Application for McGlothlin International Travel Grants for Faculty

Overview
Radford University’s College of Education and Human Development is seeking to create a partnership with the Darunsikkhalai School for Innovative Learning (hereafter DSIL) in Bangkok, Thailand. The purposes of this partnership are many:

1. To provide the DSIL with English speaking staff and interns (Radford University graduates, current Radford University students)
2. To provide Radford University students and graduates with an opportunity to teach/intern at an innovative school in an international context (study abroad opportunity)
3. To provide DSIL staff with training opportunities on the Radford University campus or via distance learning (this could include short non-degree training seminars on various topics, or enrollment in a degree program).
4. To provide DSIL students with study abroad opportunities (this could include summer camps on Radford University’s campus – e.g. Governor’s school summer programs, home stays with local host families, and/or exchanges with K-12 schools in this area).

Concrete benefits for Radford University students
Radford University students would benefit by:

1. having a new study abroad opportunity that combines professional skills training (teaching) with immersion in an international culture;
2. having an opportunity for employment immediately following graduation from Radford University. The DSIL administration has indicated a willingness and desire to have Radford University graduates teach at their school. Radford University graduates would receive a salary and a housing/airfare stipend;
3. having interactions with DSIL Thai staff in online or traditional classes on campus. Such diversity in the classroom is beneficial for helping students broaden their understandings of various issues/seeing things from multiple lenses; and
4. having interactions with DSIL students studying in the United States. Radford University students, particularly College of Education and Human Development students, could interact with DSIL students either in student teaching/blocking placements during the academic year, or during summer camp programs. This would tremendously aid Radford University students in developing their skills of working with ESL (English as a Second Language) students.

Estimated number of students potentially affected:

- Radford University graduates per year becoming members of teaching staff at DSIL: 3-5
- Current Radford University students per year doing a study abroad/internships as a member of the teaching staff at DSIL: 3-5
- Current Radford University students taking classes with DSIL staff per year: 20-40
- Current Radford University students interacting with DSIL students in K-12 settings or summer settings: 5-15

Sources/amounts of matching financial support
I am also applying for a Radford University internal course release grant and a creative/scholarly grant. However, I have received both such grants during the spring 2007 semester and it is unlikely I will receive them again so soon as the application states, “normally a faculty member may hold no more than one award in a three-year period.”

Timetable of tangible student benefits to be incorporated within two years of travel
The DSIL has invited me to undertake a descriptive case study analysis of their school so that Radford University students (and the general public through publications/presentations) can see what the DSIL’s approach to teaching and learning entails. Such a description from the perspective of an
American citizen and former public school teacher will hopefully aid Radford University students and graduates in visualizing the school and imagining themselves teaching there. The study will seek to answer questions about day-to-day life of the school, the role of the teaching staff, the curriculum and how it is co-constructed with the students (as opposed to mandated and standardized from afar), the physical environment, and so on. I anticipate that this study will take three months to research, and an additional two to three months to write up. Thus, by the beginning of the fall 2008 semester, Radford University students will have access to read and hear about this innovative, student-centered approach to teaching. I intend to not only discuss the school and its philosophy in my undergraduate (EDEF 320) and graduate (EDEF 607) foundations of education courses, in which school organization and educational philosophy are major content topics, but I also plan to present slide show presentations to the Radford University public in general and take part in study abroad fairs in order to solicit interest in students interning or working (post graduation) at the DSIL. Students, particularly graduate students, expressing an interest will be encouraged to take some of our newly established ESL certification courses in the College of Education and Human Development. Additionally, during my time at the DSIL, I will seek to determine exactly what the staff interests and needs are for training seminars/professional development that could be provided by Radford University faculty either through online courses or degree programs. I anticipate that we could establish some courses/seminars to begin by spring 2009 or fall 2009. I believe that by summer 2009 or 2010 we could see the beginning of regular summer programs for DSIL students. During the 2009-2010 school year, I believe we could see some foreign exchange students from the DSIL attending area K-12 schools.

Study of school

Write up of school, preparation of presentations

Publication of information about DSIL to RU students (through study abroad fairs, listing with internship office, integrating into EDEF 320 and EDEF 607, and via slide show presentations).

Continuation from previous, online courses offered to DSIL staff, internships or employment for 2008 graduates of RU students beginning

Continuation from previous, and summer camp for DSIL students.

Continuation from previous, and DSIL students doing foreign exchanges in area schools.

Media documentation
I plan to not only take numerous pictures of the DSIL school and student/staff that can then be used in slide shows, but I also hope to film clips with a digital camcorder so people can see the school’s philosophy and practices in live action.

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