

Memorandum

Date: 12/21/2008

To: The Office of International Programs

From: Joe Alter, Dance Division Coordinator, School of Music and Dance

Subject: Report on International Travel to Poland

Name: Joseph Alter

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Proposal title: *Cultural, artistic, and academic exchange and research between SDSU and PWST, Poland.*

Country/ies visited: Poland

Institution visited: PWST

Dates of travel: Nov. 24-26, 2008

Number of student participants: 0

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded
(list titles, countries and dates): Poland

Have all required reports been submitted? yes

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: none

Travel report: Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum):

I am proposing to travel to Krakow, Poland to establish student and faculty exchange and artistic cooperation.

This institution are ideal for cooperation with the School of Music and Dance: they are both highly regarded conservatory that combines high-level artistic training in theater and dance. An exchange program would benefit SDSU students by providing an international experience, expanding the student's point of reference and situating them in a global context.

I. Opening/overview of intentions/activity

It was my intention to investigate the feasibility of international cooperation/exchange of students and faculty between SDSU and PWST in Krakow, Poland. The areas of particular interest for the School of Music and Dance at SDSU were those institutions that would augment or enhance various aspects of our music, dance, and theatrical programs. Specifically of interest is the possibility of creating opportunities for our students to benefit from the integration of these agreements into an international component for our programs. The above-mentioned institution met these criteria and plans are proceeding for the signing of exchange/cooperative agreements. We have agreed on the terms for the initiation of these exchanges between students and faculty.

II. In preparation for the trip abroad

I initially received a grant through the Office of International Programs. In preparation for these visits I contacted Ewa Kutrys and Jacek Luminski at the Higher School of Theater, Krakow. I have longstanding relationships with this partner. These partners arranged visits to their university and meetings with the appropriate administrators. I also arranged to teach at PWST to gauge the artistic level of their program (which is extremely rigorous) as well as to ascertain the level of interest in exchange with the students. They are extremely enthusiastic to begin this program.

Contact information:

Jacek Luminski: jluminski@tlen.pl,

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III. Upon arrival/specific activity

I made the trip to PWST with the intention of finalizing an exchange program and cooperative agreements for students and faculty. The trip was to Poland in November of 2008. During this visit I met in Krakow (PWST) the rector of the University.

I met the Rector of PWST (the people's higher school of theater) Prof. Ewa Kutrys in Krakow. We have examined the respective curricula of our programs in both dance and theater for articulation agreements. This agreement will positively impact both

our Theater and Dance divisions at SDSU by offering opportunities to share artistic, academic, and cultural resources that are unique to each institution.

We discussed and agreed upon the exchange of students/faculty. In the interests of moving forward we are creating a summer program in which both universities are cooperating on a joint performance project involving students at an international dance festival located in Bytom, Poland in the summer of 2009.

Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?

This project is of interests to the School of Dance, The School of Television, Film, and Theater at SDSU. PWST is Poland's most prestigious Theatrical Arts University and have the first-degree program in Poland in Contemporary dance practices and is home to Europe's first dance theater master's program. This agreement will create the possibility of having a required international component to these fields of study for our students in the School of Music and Dance as well as for Theater majors. In addition, these agreements will provide opportunities for our faculty in the areas of collaborative research and faculty exchange.

The project is sustainable in that students from all of the involved institutions have a strong interest in studying abroad and participating in joint creative and educational projects. All of the institutions involved are committed to these agreements and believe that the students and faculty will benefit greatly through their development.

At present the Division of dance has no exchange agreements with any international partners. These agreements will provide our students with the opportunity to study abroad for the first time. As we are seeking to integrate a semester abroad into our division requirements it will affect all dance majors. At present there are approximately 55 students who are interested in participating in these agreements. They can anticipate opportunities to engage in coursework, internships, and research in both summer programs and semester abroad agreements.

I have an ongoing relationship of more than 10 years with the institution. I will be stewarding these agreements and overseeing their implementation/development. I know these institutions intimately as I lived, taught, and conducted research in Poland over the course of 4 years as well as having an active presence there since 1997.

V. Additional Information

This agreement is the first concrete step toward a comprehensive and ongoing commitment by the Division of Dance to the internationalization of our program. As dance is increasingly decentralized and the jobs available to our students with them, it is imperative that we create and maintain relationships, both academic and professional, with a dance community that is local, regional, national, and international in nature. We are committed to providing our students with these opportunities for exchange and research.

All information should be sent to The Office of International Programs via e mail:

oip@mail.sdsu.edu