

Final Written Report
Professional Development Grant

“Rhetoric in the Visual Arts”
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B. Restatement of professional enhancement opportunity

This project reveals, through an extensive archival investigation of rhetorical iconography, the wealth of images available for original examination. The major goal of this work is to map the iconography as a beginning of the investigation into the visual representations of rhetoric. This discourse is designed to showcase various locations of personified rhetoric iconography so that others may identify these icons. In particular, the professional enhancement opportunity for me was to present my research – which is largely done in the European community – to scholars with like interests *in* that community and beyond.

C. Brief review of the professional enhancement opportunity

The International Journal of Arts and Sciences (IJAS) is an organization that promotes research across the disciplines and publishes double-blind refereed journal. The IJAS hosts several conferences throughout the year at various locations around the world. A paper proposal I submitted was accepted to the conference held in Bad Hofgastein, Austria. This conference accepted papers in German and English and made my presentation in English with a German outline. Not only was I able to make a presentation on my research, but I heard other papers as well in areas of professional interest.

D. Summary of experiences had

This was my first time to attend this particular conference. My impression of the conference was that it was of a high professional caliber and the organizers did a nice job of orchestrating sessions that covered a range of topics – just like the name implies (Arts & Sciences). I was also quite impressed at the global coverage. Yes, it is titled the “International...” but some international conferences I have attended are mostly those

from North America and/or Europe. Besides a number of us from the U.S.A., this conference featured speakers from (as listed in my bulletin): the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), Thailand, Hungary, Spain, Canada, Hong Kong, the Sultanate of Oman, Cyprus, Mexico, Malaysia, Estonia, Japan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Germany, Finland, Taiwan, Russia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Australia, Iran, Tunisia, Romania, Greece, India, Pakistan, and France. I don't know that I've ever been to a conference so diverse.

I attended several sessions that I hope will have a positive impact for students I teach at TECH. For instance, one session I attended featured a paper on "Business Communication between People with Different Cultural Backgrounds" that I found quite interesting because I regularly teach Technical Writing and I try to impress upon students the context of the situation in which they may be writing. Some of the items highlighted in the presentation, like cultural headings/greetings on a document, will enhance what I deliver in the classroom about communication skills and audience awareness. Another example is a session I attended to hear a paper on "The Rhetorical Use of Chinese Logograms" because I often teach a graduate course on rhetoric as part of the Taiwanese Cohort program at TECH and I like to use texts that compare Classical Rhetoric with Ancient Chinese Rhetoric. This speaker talked about the logographic quality of Chinese characters and how those characters enhance the expressive power of the Chinese language through the form those characters take.

Overall, it was nice to be the only professor representing this geographic area (even beyond the borders of Arkansas) at the conference. I think my nearest compatriot was from Georgia State University (an Associate Dean).

E. Conclusions and recommendations

The overarching conclusion is that attending this conference was good on several levels. It was good for my professional development in hearing presentations on current research in areas of professional interest to me and that can impact what I do in the classroom here at TECH. It was good for me to present my work to people within the EU academic community (because, as pointed out earlier, that's where much of subject material for my research is located) and it was good to have audience members from outside of the EU. One audience member was from a Middle Eastern country and he was absolutely delighted to see/hear of the kind of research I was doing in the visual arts. Making a presentation at IJAS was also good for Arkansas Tech University and put the University and the solid English program in the spotlight: at the conference (as one of a few U.S. universities represented) and through my paper being one of the ones published in the IJAS conference proceedings. After my return, my academic trip was in the news locally, as well, and on the internet.

My goals for this trip were met. I made a successful, academic presentation to a very international audience. Also, as a bonus, I was able to add to my rhetoric icons collection by following a research lead in one case and by accident in another. So, I returned with two "new" representations of rhetorical iconography that I hope to use in upcoming academic projects.

Thank you for your support.

Copies to: Dr. Carl Brucker, Department Head, English
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