Study Away Exploratory Travel Funds Proposal Cover Sheet

(Applicant must provide 1 copy of the application to the Study Away office and one pdf file [post signatures] to studyaway@missouristate.edu)

Leslie Baynes
Name: ____________________________ Date: ______________

Religious Studies
Department: ________________________

836-5491
Office phone: ______________________ Email: ______________________

Assoc. Prof.
Rank: _____________________________

Rome and Pompeii, Italy
Location of travel: __________________________

July 10, 2013
Approximate departure date: ______________ Approximate return date: ______________

2880.00
Total Budget Request: $__________

I have read the Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad from the Forum on Education Abroad and will abide by these principles in planning my forthcoming short-term program.
http://www.forumea.org/standards-standards.cfm

Leslie Baynes
Applicant’s Signature

_______________________________
College Support of Travel (if any)

_______________________________
Department Support of Travel (if any)
October 5, 2012

Leslie Baynes  
Associate Professor, New Testament and Second Temple Judaism  
Dept. of Religious Studies  
Exploratory Travel Fund Application

Abstract

Jesus and Paul, the two main characters of the Christian New Testament, lived their entire lives in the Roman empire, and the Roman empire was directly responsible for their deaths. Roman religion, philosophy, law, and culture influenced the development of early Christianity and continue to influence it even to this day. A study away course on the Roman world in the New Testament and Early Christianity would enhance the offerings of Missouri State’s Department of Religious Studies.

Travel Narrative

I propose a study away course on the Roman world in the New Testament and Early Christianity, and to do this, I request funds to engage in exploratory travel in Rome and its environs. The two main characters in the New Testament are Jesus and Paul, who lived their entire lives in the Roman empire. Both of them met their ends in conflicts with the Roman empire. No student of the New Testament can begin to understand it or the history of its religious ideas without knowledge of the Roman empire, its laws, and its culture.

The implementation and timetable of the course should be after the end of the spring semester, in late spring or early summer. We would spend approximately two weeks in Rome, including the nearby town of Ostia. Ostia has one of the oldest known synagogues in the world, as well as Mithraeums where Roman soldiers in particular worshipped the god Mithras. In Rome we would explore the Roman Forum, the Coliseum, and the churches dedicated to Sts. Peter and
Paul, not to mention the Scavi (Necropolis) beneath the Vatican and the numerous Christian catacombs under the city. I also plan to spend at least two days in Pompeii and its neighboring city Herculaneum, and then at the Naples Archaeological Museum where many of the treasures of those ruins now reside. Before going there, students would read excerpts from Peter Oaks’s new book *Reading Romans in Pompeii: Paul’s Letter at Ground Level*, which embodies the point of the trip for students: to bring alive the characters, setting, and social world of the New Testament in ways that they could not imagine while sitting in a classroom in the Ozarks. While the students are in the Ozarks, however, I plan to meet with them several times before leaving for Italy to prepare and instruct them for what they are about to encounter. At this time I will also assign them mini “guidebooks” to write, dividing up sites among the students, who will act as “tour guides” for their peers. Thus every student will do intensive research on at least one ancient site, taking intellectual ownership of it, and every student will hone presentation skills that will in effect act as service learning, in service of their peer group.

I expect that a course centered in Rome and Pompeii will utterly transform students’ perceptions of Christianity. Most of the students who take courses in New Testament self-identify as practicing Christians, and their denominational background reflects that of the Ozarks as a whole. The latest statistics on religious affiliation in the Ozarks tell us that 80% of Christians in the region are evangelical Protestants, and few adherents of these denominations learn about ancient Christianity in their churches. Even when they take courses in the Department of Religious Studies, their grasp of Christianity in its earliest forms is only in its infancy. Because their perceptions of Christianity are sometimes a-historical, at times their understanding of the implications of the religion is skewed. Because religion is such a vital part of life in the Ozarks, coming to a deeper, richer, and more accurate knowledge of it can do nothing but help students
and perhaps even their community as a whole. Furthermore, the course will expose students firsthand to life and culture in one of the great European capitals, where ancient history and modern life co-exist in a manner that is rarely seen elsewhere in the world.

At this point in time I do not have any collaborators to work with on this trip.

According to the U. S. State Department, top travel concerns in Italy are earthquakes, active volcanoes, and crime. Vesuvius, the volcano near Pompeii, is not currently active. Theft of personal belongings appears to be the most common crime our students would encounter. In talking to colleagues at other institutions who take students regularly to Italy, I have learned that the best preventive measure is requiring students to stay at least in pairs and to avoid walking alone.
Study Away
Exploratory Travel Fund
Endorsements

Department Head and College Dean Comments on Travel
SPECIFIC COMMENTS BY THE COLLEGE AND DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL ON THE PROPOSED TRAVEL ARE EXPECTED AND WILL BE A PART OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA.

Department Head’s Statement:

Leslie Baynes' proposed travel to develop a Short Term Study Away program in Rome promises to result in a wonderful opportunity for MSU students to learn about the ancient history of Christianity in the very places where that history took place. I can easily imagine this Study Away program appealing to numerous students from Dr. Baynes' Intro to New Testament course and her Jesus Course, not to mention other MSU students. I recommend this proposal enthusiastically.

[Signature]

Dean’s Statement:

I endorse this Study Away proposal.

[Signature]

Missouri State University Study Away Programs
Jim D. Morris Center for Continuing Education, Suite 403
301 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806
P: 417-836-6368 • E: studyaway@missouristate.edu
W: http://international.missouristate.edu/studyaway/
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*Please describe in detail what will be included in this category in the Budget Abstract.

A BUDGET ABSTRACT MUST BE INCLUDED EXPLAINING FUNDING REQUESTED.

See reverse side for budget abstract sheet.
Budget Abstract

Airfare
I am not asking for airfare because I will use frequent flyer points. There are, however, taxes on the flight that vary between $300-$500 depending on the flight.

Ground transportation
Taxi from airport to hotel (round trip): $70.00
Train from Rome to Ostia (round trip): $2.60
Train from Rome to Sorrento (round trip): $57.50

Lodging
Lodging for eight days in Rome at the Hotel Palatino is $1600. I chose this hotel because a colleague of mine who regularly takes students to Rome stays there and recommended it to me. It is next to the Roman forum and a few steps away from the Metro. I plan to spend eight days there because I need that amount of time to learn how to get around the city, visit locations, and make necessary contacts.

Lodging for the stay at Pompeii is in Sorrento, and the cost for two nights there is approximately $350.

Meals
Meals for ten days @$40/day = $400

Total requested
$2880