Office of International Programs  
Faculty International Program Development Grants  
Report Template

Please complete this form after you return from travel and email to oip@mail.sdsu.edu.

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Proposal title: “The Brazilian Health System”

Country/ies visited: Brazil


Dates of travel: March 27-April 7, 2013

Number of student participants: 15

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded (list titles, countries and dates): Preparation for ‘Brazilian Health System’ 2012, Brazil

Have all required reports been submitted? Yes

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: NA

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum): As part of the HHS 350 course, 14 undergrad students and one PhD student mentor visited the hospital facilities of the Fed. Univ. of Rio de Janeiro, the offices of the Rio Municipal Health Department, two clinics of the Rocinha Community Family Health Centers, the FIOCRUZ (research) Foundation, and several historical and natural environment sites around Rio. Lectures included the health system, political and historical review of the system, and development of family health centers.
Travel report:

I. Opening/overview of intentions/activity
This study tour intended to introduce health sciences students to the Brazilian health system. This system guarantees the right to health care to all citizens through the national constitution. In addition, the system is now employing a comprehensive approach to primary care development within the poor communities of Rio (favelas). Students will participate in lectures and discussions at key Brazilian health institutions (hospitals, clinics, public health departments, research agencies) and will have an opportunity to discuss with Brazilian political figures the history and political environment in which the health system functions.

II. In preparation for the trip abroad
A. SDSU has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), where Dr. Novotny has had ongoing research collaborations. In addition to UFRJ faculty members, we collaborated with the Deputy Director of the Municipal Health Department of Rio de Janeiro, the President of the FIOCRUZ Foundation in Rio, and the coordinator in charge of Family Health Center development in Rio communities. Finally, we worked with the US Department of Health and Human Services to identify and invite the Health Attache to the US Embassy, Brasilia to meet with the students.

B. Email contacts
1. Dr. Jose Roberto Lapa e Silva, Professor, UFRJ. jrlapa@hotmail.com
2. Dr. Afranio Kritski, Associate Dean UFRJ. kritskia@gmail.com
3. Dr. Debra Foguel, Provost, UFRJ. foguel@bioqmed.ufrj.br
4. Dr. Betina Durovni, Deputy Director, RDJ Municipal Health Department. bdurovni@gmail.com
5. Dr. Elizabeth Soares, Municipal Health Department. ecsoares@gmail.com
6. Pedro Burger, International Cooperation, FIOCRUZ. pedroburger@fiocruz.br
7. Erica Kastrup, International Cooperation Coordinator, FIOCRUZ. ericakastrup@ensp.fiocruz.br
8. Marcelo Sereno, Workers Party Official, marsereno@mac.com

III. Upon arrival/specific activity
We met with the student group on March 31 to review and confirm the agenda for the week. This was at a historical restaurant, where the classic bossa nova song, ‘Girl from Ipanema’ was written. The week’s schedule is attached. Contacts had been confirmed at UFRJ, FIOCRUZ, and the Municipal Health Department. The student group included nursing students, public health students, political science students, and other health sciences students enrolled in HHS 350. In addition to the health-related lectures and visits, we planned a hike in the nearby Foresta da Tijuca (a restored Atlantic Rainforest Park, biggest in the world), and visits to a samba club, the Botanic Gardens, downtown art museums, the LAPA entertainment district, the Santa Teresa Arts District, and of
course the beautiful beaches of Ipanema. The students stayed (with the PhD student mentor) in a hostel in Ipanema, a very safe neighborhood.

IV. Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?
UFRJ is a major research institution with which SDSU PhD students and faculty have been collaborating. The infectious disease specialists there focus on TB, and we have mounted funded research collaborations with them already. In addition, we would like to recruit students from UFRJ to come to SDSU for PhD studies but also language training. Provost Marlin and CES leaders met with the UFRJ Provost and faculty members in the week prior to the study tour, in fact. We believe the students attending this tour were deeply impressed with the Brazilian health system and had very good high-level look as well as a community-based look at how primary may be implemented in poor communities. The Brazilian contacts were all enthusiastic about continuing similar activities, with the addition of more ‘hands-on’ work in the community in the future. UFRJ is a great partner institution, and could be the site for Fulbrights, research exchanges, and clinical rotations. FIOCRUZ is very interested in ‘sandwich’ research training programs, as they are the home to the National School of Public Health. We will be following up with them on more possibilities as a result of this trip. Graduate students in public health, social work, nursing, and ENS may be particularly interested in research collaborations and international learning opportunities at FIOCRUZ. I will continue to develop collaborations at UFRJ, FIOCRUZ, and the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Health Department going forward.

V. Additional Information
We also made a very important contact at the US Embassy, the health attache, Dr. Abe Miranda. In addition to general diplomatic support, he will be able to welcome contacts in Brasilia with the Ministry of Health and other agencies. Finally, I myself will be doing some consulting with the World Bank in Brazil, which may also provide opportunities for internships with the Bank. One students is now waiting to hear about an internship with the Bank in Brazil.