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Date: February 13, 2002

To: Nancy Marlin, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Al Sweedler, Office of International Programs

From: Huma Ahmed Ghosh, Department of Women's Studies and Asian Studies
Doreen Mattingly, Department of Women's Studies

Re: Women's Studies/Asian Studies in China, Final Report

The following is a report on the trip to China funded by the SDSU Office of International Programs for the spring and summer of 2001. At the outset we would like to thank the OIP for their generous support of \$6000 to enable the program to materialize and be a success.

A group of 21 students and 3 faculty members from the Department of Women's Studies visited China from the 3rd of June to the 25th of June 2001. Students enrolled through Extended Studies in an existing WS course (WS 580, "Women in International Development.") The travel-study trip was called "Women in China" for advertising purposes. SDSU faculty did the bulk of the work of setting up the course including making travel arrangements and hiring Chinese guides. The group visited and stayed in Peking University in Beijing, Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu and Shanxi Normal University in Xian. Materials used to describe the program to students are attached.

The purpose of the travel study course was to foster international understanding of women's lives and to expose San Diego State University students to issues concerning international politics and peace through direct contact with Chinese students. This three- week course was extremely successful in achieving our goals and benefited the students greatly. The highlight of the trip was the creation of people-to people contact for the better understanding of US-China relations with a potential for further contacts.

The long-term adversarial relationship between China and the United States has contributed to ignorance and misinformation about culture, institutions, and

everyday lives in the two countries. On this trip students from both countries were able to dispel those misunderstandings, and experience first-hand the realities of women's lives. This was done through lectures, informal get-togethers with students and faculty of Chinese Universities, and through visits to various Chinese women's organizations. American students visited a prominent women's legal center in Beijing, the offices and headquarters of the All Chinese Women's Federation, daycares, hospitals, and schools.

While in China, specifically Beijing and Chengdu, the students attended lectures by Chinese and American professors on the status of women in China and the USA. Lectures also dealt with topics of education, family, migration, and governments of both countries. Issues discussed during lectures and visits to various institutions focused on women's rights as human rights, community stability, political freedoms, and specific issues of women's empowerment in China.

We plan to continue the program with trips in alternate years; the next one is planned for June, 2003. The SDSU Women's Studies Department is currently setting up a long-term exchange programs with Peking University. In Spring 2003 we anticipate the first set of students from Beijing to visit SDSU for a semester, and then accompany the next SDSU travel-study group to China. Individual relationships have also been created between students and faculty from both countries that should result in long-term communication and understanding of women's situation and human rights in China and the USA. For example, the Women's Studies Department has spent its own funds to help finance a visit by Tao Jie from the Peking University Women's Studies Department.

Overall, the trip was extraordinary. I think that for many students it transformed their worldview, and I am certain that most of them would never have made it to China on their own. It was a lot of work for us, but well worth it.

Budget

The \$6,000 award from the Office of International Programs was used to pay the expenses of the three faculty members: Patricia Huckle, Huma Ahmed Ghosh, and Doreen Mattingly. Students were charged \$2,650 for the trip and class. Several additional sources of funding were secured to provide scholarships for the students, including a \$6,000 mini-grant from the Hansen Institute for World Peace, \$500 from the Fu Foundation, \$3,000 from other private donors. In addition, the College of Arts and letters provided a total of \$7,750 to fund individual students. Attempts are being made to seek additional grants to further the program. Grant applications will be sent to the Ford Foundation and to other international agencies interested in gender issues in China.

Dispersal of Information:

Upon returning to the United States, students and faculty participating in Women in China Travel Study Trip shared their experiences in several ways, including an article in the Women's Studies Department Newsletter, a workshop with the Hoover High School Young Women's Studies Club (attendance 45), and a noontime presentation on campus (attendance 25).

The faculty will incorporate materials and experiences from their trip into the curriculum of Women's Studies courses, such as, Women in Asian Society, Women's Work, Women in International Development and Women in Cross-cultural Perspective.

Cc: Susan Cayleff, Chair, Women's Studies Department

Attachments: OIP grant letter
Application Packet
Information Packet sent to Students