

Faculty Report

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Proposal title: Creation of Travel Study Course on Border Policy Issues in Spain and Morocco

Country/ies visited: Spain, Morocco

Institution visited: International Society of Third Sector Research (Spain), Spanish Red Cross (Spain), Catalanian International Development Agency (Spain and Morocco), Al Akhawayn University (Morocco), National Democratic Institute (Morocco).

Dates of travel: July 7-21, 2008

Number of student participants: none (grant to investigate development of future program).

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded (list titles, countries and dates): none

Have all required reports been submitted?

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: none

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum): Proposal is to create a semester-long summer course during which the professor would travel with students to Spain and Morocco for 3-4 weeks to examine border policy issues, with the goal of comparing the Spanish/North African experience to the US/Mexican experience. Students would begin the course in the US with readings/lectures, and then travel to Spain and Morocco to visit government agencies, NGOs, and academics in both countries who address border and immigration issues.

Travel report:

I. Opening/overview of intentions/activity

The purpose of this proposal was to create a summer or winter course during which the professor would travel with students to Spain and Morocco for 3-4 weeks to examine border policy issues, with the goal of comparing the Spanish/North African experience to the US/Mexican experience. Students would begin the course in the US with readings/lectures, and then travel to Spain and Morocco to visit government agencies, NGOs, and academics in both countries who address border and immigration issues.

II. In preparation for the trip abroad

In preparation for traveling abroad I made connections with various attendees of the International Society for Third Sector Research conference in Barcelona, Spain, and through these conference attendees I was also able to make contact with staff of the Spanish Red Cross (in Spain) and the Catalanian International Development Agency (staff in both Spain and Morocco). I also made numerous contacts with faculty members at Al Akhawayn University (the most prestigious English-language university in Morocco), and the National Democratic Institute (in Morocco).

Prior to leaving, I also met with several faculty and staff at SDSU in order to prepare logistically for the trip. I met with Kevin Carter at the College of Extended Studies, who gave me wonderful advice about things to think about while organizing the course. His suggestions included limiting students to one city/campus with short-term excursions rather than traveling throughout the 3-4 weeks of the course, as he said this would decrease costs for students and thus increase the marketability of the course. In addition, his opinion was that a Morocco-based course may attract more students than a Spain-based course due to the many course offerings students already have in Spain, as well as the poor exchange rate between the US dollar and the euro, which has made Europe a particularly expensive destination for students.

I also met with Ronald Young from Spanish and Portuguese, Stacey Sinclair from the Division of Undergraduate Studies, and Karey Sabol from the University Honors Program. Stacey and Karey are interested in perhaps making this course a "spotlight" course in the University Honors program and listing the courses collaboratively with UHP, which also promises to increase the market for the course. Ron suggested that, due to the comparative nature of the proposed course, student in Latin American Studies and other departments might also have an interest in the course.

III. Upon arrival/specific activity

While in Spain and Morocco I was able to meeting with a variety of actors that would be useful contacts for educational programming for a course on border issues. While at the International Society for Third Sector Research's biennial meeting in Barcelona, Spain, I met with many representatives from Spain's nonprofit and public sectors. Particularly promising were my contacts with the Spanish Red Cross and the Catalanian International Development Agency. The Spanish Red Cross is the first responder for immigrants who arrive on the shores of southern Spain after crossing the Mediterranean from Morocco and other locations in North Africa; in many cases these immigrants actually began their journey to Europe in Sub-Saharan Africa. This situation very closely mirrors that of Mexican immigrants, and often Central and South American immigrants, who arrive in the deserts of the US southwest after traveling from their home countries. The Spanish Red Cross staff has indicated they would be willing to receive students as visitors to their sites in southern Spain, where students could learn about the organization's efforts to rescue immigrants and then resettle them throughout Spain.

While in Spain I was also able to meet with staff from the Catalanian International Development Agency, which is the government agency in Catalonia that is responsible for that region's international development efforts. The staff there are particularly committed to international education and are very happy to welcome visiting students and introduce them to

their work. The staff member I met with in Barcelona recommended I meet with their staff member working on projects in Tangier, Morocco, and suggested that individual would be able to put me in touch with civil society actors in Morocco as well as local government authorities.

Upon arrival in Tangier, Morocco I spent time investigating accommodation possibilities for students. I found several options, ranging from \$20/night to approximately \$70 per night. The most viable arrangement seems to be with the Marmora hotel in Tangier, which would charge students \$30/night including breakfast (based on double occupancy) and provide free classroom space. The hotel is located in a very cultural interesting area of the city in the old Kasbah, within view of the Mediterranean and with a clear view of Spain across the straight, presenting a very tangible sense of the border that would be very relevant to our curricula. Other hotel options seemed either prohibitively expensive, or, in the case of \$20/night options, unsanitary and unsafe. While I was unable to make any successful contacts with universities in and around Tangier, I have been in contact with the local staff of the Catalan International Development Agency in Tangier and believe a viable and interested educational program could be developed there.

I also made numerous contacts with faculty members at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, the most prestigious English-language university in Morocco. The university regularly hosts many US students in their intensive Arabic language program, and at the time of my visit approximately 50% of the students I encountered were from Georgetown University. The faculty at Al Akhawayn University, the dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, as well as the international programs director all are very eager for SDSU students to come to campus and for SDSU faculty to offer courses there. Logistically this would be a very easy location for a faculty member to hold courses, as the international programs staff is extremely experienced and professional and would coordinate all travel (excluding international air travel), local cultural excursions, housing, and classroom space for students. The Al Akhawayn campus is very modern and modeled after a US university, so it would be a very comfortable experience for SDSU students. An added benefit would be that the Al Akhawayn University faculty and dean have insisted that their Moroccan students be allowed to enroll in the course, which would be a fantastic experience for SDSU students and Moroccan students alike. However, there are some drawbacks to Al Akhawayn University as a location for the course. First, Al Akhawayn is located in Ifrane, which is a small resort town in the Middle Atlas Mountains approximately 5-6 hours from Tangier and the Mediterranean. In addition to being quite far away from the "border" context that was meant to be the focus of the course, Ifrane was modeled after a French mountain resort town (in fact, when the town was created under French colonialism Moroccans were actually forbidden from entering the town), and as such the landscape, culture, and architecture are not very "Moroccan" in any sense. Therefore I have some concerns that students would miss out on the border context they would experience in a place like Tangier, and also would miss out on experiencing authentic Moroccan culture. In fact, two faculty members at Al Akhawayn mentioned that this has been a complaint from some past US students. Another concern is that Al Akhawayn University has insisted that the course last for 7 weeks during the summer, and correspond with their summer schedule in order to accommodate their students. This results in a higher time commitment from SDSU faculty and higher costs for SDSU students. Al Akhawayn University estimates the cost per SDSU student for the 7-week course to be approximately \$3,000 per student (see spreadsheet at end of this report), which excludes airfare from San Diego to Fes, Morocco; SDSU tuition costs; and the College of Extended Studies' costs including faculty salary and travel. I suspect that the end result may be a course that is prohibitively expensive for students and overly demanding on faculty members' time.

IV. Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?

I believe that a border studies course in Spain/Morocco would be beneficial to students for at least two reasons. First, living on the US-Mexico border and faced with the cultural and policy dimensions of this context, the comparative nature of the course would be a valuable means for students to compare, personally and academically, their experience with those of people living in other parts of the world. Secondly, I believe Morocco presents a safe and relatively "easy" introduction to the Arab/Muslim world, which is so often demonized at this point in history and which US students so desperately need to better understand.

At this point I see three possible, viable options for a program on border issues in Spain and Morocco, as well as a possibility for student exchanges between SDSU and Al Akhawayn University. Each option has positive and negative aspects that give each a different likelihood of success.

Option 1: South Spain-based program with excursion to Tangier.

One option is to have a 3-4 week program taught by SDSU faculty that is based in the south of Spain. Most of the educational experiences would be classroom-based and based on field trips to local NGOs working on border issues.

Activities: Classroom instruction by SDSU faculty, field trips to local NGOs and government agencies, excursion to Tangier, Morocco for visits to government agencies and possibly NGOs.

Positive Aspects:

- Connections have already been set up with the Spanish Red Cross, which would provide one or more field trip opportunities.
- The Spanish Red Cross seems confident they could facilitate connections with local government agencies and other NGOs, therefore creating other fieldtrip opportunities
- An excursion of 2-3 days to Tangier, Morocco could be arranged easily, with visits to the Catalonian Development Agency and possibly other NGO actors in northern Morocco.
- A faculty member with Spanish language skills could easily make logistical arrangements, and these arrangements could probably be made fairly easily in English as well.

Negative Aspects:

- Logistics in terms of lodging, classroom space, etc would need to be arranged.
- Costs may prove expensive for students due to the value of the euro vs the US dollar.

Sustainability: I expect Public Affairs students, Homeland Security students, Latin American Studies students and University Honors students would be interested in the program, assuming cost were reasonable. Time requirements are also reasonable for faculty.

Option 2: Tangier, Morocco-based program with excursion to Spain

Another option is to have a 3-4 week program taught by SDSU faculty that is based in Tangier, Morocco. Most of the educational experiences would be classroom-based and based on field trips to local NGOs and government agencies working on border issues.

Activities: Classroom instruction by SDSU faculty, field trips to local NGOs and government agencies, excursion to southern Spain for visits to NGOs and possibly government agencies.

Positive Aspects:

- Connections have already been made with the Catalonian Development Agency, which would provide one or more field trip opportunities.
- An excursion of 2-3 days to southern Spain could be arranged easily, with visits to the Spanish Red Cross and possibly other NGO or government agencies in southern Spain.
- While airfare would be expensive, costs in country should be relatively affordable to students.

Negative Aspects:

- While an appropriate hotel has been found with adequate lodging and classroom space, because of the cultural and language differences in Morocco logistics promise to be difficult, particularly for a faculty member without Arabic or French language skills. Female faculty members may also face some difficulty from individuals who may doubt they are the person with the "authority" to make logistical arrangements. The faculty member would need to arrange all field trips and excursions.

Sustainability: I expect Public Affairs students, Homeland Security students, Latin American Studies students and University Honors students would be interested in the program, assuming cost were reasonable. Time requirements are also reasonable for faculty.

Option 3: Ifrane, Morocco-based program at Al Akhawayn University

Another option is to have a 7 week program taught by SDSU faculty that is based in Ifrane, Morocco Al Akhawayn University. This program would have to be taught in summer and during a time that corresponded with Al Akhawayn University's summer class schedule. Most of the educational experiences would be classroom-based, with some cultural excursions in other communities in Morocco.

Activities: Classroom instruction by SDSU faculty, cultural excursions in other communities in Morocco.

Positive Aspects:

- Connections have already been made with Al Akhawayn University, and the faculty and administration are very excited about the possibility of a program focusing on comparative public administration.
- Logistics would be extraordinarily easy for the faculty member; essentially, they would need to arrive in Ifrane and show up for class at the scheduled time.
- Students would have comfortable, culturally familiar accommodations.
- SDSU students would be in the classroom with Moroccan students, which presents an excellent opportunity for learning and cultural exchange

Negative Aspects:

- The course would need to be at least 7 weeks long in summer, which may discourage participation by graduate students and would demand a great deal of time from the SDSU faculty member.
- The fact that the course is located in Ifrane and at an elite English-language university would decrease the "authenticity" of the students exposure to Moroccan culture.
- While SDSU students would be in classrooms with Moroccan students, the Moroccan students are from the country's most wealthy and elite families, which would provide only a small slice of Moroccan lifestyles to our students.
- Al Akhawayn University's distance from the border would dilute the border studies component of the course, though an excursion to Tangier could still be arranged.
- The costs for the program are quite high and may prove to be prohibitively expensive for many students.
- Summer in Morocco is extremely hot, and while this will not present a problem in Ifrane, the proposed excursions (particularly to the Sahara) could prove quite physically challenging to some students.

Sustainability: I expect Public Affairs students and University Honors students would be interested in the program, assuming cost were reasonable. Time requirements are less reasonable for faculty, and I expect that Homeland Security, Latin American Studies, and graduate students in general may be less interested in this course option.

Option 4: Traditional student exchange between SDSU and Al Akhawayn University

A final option is to have traditional student exchange between Al Akhawayn University and SDSU. Since Al Akhawayn University's language of instruction is English, SDSU students could easily attend classes there. Al Akhawayn University's intensive Arabic language program may prove particularly attractive to some students. However, tuition arrangements would need to be made. Al Akhawayn University could also spend a semester at SDSU, and because they tend to be from wealthy families, tuition is likely not to present a barrier for these students.

Promotion, Support, and Next Steps

I would be happy to assist in promoting any of these options to students, and would also be willing to serve as an instructor for a 3-4 week winter break course. A 7-8 week summer course is beyond the scope of what I could offer in terms of time at this point in my career as an untenured professor, but I would happily assist any interested faculty member in making arrangements with Al Akhawayn University faculty and staff. I plan to be in contact with Kevin Carter, Stacey Sinclair, and Karey Sabol during the fall semester to discuss logistics, costs, and marketing for the various options proposed above.

V. Additional Information

Concerns about anti-Americanism and discrimination against Jewish students

I feel it is important to add that, while traveling in Morocco, on several occasions I was subjected to anti-American and anti-Jewish remarks and jokes (even though I myself am not Jewish). While this probably is to be expected in the Arab world considering the current political climate and the war in Iraq, I do have some concerns that some students, and particularly Jewish students, could face a very hostile climate in the course. This is something that should be taken into consideration if/when SDSU moves forward with this course offering.

Useful Contacts:

Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco (AUI):

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

oip@mail.sdsu.edu

Office of International Programs
Special Academic Program Worksheet

Institution: San Diego State University
 Program Name: Summer Program in Border Studies
 Program Dates: 30 May to 17 July 2009
 # of instructor/administrators: 1 # of Students: 12

Housing	Price/Night	N° Nights	N° rooms	TOTAL	Extra	N° Rms	TOTAL
Single room	250	0	0	0			0.00
Double room	300	49	6	88,200			0.00
1 bedroom apartment *	600	49	1	29,400			
2 bedroom apartment *	700	0	0	0			
Studio*	450	0	0	0			
				SUBTOTAL			0

* for staff and faculty only

Restauration	Price/ pers	N° Days	N° Pers	TOTAL	Extra	N° Pers	TOTAL
3 meals a day in the Faculty restuarant	165	49	13	105,105			0.00
meal in reastaurant for driver	110	0	0	0			0.00
Buffet Lunch: 100	100	0	0	0			0.00
Special Buffet Lunch: 150 to 300 *	0	0	0	0			0.00
Buffet Dinner: 100	100	0	0	0			0.00
Special Dinner: 150 to 300 *	0	0	0	0			0.00
Coffee break: normal 30 / special 40*	0	0	0	0			0.00
				SUBTOTAL			0

* choose the price

Campus Access	Price/ day	N°	N° Pers	TOTAL	Extra	N° Pers	TOTAL
Athletics and Activities	10.83	49	13	6,901			0.00
Health Center Services	5	49	13	3,185			0.00
Communications	5	49	13	3,185			0.00
Library	10.83	49	13	6,901			0.00
Health Insurance	5.50	49	13	3,504			0.00
ID Card	50	1	13	650			0.00

SUBTOTAL	24,325	0.00
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Tuition and Administrative Costs	Price	N°	N° Pers	TOTAL	Extra	TOTAL
Foreign Student Tuition Rate	2700	0	0	0		0.00
Orientation Fee and AUI bag	160	0	0	0		0.00
Classroom Facilities	4000	0	0	0		0.00
Academic lecture, AUI Prof (90 minutes)*	1205	1	3	3,614		0.00

*This total covers fees of IGR

SUBTOTAL	3,614	0
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Travel	Price/ person	N°	N° Pers	TOTAL	Notes	
Airport pickup from Fez (1 van, 12 seats)	480	2	1	960	beginning and end of program	
Day trip to Fez	560	1	1	560		
Tafilalt Oasis weekend trip	3056	1	1	3,056		
Tafilalt Hotel costs & entrance fees	550	1	13	7,150		
Lunch to Zaouia Sidi Abdeslam	64	1	1	64		
Day trip to Volubilis	800	1	1	800		
Weekend trip to Marrakech	3440	1	1	3,440		
Marakech Hotel costs & entrance fees	550	1	13	7,150		
Day trip to Meknes	560	1	1	560		
				SUBTOTAL	23,740	

Grand Total	274,385	0
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Exchange Rate	7.23
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Total in US\$	37,950.84
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Per Student US\$ in Morocco **2,919.30**

Tuition

Provisional and some figures need to be checked.--Signed Amy Fishburn, 17 July, 2008

