**SABBATICAL LEAVE REPORT FOR 2014-2015**

**8/26/2015**

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Dear Provost Mark Braun:

Following is my report on my sabbatical leave for the 2014-2015 academic year.

I proposed to work on my book manuscript during my sabbatical, though I was also hoping for an opportunity to teach overseas for at least part of the year. Happily, both goals were accomplished. I learned in April 2014 that I was awarded a Fulbright grant to Poland for 2014-2015. I had elected for a half year grant, both for family reasons and in order to complete my book manuscript in fall 2014. I noted in my sabbatical proposal that I was uncertain if I would be working on final editing of my book, writing new chapters suggested by a publisher, or conducting more research to deepen my cases. I did the last. With the help of a Research, Scholarship, and Creativity grant for 2014-2015 ($2,100), I was able to conduct field research in Washington DC in early fall 2014, which was a significant factor in finishing my manuscript by December 2014.

**Summary of Activities and Outcomes**

*Summer and Fall 2014*

Planning for Fulbright in Poland I received a Kendall Center Mini-grant ($1500) and Kendall Center CIEE International Faculty Development Seminar grant ($4000) to attend the CIEE faculty seminar to Germany and Poland June 29-July 10, 2014. The seminar, “Ruin and Revival: History, Modern Memory and Identity” was something I was accepted into BEFORE notification of the Fulbright grant. It turned out to be an incredible introduction to Poland, a chance to do a little scouting prior to taking my family to Poland in January 2015, and, best of all, highly relevant to my research and teaching in international reconciliation.

Research trip, publishing contract, and manuscript submission In addition to preparing for my family’s time in Poland, summer and fall were dedicated to finishing the manuscript, “The Humbled Superpower: US Foreign Policy and Possibilities of Contrition”. In September 2014 I signed a contract with a publisher and in October I spent a week doing research in Washington DC. Though seemingly late in the project, given that my chapters were all drafted, the interviews from this trip provided essential primary data for my research. A secondary goal of this trip was to gather preliminary data for my next research project, which essentially looks at how U.S. peace organizations fizzle out or re-invent themselves after a conflict dies down. My hope was that interviews with peace activists/organizations from the 1980s Central American conflicts and 1970s Vietnam era would start me on this journey. After revising and editing, I submitted my manuscript for review on December 30, 2014.

*Spring and Summer 2015*

Teaching in Poland My family and I left for Poland at the end of January, to begin my US Fulbright Scholar grant. The month of January and early February were pretty much consumed by two minor surgeries and 2 emergency hospital visits/stays affecting three different family members. Nevertheless, I began teaching in Poland in February, finishing my classes and exams in late June. At Collegium Civitas, a private university known for a social sciences and international relations focus, I taught two courses I normally teach at Gustavus: US Foreign Policy (for Masters level) and Politics of Reconciliation. I had 55 students.

Academic presentations in Poland I chose Poland because of my research interests in the politics of reconciliation and Poland’s own tales of reconciliation with both Germany and the Soviet Union/Russia. I gave three different academic presentations in Poland during the months of April through June: one on US contrition in the war on terror, presented both to the faculty at Collegium Civitas (4/13) and to a conference at Jagellonian University in Krakow (6/20); one on active learning pedagogies to faculty at the U. of Bialystok (5/15); and one on Polish-German reconciliation to a conference jointly hosted by Auschwitz Jewish Center and the Polish Fulbright Commission (6/12).

**New Research Directions/Future Plans**

Publications: I received my book manuscript reviews in mid-August 2015. Reviews show much confidence in the strength of my research and my overall project, recommending publication. I am making a proposal for revisions and hope to complete them by January 2016.

Upcoming presentations:

1. *Gustavus**Faculty Shop Talk 2/26/2016 will report on my work on inter-state reconciliation.*This is a chance to share my overall book project with a Gustavus audience.
2. *Peace and Justice Studies Association annual meetings Oct 15-17, 2015*I will present an update on my book chapter on Vietnam at this Peace Studies conference. I have presented this case before, but the material from my interviews and particularly related to the 50th year commemoration activities will be new.

*Abstract:* Reconciling History: The Vietnam 50 Year Commemoration

The path of normalization of relations between the US and Vietnam was slow, yet now the two nations are booming with business deals and government cooperation. The difficulties of the past are largely swept under the rug. This paper examines the historical memory of the Vietnam War in the US, emphasizing recent official and unofficial commemorative efforts that are celebratory, calls for action and education, and, in some cases, peacemaking efforts that emerge from long-term initiatives dating back to the war protests. The goal of the paper is to assess the potential in these efforts to both a) achieve a deeper reconciliation of the past within the US and b) foster deeper acknowledgement of past wrongs between the US and Vietnam. It is argued, not surprisingly, that these two processes are related, and the promise and pitfalls of these commemorative efforts in reconciling the past is analyzed.

1. International Studies Association annual meetings March 16-19, 2016 If I am accepted to participate, I will present on NEW research related to my fall 2014 interviews. I still have considerable work to do on this, and with another unexpected new project I was invited to participate in as well as my book manuscript revisions…I am wary of what I will be able to produce for this conference in March. Nevertheless, here is my abstract. One has to start somewhere.

Abstract: Letting the U.S. Off the Hook?: US Peace Organizations and Post-Conflict Justice

What happens to peace movements after the fighting is over, but justice is not obtained? Using the cases of the Vietnam War, the Solidarity movement in Nicaragua in the 1980s, and the more recent example of the Iraq war protest groups, this paper examines what happened to organizations in each of these cases after the initial conflict was over. Organizations that had been involved in countering US foreign policy, for the most part, did not seek to hold the US government accountable for what they perceived as post-conflict justice (reparations, settlement of the World Court case in Nicaragua, legal accountability for actors in the US, etc.). Using literature on peace NGOs, the reconciliation and transitional justice literature, and data from select organizations, this strategic organizational choice is examined, as well as its effects on reconciliation and justice at inter-state and domestic levels.

**Summary**

I am very pleased to report that I had an immensely productive and rewarding sabbatical. While my proposal built in a few different scenarios (articles vs. book manuscript, for example…and uncertainty about the Fulbright), I have the perhaps rare ability to report that I have accomplished all of my sabbatical goals. The Fulbright was my first hope for my sabbatical time, and I am just thrilled that I had that amazing opportunity. I am very grateful to Gustavus for the sabbatical leave, as well as the Kendall Center mini-grant and RSC grants that supported my pursuits. The year was so full that I have a hard time believing I did all of this in one year (wasn’t that first trip to Poland in summer 2013? No, it was 2014!). I return to Gustavus with some boxes yet to unpack (and January medical insurance/bills yet to sort – ugh!) but very grateful and energized for a new year.

Respectfully submitted,

Mimi Gerstbauer