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March 20, 2006

DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire may be a continent away from Paris, but on March 24, 2006, Main Street will sound like the Champs-Elysee as high-schoolers from across the region visit campus for French Immersion Day.

In honor of the “Semaine Internationale de la Francophonie” (International Francophone Week), 50 local area high school students are to spend a day on campus immersed in French activities. Students and teachers from Dover, St. Thomas Aquinas and Newmarket high schools will visit UNH Friday, March 24, 2006. Before arriving, all students will sign a contract promising that they will speak only French during the entire time they are on campus.

“Immersion is one of the best methods for learning another language and culture, and students will have the opportunity on French Immersion Day to experience life in a French-speaking environment. At the same time, many of these high school juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to explore the UNH campus and to sample first-hand the daily activities of a university student,” says Barbara Cooper, professor of French.

Students will participate in a variety of activities during the day. They will attend a presentation on UNH’s study abroad programs in France, visit French classes, work on a computer-based project in the Language Resource Center, have lunch at the Holloway Commons dining hall, meet with native speakers of French from around the globe, and interact with UNH French-speaking students and faculty in a series of French games. All of the activities will be run entirely in French and will allow students to see, hear, and speak French for an entire school day. A special display of French-related books will be available in the UNH Bookstore.

EDITORS AND REPORTERS: You are welcome to observe any of the French Immersion Day activities at Murkland Hall. Please notify Barbara Cooper, professor of French, at 603-862-3771 or btcooper@unh.edu if you intend to do so or if you would like further information.