

TO: Uliana Gabara
FROM: Ron Bacigal RJB
RE: Faculty seminar on China

The visit to China has proven to be very valuable in teaching the Eastern texts in the Core Humanities course. The students are naturally curious about geography, climate, the people, culture, etc. Three weeks did not make me a China expert, but at least the students realize that I have had some contact with China beyond what one reads in a book.

To me the most significant aspect of the Faculty Seminars Abroad is the fostering of an intellectual community on campus. Being somewhat isolated at the law school, this experience has made me feel a part of the University and demonstrates how much I share with other professors, whatever their particular discipline.

As to specifics of the China trips:

- 1) Well done. It was an appropriate mix of tourism, intellectual stimulation and good fellowship. Congratulations and gratitude to Dr. Gabara for effectively organizing such an experience. In the past two years I have seen Dr. Gabara handle a surly train porter at 4 a.m. in Budapest, and charm University presidents in China. I know of no one else on campus who could accomplish these diverse tasks.
- 2) The lectures by Chinese scholars were of varying quality. Some very good, some very boring. I know of no way to correct this as we are at the mercy of the local people in arranging these lectures.
- 3) The accommodations and travel arrangements were very good. Given the potential for short tempers brought on by frustrating travel arrangements, I think it very important that things be continued in this first class manner.
- 4) Five days was too much time in Kunming, but again it is difficult to know this in advance. As a general rule in the future, visits to one spot should be kept shorter in duration.
- 5) It is beneficial to have periodic evening sessions where everyone can share their experiences. This was done on the trip to Eastern Europe and was very helpful. It was not done on a regular basis in China, but I think it should be reinstated for future trips.

In conclusion, because of their focus on internationalization of the curriculum and because of their role in facilitating faculty interaction, the Faculty Seminars Abroad are the most exciting and effective means of creating a true intellectual community on campus.