

## **Math students learn lessons on the Inca Trail**

**by Grace Lim - Tuesday, February 23, 2010**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/2522/math-students-learn-lessons-on-the-inca-trail/>

Eric Kuennen wanted his students, all future math teachers, to view the world of mathematics from a different perspective. This desire to shake things up led Kuennen and 16 of his students to the mountains, jungles and deserts of Peru.

"We really need to go someplace that's different from the U.S.," said Kuennen, an assistant professor of math at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, who along with Dr. Jennifer Szydlik, led the students on a study tour in Peru last summer. "We need to take them out of their comfort level."

In the four-week course "International Comparative Mathematics Education Seminar (Math Education in Peru)," students spent the first week of class in Oshkosh, where they studied theories and conditions of learning and the theory and practice of teaching. The next two weeks took place in Lima, the capital of Peru, where the students attended class at the Universidad del Pacifico and visited public and private elementary and secondary schools. The students also were given an opportunity to teach a class to Peruvian students. The last week was spent traveling Peru where they stayed at a jungle lodge in the Peruvian Amazon Rainforest, explored the Inca ruins and hiked the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu.

Kuennen said going to Peru, for many of his students, was a journey in discovery.

"It is completely different from what they are used to in Oshkosh, in Wisconsin," he said. "The city of Lima is a huge sprawling city with lots of lower-income, kind of Third World neighborhoods. It was an eye-opener for our students to see that so much of the world lives in a completely different standard of living than what we're used to."

- [Read the full story and watch videos at College of Letters & Science Special Reports.](#)

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