

## International Educational Experiences Report

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Under the auspices of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA), I traveled to Ghana Africa this summer, July 24-August 4, 1999, for the "Second International Working Conference on Public Management and Development Administration." The conference theme was "Improving Government Performance in Development." This conference brought together both educators and practitioners in public administration from both the United States and Africa. Along with plenary sessions, there were several concurrent training workshops. I was one of the presenters for the "Management, Education and Training Practices and Techniques to Enhance Effectiveness and Efficiency" workshop. This panel was composed of the following persons:

Assistant Dean of Student Services  
Graduate School of International and Public Affairs  
University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Regional Administrator  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Atlanta, Georgia

Director  
Human Resources Development  
Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration  
Ghana, Africa

Associate Professor  
School of Public Administration and Urban Studies  
San Diego State University

This conference was the impetus for an educational network between San Diego State University and the University of Ghana. During the above described conference I serve as a liaison between SDSU and the University of Ghana. I now propose that we establish a formal student exchange program with the University of Ghana.

During this trip, we also met and interacted with academicians in public administration at the University of Ghana. These professionals expressed an interest in the establishment of a student exchange program with San Diego State University. A second meeting with such officials, to discuss commitment, collaborative strategies, and processes, is the next important step.

As an Associate Professor in Public Administration, I have skills in program design and implementation, university teaching, and research. I also have experience in course development.

I envision the possibility of two major projects resulting from a formalized agreement between SDSU and the University of Ghana: first, a formalized and institutionalized student exchange program between SDSU, and the University of Ghana, and my second vision involves the use of the internet for the purpose of offering public administration courses (more specifically, courses in Administrative theory and behavior which are a required component of the PA program at SDSU, and generic enough for most undergraduate studies--including international studies--in public administration) to students in Ghana.

An exchange program could be designed such that, to start, SDSU would send 5 undergraduate students in public administration to Ghana, and University of Ghana would, in turn, also send five students to SDSU. This program would work best during Summer School, i.e., the first 3-week session (Session A) in the summer. My course, "Administrative Behavior," will be offered each Summer--Session A. This PA 340 course is an important first step toward educating students, from international settings, to understand modern management strategies in a technological world--important fundamentals in working toward a better infrastructure. Presently, this course is in the process of being completed technologically, and with more time and technological assistance, could possibly be offered over the internet.

Additionally, it would be possible to also establish a graduate exchange program, designed for students in public administration at both universities, who may want to pursue field research and a thesis topic in comparative government/administration. For example, faculty could assist graduate students with research designs which would address the following questions: To what extent is public administration similar in the U.S. and Ghana, Africa? Are there universal principles of administration that hold in both countries? What is the influence of culture on public administration at the local level? Are there differences with regard to the degree of centralization, formalization, specialization in their agencies, as well as characteristics of the management style practiced? The "sample population" to whom graduate students send survey questionnaires might be comprised of public servants and managers in both countries.

Ghana is an excellent location for the University to market its programs because, presently, the demand for university courses can not be met in Ghana. There are many more students wanting to attend the university than the university can accommodate. Additionally, SDSU can add to the knowledge base relative to public administration which is fundamental to a comprehensive developed infrastructure. The total cost for such a program must be explored, and student financial aid resources will have to be pursued.