

Report of International Activities with the University of Pisa  
By  
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Background:

During a previous trip to Tuscany, Italy in 2007 I spent a few days in Pisa and I visited the faculty of engineering of the University. The University of Pisa was established in 1343. The college of engineering has departments and programs in

- 1-Aerospace engineering
- 2-Applied mathematics
- 3-Automation
- 4-Chemical engineering
- 5-Civil engineering
- 6-Electrical and telecommunication
- 7-Mechanical engineering
- 8-Nuclear engineering
- 9-Structural engineering

The college has over 250 faculty members. Each of the programs are much larger than our programs and the University has extensive laboratories for teaching and research.

I first spoke to the Preside (Dean) of the faculty Prof. Emilio Vitale and he agreed that it would be advantageous for both universities to have an exchange program between the SDSU and the University of Pisa (UNIFI). Prof. Vitale suggested that I return later in the year so that we could start to negotiate an arrangements so that SDSU students would be welcomed to UNIFI and Italian students would be welcomed to SDSU. As a result of this trip, when I came back to SDSU, it was decided that it would be very beneficial for our engineering student to gain international experience in Europe. The

travel grant from OIP partially paid for trips to Pisa to finalize the details for a summer class for SDSU students and for the trip to accompany the students. The grant only paid for the air fare of the first trip and for a small portion of the second trip.

### Report of Jan-Feb 2008 trip to UNIPI

In February 2008 I went to the University of Pisa to develop contacts with the faculty. I met with the Dean, the chairs of two engineering departments and four other faculty members. All of the faculty members were very favorable to an exchange program with SDSU. I then proceeded to negotiate the details of how our students could come to Pisa during the summer sessions. Prof. Marco Raugi and his staff member Calogero Sollima are the persons that Dean Vitale appointed to interact with me.

It was agreed that I would bring students from SDSU at the termination of our spring semester and before the start of the summer vacation for UNIPI. The five weeks starting with May 18<sup>th</sup> and ending with June 20<sup>th</sup> were selected.

Upon returning to SDSU in March, I proceeded to advertise the program and to recruit students.

### Trip to the University of Pisa with the students-May/June 2008

The students arrived in Pisa on Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup>. The class started on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Their class of Italian culture was integrated with the class that the engineering students from the University of Illinois in Champagne were taking. During the next five weeks the students studied the Italian language, the Italian culture and visited many cultural sights. One day trips with the teacher were taken to Pisa, Florence, Siena, Viareggio, Lucca, Volterra and San Gimignano. In addition the three day train trip to Rome also included stops at Arezzo and Perugia. In Rome we visited the Coliseum, the Vatican Museums and St. Peter, the Spanish steps, Trastevere (the Jewish section of Rome), as well as other cultural sights.

The students lived in apartments with kitchen facilities. The meals were supplied by the university “mensa” (dining facilities). The University also made available to the students a computer lab for their exclusive use so that they could use the facilities for the homework, and to keep in touch with their families via email. Each student was also given a bicycle so that they had the freedom to experience life in Pisa as the local students do.

Dr. Sollima was the contact person for the students and he was always available to answer any question and solve any problem that the students might have encountered.

During my stay at the University I met with Prof. Bennati (chair of Structural Engineering), Prof. Salvetti (chair of Aerospace engineering), Prof. Raugi ( International Programs director), Prof. Frediani (Aerospace Engineering), Prof. De Sanctis (Chemical engineering), Prof. Caramelli (Structural engineering), Prof. D’Agostino (Aerospace engineering). We had discussions regarding student exchange programs and possibilities for faculty exchange and research collaborations.

## UNIFI at SDSU

As a result of our trip to Pisa, during the first week of September we had University of Pisa students accompanied by Dr. Sollima visiting San Diego for a cultural visit. The Italian students were at the University of Illinois in Champagne taking a course in metallurgy for five weeks and they decided to visit SDSU.

## Future Activities

1-Summer activities for SDSU students at the University of Pisa

Up to 15 students will be recruited to spend five weeks at UNIFI starting May 19<sup>th</sup>.

2-UNIFI students at SDSU

Up to 15 Italian students will come to SDSU and will take a course that will be taught by Prof. De Sanctis from UNIPI

3-Prof. D'Agostino and I are presently discussing the possibilities of a proposal that will be submitted for joint funding for a dual degree master of engineering program from SDSU and UNIPI. The RFP for this joint European Union - United States Atlantis program is due out by the end of 2008 and the proposal has to be submitted by April 2009.