself.”

**Black Tie Affair**

A Night of Musical Theatre: Featuring Selections from African American and Latino Broadway Musicals

Attire: Casual

February 9th Lower Level Z-6 @ 7:00 pm.

**Conversations about Culture Series**

February 10th Executive Dining Room (EDR) @ 11:30 am.-1:30 pm.


February 19th Row Hall 212 @ 12:00 pm

**SAC Black History Month Event, Featuring the poet Shihan**

February 24th Campus Center Ballroom 108.3 and 108.4 @ 6:00 pm.