Strengthening Cross-Disciplinary Initiatives in International Education at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville

PROJECT PERIOD:

July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004

FINAL REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

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I. OVERVIEW

The purpose of this project is to prepare a proposal to seek funding from the United States Department of Education, Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program (UISFRL), in order to build on UW-Platteville’s University-wide International Initiatives aimed at enhancing international education at UW-Platteville.

In preparing students for leadership positions, UW-Platteville recognizes the fundamental need to understand and compete in global markets, to encourage research by the faculty, to foster economic development and diversification within the state of Wisconsin, to improve the quality of faculty, students and staff, and to serve the business community’s needs in a changing and increasingly interdependent global environment.

This project is a joint venture of the College of Business, Industry, Life Sciences, and Agriculture (BILSA) and the College of Liberal Arts and Education (LAE) aimed at achieving a set of six interrelated goals:

1. To create and fortify bridges in the international undergraduate curriculum;
2. Give added coherence to the undergraduate curriculum by offering interdisciplinary instruction in area studies and business;
3. Create new curricular ties in international education between engineering, the sciences, and the foreign language programs;
4. Add a significant business, language and cultural experience relevant to students in the new International Business Major;
5. Take advantage of new learning technologies and new instructional materials; and
6. Reach out to communities beyond the university boundaries to provide outreach and professional development initiatives.

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The activities initiated under this proposal, hereafter referred to as the Project, is to serve the University’s mission by:

- Enhancing international skills within the university and business communities;
- Providing a growing pool of graduates with creative skills in international business studies;
- Promoting joint international business research projects between the University and the business community;
- Expanding the business community’s knowledge about foreign markets;
- Engaging the University and business communities in mutually productive international business-oriented relationships; and
- Establishing linkages to meet the information, research, and manpower needs of the region, the state, and the country.

III. PROJECT OUTCOME

The proposed project program is designed to address the specific needs of the aforementioned groups by:

- Building bridges in the undergraduate curriculum between area and international studies faculty and professional school faculty;
- Adding relevant interdisciplinary content and appropriate sequencing for students who wish to add an international component to their studies through the establishment of certificates and concentrations;
- Improving the integration of language study in the professional school curriculum by creating better ties between language faculty and professional schools;
- Making international education more accessible and relevant to students through new recruitment methods, the use of new technologies, and the creation of a speakers series and internships; and
- Reaching beyond the borders of the university to link our international expertise to the needs of the state, region and the nation.

IV. PROJECT STATUS

Over the past nine months, both Patrick Hagaen, Co-Director and Louis Nzegwu, Co-Director, have extensively worked on the project proposal. The project has yielded the following results as part of the grant submission process:

1. **Strengthening the Engineering Exchange with the Fachhochschule Darmstadt**

In collaboration with Lisa Riedle, Assistant Dean of EMS, we have established a number of goals for the UISFL grant proposal. Since the exchange of engineering students between the Fachhochschule Darmstadt and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville was established, it has become clear that a number of things need to be undertaken to improve the exchange for UWP students. The following goals have been set: 1) support exchange students through better advising prior to departure for Darmstadt; 2) send UWP’s German professor on a fact-gathering mission to the Fachhochschule Darmstadt to establish a better understanding of German language instruction there and other general educational opportunities for UWP exchange students while abroad; 3) send engineering and German faculty to the University of Rhode Island’s annual international engineering conference to gain an understanding of model programs and courses in this growing
field; 4) together with the Mechanical Engineering Department work on a recruitment program in Wisconsin for talented students of engineering and German.

2. **Strengthening the University International Education Committee**

The UWP faculty and staff have secured administrative and governance approval for a University International Education Committee. One of the goals of this grant is to support the development of this committee once it is elected in October 2004.

3. **Cooperative Efforts with the Teaching Excellence Center**

Dr. Tom LoGuidice, Director of the Teaching Excellence Center has offered his assistance in facilitating college-level developments in the area of international education on the UWP campus.

4. **Procurement of Funding to Support the Development of Short-Term Study Tours**

The chancellor and the deans of the colleges of EMS, LAE, and BILSA support the development by faculty of short-term study tours. Funding is sought to support the professional development of faculty and staff who are interested in creating short-term study tours in their respective fields. The project directors are currently working on a final draft to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education on or before November 5, 2004.