

August 17, 1999

To: Alan Sweedler, Office of International Programs
(alan.sweedler@sdsu.edu)
From: James L. Schorr (jschorr@mail.sdsu.edu)

Report: IPC Travel Grant (1999)
Opportunity for International Educational Experiences

My efforts in "generating educational connections that will lead to greater involvement of students in international educational experiences" during my recent visit to Ireland (July 22 August 2, 1999) was, in general, a success. This in spite of the fact that two of my contacts were ultimately unavailable. Therefore, I would like to report on what I did find useful on this data-gathering mission not only to the University of Limerick, but also to University College Dublin.

1) The best laid plans ...

Patrick Gunnigle, Professor and Chair of Business Studies (University of Limerick), remains an important link for SDSU, especially for graduate business students and faculty. However, since he was unavailable during my visit, he recommended I contact Serge Riviere, Chair of Languages (UL) to discuss possible student exchanges. As luck would have it, Professor Riviere was also at the same ISECS conference in Dublin (UCD) that I attended. Unfortunately, he gave his paper at the exact time I gave mine, and we kept missing each other among the other 1400 participants. To complicate matters, Professor Riviere left the country the day after he gave his paper. It seems that the end of July is vacation time for most Europeans. Undaunted, I pursued this important link with the University of Limerick with Liam O'Dochartaigh, Director of the Study Abroad program at UL (liam.odochartaigh@ul.ie).

The most pleasant, most surprising part of my fact-finding trip was an unplanned contact I made at the University College Dublin, John Kelly (jjkelly@ucd.ie). John is a friend of the family who, in addition to being Professor of Chemical Engineering, was also Rector and Dean of UCD, and currently directs the Irish Fulbright Project (see website <http://www.ucd.ie/~fulbright>). John Kelly helped to write much of the legislation that gave rise to the European Union's SOCRATES program (exchanges within the EU).

2. In the eyes of the beholder: student and faculty exchanges

There are certainly possibilities for our students as well as our faculty to participate in exchange programs with UL and/or UCD. This is especially true for International Business students, International MBA students, European Studies majors and others. However, after a rather extensive conversation with Liam O'Dochartaigh, I can see that undergraduate exchanges with UL or UCD will have to be small at first. Many Irish students can come to the US to work during the summer, without going through the hassle of getting support from their university. At the same time, we should consider how many SDSU students might be interested in a year abroad in Ireland. As far as the facilities, both UL and UCD are excellent, have good international student support, and an interesting array of courses for our students. (The UL student dorms are excellent; I stayed at the UCD dorms and they are certainly acceptable as well).

I am attaching a packet from UL, and have requested more information regarding exchanges from UL and UCD. Please note that both universities are on the web.

Since I am committed to the efforts by International Business to require Study/Internship Abroad for its undergraduates, I believe that study abroad will also profit other SDSU majors. Both UL and UCD will work with SDSU in the area of student exchanges. I believe that our contacts with UL (see Mark Butler, Management) and future contacts with John Kelly (UCD) can easily result in faculty exchanges as well. As for the difficult task of setting up internships abroad, the Interesource Group will be helpful in implementing this endeavor.

3. Cooperative Education (UL)

One of my goals in this fact-finding trip was to see if the Cooperative Education program at the University of Limerick would be transportable (usable) at SDSU. It seems the UL was founded on the idea of coop education for everyone; very practical for their graduates. However, it should be pointed out that UL has a very large staff that keeps very busy finding internships for anyone who requests one. There is at least one full-time staff person per college for this job.

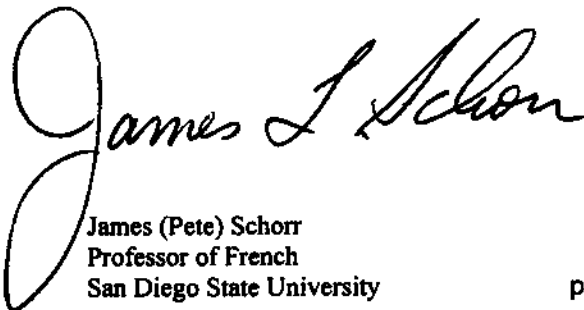
An interesting problem I noted for Humanities majors: internships tend to be working at Euro-Disney selling burgers or at summer camps taking care of kids. The question is, do we really want to do this on a large scale? Will college deans fund a pretty substantial staff to find internships for our students. In IB, Renatta Adler has successfully run the IB-internship program; she will have to be our guide here. But there is also a possible tie-in with the UL coop program that should be pursued: we could find an internship in San Diego for one of their students in exchange for an internship in Europe for one of ours. It is also possible to work with Haaris Sheik and Brenda Kenny at the Interesource Group; however, that's a financial investment. There are other private "finders" as well. In any case, we might want to start small with groups (such as IB) who actually want an internship abroad. Again, this is something we might want to pursue in our International Business program, but might also be useful in other programs at SDSU.

The follow-up plan:

I intend to pursue conversations and email with Liam O'Dochartaigh and John Kelly. I also have two contacts made during the EMU conference I co-chaired for SDSU in March: Brenda Kenny and Haaris Sheikh. Both are affiliated with the University of Limerick, but work directly through the Interesource Group (Ireland) Limited; 48 South William Street, Dublin 2, Ireland (Brenda Kenny, Executive Director and Haaris Sheikh, Managing Director).

At this point, I am confident that student, and possibly faculty, exchanges will come from our future collaboration with the University of Limerick the University College Dublin. It is essential that we participate in the upcoming meeting of NAFSA (May 1999), which I believe Ron Moffatt is co-hosting. Liam O'Dochartaigh and other reps from Irish Universities will be there; representatives from IPC should be there as well.

I am at your disposal to answer questions about my experience in Ireland and would certainly be willing to speak with students interested in studying abroad at UL or UCD. Thank you for your support.



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