

Bolivian professor learns, teaches at Meredith

AYANA RHODES
Staff Writer

As a result of an exchange program that Meredith has with other countries, some new students and faculty can be seen in the halls of Meredith College. This year, Benita Cespedes is a visiting professor in the foreign language department.

Cespedes is from Cochabamba, Bolivia. This is an area composed of both mountains and jungles. The climate in the city is usually warm, but the jungle right outside of the city is very hot.

Cespedes is a *Licenciada* at San Simón University. She has had five years of study and has completed a thesis in order to become certified as a *Licenciada*.

Cespedes teaches three languages at San Simón University: English, Spanish, and Quechua, which is one of the native languages of Bolivia. In addition, Cespedes teaches summer and winter English courses at Catholic University in Cochabamba.

Cespedes is at Meredith through an agreement between San Simón University's and Meredith's foreign language departments. This teacher exchange will result in a professor from Meredith teaching a needed subject in Bolivia next year.

Cespedes is currently teaching Spanish Phonetics and Phonology. This class teaches students to pronounce the sounds of native Spanish speakers.

Cespedes also takes some courses at Meredith. She is currently enrolled in Voice and Articulation, English as a second language (ESL), and

Second Language Acquisition. Cespedes said that she was taking these classes in order to "improve my skills as a teacher."

Cespedes is also taking a pre-adolescent/adolescent behavior class. She says that to know this helps even though she does not teach adolescents. "It will help with my nephews and will eventually help when my three year-old son gets

older."

Being new to the school and the area has not been easy to Cespedes. "Most people are really nice," said Cespedes. "They ask 'how are you? Is everything okay? Do you need a ride?'"

However, Cespedes is sad that many students do not talk to her, not even the ones in her classes. She thinks this is "really weird" because in her

culture, everyone talks to new students. She says that the environment in Bolivia is "more open."

Cespedes misses the hugs and kisses of her culture. When

Americans meet, they usually shake hands. Even though Cespedes says that in Bolivia, she does not show the usual amount of affection of her culture, she does hug and kiss others, and for her, Americans' need for space is foreign.

Cespedes also misses speaking Spanish. Here, she is required to speak so much English that she really enjoys speaking Spanish with Dr. Hatsy Nittoli, foreign language department, and other Spanish speakers.

Cespedes said that she would like for students and faculty to smile and to speak to her more, because she lives in Meredith's guest house alone and misses her family very much.

Cespedes is also an apprentice for the *Meredith Herald*, and she will be writing periodic pieces about her life in the United States.

Her first piece follows.

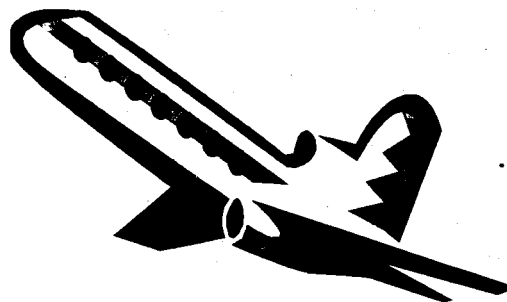


Benita Cespedes is a visiting professor from Bolivia in the professor exchange program.

PHOTO BY AYANA RHODES

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From the Office of Study Abroad and
the Department of Foreign Languages



UP, UP AND AWAY

You are invited at 9:00 pm on Thursday, September 16, 1999,

to the Chapel Common Room, where students who studied abroad last Spring will discuss their programs and reflect on their experiences. In addition to being an opportunity for interesting conversation, this meeting will be an information session for students who are interested in studying abroad.

Whether you are interested in learning about Meredith exchange programs in France or Spain or interested in finding a program elsewhere (Zimbabwe, Japan, Australia, England you name it!) Please join us for the evening.

DATE: 09/16/99

TIME: 9:00 PM

Grocery shopping quite tricky

BENITA CESPEDES
Guest Writer

Shopping in a supermarket seems to be a very common and trivial thing to do. Some people like it; others do not. Some may or may not like it, depending on what they are going to buy.

I am in the third group. It takes time to grocery shop, and if you are indecisive, it takes more time because you have to make your choice and bargain to get a better price for a good product.

You must be wondering, "Where can this happen?" Here in the United States, prices are fixed, except in a flea market. Well, in my country, Bolivia, in most of the markets you can haggle with the seller unless you are in one of the fancy supermarkets that we are starting to have as a result of the progress we have from watching foreign movies and from people who have been abroad and want to reproduce the things they have seen in bigger countries.

Besides the opportunity to

haggle in Bolivia, you can also smell flowers, vegetables and fruits; sometimes they do not look as clean or disinfected as here, but your nose can guide you towards the things you want or need to buy.

I learned that in supermarkets here, you do not need your nose to do your shopping; you need to use your eyes to read the brands, the type of product and the expiration date. These things are things you need to be trained on.

Although this is not my first time here, it takes me a while to get in the right track to do my shopping in the supermarket.

In one of my first visits to Food Lion, Dr. Hatsy Nittoli of the foreign language department, took me to the dairy section to buy milk. I finally chose between whole milk and skim milk when she asked if I had looked at the date.

So there are many things you need to be aware of when buying groceries in a supermarket. I hope to do it faster and more accurately very soon.