There are several updates involving various areas in which to report. In the area of curriculum development, the CIEP has expended much time and effort to update its writing curriculum. The majority of this work was accomplished by Gail Farber, Carol Johnston and Mike Williams. Moreover, the CIEP is launching new curriculum this fall with new texts, evaluation instruments, syllabi, and other materials. Meanwhile, the reading curriculum review committee was formed this summer and began its work.

In the area of administrative operations, Cristy Steffen and Charles Duve, under the direction of Carolina Coronado-Park, have been working to launch a new CIEP website. The new site will include features such as interactive presentations, e-brochures, new web forms, online application processing, and electronic payments for application fees. The CIEP is also planning to produce one or more promotional videos for the website. The site will be launched by the end of October, however, we will continue implementing some of the features until the end of December.

Cristy Steffen also successfully competed for the position of CIEP Promotions and Admissions Assistant. This is a new full-time position for the program and will help the CIEP better manage new applications, serve prospective students, and aid with the promotion of the program.

Also important to its operations is the news that the CIEP is moving! The program’s operations have been based in Baker Hall for over 30 years, but starting in January 2014, CIEP will operate from the newly renovated Bartlett Hall Building. This will afford the staff superior facilities in space specifically designed for the unit.

Finally, this fall, the CIEP is hosting its first student from Okayama University in Japan. Ms. Yuka Sakimura is a member of Okayama University’s administrative staff and is here to study and foster future collaboration between our institutions. Additionally, this October, Instituto Presbyterian Gammon in Brazil will send a group of high school juniors to study in the CIEP for a 4-week program.

I am grateful for all the work of the staff to continue to develop the CIEP, wish everyone success, and truly look forward to the next sessions.
What started off as an occasional association between the UNI College of Business Administration (CBA) and the Culture & Intensive English Program (CIEP) has turned into a collaborative partnership that brings students from all over the world to UNI’s campus. This collaborative partnership has allowed the CBA and the CIEP to work together to develop a variety of specialized business English programs at UNI.

The CBA and CIEP began collaborating together after Christine Schrage, Instructor of Marketing and Global Opportunities Coordinator at UNI approached Phil Plourde, Director of the CIEP, about a grant application. “I needed a way to work with the grant to make it so that when students came here we knew that they were going to be successful in the classroom,” said Schrage “the CIEP provided that.”

The grant, called the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) Grant established an exchange program between Iowa colleges and Brazil universities. It allows students from exchange universities in Brazil to come to UNI during the summer to help prepare the students who will be on campus for a whole semester. The grant also allows UNI students to study as exchange students in universities in Brazil.

After the first summer of FIPSE Grant participants came to UNI, Schrage and Plourde started working on ideas for additional specialized programs to bring a variety of international students to UNI.

“We started working on these other ideas about having people come in to learn business English, giving it a different twist, different time periods, so we could see what we could do to get people on campus.” Schrage said.

So far the specialized business English programs have brought in students with a wide range of professional backgrounds from Brazil, China, Columbia, Dominican Republic, and Poland.

Students enrolled in a specialized business English program participate in a variety of activities and lessons throughout the duration of the program, which typically last three to four weeks. While the CIEP organizes and provides the language component of the program, Schrage organizes trips to Iowa businesses and provides students the opportunity to engage in real American business practices and meetings. When deciding what businesses to take students to, Schrage says, “I try to look at the group of students and what kinds of things they want to see, and then I contact those types of companies.”
The CBA and CIEP both have plans to further develop the specialized English business programs. Phil Plourde hopes to be able to develop a special program with a set curriculum that could occur multiple times a year and be accredited by the CEA. Chris Schrage would also like to see the program become accredited, and hopes to increase the number of participants in the program in addition to increasing the number of students who stay at UNI for longer periods. She also has big goals for UNI, the CBA, and its students.

“My first big audacious goal is to get an international experience for every student graduating out of the College of Business, but I'd really like to see UNI become this big important hub in the Midwest for networking of people from different countries and trade and us to be the go-to place for that,” Schrage said.

Plourde and Schrage are already taking steps towards their goals. Plourde and CIEP instructors have begun planning the English instruction for the 2014 Professional English Program based on the instructors experience and feedback from the students. Schrage is working on further developing and promoting the programs any way she can.

“I just put the word out,” says Schrage, “I send emails, I send our brochures, and anybody I talk to I say, ‘hey we have this program, maybe you should consider sending students there, whether professionals or university type groups.’ Word of mouth is the best thing possible so it’s never far from my mind to tell somebody about what we have here and what we can do, especially if they want to improve their English skills and learn a little bit more about American business practices.”

Schrage is also working on making the programs visible on the CBA website in addition to the CIEP website.

To further develop the programs, Schrage looks at information compiled from conversations with the students, the profile sheets she requires students to fill out prior to starting the program, and the assessments that students fill out at the end of the program. She also collects information from the instructors, business professionals, and any other personnel involved in the program.

“I look at all of that information and decide what I need to switch around and/or figure something out differently,” said Schrage.

Both the CBA and CIEP hope to continue to collaborate together and grow the business English programs at UNI.

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Both the CBA and CIEP hope to continue to collaborate together and grow the business English programs at UNI.

“We’re working to understand the market place, understand what our students want and meeting those needs with a well-structured program that is structured in a way that understands the role of the student in the classroom,” says Phil Plourde.

Plourde and Schrage feel that they are going in the right direction and believe the programs will continue to benefit the CBA, CIEP, and UNI.
This June the Culture and Intensive English Program partnered with the College of Business Administration and UNIBusiness Global Initiatives to provide English language classes for the Professional English Program organized by Professor Chris Schrage. The program ran from June 10 to June 25. Program participants were eight professionals from Colombia. Most of the group was associated with EAFIT University in Medellin, and they brought enthusiasm and a variety of life experiences to the classroom every day.

Jaime Lyon, Emily Luttrell-Narigon, and Kate Hein worked together to provide instruction on topics related to the workplace, incorporating grammar and vocabulary instruction in context. These instructors designed the program on the basis of the group’s needs and interests, which were ascertained through a needs analysis sent out to the group before their arrival, as well as first-day surveys and informal feedback collected throughout the program.

“Daily we would cater our lessons toward the needs of the students. Many times we had lectures prepared but because the students were focused on another topic from a prior class, I would then apply new skills to the specific topic they were interested in,” Lutrell-Narigon remarked.

Students attended English class for five hours each day, with Lyon and Luttrell-Narigon teaching in the morning and Hein in the afternoon. Students benefited from a variety of different teaching styles and recycling of content and language from class to class. One student said, “The rotation of the teachers and work with different teachers was a very innovative methodology for me; I liked it a lot.” Another said “I really liked the methodology used by teachers in the classroom; the three teachers dictated their part and all subjects were synchronized.”

Topics of instruction included conflict management, entrepreneurship, and American business etiquette. The instructors embedded instruction on prepositions,
question forms, phrasal verbs, business idioms, and modal verbs. Because the course was catered to this group’s needs, students reported personal progress in key areas of language development.

One student noted, “We learned American culture in the world of business.”

Vocabulary development was a priority for this group, and one student noted that “idioms were very important, very useful for our professional activities, and helped us to prepare the company presentations [required for the College of Business].”

Exit surveys administered by the College of Business showed a high level of satisfaction among students. Students gave the program high ratings and wrote that they would recommend it to others. It was a great experience for students and teachers alike, who worked together to reach common goals. Jaime Lyon summed up the rewards of a program like PEP as follows:

“Business English is a need that is growing globally so having the opportunity for a group to come and focus specifically on this need was a great experience. Hopefully, the students will find their experience and knowledge here useful in the future.”
With one semester left to study at National Chengchi University in Taiwan, Meng-Ju Lu chose to return as an exchange student to Cedar Falls, Iowa, where she studied English during a summer program in 2011. Meng-Ju Lu, nicknamed Lulu, is studying Land Economics with a minor in Accounting at NCCU—a partner university of the University of Northern Iowa.

She said the positive living conditions, weather, people, and campus were all important factors in her decision to return to UNI. The location was also ideal for learning English during her first visit.

“I’d been looking for a university that provided a short-term language center, but the priority of my consideration is the location because I don’t want to go somewhere where there are too many Asians, so I chose the middle of America, so it will be more challenging,” she said.

Although the NCCU summer program was short-term, she gained skills in CIEP that transferred well for her journey as an exchange student for Spring 2013. Writing skills were valuable for the application process. She remembered business email etiquette and used these skills to make inquiries for the exchange.

In addition, CIEP’s emphasis on listening proved to be highly important upon arrival.

“Through the summer, my listening skills really improved,” she reflected. “Even in just one month, because you expose yourself in the whole English environment so it really benefits.”

While her previous experience in listening classes focused on comprehending short utterances, CIEP’s listening classes focused on understanding longer speeches or lectures, which helped in university classes.

“Listening is the most difficult thing,” said Lulu about the challenges she encountered as an exchange student. “Everybody speaks the same language, but they have different accents. Different regions. Some are clear and some are not. So it’s the first barrier or obstacle to overcome. Then it’s the speaking. Before in our education, we focus on how well you do on the test, not how well you speak or listen. When we try to speak, even, we have enormous vocabulary, but we just use simple vocabulary to communicate.”

“My listening skills really improved. Even in just one month, because you expose yourself in the whole English environment.”

~Meng-Ju Lu

English Corner, a student organization that coordinates conversation activities for international students, provided opportunities to practice speaking and listening while making friends.

“We met every Thursday for one hour with American students,” described Lulu. “They helped us to improve English skills through games or topics of discussion.”

In contrast to the Taiwanese education system, small classes at UNI use discussion as a way of learning. As a student, Lulu was surprised she could have more contact with professors.

“I found that professors here, when they teach, they tend to be more interactive with students compared to my university,” she said. “They focus on when students ask questions actively. The professors usually encourage us to throw out some questions in the class, and everyone can discuss.”

As an exchange student, Lulu also spent free time volunteering and attending events sponsored by the International Student Association.

Occasionally, she visited with other CIEP students at CIEP-sponsored activities like the International Food Potluck and Kalona Trip. Lulu believes that CIEP is a “good foundation for making friends” and still keeps in touch with classmates from Brazil that she studied with in 2011.

“We are not only in the same CIEP class, but in the same dorm, so at night when everybody gets homework, we meet at lunch and play games, so we cultivate a good friendship with them,” Lulu remembered.

Now that her Spring exchange experience has come to a close, this college senior must return to her home country and home university. However, Lulu is hoping for a way to return to Cedar Falls for a Master’s degree in Accounting. The short-term program experience studying English in CIEP is having a long-term effect on her educational choices.

Admitting the intensive nature of the program, she encourages current CIEP students to keep moving forward:

“Stay optimistic. You will benefit in the future. When you go to academic classes, still you have to read, write, speak and listen. What you learn now will pay back!”
Ethnic Groups in China  

By Zhipeng Ye

In China, because of the different environments, living habits, customs, and histories, many different ethnic or minority groups have developed. China has 56 recognized ethnic and minority groups, including the Han, Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uighur, Yi, Tujia, Naxi, and others. The many ethnic groups have very interesting and different cultures and customs always shown in living habits, forms of marriage, and taboos.

First of all, most of the ethnic groups live separately. Due to living in geographically remote and closed areas for such a long time, many haven’t received enough education. For example, in a marriage survey of eight hundred people in the Tujia group, more than 70% of girls only finished primary school. They would not marry or live too far away from home, and so that causes special ethnic features. For example, the houses of the Tujia are always built together. So it’s hard to see only one house in a Tujia area. The Tujia houses are always in a little hamlet or a village.

Second, marriage customs of many ethnic minority groups is very different from today’s mainstream society. For example, the Naxi group traditionally has had consanguineous (similar ancestral) marriage and communal marriage. One characteristic of the traditional Naxi marriage is called ‘The Summer Wedding’ (Mosuo language). It’s a marriage in which the man and woman each live with their mothers (following the matrilineal tradition). The woman and man can become a couple if they like each other. However, if they have no economic agreement, they might not marry. The man lives in the wife’s house at night and then goes back to his mother’s house in the daytime. If they have a baby, the baby belongs to the mother’s sister. The father will not bring up the baby, but bring up nephews. Also, his baby is brought up by the baby’s mother’s brothers. Once the man and the woman fall in love, they can live together. And their love is the basis of the Summer Wedding.

Third, a lot of ethnic groups have taboos. The Kazak group is one example with many taboos. One of these is that young men cannot drink alcohol in front of the old. Kazak people believe they should never cross or step on table linen. They should not sit on a box, which is full of food or other tableware. They never eat pork, dog, donkey, or animals that died naturally. They should not calculate other people’s cattle in front of the owners. Also, they don’t like others to praise their children in front of them, especially using the word “fat” because they think it will bring bad fortune to their children.

From the living situations, forms of marriage, and taboos, we can know a little about China’s ethnic groups. The ethnic groups people are less than Han Chinese people who number the most in China—over 90 percent of the population. Only sometimes can we see the other ethnic groups. With the development of China’s society, the characteristics of different ethnic groups have become more and more distinguishable. I’m learning about their cultures in my own country, too.
The education system in China is serious and hard. Chinese children begin to study at an early age. The Chinese educational quality is very high because students absorb a great deal of knowledge from the time they enter elementary school. Because there is a lot of knowledge they need to learn, they learn good study habits, and these habits allow them to learn faster and give them the ability to keep knowledge firmly in mind.

In addition, due to the fact that there are so many Chinese people, there always are more than sixty students in one classroom, and all the students stay together almost every day. This kind of educational system makes children keep in touch with each other and gives them contact with many different types of children quite often.

Thus, children learn how to cooperate with others beginning at a young age. It is also a really good way to help them to shape good character because, as we know, shaping people’s character in childhood is very important. As a result, they can deal with many problems, spend lots of happy time with friends, or face the trouble they cause in childhood. This is a valuable experience for them.

In high school, they begin to be ranked in order by grade. The order is always ranked by the unit of the whole class, which means maybe thousands of students will be ranked together. From this order, students know which level they are in, realize how cruel the competition is, and adjust their mood to keep working hard.

If students do not have good grades, this forces them to face their study problems and to make changes in their study methods. This hard process helps students to become mature, such as learning to control emotion and bearing pressure. If they have tough times in the future, they will not lose control because they have experienced these things when they were younger.

If a student has good grades and is ranked high, he or she will help other classmates a lot and work harder to make sure they get better grades and remain highly ranked. This teaches students a lot and leads them to have a strong inner world.

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**China Facts**

**Population:** 1,303,701,000  
**Capital:** Beijing; 10,849,000  
**Area:** 3,705,405 square miles  
**Language:** Chinese (Mandarin), Cantonese, other dialects and minority languages  
**Economy:** Industry: Iron and steel, oil, machine building, armaments, textiles and apparel, petroleum, cement  
Agriculture: Rice, wheat, potatoes, pork, fish  
Exports: Machinery and equipment, textiles and clothing, footwear, toys and sporting goods, mineral fuels
Isabel Alvardo Yactayo
CIEP Global Connections Scholar
Graduate student in the Department of Languages & Literature
From Lima, Peru, Isabel Alvarado Yactayo followed in the footsteps of her siblings and pursued her dream of studying in the United States. In January 2013, Isabel arrived at the University of Northern Iowa as a graduate student in the Department of Languages and Literature.

After beginning her Spanish Master’s classes at UNI, Isabel was eager to improve her English skills in order to help her develop academically and professionally. Isabel described her desire to learn English, “My classes are all in Spanish. But my teacher says, ‘you can find more information at the Rod Library’ but it is in English… I want to improve for my career, and I understand to improve I need to speak much better English.”

In May 2013, the CIEP announced a scholarship opportunity for students. The Global Connections Scholar Award was created in order to offer financial assistance to students who had recommendations from a staff or faculty member of the University of Northern Iowa. Award recipients had to provide proof of academic merit and financial need. When this scholarship opportunity was announced, Isabel applied and was granted a scholarship award for CIEP tuition for the Summer CIEP session.

Since receiving the scholarship, Isabel worked hard to focus on her English skills. She commented, “In this semester, I improved. I understand more. I work with my teachers to improve my grammar and pronunciation. It is very good, I have great teachers.”

In addition to practicing English, Isabel also teaches Spanish courses at UNI as a graduate student. Through teaching, she is able to learn about American culture and share her own culture at the same time.

“It’s an amazing experience, I teach grammar and emphasize the pronunciation. (My students) are very polite. We can share many experiences about the country, the music, and customs,” Isabel remarked.

In addition to learning the English language, and teaching Spanish, Isabel enjoys spending time with her host family, attending CIEP activities such as the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), attending barbecues and traveling the U.S. to visit her brothers and sisters.

When asked, Isabel described the following as her ideal life in ten years, “I would like to teach in my country and share my experience, to improve not only English, but to learn the culture, about other countries, and people.”

CIEP Tuition Scholarship SPRING 2014

The Culture and Intensive English Program will offer a tuition scholarship to prospective or currently enrolled CIEP students in Spring 2014. In normal circumstances, the scholarship will cover the cost of CIEP Tuition for two consecutive sessions. Other expenses such as housing, meals, books, health insurance and university fees are not covered in this scholarship. The total amount of the award is $4,900 which covers tuition for two sessions ($2,450 per session). Applications are now being accepted. Submissions are due October 15, 2013.

Additional Scholarship Opportunities

The CIEP also offers additional scholarship programs including: Cedar Valley Business Professionals Scholarship, Cedar Valley Resident, Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Scholarship and the Global Connections Scholar Award.

For more information, visit: www.uni.edu/ciep/scholarships
An English teacher for nearly 20 years, Mike Williams, the Culture and Intensive English Program’s Academic Coordinator, has taught the English language and U.S.A. culture to hundreds of students from all around the world. His journey as an educator began when he was a language student himself, studying Chinese in Taiwan in 1990. As a part of his exchange program he taught English to Taiwanese students. Williams had been contemplating getting a masters in journalism (his major as an undergraduate), but he enjoyed teaching so much that he changed his mind and decided to get an M.A. in TESOL. He also got invaluable experience teaching English at Hebei College (now Hebei University) in China and worked for some time for an English newspaper in Beijing.

He joined the CIEP team as a Graduate Assistant in 1998 while working dual master’s degrees in TESOL and Mental Health Counseling at the University of Northern Iowa. During the time Williams has been at the CIEP, he has also served as a program assistant and an academic support specialist before becoming the academic support coordinator.

“Now I teach one class,” Williams informed, “but my main job is to study the curriculum that we have in our program and to oversee its... continual development and evolution [and] that it meets our students’ needs and projected needs for the future in the academic world”.

This has included incorporating technology in the classroom. Students recently piloted a program using iPads to video chat with other English-language learners in Turkey as a way to practice their listening and speaking skills.

Teachers also use eLearning, “as another way to give students a step up to the academic world,” Williams said. The CIEP strives to provide students with the best education possible, and students have responded.

When Williams was at an educational exhibition in Taiwan a few years ago, he ran into a former student who, after completing her studies with the CIEP, went on to earn a master’s degree at UNI. She was so overjoyed to see CIEP representatives at the exhibition that she asked if she could share her experience with other Taiwanese students stopping by the booth in hopes that they would consider attending the program as well.

“It’s always nice to run in to [former students] and to hear [about their] academic classes and then to hear later...what they’re doing and that they’ve finished [their education] and they [have] a career... or family...in their life [now],” Williams expressed.
Meet the CIEP

Staff

Administrative Staff
Philip Plourde, Director
Mike Williams, Academic Coordinator
Carolina Coronado-Park, Program Coordinator
Cristy Steffen, Admissions & Promotions Assistant
Anastasia Bender, Secretary II
Sally Roos, Activities Coordinator
Shawna Schrock, Activities Coordinator Assistant
Olivia Randolph, Office Assistant
Vanessa Hilst Robles, Administrative Assistant
Charles Duve, Graphic Design & Electronic Media Assistant
Nick Carolan, Housekeeper

Academic Support Specialists
Gail Farbor
Carol Johnston
Emily Luttrell-Narigon
Jaime Lyon
Petra Maier
Lauren Rein
Tom Riedmiller

Program Assistants
Carol Anne Floyd
Ashley Jennings
Matt Steffen
Christina Tsimpides

Graduate Teaching Assistants
Shimaa Aly
Caitlin Dau
Kate Hein
Marine Pepanyan
Daryl Veatch

Translation Staff
Tawrat Alfarad, Arabic Translator
Yanqing Han, Chinese Translator
Xiaozhen Lei, Chinese Translator
Yoshi Abe, Japanese Translator
Sujeong Seo, Korean Translator
Harun Parpacu, Turkish Translator
Anh Thuy Le, Vietnamese Translator
CEDAR RAPIDS TRIP
On the 4th of July, CIEP participated in the American Independence Day celebrations by attending the Freedom Festival in Cedar Rapids.

COMMUNITY MEALS
Throughout the summer, CIEP students had the opportunity to volunteer in the community. On July 24, students served a meal at the Catholic Worker House in Waterloo, Iowa.

FLINT HILLS TOUR
On July 25, students traveled to Shell Rock, Iowa to tour Flint Hills Resources.

CIEP BARBECUE
In June, CIEP students gathered for a barbecue where they were able to cook a meal and participate in various games and activities.

END OF TERM PARTY
Students and staff gathered together on Friday, August 2 to celebrate the end of another successful CIEP session.

DES MOINES TRIP
On July 6, students spent the day in the capital city of Iowa, Des Moines. They were able to visit the capitol building, and see several attractions in the city.

CONVERSATION HOUR
This summer, students had the opportunity to participate in weekly conversation hours and attend culture discussions. Discussion topics included: Baseball, Language Learning Strategies, and Nonverbal Communication.
Welcome New Students!

Summer 2013
During the Summer 2013 session, the CIEP welcomed 17 new students from nine countries including: Brazil, China, Dominican Republic, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Saudi Arabia. Pictured on the left are a representation of the new summer students along with the activities staff.

Fall 1 2013
In the first Fall 2013 session, the CIEP welcomed 58 new students into the program from 15 countries including: Bosnia, Brazil, China, Colombia, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syria, and Tibet. Pictured on the left are a representation of the new summer students along with the activities staff.

New CIEP Website
This Fall, the CIEP will be launching a new website. This site will still be accessible at: www.uni.edu/ciep. The new site contains interactive features, online application capabilities, and more comprehensive information for applicants, current students, staff, partners, agents, and representatives. The new website contains the following features:

- Interactive Map with CIEP Alumni Profiles
- Online Application System
- Interactive Brochures
- Translated information
- Activities & Academic Calendar
- Promotional Materials
- Interactive Handbooks

Acknowledgements
In addition to the authors, the following people assisted in the creation of this newsletter:

Photography: Sam Castro, Sally Roos, Charles Duve, Olivia Randolph
Design: Cristy Steffen
Content & Editing: Carolina Coronado-Park