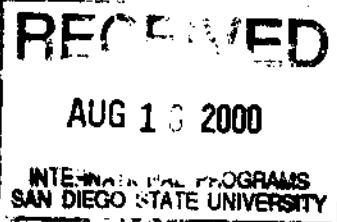


8/10, 00



To: Office of International Programs, MC 5102

From: Harold Jaffe HJ

Re: Report on travel to enhance International opportunities for SDSU students in Cuba

Between June 10 and June 24 Professor Gerald Butler and I made several educational connections in Cuba. First, we conferred with the University of Havana administrator (Especialista intercambio Academico) Jose Ramon Mendez, who had previously met with President Weber. Senor Mendez cited several American and Canadian universities which already had programs in Cuba, mostly in areas other than literature, and expressed interest in hosting SDSU students in literature and creative writing both during the school year and in special summer sessions.

Senor Mendez suggested that we also check at the Universities in Matanzas, Pinar del Rio, and Santa Clara. In the next two weeks I actually met administrators in each of these universities, and each was interested in principle in hosting SDSU students in literature, and Pinar del Rio thought they might also be interested in creative writing. I am in contact with these administrators via mail.

Back in Havana, I met with the well-known Cuban photographers Alberto Korda and Osvaldo Salas, who was actually born in the US and holds dual citizenship. Korda was for a considerable time the chief photographer of the revolution. Each said that he would be very interested in traveling to SDSU to teach a brief course in photography.

I am also in touch with several fiction writers and graphic artists for a forthcoming issue of *Fiction International*, which I edit. A number of these writers and artists teach at the University of Havana, Matanzas, Santa Clara, or Pinar del Rio, and each expressed interest in teaching Cuban Literature, Creative Writing, or graphic arts, to SDSU students and/or coming to SDSU to teach.

MEMORANDUM

August 8, 2000

To: Office of International Programs, MC 5102

From: Gerald J. Butler

Re: Report on Travel to Enhance International Opportunities for SDSU Students

On June 10 with my colleague Harold Jaffe I traveled to Cuba and spent two weeks there. As the Graduate Director for the Department of English and Comparative Literature here at SDSU, I was primarily interested in educational opportunities for our graduate students, especially in Comparative Literature. We contacted José Ramón Méndez (Especialista Intercambio Académico—EE.UU.-Canada), who produced the exchange agreement signed by President Weber, and I spoke to him about specific matters relevant to the possibility of our students taking courses at the Universidad de La Habana for graduate credit in our M. A. program here. He told me that faculty members would be contacting me about specific courses in the future. I also contacted Niurka Remedios Ballesteros at Mercadu in Havana, the Agencia de Viajes Especializados, and she was kind enough to supply me with much material and since has sent me by email attachment the up-to-date list of offerings all the universities in Cuba have for foreign students. With this information and these contacts I intend to advise and assist our graduate students who want elective credit (they are allowed nine units in our program) to take courses in Cuba. For them to use Cuban university graduate courses to satisfy "research focus" courses in our Comparative Literature specialization will, however, require an articulation agreement.

I shall also advise our students to study Spanish in Cuba; Cuban universities provide an excellent, and economical, opportunity to fulfill the foreign language requirement. I was fortunate enough to stay with Adelaida Herrera of the writers' and artists' union and am now trying to establish contacts with Cuban poets for a special issue of our Poetry International, which is produced with SDSU student assistance. Moreover, it is fair to say that, with its relative lack of racism, the quality of its education and health care, not to mention its achievements in literature, music, and film, Cuba itself has much to offer as a learning experience for all our students in the humanities.