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Alan Sweedler
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FROM: Allan Miller, Professor of Art 

RE: Report: Travel Grant to Brazil

First, I should like to thank the faculty committee of the International Programs Council for its recommendation for my proposal to develop student study-travel opportunities in Brazil.

In accordance with the award, I carried out the travel portion of my proposal. In this regard, I sincerely believe that I was successful in that I returned with a firm commitment from the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ) to participate with the School of Art, Design & Art History (Design Area) in a student exchange program. The commitment was arrived at after three days of discussion with the Director of the School of Fine Arts (EBA), Professor Victorino de Oliveira Neto. The discussion covered the conditions under which such an exchange program would function under Brazilian regulations, our relative responsibilities, funding for students, student housing, educational visas, courses of study, duration of studies, etc. It was obvious that considerable, additional planning would be required in order to ensure the successful implementation of a student-study travel program.

The educational conditions were quite reasonable considering that the UFRJ, like its sister institutions located in each state capital, is part of a federal, higher education system. The President, Henrique Cardoso, actually signs the appointment orders for each of the university presidents. The only firm stipulation indicated by Professor Oliveira Neto was that the SDSU students, who attend the UFRJ, must receive appropriate academic credit (units and grades) toward their degrees.

It was indicated to me that course development, acquisition of student visas, and authorization for implementing a travel program would be forthcoming with reasonable effort; however, the real challenges, common to both schools, would be funding for student travel expenses and the acquisition of reasonably priced student housing.

It was apparent that both of our schools should embark on plans to acquire corporate sponsorship in an attempt to support financially these two components. I indicated that, traditionally, SDSU students are responsible for all of their travel and living related expenses and institutional fees. Additionally, I mentioned that on campus housing (dorms) could be arranged at SDSU.

Professor Oliveira Neto agreed that the student exchange program could evolve under the context of a joint project, PROJECT GENESIS, that we initiated in May, 1999. The joint project could have orientation and screening functions for the students being selected for the study-travel activities. It is apparent, more discussions must be undertaken to move the travel program forward.

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I will make contact with Larry Cobb, School of Extended Studies for some advice in course development for Summer and Winter Sessions. More on-campus contacts will have to be made for further advice. In any event, I am moving forward with my activities in the School of Art, Design & Art History with the intention that the eventual implementation of the student-travel program will occur.

A second educational institution was visited to assess its potential for participating in a study-travel program with SDSU. The School of Art at the University of Brasilia (UNB) was visited. My contacts were not in residence at the time of my visit, although I had anticipated meeting with one colleague.

I met with the Director of the School of Art, Professor Mario Bonomo, who is an Art Historian. He in turn, directed me to Professora Grace Maria de Freitas, Directora do Instituto de Artes—IDA. Her e-mail is: ida@unb.br Her office deals with special programs. She was not in residence at the time of my visit; however, I feel that I should send Professora Maria de Freitas an e-mail discussing the feasibility in joining our university in a study-travel program.

I met a Professor Varsky of the Department of Music varsky@guarany.cpd.unb.br on a previous visit, who spoke excellent English and had studied in the USA. He expressed a moderate interest in discussing joint student projects; perhaps, he might be another possible contact.