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NEWS RELEASE

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Feb. 27, 1997

HAVE PASSPORT/GERMAN LANGUAGE SKILLS: WILL TRAVEL

MISSOULA —

Ben Cannon of Clancy, a senior in international business at The University of Montana—Missoula, was one of 17 students who left Missoula Feb. 17, bound for Germany and Austria as participants in the German Study Abroad Program.

The group, traveling with foreign languages Assistant Professor Elizabeth Ametsbichler, touched down first in Neckargemund, Missoula's sister city in Germany for the past four years. There they have a month of total immersion, living with host families and taking part in special courses at the University of Heidelberg, Germany's oldest university, before moving on to Vienna to finish the semester.

Although UM students have been going to Vienna every spring since 1973, the Neckargemund/Heidelberg segment wasn't added until 1994, after the sister-city relationship was established. The new segment has "greatly enhanced" the program, Ametsbichler said, giving the students an opportunity to form personal relationships in German families before attacking the metropolis of Vienna.

Students in the program are enrolled at UM for 16 credits, which they earn in grammar, conversation, theater and culture courses. To get into the program, students must have excellent

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German language skills and be in at least their fourth semester of German. Three weeks of intensive orientation on the UM campus precede the trip.

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