Cal Poly Graphics Students Study in London

San Luis Obispo – It wasn’t all tea and crumpets for 18 Cal Poly Graphic Communication students and their professor, Ken Macro, when the group spent five weeks in England studying at the London College of Communication as part of GrC’s London Study program.

The five-week extended field trip was designed to teach two courses, taught by Professor Ken Macro, that reflect the history of the graphic communication industry in England and Europe and expose students to that history.

The courses — Production Management for Print and Digital Media, and Management Topics in Graphic Communication — covered production planning, scheduling, and control for print and digitally imaged products, as well as equipment and inventory planning, resource optimization, and the application of quality management principles to the printing industry. Students learned about current trends and practices related to graphic communication management, studied theories of social change and industrialization of the printing industry in England and the evolution of print production laborers into skilled technicians in a modern industry.

Macro said the experience expanded each student’s view of the origination of print and its affect on the English language. “It provided students with an up-close hands-on analysis of rare and valuable early printed incunabula that was simply riveting. Having the opportunity to tour innovative world-class operations in a changing and very competitive industry was absolutely stimulating,” Macro said.

The students toured companies and historical sites in England and Scotland including DSTi, Lavenham Press, Polestar, Pillans & Waddies, and CATS Solutions.

They also attended a training facility for “The Guardian” in central London; toured St. John’s College Library in Cambridge where they viewed printed works of Caxton; and toured the British Library, where they viewed printing artifacts including an original Gutenberg Bible and an original print of Shakespeare’s first folio.

Harvey Levenson, head of Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication Department says that the London Study Extended Field Trip will be repeated next year and is a good example of the type of opportunities and intellectual experiences the department provides students. “While we are part of a state university, our Graphic Communication program is national in scope and we are now developing an international presence,” said Levenson. “Over the past year we have had representation not only in England, but in Russia and Brazil as well.”

About Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication Department

Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication Department (www.grc.calpoly.edu) is celebrating its 60th anniversary in the 2006/07 academic year. It is one of the largest and best-known programs of its kind in the nation. It has more than 33,000 square feet of modern laboratories and over 3,000 Graphic Communication alumni. The department offers concentrations in printing and imaging management, electronic publishing and imaging, design reproduction technology, graphics for packaging, and an individualized course of study. In cooperation with Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business, the department also offers an MBA with a focus on document systems management. The department is accredited by the Accreditation Council of Collegiate Graphic Communications and houses the Graphic Communication Institute (www.grci.calpoly.edu). The Institute conducts research, testing, product evaluations, seminars, workshops and conferences for industry.