

Faculty Report Template

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College: Arts and Letters
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Proposal title: Ireland Summer Writing Program
Country/ies visited: Ireland
Institution visited: National University of Ireland, Galway
Dates of travel: June 19, 2004-July 27, 2004
Number of student participants: 11
Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded: None
Have all required reports been submitted? Yes
Other funding for this activity available/applied for: None funded. We've approached our College and Department for support, but haven't received these funds.

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum): The goals of this proposal are to complete organization and to help supplement our implementation of a summer creative writing program sponsored by SDSU in cooperation with the National University of Ireland in Galway. As the participating faculty member from SDSU, this grant would support travel to Galway, Ireland, as well as housing expenses during the four and one-half weeks spent directing the program and teaching courses in conjunction with a professor from NUIG. While on site, I also plan to explore ways in which our program might be expanded or made more effective for participants.

Travel report:

I. Opening / overview of intentions/ activity: As proposed, I traveled to Galway, Ireland in order to direct our Second Annual Ireland Summer Writing Program. Eleven students participated, five from SDSU, and one each from Vassar, University of Michigan, Stanford, University of Washington at St. Louis, Amherst and George Mason. The program operated from June 24, 2004 - July 24, 2004 and was considered a great success by participating students and faculty. We ran Writing Workshops in Poetry and Fiction, plus offered a course in Contemporary Irish Literature, with Irish writers attending to read from their work and discuss writing techniques, as well as the general writing climate in Ireland.

II. In preparation for the trip abroad:

1 collaborated with: Seamus O'Grady, Office of International Affairs, NUIO.

2 Carmel Flanagan, Office of International Affairs, NUIG.

3 Michael Gorman, Professor of English and Poet, NUIG.

4 Moya Cannon, Poet.

5 Daniel Carey, Professor, NUIG.

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2 e-mail contacts: Seamus O'Grady: c.flanagan@mis.nuigalway.ie

3 Carmel Flanagan: c.flanagan@mis.nuigalway.ie

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3 researched university statistics and compared to SDSU (e.g. number of students enrolled: The National University of Ireland in Galway is a smaller campus than SDSU, having approximately 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students. However, it is very similar to SDSU, in that it offers affordable higher education to students from a mainly urban area. In keeping with Ireland's rich literary tradition, NUIG offers a vibrant and rigorous course of study in Creative Writing and English Literature.

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5 confirmed that prospective university is "recognized" by the Ministry of Education: Yes.

III. Upon arrival/ specific activity- What/who are the contacts made at the prospective partner university?

Specific contacts as noted above. - What particular major/minor is of interest? English majors and minors, MF A in Creative Writing.

IV. Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?

1 Why is this particular institution valuable for SDSU? This is a valuable collaboration for SDSU, because NUIG's campus and history are quite similar to our own. The Department of English and the Creative Writing Program at NUIG are strong and emphasize those Irish writers who are frequently taught on our campus in British Literature Classes, as well as other survey courses.

- Sustainability of project (is there a high likelihood that students in the Department will be interested in studying the proposed subject area at the prospective partner university and vice versa)? There's a high likelihood that our students will continue to be interested in studying writing and Irish Literature in Ireland. I feel that we did very well in recruiting our own students last year, considering that it was our first year of offering the program, and we got a fairly late start in advertising. The fact that we accept all applicants campus-wide (not only English Literature or Creative Writing students) will improve our numbers. Last year, for instance, a biology major participated in our program. This student submitted a sample of creative writing in her application that was very strong. So, we're able to draw from any student who is interested in creative writing regardless of his/her college major. The English Department at SDSU offers our courses at NUIG as classes that qualify for required courses to be met by English majors.

How will this exchange program (or expansion) increase participation by students in international activities, or enhance international learning environments for students? This program is ideal as a first international travel/study experience. Ireland is a safe country for young people to visit. Because the language spoken is English, students are able to easily communicate. My experience as director of this program is that those students who participate become extremely enthusiastic about travel/study experiences and go on to participate in programs farther afield, both culturally and linguistically.

- What students will benefit? The most obvious students to benefit are all English and Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing students. Our program offers credit for both undergraduates and graduate students. However, those students from all colleges across the SDSU campus who are interested in creative writing or literature will also benefit.

The Program also serves as an excellent recruiting tool for SDSU. Students from some of the finest writing programs in the United States attend; we partner with the University of Arkansas, a top-ten ranked program in creative writing.

- What will be their activities (e.g. course work, international internships, field research, etc.)? The course work for our program includes a Writing Workshop in either Poetry or Fiction and a course in Contemporary Irish Literature. Field trips are taken throughout the month's program, to sites such as Yeat's Tower, Inishbofen, The Burren. This past summer we were also able to attend any desired event at the Galway Arts Festival held the last two weeks of July. In addition, guest writers from throughout Ireland offered guest workshops and discussed Irish Literature with participants.

- What will be your role in promoting and supporting these activities? By way of promoting the program, we visit English classes on campus to distribute flyers and other information. I answer all e-mail requests for program information and read the submitted applications with accompanying writing samples. I've taught courses in the Poetry Writing Workshop and the Contemporary Irish Literature course offered in Galway. I accompanied students on all field trips and have otherwise been available for any problems or questions participants might have.

V. Additional Information: Ireland is currently the most expensive member country in the European Union. Because of this, we need to research more affordable student housing. Last summer, I was able to acquire alternate faculty housing at half the cost of that offered by NUIG. Another program that SDSU might explore is one that NUIG offers at the same time as our writing program during the summer. This program is titled Irish Studies and draws participants from all over the United States. All things Irish are offered in this program: Irish Music, History, Language, Literature, Architecture, Geology, Biology, Anthropology. If we were able to participate in the Irish Studies Summer Program, our students would benefit by working in several concentrations of study and also have the opportunity to work with students from other areas of the country and of Ireland.

Information should be sent to The Office of International Programs via e mail: oiip@mail.sdsu.edu