

International Travel Grant Report

Name: Laura J. Hall
Faculty/Rank: Professor
Department: Special Education
College: Education
Office phone: 619 594-0768
E mail address: ljhall@mail.sdsu.edu
Proposal title: Building Student Exchange Programs in Australia
Country visited: Australia
Institution visited: Deakin University, Melbourne: University of Canberra, Canberra & University of Technology, Sydney
Dates of travel: August 4 through August 17, 2007
Number of student participants: 6

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded
Winter, 2000 – Australia – Developing a Student Exchange with Deakin University
Summer & Fall, 2004, Denmark & Canada – Semester Abroad for Liberal Studies Students

Have all required reports been submitted? Yes

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: College of Education Faculty Travel Grants – Airfare awarded for conference presentation in Sydney

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum):

The purpose of the travel to Australia was to build upon currently established exchange programs so that increased numbers of exchange places can become available for the current demand by SDSU students. In addition, the pre-approval of courses for Liberal Studies students at SDSU would increase the possibilities that students from this major will participate in Study Abroad programs. Additional options to the established program at Deakin University were explored.

Overview

In general, Australian Universities are undergoing a period of change. This means that personnel working in the areas of Study Abroad, International Programs and exchange are leaving, merging departments and changing responsibilities. It was important to have face-to-face meetings with these personnel in order to maintain our current positive relationships with these universities as well as create new exchange opportunities in coordination with new faculty personnel who are have new positions and renewed energy for these endeavors.

The main purposes of my visit were 1)to encourage increased numbers of Australian students studying at SDSU with our exchange agreements so that we can send more students to the popular destination of Australia and 2) to work with faculties in Education to design specific programs to enable students in Liberal Studies, Teacher Education and Special Education to participate in exchange and Study Abroad programs. This is an area that has fewer numbers of participating students due to the prescribed requirements of the credentialing bodies in California and abroad.

Deakin University

San Diego State University has an active exchange program with Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. Since the initial year of 2001, 51 SDSU students have participated in the exchange program at Deakin and a further 48 have paid to attend through Study Abroad. The internship for business majors interested in the surfing industry, kinesiology and the humanities are particularly attractive to SDSU students. We have put into place a semester of study for Liberal Studies students with a sequence of courses that have been pre-approved by all the relevant administrative systems at SDSU.

According to Rosemary Livingstone who has been working with Study Abroad since 2001, SDSU remains one of the most popular choices for Deakin students seeking exchange. However, there is pressure from administrators to only fill the two exchange places and to send students who seek exchange to the other 29 exchange partners. In addition, if more students are sent to SDSU on exchange Deakin would lose out on the extra funds received through Study Abroad. Due to this situation, we are planning to establish a second agreement that would be College to College in order to support the Education students who do not usually participate in exchange programs.

Itinerary at Deakin

On August 7, 2007 I spent the day with the Exchange and Study Abroad office personnel on the Burwood campus. This is the campus that is currently housing International Programs with plans to move to a new building that is currently under construction on this campus. I met with Rosemary Livingstone and Christine Jeanne, Education Abroad Coordinator for an update on the change in structure and personnel involved with International Programs at Deakin. Linda Vaughn is the person at Deakin responsible for incoming applications. Rosemary Livingstone informed me that this was her last year at Deakin as she will be retiring. They told me how pleased they are with the exchange program and our important relationship. The only issue they wanted me to discuss with

our International Programs Office at SDSU was difficulties booking housing arrangements on campus. For example, although SDSU information on brochures suggests that students apply for on campus housing as soon as possible, Deakin students were told that they could not apply for housing until they received an official offer letter, and when they finally received this letter there were no places left for on-campus housing.

I met with the two Deakin students who will be attending SDSU during the next academic year. One student is majoring in communication and informed me that her father was quite firm that he wanted her to reside on campus. The second student is a business major studying commerce. He is interested in surfing and will consider living near the beach. I answered their questions about SDSU and they both seem eager to come to San Diego.

Ms. Livingstone arranged a meeting with Dr. Ian Robottom, Associate Dean International new to the Faculty of Education at Deakin. He was very keen to get more education students to study abroad. Since we already have an established sequence of courses for Liberal Studies at Deakin, we need to determine a sequence of courses that Deakin students can take at SDSU. I will follow-up on this meeting by contacting those lecturers in the College of Education that teach the selected sequence of courses. A practicum experience is also part of the experiences Dr. Robottom selected. He said that he would arrange for funds in the amount of \$500 per student to be sent to pay for a Master teacher who supervises a Deakin student for several weeks.

On August 8, 2007 I spent the day in the Psychology department at Deakin University. I was asked to give a talk for a colloquium and it was well attended. I also met with Professor Joe Graffam who is the Head of School for Psychology. We talked about developing a sequence of courses at Deakin that meets the requirements for a certification from the Behavior Analysis Certification Board in the USA. The Department of Special Education at SDSU already has an approved sequence in a SDSU certificate program. Dr. Graffam was eager to develop an alternative to a 4th year Honors program at Deakin for those post-bac students who want advanced education but do not qualify for, or select not to do, the Honors year. Students at Deakin and at SDSU could take these courses at either university as part of an exchange or Study Abroad program. During a conference in Sydney I met with Robyn Allcock, CEO of Autism Behavioural Intervention Association in Melbourne, Victoria. They currently run training workshops for those interested in entry-level work as a therapist working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders. I also met with Ann-Marie Russell who is the director of a private-non-profit agency that serves individuals with autism and their families. They were very eager to have the sequence of courses available at Deakin and will arrange a meeting with Dr. Graffam to determine how they can facilitate the establishment of this program.

University of Canberra

I met with Kelly Donohue Manager of Study Abroad and Exchange at University of Canberra on August 10, 2007. She has been in her position for two months and stated that San Diego State University is one of the most popular destinations for exchange.

They have had no problem sending at least two students each year since the program began a couple of years ago. She stated that if there is increased interest she would send additional students. She had an open session for those students with an interest in applying for exchange to SDSU for next year. Although Kelly told me that some students were unable to attend who expressed an interest, five students did show up on a Friday afternoon to hear about SDSU. One student from Nursing has already completed her application. Two students were from Sports Sciences, one was from psychology and the fifth was from social work. Since the National Sports Training Center is in Canberra, this university would be an excellent place for SDSU kinesiology students, especially in the near future as Australia is preparing athletes for the Olympic Games in China.

I also met with Dr. Leah Moore, Deputy Head of the Faculty of Communication and Education and Dr. Chris Kilham, Head of their Special Education program which they title Educational Support and Inclusion. Dr. Kilham shares my interest in autism spectrum disorders. After some discussion we agreed that an exchange with students interested in special education would be the focus of our efforts for increasing education student participation. Due to the process of restructuring currently occurring at University of Canberra we determined that this would not be a good time to explore a pre-approved sequence of courses for SDSU Liberal Studies students. Dr. Kilham is planning on taking 3 months of leave in 2008 and would like to explore the possibility of taking 5 students with her to San Diego for participation in classrooms with students with disabilities. Logistics of home stays or housing and classroom teachers willing to host Australian students would need to be explored. I also met Diana Boswell who is a lecturer in the same department as Dr. Kilham at a conference in Sydney. I had several opportunities to talk with her, including following a presentation I made with SDSU students that she attended. She seemed eager to continue to develop our relationship and to support a student and faculty exchange.

University of Technology Sydney

I met with Kate Cormie, Student Exchange Officer and Maureen MacMahon, on August 16, 2007. They explained that they just joined offices recently and that they were working on sharing information and changing responsibilities but anticipate positive outcomes from this change. Kate informed me that SDSU is their #1 destination of choice for their students! Although the exchange is relatively new, they plan to send up to 6 students for next year, mostly with an interest in business. Since UTS is a strategic partner with SDSU we discussed expanding the promotion of the exchange program with other majors.

We met with Geoff Riordan, Associate Dean for the Faculty of Education. He is relatively new to UTS and has been reorganizing the education programs. He is very interested in promoting the exchange within education, particularly the undergraduate Primary Teaching degree. We identified a semester that would be best where the students do a 3 week practicum in special education. It turns out this semester has only one prescribed course in English Education and two electives. I will be sending a list of courses offered at SDSU that have similar content to these electives so that Dr. Riordan

can select those that meet their requirements and pre-approve the semester for the students. They take these courses during the Fall semester of their second year.

I will be reviewing the courses offered at UTS that appear to meet the Liberal Studies requirements at SDSU and attempt to arrange a third sequence of pre-approved courses for Liberal Studies students with UTS. Dr. Riordan suggested that he may send the person in Education, Allan Scully, to SDSU to further explore our exchange programs with a focus in Education.

Other University contacts

During the international conference that I attended in Sydney, I met with David Leach who works in psychology at Murdoch University. He invited me to visit when I am next in Australia. I may schedule a second visit to Australia within the next couple of months and Perth would be one of my target destinations. Murdoch has an exchange agreement with SDSU.

I also met with Vicki Bitsika, Associate Professor in Counseling and Behaviour Management at Bond University. Bond is a private university in Australia. It is the only one that has a focus on Applied Behavior Analysis and Dr. Bitsika was very interested in obtaining the approved sequence of courses for the BCBA either for Bond University alone or in conjunction with SDSU. I plan to review the offerings at Bond University to determine if they have course sequences not available with our already established exchange partners.