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Rochelle Gregory

Kyle C. Kopko

M. Grant Norton

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CHAPTER NINE

The Fulbright International Education Administrators Seminars: Pathways to International Partnerships

ROCHELLE GREGORY
NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE

KYLE C. KOPKO
ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

M. GRANT NORTON
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

While the benefits of studying abroad are well documented (e.g., Braskamp et al.; Lewis and Niesenbaum; Ludlum et al.; McCabe; Williams), honors administrators face significant challenges in internationalizing their honors programs and colleges. The U.S. Fulbright Commission, by partnering with commissions in France, Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Russia, and Taiwan to host programs for international education administrators from around the United States each year, is addressing the challenges of

internationalizing American higher education. According to the Institute of International Education, the seminar in Germany in 1984–1985 was the first of its kind. Other seminars were added in 1986 (Japan), 1999 (Korea), 2012 (India), 2013 (France), and 2017 (Taiwan) (“The Power”). This chapter provides an overview of the German-American Fulbright Commission’s IEA seminar and outlines the seminar’s benefits and the opportunities it offers honors administrators working to internationalize their programs.

The IEA application process requires a project statement, institutional statement, and letters of recommendation, including one from the applicant’s direct supervisor. Effective applications demonstrate an applicant’s “desire to learn about the host country’s education system as well as establish networks of U.S. and international colleagues” (“IEA Review Criteria”). The applicants’ administrative positions and willingness to share knowledge gained through the seminar are other important selection criteria. All applications are initially reviewed by a panel consisting of U.S. Fulbright IEA alumni. Applications are then forwarded to the specific country commission (in our case the German-American Fulbright Commission), which makes the final selection. All travel, accommodations, and program costs are covered by the Fulbright IEA Program.

The German-American Fulbright Commission hosts the IEA seminar to “familiarize U.S. higher education administrators from American universities, colleges or community colleges with Germany’s higher education system, society and culture” (“U.S.-Germany”). Starting in Berlin, participants are provided with a comprehensive overview of the German higher education system through presentations, workshops, meetings with experts, campus visits, and city tours. During the second part of the program, participants are divided into small sub-groups that travel to other destinations throughout Germany to visit institutions of higher education, such as research and technical universities and universities of applied sciences, thereby further exploring Germany’s federalist education system (“U.S.-Germany”). Fulbright IEA participants return from the experience with contacts and firsthand

knowledge that they can use to help students pursue international education opportunities.

For honors administrators, the IEA seminar is ideal because it offers unique opportunities to build successful, sustained international collaborations that can enrich and internationalize their honors programs and colleges. Recognizing that honors programs are unique and individually suited to their institutions and to their students' needs, the IEA seminars allow honors administrators to identify specific objectives that align with their program's goals and needs. By participating in the IEA seminar, honors administrators establish lasting, collaborative partnerships with international institutions that they can tailor to their specific honors programs or colleges. Seminar participants also observe and gain valuable insight into other curricular models, are connected to the Fulbright network of scholars, and return to their respective institutions with professional development that they can leverage to support their honors students and faculty ("IEA Seminars"). While the German IEA will be the focus of this chapter, the insights gained and the process of developing professional connections discussed here are generally applicable to Fulbright IEA seminars in the other host countries as well.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR OBJECTIVES

We were three of fifteen participants who traveled to Berlin, Germany, in October 2017 to participate in a twelve-day seminar. All participants' professional responsibilities involved international education or international exchange in some way; however, the participants' goals varied based upon each participant's professional responsibilities and the needs and objectives of the institution. The 2017 Germany IEA cohort included administrators from diverse departments and divisions, including faculty affairs, study abroad, international student affairs, academic affairs, career and technical programs, and honors education. Our cohort included administrators from two-year, four-year, private, and public colleges and universities in California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South

Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. The participants' varied professional backgrounds led to productive discussions about the German higher education system's operations, priorities, and challenges, especially as they compared to those in the United States.

As current and former honors deans and directors from diverse institutions, we had objectives for the seminar that varied depending on our specific students' demographics, our institution's needs, and our professional interests. Rochelle Gregory is the chair of the English, Speech, and Foreign Languages division at North Central Texas College, an open-admission, two-year college located north of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. North Central Texas College serves 10,500 students and offers fifty-eight degree and certificate programs. Seventy-five percent of students receive financial assistance, and the college has awarded more than twelve million dollars in Pell grants since 2008. Gregory served as the honors program coordinator for seven years and oversaw its growth from twenty-five students when it first launched in 2009 to its current enrollment of more than one hundred students. As the honors coordinator and chair for the English, Speech, and Foreign Language division at North Central Texas College, Gregory has participated in and led thirteen affordable, short-term study abroad programs to Europe and Central America for more than three hundred students.

Gregory's purpose for applying to the seminar stemmed from her experiences teaching and developing programs at a mid-size community college with a sizeable first-generation, low-income, and minority student population. Gregory sought to leverage the experience to promote her community college by creating faculty and student exchanges, especially in areas related to STEM disciplines, workforce training, and adult education. This opportunity would be mutually beneficial to North Central Texas College and German faculty and students because North Central Texas College's programs align directly with Germany's leading industries, e.g., energy and environmental technology, steel and metal machining, medical technology, health care, and IT and telecommunications. Because Texas is a leader in the oil and gas industry

and North Central Texas College has a long tradition of building lasting partnerships with local and regional employers to develop innovative job training programs, a faculty and student exchange program would be mutually beneficial. Additionally, this seminar would facilitate North Central Texas College and German faculty and students studying together and sharing research about best practices in adult education to prepare students for transfer into the university or the workforce.

Kyle C. Kopko is Associate Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning and Associate Professor of Political Science at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. Elizabethtown College is a comprehensive liberal arts college that features a blend of liberal arts and professional programs. It was founded in 1899 by members of the Church of the Brethren, a church that originated in Germany. The college is located approximately fifteen minutes outside of Harrisburg/Hershey and two hours away from Philadelphia. Elizabethtown College enrolls 1,700 traditional undergraduates. Its honors program was established in 1999, thanks to an endowed gift from the Hershey Company, and currently serves two hundred students. Approximately one-third of Elizabethtown honors students study abroad, and the college offers more than forty study abroad locations.

Kopko applied for the IEA for three overarching reasons. First, he sought to identify potential study abroad opportunities for Elizabethtown College honors students. Second, he wanted to understand better how German institutes of higher education effectively partnered with industry to provide students with high-impact educational practices. This knowledge, in turn, would be used to improve high-impact practices at Elizabethtown College. Finally, he sought to understand how German institutions fostered interdisciplinary research among students and faculty because this is an ongoing priority of Elizabethtown College.

M. Grant Norton is Dean of the Honors College at Washington State University. Founded in 1890, with its main campus in Pullman, Washington, and with branch campuses and extension offices across the state, Washington State University serves 30,000

students, is recognized as a Carnegie Research I university, and is ranked number one in the nation for U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded research. The honors college was founded in 1960 and currently has one thousand students. Typically, up to forty percent of students in any graduating class will have studied abroad through faculty-led programs, academic exchanges, internships, and direct-enrollment programs. Norton sought to leverage his experiences in the seminar to identify and develop student and faculty exchange opportunities at major German universities that would promote scientific inquiry and the university's and honors college's global profile.

Other participants' objectives were shaped by their professional roles and their institutions' needs, such as facilitating dual exchange programs, learning more about the German higher education system in order to promote more seamless international education experiences for in-bound and out-bound students, establishing internship opportunities between American universities and German industry leaders, replicating successful technical education programs, and making introductions that could lead to MOUs between similar German and American institutions.

THE GERMAN-AMERICAN FULBRIGHT COMMISSION AND THE IEA SEMINAR

The German-American Fulbright Commission was established in 1952. As one of the forty-nine binational commissions, it is one of the largest commissions in the world with 46,000 alumni on both sides of the Atlantic. Since the commission's founding, its objective has been to promote mutual understanding between the U.S. and Germany through academic and bicultural exchange, thereby fulfilling Senator J. William Fulbright's vision that "educational exchange can turn nations into people" ("About Fulbright").

Germany's robust higher education system includes 396 institutions of higher education, including 121 universities, 218 Fachhochschulen (universities of applied sciences), and 57 schools of music and fine arts. Also of note, 240 are state-funded

institutions, 117 are private institutions (mostly business schools and universities of applied sciences), 39 are church-maintained programs (primarily geared toward social work), and 30 are Duale Hochschulen (universities of cooperative education). Additionally, professional and vocational training occurs entirely outside of universities.

The German IEA seminar was divided into three segments: the first week was spent in Berlin and the second week at several sites throughout Germany. The program culminated with a four-day visit to Brussels, where participants met with representatives from the European Union (EU).

Berlin

In Berlin, participants received a comprehensive overview of the German higher education system and its internationalization strategies at sessions with representatives of the German Rector's Conference, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the German Federal Ministry of Education. They also toured the city and met with local university administrators to learn about the history, purpose, and instructional and administrative organization of German research universities, universities of applied sciences, colleges of art, and German apprenticeship programs. Seminar participants met with Fulbright alumni and representatives from the U.S. State Department to discuss the importance of educational exchanges and transatlantic relations. At the conclusion of the first week, seminar participants were divided into three groups based upon their professional backgrounds and visited major universities in either Darmstadt, Heidelberg, or the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg in the Rhineland.

Darmstadt

Because Gregory is an administrator at a community college with an emphasis on workforce development, she traveled to Darmstadt, a city of 150,000 near Frankfurt in the state of Hesse in southwest

Germany. Darmstadt is officially called the Wissenschaftsstadt, or the “City of Science,” because of its major universities, technology-driven industries, and research institutions. Specifically, Darmstadt is the home of two major technical and applied science universities: the Technische Universität Darmstadt (Technical University of Darmstadt—TU Darmstadt for short) with approximately 26,000 students and the Hochschule Darmstadt (Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences) with around 16,000 students. Two global corporations, Merck and Schenck RoTec, are located in Darmstadt as are the scientific research institutions Fraunhofer Society, GSI Helmholtz Center for Heavy Ion Research (German: Helmholtzzentrum für Schwerionenforschung), the European Space Operations Centre, and the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites. TU Darmstadt, one of the nine leading technical universities in Germany, which is called the TU9, places technology at the center of all of its disciplines. From natural and social sciences to humanities, each discipline aligns with research and scholarship in engineering (“Who We Are”).

The university’s partnerships with companies and research institutions are the driving force in economic and technological development in the Frankfurt-Rhine-Neckar metropolitan area (“Alliances and Networks”). The Hochschule Darmstadt, on the other hand, emphasizes dual enrollment programs that align the university coursework with a “practice-oriented approach to higher education” and enables students to study at the university while learning as interns and student trainees in high-tech corporations and research institutes (“About Us”). For Gregory visiting Darmstadt offered the opportunity to connect with administrators in workforce development and form partnerships that will provide new opportunities for students to participate in short- and long-term study abroad programs.

Heidelberg

Because of his background in academic affairs and interest in interdisciplinary research, Kopko was selected to travel to Heidelberg, a city of approximately 155,000 in southwest Germany.

Heidelberg is home to Universität Heidelberg (English: Heidelberg University), the oldest university in Germany, founded in 1386. It is a traditional research university and enrolls 30,000 students. The Universität Heidelberg has received multiple awards as part of the Excellence Initiative, a program sponsored by German federal and state governments and administered by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (English: German Research Foundation or DFG) and the Wissenschaftsrat (English: German Council of Science and Humanities) (“Excellence Initiative”). Most of its undergraduate courses are taught in German; however, most graduate courses are offered in English. The university promotes interdisciplinary research, as evidenced by its numerous research centers and partnerships that encourage the interdisciplinary study of topics such as aging, mental health, conflict research, and Jewish studies.

The university is also home to a Max Planck campus and the Heidelberg Center for American Studies. The Center for American Studies offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in American Studies with a strong interdisciplinary focus (“The Heidelberg Center”). The visit to Heidelberg underscored the strong emphasis that German higher education, generally, and Heidelberg University, specifically, place upon interdisciplinary research and education. During the visit to Heidelberg, several American graduate students were in residence at the Center, researching varied subjects including history, literature, religion, philosophy, and politics. Since this interdisciplinary approach is valued and embraced by many U.S. honors faculty and students, the Heidelberg Center offers attractive graduate study options for honors students, especially since there are no tuition fees for master’s and PhD programs.

Subsequent to visiting Heidelberg, Kopko has promoted this opportunity to honors students and faculty for study abroad and post-graduate research opportunities. He has also engaged with the Center for American Studies to strengthen his own scholarship and that of his advisees who wish to engage in interdisciplinary social science research focusing on the United States.

Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg

As a dean at a research-focused institution, Norton, who was seeking research-based study abroad opportunities for his student body, traveled to the state of North Rhine-Westphalia to visit Sankt Augustin (near Bonn), one of the campuses of the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg (English: Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, also known as H-BRS). Sankt Augustin is located in the center of Europe with nine European Union capitals within a one-hour flight. The characteristics of universities of applied sciences include small learning groups, which are like honors communities, and a requirement for students to gain practical experience outside the classroom, which is similar to experiential learning but focused on industrial experience. Universities of applied sciences expect their faculty members to have practical experience gained in industry. An important third mission of these institutions is knowledge creation and technology transfer. Universities of applied sciences focus on BS and MS students and provide only minimal opportunities for students to obtain a PhD. Even though H-BRS was founded relatively recently—in 1995, it has already grown to 9,000 students and has established partnerships with 80 universities in about 40 countries.

Brussels

For the final four days of the seminar, the cohort reconvened in Berlin and then traveled to Brussels to join the IEA France seminar participants. Co-organized by Fulbright Belgium Luxembourg, the agenda in Brussels provided insights into EU perspectives on higher education and plans for its continued internationalization, including funding opportunities for EU-transatlantic partnerships. The program also included a visit to the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (English: Catholic University Leuven) to learn more about international opportunities for students who plan to pursue doctoral research in Humanities, Social Science, Biomedicine, Science, Engineering, and Technology (“Doctoral Studies”).

REFLECTIONS

In reflecting on the IEA seminar, we found that while we represent very different institutions, the experience offered all of us unique opportunities to internationalize our honors programs through partnerships with German institutions.

International Networks and Opportunities

We tapped into a new network of professional connections at German universities, government agencies, and research institutions that will allow us to develop sustained partnerships that benefit our students and faculty. For example, as a direct result of the IEA program, Washington State University established an academic exchange program and a summer research experience in advanced catalysis and a research collaboration in catalysis and ceramics with the Technische Universität Berlin. North Central Texas College also brought forty students to Munich on a short-term study abroad in January 2018 and is developing an additional short-term study abroad program focused on engineering and technology for March 2021.

Germany's world-class universities offer a wealth of opportunities for honors students. Undergraduate students are often aware of and able to participate in a variety of study abroad opportunities; however, graduate opportunities are often overlooked, and they, too, are plentiful. Given that many honors students enroll in graduate school or professional school following their undergraduate degree, they should consider Germany for post-graduate educational opportunities. Germany is an ideal country for American students interested in pursuing topics related to STEM fields, immigration and refugee policy, EU relations, and interdisciplinary studies. Graduate programs are offered in English and are tuition-free or cost very little. For example, the American Studies Centre at Heidelberg offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs that enable students to pursue higher education in Germany at a comparatively low cost of approximately 1,500 Euros per semester for non-EU students ("M.A. in American Studies"). Scholarships and financial aid are also specifically allocated to refugee and displaced

students to help them pursue higher education. For example, the Hessen State Ministry for Higher Education, Research, and the Arts provides financial assistance to refugee doctoral students and scientists studying and working in Hesse. In addition to the tuition-free assistance that all students receive, displaced and asylum-seeking students can receive up to 2,000 Euros per month for living expenses (“Financing”).

Frequently, study abroad opportunities are developed for students at four-year universities in traditional disciplines, such as humanities, languages, physical and life sciences, and social sciences. Unfortunately, too few opportunities exist for vocational and adult education students to study internationally, even though they gain just as much from the experience as their counterparts who are traditional students. Honors program administrators understand that student demographics are changing. Honors programs are serving more diverse student populations, including minority, non-traditional, low-income, and first-generation students, and especially at community colleges, honors programs are also diversifying their honors programming to include students in career and technical programs. As such, honors administrators understand that higher education is increasingly under pressure to provide affordable high-impact experiences for all students. International education should not be an opportunity reserved only for a few highly selective students. Colleges and universities have the ethical obligation to develop creative, rigorous, and meaningful study abroad opportunities that emphasize experiential learning and translate to enhanced global learning and cross-cultural communication (Alon 8; Braskamp et al. 111; Engle).

Through this seminar, we identified ways to incorporate German experiences into the curricula of honors programs and institutions, including short- and long-term study abroad and international exchange programs that would be suitable for our students, many of whom are low-income, STEM, and non-traditional students. These opportunities include the previously mentioned German language-engineering program at Darmstadt and the American Studies Institute at Heidelberg. Additional resources for

those seeking to develop connections with German institutions include the Institute of International Education (“The Power”) and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), which provides a database of short- and long-term programs for undergraduate and international students who wish to study in Germany (“International Programmes”) and information about DAAD for foreigners, Germans, and higher education institutions (“German Academic”). There are also numerous resources to assist students in navigating the bureaucratic, cultural, financial, and logistical challenges of studying abroad in Germany, including the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (“Study in Germany”), ERASMUS+ for students who are citizens of the EU and partnering nations (“What is Erasmus+”), and the Humboldt Foundation’s research fellowship awards (“Humboldt Research”).

Participating in any Fulbright seminar, whether to France, Germany, India, South Korea, or Taiwan, connects honors administrators with a network of scholars and institutions that administrators can leverage to connect with other international Fulbright scholars and bring them to American campuses to share their research with American honors students. For Gregory, specifically, the connection to a network of Fulbright scholars has been an exciting and cost-effective mechanism for introducing students, faculty, and the community to renowned and innovative scholars while promoting her community college.

Of course, because of their participation in the international Fulbright program, honors administrators, in general, become more familiar with the diverse scholarship opportunities available to honors students. Gregory, Norton, and two other 2017 seminar attendees were selected to review Fulbright applications for upcoming Fulbright seminar and scholar programs. This unexpected professional development opportunity provided valuable insights into the diversity of research opportunities available to honors students and into the best practices for writing project and institutional statements. The Institute of International Education, which oversees the Fulbright selection process, “manages more than 200 programs with participants from more than 180 countries”

(“Browse Programs”). These experiences will inform how Gregory and Norton guide their honors students as they prepare their own Fulbright applications in the future.

Curricular Models

German higher education’s guarantee of affordable and diverse comprehensive education for all citizens (residents and international) and its vocational training programs (German: *Duales Ausbildungssystem*) and adult education programs (German: *Abendgymnasium* and *Abendrealschule*) offer valuable models for honors faculty and students. Honors administrators in the United States would do well to learn more about how German higher education institutions combine industry training with university internship opportunities. For example, with the recent emphasis in American high schools on vocational training, the Fulbright IEA seminar provided an opportunity that was especially relevant for Gregory, a community college administrator, to identify best practices for developing vocational training programs. Community colleges have traditionally provided the training and job skills needed for a highly specialized workforce, and the demand for highly skilled workers, especially in the health sciences, medical technologies, and oil and gas industries, is increasing. Administrators can, then, look to the German educational system, with its emphasis on dual enrollment and practical technical training for models that will meet students’ and employers’ needs. American community college administrators must be intentional and innovative in their approaches to addressing American workforce needs, and Germany’s model illustrates a specific response to an aging workforce that is retiring faster than it is being replaced and to technological innovations that require constant and proactive approaches to ensure that employees are properly trained and knowledgeable.

The IEA seminar also emphasized the importance of promoting German language study. The benefits of studying another language are well-documented: students who learn another language demonstrate greater cognitive development, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills; learning another language facilitates enhanced

knowledge of one's native language, syntax, and vocabulary; and bilingual and trilingual students are more open to cultural diversity ("America's Languages"; "The Benefits"; "What the Research Shows"). German language study is especially important for students in STEM fields because Germany has positioned itself as a leader in high-tech and pharmaceutical industries. Proficiency in German language and cultural studies will give students a competitive edge in a globalized workforce. TU Darmstadt, for example, offers an international summer program, German Engineering and Language, that combines automotive and mechanical engineering studies with German language and culture classes ("International Summer University"). During the four-week program, first- and second-year college students take engineering courses and workshops focused on automotive engineering, aeronautical engineering, and mechatronic and production technology. The workshops include excursions to Mercedes-Benz; Continental AG; EUMETSAT (European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites); and Donges SteelTec, a steel construction company. The program also includes intensive German language study and seminars on German culture and history, especially of the Rhine-Main area, to develop students' language and intercultural competence skills. This short-term international opportunity is an excellent example of an affordable study abroad program (costing 2,200 Euros) that merges studies in STEM and humanities fields ("International Summer University").

CONCLUSION

The IEA seminar allowed participants to observe firsthand the transformative power of education for German and American students. The access to education in Germany—for all students, regardless of nationality and citizenship, including refugees and international students—is inspiring and will enable that country to lead as a powerful and positive force in the global market. Honors administrators benefit by developing honors programs that emphasize international education opportunities for all students—regardless of citizenship, income, age, and vocation—to promote

equality and equity in higher education. The seminar demonstrated the commitment of U.S. and German educational and industry leaders to fulfill Senator Fulbright's vision of creating a network of scholars and researchers across every academic discipline who would "increase mutual understanding" and promote global peace and human dignity ("About Fulbright"). As Fulbright scholars, we were proud and honored to serve as citizen-ambassadors representing the United States, our respective universities and colleges, and the Fulbright program in Germany.

That Germany is only one of seven IEA programs, however, is important to note. The insights and professional connections gained as a result of this experience are comparable to what Fulbright scholars would have in IEA programs in other countries. While we encourage honors administrators to participate in an IEA, we advise applicants to first evaluate how participation in an IEA will enhance their honors programs and institutions. Given that the Fulbright program seeks to increase mutual understanding among people of different countries, applicants should also consider how their professional backgrounds and experiences may benefit institutions of higher education in the host countries. By doing that, honors administrators will ensure that the Fulbright IEA is a mutually beneficial experience that leads to meaningful educational opportunities for students, faculty, and staff.

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Address correspondence to Rochelle Gregory at
rgregory@nctc.edu.