Grand Rapids Community College Foundation
Instructional Improvement and Professional Development (IIPD) Grant
Report Form

IIPD guidelines require that any individual who receives an IIPD grant must submit a report on their activities within 60 days of completion of the activities. This report must be received by the GRCC Grants and Resource Development Officer in order to be considered eligible for an IIPD grant in a subsequent year. Submit your report to the Grants and Resource Development Officer, mezzanine level, College Park Plaza Building.

Name: Keith St. Clair       Job Title/Department  Social Science Professor

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Date of IIPD Award (insert year award was received):

October, 200_       March, 2007

Purpose of Grant:

Faculty Development Seminar in China

Please respond to the following questions related to the activity for which you received grant funding and attach your report to this form.

1. Describe the new avenues of instruction, including changes in curriculum, teaching strategies or other changes that are resulting from your grant-funded activity.

The biggest change in curriculum will be in PS 201 Comparative Government. Since this course examines politics as it is practiced in various countries throughout the world while comparing and contrasting these practices, this grant will be a perfect supplement to this course. I have included China in the past, but this grant allowed me to go there for the first time. In addition to broadening my knowledge of China, I am now able to supplement my lectures with digital photographs and personal anecdotes from my trip.

In PS 202 International Relations, my experiences in China will provide excellent examples of nationalism, terrorism, religious diversity, poverty, environmental degradation, and problems of economic development. All of these issues are touched on in this course, and with over 1 billion people problems in China can easily become the world’s problems.

2. How will the grant-funded activity result in an impact on student learning and enhancements to student success?

Students are gaining my first hand accounts of Chinese cultural issues. I have experienced the diversity of the people of China. Among them are the Hui, ethnic Han Chinese who happen to be Muslim. In addition, I met with many Uighurs, a Turkic speaking Muslim minority throughout the desert Northwest. Many of these people are discriminated against by Han Chinese, and in Kashgar their movements are

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particularly restricted because of terrorist attacks in recent years. Many of these people expressed animosity to the Chinese and US governments. One community leader even invoked a sympathy for Osama bin Laden and his jihad.

I will also have much to say about the pace of globalization and economic development in China. The Chinese are embracing Capitalism to the hilt. The pace of economic change is literally breathtaking. The air pollution in China is oppressive and obscures the skylines of most cities. The long term health effects because of this are daunting. At the same time the use of coal that gives rise to this pollution threatens to make the impact of global warming even more severe. On a local level, neighborhoods in Beijing are being cleared for economic development displacing a large population of urban poor. All these issues are also covered in my International Relations course.

I am using the digital photographs that I have taken as well as my seminar notes to supplement my course lecture with that of the textbook. The feedback in the past from students has been very positive, and I believe that their increased interest in the subject matter has resulted in better performance on class assignments.

3. What steps are you taking to assess the impact of this activity on student learning?

Assessing the impact of my international seminars is a difficult task. What I have done is compare the results in classes where I have given my presentation with those in which I have not. My observations are that the classes that witness my photos and personal stories are more engaged and more interested. The photos seem to accompany an increase in questions on the part of the students. Some students express a desire to go there themselves.

I may be able to compare test scores with past classes to see if there has been improvement over similar exams given in previous courses.

4. How are you engaging others in the learning process and disseminating activity results with the wider campus community? NOTE: If shared learning activities have not yet taken place, an addendum to this report must be filed with the Grants Office describing shared learning activities prior to applying for another IIPD grant, as required by IIPD Guidelines.

I am planning on giving presentations on China this year at GRCC and Muskegon Community College. In the past, I have done a promotional video for the GRCC Foundation stressing the importance of Professional Development grants like this. I would certainly be willing to do so again.

I have also spoken to my Rotary Club on my travels. Sharing my photos and what I have learned has met with very positive feedback. I am frequently complimented on my presentations and how it is helpful to bring distant places to West Michigan. However, audiences are most interested in hearing about the people and their cultural differences with the US. This always leaves more of an impact than just the descriptions of locations.

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5. Describe how the grant-funded activity is supporting the objectives of your department and your existing job responsibilities.

I am sharing my knowledge that I have gained with my department through scheduled presentations on campus. Video taped presentations of these talks will be broadcast on channel 28 promoting this college and the GRCC Foundation's work.

6. How has this grant helped in fostering your professional development goals?

I have always realized that teaching International Relations and Comparative Government requires the necessity to travel. My credibility in the classroom depends on it. Similarly, students wouldn’t think much of a nursing instructor who had not been to a hospital in years. My personal stories and photographs enhance my authority with my students.