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Proposal title: SLU-SDSU Workshop on Sustainability and the Development of Cooperative Programs
Country/ies visited: Sweden
Institution visited: Swedish Agricultural University
Dates of travel: 21-24 May 2011
Number of student participants: 0

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded
(list titles, countries and dates):
1st award of this nature

Have all required reports been submitted? yes

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: personal funds

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum):
The purpose of this project was to initiate collaboration between the Swedish
University of Agricultural Science – Faculty of Landscape Planning, Horticulture and Agricultural Science, and San Diego State University. Office of International Programs. Administrators and faculty will give presentations on topics of mutual interest to help facilitate later discussions on possible student exchanges and research cooperation.

Travel report:

I. Opening/overview of intentions/activity  This project was a follow-up to a visit to SDSU by SLU officials to investigate the possibility of collaborative programs involving undergraduate and graduate student exchanges and developing research projects with SDSU faculty and staff. SDSU personnel gave presentations to faculty and students at SLU and SLU faculty gave presentations on such topics as sustainable development, community gardening, urban preservation and public geographies, and youth mobility

II. In preparation for the trip abroad
- Collaborated with: SDSU – Al Sweedler, Stuart Aitken
  SLU – Anders Larsson
- E mail contacts
  Anders Larsson, Head of Dept.
  Landscape Architecture
  Anders.Larsson@slu.se
- Researched university statistics and compared to SDSU(e.g. number of students enrolled
  SLU has 4,102 full-time students,
  2,290 full-time staff and 742 research students
- Confirmed that prospective university is “recognized” by the Ministry of Education -- This university was selected by Dr. Al Sweedler, Assistant VP for International Programs, SDSU

III. Upon arrival/specific activity
- What/who are the contacts made at the prospective partner university?
  Upon arrival at SLU, we met with Paul Jensen, External Relations;
  Anders Larsson, Head of Department, Landscape Architecture; various faculty members from the program
- What particular major/minor is of interest? Landscape architecture.
  This major is relative to our teaching and research areas in
IV. Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?

Why is this particular institution valuable for SDSU? SLU is a leading university focusing on the urban environment and multitude of activities that affect it. SLU research on the development of urban environments and rural areas includes work done on aesthetic value and physical form, social and ecological systems, environmental communication, and planning strategies that include environmental impact assessment, all with the aim of contributing to an increased understanding of long-term change processes within communities. Contacts have already been made with colleagues at SLU and there is an interest in pursuing additional opportunities between SDSU and SLU. Some SLU students have already visited the SDSU Department of Geography examining children’s geographies. I have been asked to return to provide a lecture or two and to continue the discussion about future activities.

- Sustainability of project (is there a high likelihood that students in the department will be interested in studying the proposed subject area at the prospective partner university and vice versa)? My visit and subsequent communication with Professor Larrson lead me to believe there is interest in pursuing future student, faculty, and research exchange projects. A number of students here at SDSU have indicated an interest in pursuing exchange/research visit opportunities in Sweden.

- How will this exchange program (or expansion) increase participation by students in international activities, or enhance international learning environments for students? This student and faculty program would lend itself to advancing the SDSU goal increasing international experiences for students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. It would also help faculty members broaden their contacts through research and publishing outlets.

- What students will benefit? Masters in City Planning students and other graduate students would benefit from obtaining training from another country and learning new methods of pursuing sustainable development. I would hope that students in other majors (undergraduate and graduate) might be interested in such an opportunity. Efforts would be made to publicize opportunities at this university throughout SDSU.
What will be their activities (e.g. course work, international internships, field research, etc.)? Students would be able to take courses in their chosen field whether it be planning, environmental studies, sustainable development, horticulture, etc. Graduate students might also opt to pursue research on the master’s thesis or funded research project.

What will be your role in promoting and supporting these activities? I would take the lead in promoting exchange opportunities for faculty and students in the aforementioned areas. I would monitor the activities and provide reports as needed or required. I would also travel there to continue to make sure things are progressing and to facilitate even more opportunities for collaborative efforts.

V. Additional Information

I was delighted to have taken part in this inaugural project and think it has the potential for much more work. I have also lectured on urban planning and smart growth at the Royal Institute of technology in Stockholm and have mentioned the opportunity at SLU with them. There is interest in seeing if a regional effort is worth pursuing.