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BACKGROUND

Why Vietnam?

Why Vietnam? There are two important reasons. First, the Vietnamese student population has been increasing in the New York City (NYC) public school system. Nearly half (48%) of Vietnamese in New York State live in New York City (NYC) (Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center, 2006). The vast majority of Vietnamese children in NYC (87%) are enrolled in the NYC public school system, exceeding 79% of all children and 86% of Asian children in the city. Yet, most teachers are unprepared to assist this population of students; many teachers and administrators neither understand their culture nor can speak their language. “In our school,” said one New York City principal, “we have lots of teachers and staff that can speak Chinese and Spanish: none have the ability in Vietnamese.” (*Voices of New York, 2008*).

In addition, having a seminar in Vietnam will offer participants the opportunity to acquire first-hand knowledge about the language and culture of Vietnam. Many teachers know little about Vietnam. Apart from the limited knowledge of the Vietnamese War they may possess, for the most part, teachers know very little about Vietnam: the language, the culture and the people. Consequently, they are not able to add anything more to their lessons other than what the textbooks may offer. Nor can they make their lessons culturally relevant. Participating in culturally relevant teaching essentially means that teachers create a bridge between students’ home and school lives, while still meeting the expectations of the district and state curricular requirements. Culturally relevant teaching utilizes *the backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences of the students* to inform the teacher’s lessons and methodology (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Without such knowledge, teachers will miss opportunities to make important and meaningful

connections between the content and the students they teach. Once teachers gain experiential knowledge of a culture, they are likely to be better prepared to deliver what researchers have termed culturally responsive instruction to their culturally/linguistically diverse students (Delpit, 1998; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

It is for this reason that The School of Education of St. John's University (STJ) is proposing a short-term seminar targeting Vietnam as its site of area studies in language and culture. To the extent that teachers in NYC are likely by dint of demographics to encounter Vietnamese children in their classroom, there is a clear and pressing need to adequately prepare these teachers to interact with Vietnamese students. It is probable that exposure to and guided efforts to attain increased understanding of the language and culture of Vietnamese students in Vietnam itself will be one of the most effective means of achieving this goal.

I. PLAN OF OPERATION

St. John's University (STJ), Queens, New York, proposes to conduct an overseas-based short-term seminar in the Vietnamese language and area studies (focusing on culture) for a group of 13 participants: *eight* K-12 in-service teachers; *three* pre-service teachers; *one* curriculum specialist; and *one* bilingual scholar/escort. This six-week seminar, which will take place during the summer of 2011 (July 5- August 19), will consist of three phases: 1) a three-day pre-departure phase at the STJ campus; 2) a six-week phase overseas at Thai Nguyen University (TNU) located in Thai Nguyen City, Vietnam; and 3) a post-seminar phase at STJ to take place over three months. The objectives of the seminar are: (1) to provide intensive Vietnamese immersion language training and give participants first-hand experiences with Vietnamese culture and people; (2) to develop lesson plans that support and enrich the curriculum by integrating Vietnamese culture and language into English, history, and art classes; (3) to develop

intercultural competency skills in pre-service teachers; and (4) to develop a community learning-based project between STJ and three New York City public schools with Vietnamese student populations. The proposed seminar is aligned with the goals of the Group Project Abroad (GPA) Program, namely to improve modern foreign language training and area studies among teachers in elementary and secondary schools.

The first objective of the seminar – *to provide intensive Vietnamese immersion language training and to acquire an understanding of Vietnamese history, culture and people* – will be accomplished through intensive study of the Vietnamese language at Thai Nguyen University (TNU) during the entire six-week overseas phase. Project participants will take classes four days a week (Monday through Thursday mornings) for three hours per class and will take an additional hour in the afternoon with a tutor working in groups of three. To learn about the culture, including the history, geography, and ethnic peoples of Vietnam, seminar participants will join in structured educational and cultural tours within Thai Nguyen City (where TNU is located) and to other parts of Vietnam. The tours will cover a wide range of Vietnamese institutions and experiences, such as schools, libraries, historical sites, museums, orphanages, places of worship, hospitals, outdoor markets, etc., so that participants will acquire an authentic understanding of the backgrounds and day-to-day life experiences of Vietnamese students that might influence these students' school performance and social practices in the United States. Seminar participants will be expected to document their exposure to a broad spectrum of Vietnamese life and culture in daily journal writing. They will do so through observation and systematic documentation of verbal and nonverbal communication patterns and of Vietnamese discourse norms, including conversational style, greetings, classroom language, ways of conducting business, and ways of interacting with people.

In order to meet the second objective of the seminar – *to develop lesson plans that support and enrich the curriculum by integrating Vietnamese culture and language into English, history, and art classes* – In-service K-12 participants will create a unit of lesson plans integrating aspects of Vietnamese culture and language. During the pre-departure phase, participants will begin the process of designing lesson plans that are culturally relevant. At this time pre-service teachers will be matched with a similar group. That is, the pre-service teacher who is studying elementary education will be matched and collaborate with the elementary school teachers, while the two pre-service teachers studying secondary education will be matched and collaborate with the middle or high school teachers. During the overseas phase the project director, together with the curriculum specialist, will meet with participants on a regular basis to monitor their material development activities and address any questions or concerns that they may have. In these sessions project participants will continue working on development of their lesson plans. These sessions will be opportunities for participants to share their “works-in-progress” for critique and feedback by project director, curriculum specialist and other participants. Participants will be engaged in regular planning and writing of their respective lesson plans through all three phases of the program. From the pre-departure phase, teacher participants will meet in groups where they will begin to discuss and develop their lesson plans. Throughout the overseas phase they will consistently and diligently continue work on building and strengthening their units of lessons under the guidance of the project director and the curriculum specialist. During the post seminar-phase participants will make final revisions on their work in preparation for presentation of these materials at professional development sessions and teacher conferences.

The third objective of the seminar – *to develop intercultural competency skills in pre-service teachers* – will be accomplished by pre-service teachers documenting their exposure to a broad spectrum of Vietnamese life and culture in daily journal writing. They will do so through observation and systematic documentation of verbal and non-verbal communication patterns and of Vietnamese discourse norms, including conversational style, greetings, classroom language, ways of conducting business, and ways of interacting with the Vietnamese people. This will collectively build pre-service teachers’ culturally informed communication skills and intercultural competence – both necessary components of culturally responsive teaching – and thus meeting this objective of the seminar to foster and enhance intercultural competence in pre-service teachers so they will be prepared to successfully teach in culturally and linguistically heterogeneous classes and to provide culturally responsive instruction. For teachers in NYC, then, who are constantly interacting with students from different cultures, it is imperative that they develop competence in intercultural communication in order to better understand and serve this population. According to Lustig and Koester (2006), “competent intercultural communication, is contextual; it produces behaviors that are both appropriate and effective; and it requires sufficient knowledge, suitable motivations, and skilled actions” (p. 66). Such knowledge and actions set in a specific context can only be acquired through first-hand experience of a culture; hence, the impetus for this seminar.

Finally, the fourth objective of the seminar -- *to develop a community service-learning project between STJ and three New York City public schools with Vietnamese student populations* – has two parts: a component that can only be fulfilled during the overseas phase and the second component that will be realized back in the United States (US). The objective for the first component will be met through regular meetings with pre-service teachers where plans are

to develop a service-learning project to implement back in the US. We have already identified three NYC public schools with a Vietnamese population (see school letter of support in appendix). A part of the seminar then is to train the three pre-service teachers to become “coordinators”, one pre-service teacher per school. They will be trained in the Vietnamese language and culture so they can, in turn, prepare tutors to work at the schools, not only with Vietnamese students but all second learners as well. Moreover, in doing service-learning, we will simultaneously be fulfilling STJ’s Vincentian mission to serve others wherever we go.

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Advertising: Pending a grant award notification, the proposed seminar for K-12 teachers and pre-service teachers will be announced and advertised through various means, including brochures prepared by the STJ Office of Global Studies, flyers, announcements on STJ’s website, on other New York metropolitan area universities’ websites and through New York City teacher lists. Interested candidates will be asked to provide a letter of recommendation from both their principal and district supervisor. Letters from principals will profile the candidate’s character, teaching ability and skills to create lesson plans. On the other hand, letters from the district supervisor will show support for the GPA seminar and discuss how the district will utilize and disseminate the information that the candidate will acquire in Vietnam. Naturally, preference will be given to those candidates who work in areas where there is a Vietnamese population.

The three pre-service teachers will be selected from the English language arts, social studies, and fine arts areas in NYC schools of education. Letters of recommendation will be required from two of their professors. These letters will address their academic performance, teaching skills and their readiness to study abroad on a GPA. Both K-12 teachers and pre-

service teachers will submit an essay (no more than two pages) in which they describe *why* they wish to be a part of the seminar and *how* they will share their knowledge gained in Vietnam (for example, with colleagues at the school and district levels or in a class presentation). The Project Director, the Project Coordinator, the Director of Vietnamese Initiatives and a NYC District Supervisor (with a Vietnamese population) will be responsible for reading recommendations and essays and making a final selection.

It is important to note that STJ has a long-standing policy of nondiscrimination. The policy explicitly states: “We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, alien status, citizenship, or disability. Rather, we try to make all feel a part of the St. John's community, regardless of their background or physical condition.” Within this framework, this project is committed to involving and recruiting participants regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Additionally, the project is committed to recruiting participants who are diverse in ethnic and linguistic background, socio-economic status, education, and abilities. We will make this commitment explicit in project materials and will evaluate the degree of diversity that we achieve in all our project activities. Furthermore, in an effort to achieve this diversity, our materials will be disseminated via a variety of media, including the Internet, social networking sites as well as brochures and flyers posted in places calculated to reach a diverse population. More formally, we will adhere to our University’s Affirmative Action plan, which articulates a similar commitment to proactive recruitment of students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups. Thus, students from a variety of backgrounds will be encouraged to participate in the seminar, and every effort will be made by the project director and host country coordinator to ensure that all forms of transportation to and from airports both in New York and

Vietnam, to and from tours in Vietnam, as well as all in and out of buildings at STJ and TNU where classes are held are wheel-chair accessible. Furthermore, the bilingual scholar/escort in consultation with STJ's OGS director, will make every effort to ensure that participants' religious and meal preferences are met.

Preparation of academic content: The project director and coordinator will be responsible for preparing reading materials, maps, and other resources for all phases of the seminar. The project director will coordinate with the host country coordinator to ensure that the Vietnamese classes and cultural lectures at TNU are well organized and that the content is appropriate and consistent with the seminar objectives.

Pre-departure orientation: A mandatory three-day pre-departure orientation conducted by the project director will take place at STJ. The orientation will include interactive lectures, discussions and audiovisual presentations which focus on topics that will be studied in-depth during the overseas phase. In addition, as language instruction is an instrumental part of this seminar, participants will receive three hours each day (for a total of nine hours) of Vietnamese instruction from Cathy Lancellotti, the Director of Vietnamese Initiatives at STJ. The language instruction will include survival Vietnamese: greetings and basic vocabulary that participants can use upon arrival to Vietnam. Each participant will also be given materials on Vietnam and TNU (maps, history, culture, etc.), guidelines on rules of conduct, rights, and responsibilities in Vietnam, and a complete itinerary for the overseas phase. Each student will be required to carry a laptop computer and a digital camera to Vietnam. Participants will also be asked to complete pre-departure assessments as well as pre-departure class readings on language and culture, and to write journals on their goals and expectations regarding the overseas phase. The project director will also ensure that all participants have the proper documentation and airline tickets to travel.

The pre-departure phase

The pre-departure phase will be managed by the project director in consultation with the project coordinator and other key personnel, including the directors of the STJ Office of Global Studies (OGS), the STJ Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR), and the bilingual scholar/escort as well as the TNU host country coordinator.

- The project director will initiate contact and stay in regular communication with the host country coordinator. She will begin by sending a detailed list of responsibilities to key personnel involved in planning the seminar at STJ and TNU via both email and mail.
- The project director and coordinator will meet with the OGS director at least once per week during this phase and continue communication with him on an ongoing basis via telephone, email, and interoffice memos to plan and coordinate the overseas phase.
- The OGS director, project coordinator, and project coordinator will hold primary responsibility for generating and disseminating information (flyers, brochures, etc.) about the seminar to prospective participants and for sending copies to the project director.
- The project director will prepare the course content and materials to be distributed at the pre-departure orientation.
- The OGS director will be responsible for processing participants' study abroad applications and for communicating (via email, mail, and telephone) with the bilingual scholar/escort to plan the logistics of housing arrangements and organizing tours. All correspondence between the OGS director and the bilingual scholar/escort will be copied to the project director and the OGSR.

- Once participants' study abroad applications are properly completed, the OGS director will forward (via certified mail and email) the final list of registered students to the host country coordinator, who is responsible for registering these students for Vietnamese classes at TNU. All correspondence on registration for Vietnamese classes between the OGS director and the host country coordinator will be copied to the project director and STJ's OGSR. The host country coordinator will send a final list of participants completely processed and registered for Vietnamese classes to the project director, copied to the OGS and OGSR.
- The host country coordinator is responsible for arranging the instructors to teach Vietnamese classes to the registered participants at TNU.
- The project director, in consultation with the OGSR, will monitor the disbursement of all grant funds. The director of STJ's OGSR will be responsible for the disbursement of grant funds to the host country to cover the cost of all seminar-related expenses. The project director will be kept abreast of all transfers of funds by the OGSR.
- Pre-departure communication via email and telephone among the project director, the host country coordinator, and the bilingual scholar/escort will be carried out on a regular basis to ensure that all aspects of the overseas phase are managed and coordinated effectively.
- The project director will conduct the three-day pre-departure orientation with participants to prepare them for the overseas phase. The carefully planned steps detailed in this pre-departure phase will ensure that participants have the necessary information to conduct the overseas phase effectively.

The overseas phase: 6 weeks (July 5 – August 19, 2011) – TNU in Vietnam

Language Classes: Language instruction in the Vietnamese language will be an integral part of this seminar. Classes will be taught by Dr. Diem Hoang and Dr. HieuThieu, Lecturers in the Foreign Languages Department at TNU, for three hours a day, four days a week (Monday through Thursday) and will focus not only on conversational fluency but also on the high frequency, task-related classroom language and paralinguistic behavior that teachers need to know in order to better serve their Vietnamese students. To provide further opportunities for language learning and development of conversational skills, participants will meet with Vietnamese tutors (doctoral students in the Foreign Language Department at TNU) to receive an additional hour of instruction and conversational practice in *small groups* (three project participants per group), Monday through Thursday.

Cultural Lectures: TNU will provide project participants with a series of lectures on the culture of Vietnam. Such topics will examine and include *Vietnamese history, economy, religion and politics; the communication culture of the Vietnamese; and the ethnic minorities of Vietnam.* Lecturers are faculty from the various schools and colleges at TNU, including the College of Education and College of Economics and Business Administration. Each two-hour lecture will be given in Vietnamese but will be translated into English for project participants by a university-hired translator (a university policy); participants will always be granted time to ask questions of all lecturers.

Educational/Cultural Tours: Participants will take part in all educational/cultural tours. During the week, in addition to attending language classes, project participants will visit local places near and within Thai Nguyen City, such as museums, libraries and schools. On the weekends, overnight trips are planned, such as to Hanoi, Sa Pa, and Ha Long Bay. Participants will keep journals, take picture and prepare a Culture Portfolio (see in appendix) for future presentations in

their respective schools and teacher conferences. (A detailed working itinerary for the overseas phase is provided in appendix.)

Other Activities:

Informal Culture Chat Sessions – Every week there will be sessions where (graduate) students of TNU informally meet with project participants to discuss and address aspects of Vietnamese culture. Our bilingual scholar/escort will facilitate these sessions. These opportunities will further increase participants' knowledge of Vietnamese culture while practicing the Vietnamese language.

School Visits – TNU personnel will be instrumental in orchestrating school visits for project participants. Although most schools will be closed during the GPA, some will be open for participants to observe classes in session. Participants will visit five types of school: an elementary, middle, and high school in addition to two special education schools (for children with learning disabilities and for the gifted and talented). Participants will have multiple opportunities to meet with Vietnamese educators to discuss aspects of Vietnamese education and to learn how US and Vietnamese educational systems differ. They will see the school curricula and sample work of Vietnamese students at various levels. We anticipate these exchanges to be both informative and enriching. Hung Linh Pham, bilingual scholar/escort, will oversee these sessions.

Community Service-Learning – Seminar participants will participate in reflective service-learning activities. The concept of service-learning is well documented in both theory and research. Service-learning involves engagement and reflective thinking to maximize learning. The on-going process of reflection provides opportunities to think deeply and critically about past experiences or knowledge in order to find meaning, and enable better decisions. Because

reflection is an essential element in service-learning, it will take place throughout the service-learning activity (before, during, and after). Meeting the objectives of the proposed project will be challenging to the participants, contextualized within the setting where it occurs, and include communication and sharing with others involved in the service-learning project at different levels. Thus, reflection activities will be infused in daily activities in each phase of the project. Project participants will be provided with three opportunities to do service within a school, an orphanage and a hospital. We will also visit and provide service in one of the twelve SOS Children Villages in Hanoi.

Overseas phase

This phase of the seminar will be managed by the host country coordinator in consultation with the bilingual scholar/escort at TNU.

- The host country coordinator or a designated representative will meet and greet the project director and participants on arrival at the airport in Vietnam and accompany them to the TNU campus. He will host an orientation soon after arrival for the project director and participants to prepare them for their overseas phase and to address any questions or concerns that they may have.
- The bilingual scholar/escort will coordinate housing arrangements, and will keep in touch with participants to address any problems. He will also coordinate all educational tours and communicate with the project director and participants on a regular basis to ensure that tour information (destination, time, etc.) is clearly understood.
- The host country coordinator will oversee the smooth functioning of Vietnamese classes by communicating regularly with the course instructors for the duration of classes.

- The project director will meet regularly with participants to monitor progress and address questions or problems. She will also stay in regular contact with the host country coordinator and OGS director at STJ.

Post-seminar phase:

Debriefing and post-seminar evaluation: The project director and participants will meet at STJ in August upon return to the US to hold debriefing sessions on the overseas phase of the seminar. Post-assessment instruments will be administered to participants and collected. Students will submit their Culture Portfolios by the end of August. An external project evaluator will conduct focused interviews with the participants to assess the seminar experience and to analyze all pre/post assessment instruments and course evaluations. A final evaluation report of the seminar will be submitted to the GPA Program.

Post-seminar phase

- The project director and project coordinator will coordinate debriefing sessions with participants on the STJ campus. This will provide an opportunity to analyze and reflect on the overseas experience as individuals and as a group as well as providing an effective coda to all phases. The project director will communicate the results of debriefing sessions to the host country coordinator to maintain continuity of communication and feedback.
- The project director will collect all relevant evaluation materials, such as the Culture Portfolio and pre- and post-seminar assessment instruments for analysis. The materials will be subsequently submitted to the external project evaluator for further analysis.

- The project evaluator will conduct interviews with the participants, meet with the project director and coordinator to discuss the analysis of the interviews and instruments, and write a final project evaluation report.
- The project director, with the assistance of the project coordinator, will submit a final project report to the OGSR and to the Fulbright-Hays GPA Program.

Use of Resources and Personnel to Achieve the Objectives of the Project

Faculty, staff as well as use of a variety of support and resources will be used for all phases of the proposed seminar.

Project objective 1: To provide intensive Vietnamese immersion language training and to acquire an understanding of Vietnamese history, culture and people — This objective will be achieved by having participants attend Vietnamese-instructed classes at TNU where they will practice conversing and writing in Vietnamese with native speakers. They will also use Vietnamese when interacting with all personnel at TNU and in the wider Vietnamese community.

Participants can use the library and bookstore at TNU to access reading and other materials in Vietnamese. In addition, participants will also be able to access information about Vietnamese culture through television, newspapers, radio, visits to historical sites, and so forth. Their digital cameras will be used to take photographs of important places, buildings, people, and objects, as well as memorable moments and scenes to capture the culture more vividly. Pictures will be uploaded into their laptops to be included in their Culture Portfolio. Their laptop computers will be used for journal writing to document their experience of the culture and completing lesson plans assignments. Additionally, they can also use the laptop and internet to do research and to

stay in touch with Vietnamese teachers, students, and friends in the U.S. to communicate their cultural experience.

Project objective 2: To develop lesson plans that support and enrich the curriculum by integrating Vietnamese culture and language into English, history, and art classes — Project participants will learn from the educational/cultural sites. They will take pictures and will collect artifacts that they will use in their English, social studies and art classrooms, items that are uniquely Vietnamese and are not readily available in the US. Artifacts may include newspapers, comic books, jewelry, money or a piece of clothing. Also, project participants will make use of their laptop computers to create and store lesson plans and work with the curriculum specialist to integrate technology into their lessons (creating a multi-media presentation).

Project Objective 3: To develop intercultural competency skills in pre-service teachers — Sustained, intensive immersion in Vietnamese culture and language instruction for six weeks through participant observation will give participants both time and opportunity to develop the requisite culturally-based communication skills and knowledge needed to develop their units. The opportunity to interact closely and regularly with ordinary Vietnamese, TNU students and personnel will help to deepen cultural understanding and develop effective interpersonal and intercultural communication skills. This will assist teachers in interacting more effectively with Vietnamese children and their families in New York and other parts of the U.S. In addition, information garnered from tours, interacting with Vietnamese natives, reading local newspapers, and listening to local television, can all be used as content for developing culturally responsive classroom materials and instruction. Participants will collect additional curriculum resources

such as videos, DVDs, books, magazines, native handmade artwork that can be used as visual aids to enhance classroom lessons and presentations in US classrooms.

Project objective 4: To develop a community service-learning project between STJ and three New York City public schools with Vietnamese student populations – K-12 teachers, as well as pre-service teachers, will benefit from all the activities described above. The aim is to gain deep insights into Vietnamese people and culture in order to interact effectively and comfortably with Vietnamese populations at schools upon return to the US.

II. QUALITY OF KEY PERSONNEL

A. The Project Director

Dr. Yvonne Pratt-Johnson, Professor of TESOL and Assistant Department Chair of the Department of Human Services and Counseling in STJ's School of Education, will serve as project director. A Professor for over thirty years, she earned the Ed.D. from Columbia University in Spanish Education and TESOL and an M.S. in Spanish Linguistics from Georgetown University. She taught both undergraduate and graduate students at the City University of New York for many years and has extensive teacher training experience. Prof. Pratt-Johnson has been a recipient of grants for literacy development and teaching language minority students and has authored a book and several articles and book chapters in the areas of the education of second language learners, linguistic and cultural competence/responsiveness in the classroom, and teacher sensitivity. She has also presented at international and national conferences on second language learners. In addition, Dr. Pratt-Johnson has experience in curriculum writing and development and is responsible for writing linguistic and language courses at STJ and the City University of New York. Dr. Pratt-Johnson has lived and studied in

both Italy and Spain and has traveled throughout the Caribbean, Europe and Latin America. She has been instrumental in and responsible for both organizing and leading student study abroad programs to Argentina, Brazil and the Dominican Republic. She speaks, reads, and writes Spanish proficiently. (see copy of Dr. Pratt-Johnson's CV in appendix).

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project:

Dr. Pratt-Johnson's responsibilities will be carried out in three phases. In the **pre-departure phase**, it is anticipated that her responsibilities will take 10 to 15 hours per week to execute and will increase as the project advances towards the travel date. These responsibilities include working closely with the project coordinator to develop and write the narrative for the program; designing an itinerary for the overseas phase of the seminar; collaborating with the STJ Grants and Global Studies Offices and with the program coordinator in the host country to develop a budget for the seminar; recruiting participants for the seminar and ensuring that they meet all requirements for the seminar; and holding pre-departure orientation sessions to prepare participants for the rules of engagement, expected behaviors, and tasks to be accomplished on the trip. During the six week **overseas phase**, Dr. Pratt-Johnson will be responsible for working closely with key host country personnel to ensure that all language-related activities and educational/cultural tours are conducted in keeping with the expectations and goals outlined in our study abroad project; accompanying participants on targeted educational/cultural tours; meeting regularly with participants to ensure that tasks and activities are being completed in a timely and efficient manner; and addressing any concerns or problems that may arise among participants. She will also be regularly and actively involved with participants in developing curriculum-related during the six weeks abroad (as well as in other phases of the project).

Finally, in the **post-seminar phase**, the director will be responsible for ensuring that all participants have fulfilled all requirements of the seminar, including conducting debriefing sessions with students to discuss their reflections on their overseas experience; formulating recommendations for future seminars; and overseeing the evaluation of the project.

B. Other Key Personnel

Project Coordinator

Dr. Audrey Murphy will serve as project coordinator. Currently, Dr. Murphy is Assistant Professor of TESOL in STJ's School of Education. She earned her Ed.D. and Professional Diploma (P.D.) from St. John's University in Administration and Supervision, with a specialty in the education of second language learners. She was granted a USDE fellowship for both her MS degree in Bilingual Education/TESOL and her P.D., both of which included a focus on enhancing the achievement of ELLs. In her role as a New York City Principal, she supervised over thirty ESL/Bilingual teachers, initiated structures to support ELLs in the content area, and implemented Dual Language programs for both native speakers of English and second language learners. As a Network Leader, she has instructionally supported 20 principals in NYC whose schools included over 3,000 ELLs, as well as more than 100 second language teachers. Dr. Murphy has presented at national and regional conferences and is currently conducting research on the effects of dual language instruction on student achievement and on assessing the progress of English language learners. (see copy of Dr. Murphy's CV in appendix).

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project:

As project coordinator, Dr. Murphy will be actively involved in assisting the Project Director in developing and writing the narrative for the program and creating the budget; disseminating materials, holding information sessions, recruiting participants, assisting in the participant selection committee, assisting the project director in planning the pre-departure orientation; working with the project evaluator to arrange post-seminar interviews with participants; and discussing project evaluation with the project director and evaluator. In addition, she will manage the website, coordinate and supervise the service learning project between students and schools and keep track and monitor conference presentations as post-seminar activities. These responsibilities will require approximately 10 hours per week to discharge and will increase as the project advances towards the travel date.

Bilingual Scholar/Escort

Hung Linh Pham will serve as the bilingual scholar/escort for the GPA seminar. He is a native Vietnamese, studying in the School of Education at STJ. Mr. Pham received his B.A. from Thai Nguyen University and received a M.A. in linguistics (with honors) from Hanoi University in Vietnam. As a recipient of a fellowship/scholarship from the Vietnamese Government, he traveled to STJ to obtain a Ph.D in Administration in Higher Education. He has received a M.Ed (with honors) in Administration and Instructional Leadership from STJ. In Vietnam he served as a teaching assistant in the Department of Linguistics and Literature in Thai Nguyen University (TNU) for 3 years. Currently, he is an Instructor at TNU (the site for the proposed seminar) and has been for almost a decade. He is a recipient of several academic, research and teaching awards.

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project:

As a bilingual scholar/escort, Hung Linh Pham was charged by the host coordinator to serve as liaison between STJ and TNU. In the pre-departure phase, Mr. Pham will communicate regularly with the Project Director to provide the latter with estimated costs so that the Director can create a budget. He will also advise the Director on the most cost-effective way to conduct tours. Hung Linh will communicate and work with the Director on creating the in-country itinerary and will report all final arrangements to the host country coordinator and the Project Director. In the overseas phase, he will be the point person for all tour queries. His time commitment will be approximately 10 hours per week in the pre-departure phase and 5 hours per week during the overseas phase. He will accompany project participants on all tours and, in some cases, direct the tours himself. He will receive no compensation for his time and effort.

Curriculum Specialist

Robin Russell will serve as the Curriculum Specialist. She has a Professional Diploma in Curriculum Studies (with a concentration in *Technology in Education*) and an M.S. in Elementary Education from St. John's University. She is certified as an educational technology specialist (K-12) and has New York State teacher certification (K-6). She has extensive experience in integrating curricula and technology and has been a technology curriculum specialist for ELA and social studies at the elementary school level. Her work and experience have also included middle and high school levels. In addition, she is an Adjunct Professor at St. John's University where she teaches both graduate and undergraduate students in educational technology; conducting internet research; designing webquests and power point slide shows. She has received the *St. John's Dean of Education Academic Excellence Award* and the *Fulbright Scholar Bilingual Program Award* in 2007.

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project

As Curriculum Specialist, Robin Russell will work with the Project Director to assist project participants in designing lesson plans based on Vietnam language and culture. In the pre-departure phase, she will lead several workshops for project participants laying a foundation for what they are expected to accomplish during the seminar. Overseas she will continue working with the teachers, regularly meeting with them for whole group activities, in smaller groups and at times one-on-one. During the post-seminar she will continue offering guidance to participants as they further tweak, develop and enrich their lesson plans. Her time commitment will be approximately 10 hours per week in the pre-departure phase, 100% during the overseas phase and approximately 10 hours per week in the post-seminar phase.

Project Evaluator

Dr. Angelique Nasah will serve as the project's external evaluator. Dr. Nasah has more than fifteen years of experience as a professor, has authored and directed numerous grants, and has evaluated several federally funded projects, including several on teacher training for bilingual teachers. (see a copy of Dr. Nasah's CV in appendix).

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project:

During the pre-departure phase, Dr. Nasah will work with the project director and coordinator to ensure that all evaluation materials and instruments described are valid and able to measure project objectives adequately. In the post-seminar phase, Dr. Nasah will collect and analyze all pre- and post-seminar instruments, including the Culture Portfolio, as well as conduct focused interviews with seminar participants. She will meet and discuss her analysis and findings with the project director and coordinator. She will submit a final written project

evaluation report no later than one month after receiving all evaluation documents and materials. The project evaluator will spend approximately 5 hours per week on the project in the pre-departure phase, and 5 to 10 hours per week in the post-seminar phase until the final project report is submitted.

Host Country Coordinator

Dr. Hong Quang Pham, Dean of Thai Nguyen University of Education and a psychology faculty member at TNU, will serve as the host country coordinator. Dr. Pham (no relation to the bilingual scholar/escort) has more than 20 of teaching and administrative experience. He obtained both his M.A. and Ph.D degrees from Hanoi University of Education in Vietnam and has held such positions as Vice-Dean of TNU, Head of Training-Scientific Management and International Relation Department and Lecturer. Dr. Pham, who is fluent in English, is a recipient of many research grants and has published extensively in scientific journals on psychology, education and various aspects of Vietnamese culture. (See a copy of Dr. Hong Quang Pham's CV.)

Responsibilities and time commitment to the project:

In the pre-departure phase, Dr. Pham will be responsible for communicating regularly with the Project Director to ensure that she is kept abreast of all arrangements in Vietnam. He will be responsible for assigning two instructors for the Vietnamese classes, communicating the cost of registration to the project director, and registering participants for the Vietnamese class. She will coordinate the overseas phase, including planning and facilitating a welcome orientation and reception for participants and communicating regularly with the bilingual scholar/escort to ensure that housing and tours are properly arranged. He will also address any problems that

occur with participants or the project director while overseas. Finally, he will be responsible for ensuring that funds are appropriately disbursed to TNU personnel in collaboration with STJ's OGSR. He will maintain communication with the project director in the post-seminar phase to assess the overseas experience and plan for future seminars. His time commitment will be approximately 10-12 hours per week in the pre-departure phase and five hours per week in the overseas phase.

Equal Access and Treatment

St. John's University has a long-standing policy of nondiscrimination. The university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, alien status, citizenship, or disability. This GPA seminar will adhere in every way to these guidelines in the advertising, selection, and treatment of participants for the seminar.

III. BUDGET AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

The costs listed in the line item budget were arrived at by careful investigation of the most reasonable prices in today's market with respect to the personnel, resources, and activities needed to accomplish the seminar's objectives. The project director consulted with SJU's study abroad office, the host country coordinator, and the bilingual scholar/escort to construct a reasonable budget. Each category of the line item budget is discussed below, based on a projected group of 14 persons (13 participants and the project director):

Personnel: Consistent with the GPA program policy guidelines, no U.S.-based salary or fringe benefits are being requested for this seminar.

Travel: The project requires a six-week overseas experience in Vietnam in order to achieve the first objective, which is participants' learning Vietnamese through immersion in the Vietnamese-

speaking culture. This requires round trip airfare from New York City to Hanoi, Vietnam. SJU's study abroad office, which has extensive experience in booking groups of students, provided the most reasonable round trip economy fare for group travel between NYC and Hanoi. Within Vietnam, all transportation rates were provided by the host coordinator and the bilingual scholar/escort. These rates include a chartered bus to and from Hanoi airport, guided bus tours of various sites within Thai Nguyen City, plus buses for all tours outside of Thai Nguyen. It also includes flight travel to My Son Hoi-An, an important and historical site for participants to see. All educational/cultural tours, including those outside of Thai Nguyen such as Hanoi, Sapa, Trang An-Hoa Lu, and Mai Chau-Hoa Binh and Ha Long Bay are an important component of the first three objectives of the seminar, which is to gain experiential knowledge of Vietnamese culture. The bilingual scholar/escort has extensive experience in booking tours for groups of international students, and verified to the project director that the rates quoted for buses are the most reasonable in today's market.

Supplies: The host country coordinator provided an estimate of the cost of textbooks and materials for the Vietnamese class at TNU that must be taken by all participants (except the bilingual scholar/escort). The project director was assured that this cost was the most reasonable in Vietnam, even projecting for inflation.

Contractual: The host country coordinator provided the cost of instructional and administrative personnel in Vietnam. This includes the coordinator himself, the two Vietnamese instructors, the tutors, the lecturers and a clerical assistant. Costs were calculated at the lowest rates in Vietnam. It was suggested by the coordinator that the clerical assistant be paid \$6 per

hour. The number of hours for each person was calculated based on need to achieve seminar objectives.

Other: All costs vital to the project's success such as registration fees for Vietnamese classes, housing, meals, various educational/tours, hotels for out-of-town trips, and admission fees for sites, were provided by the bilingual scholar/escort. Every effort was made by the bilingual scholar/escort to find the most reasonable rates in Vietnam for all project-related activities. For out-of-town trips, costs were calculated for moderately priced hotels based on double occupancy.

The entire project was designed in a way to give participants an authentic experience of language and cultural knowledge in the most cost effective manner. First, the group's air travel was calculated at the least expensive economy rate. Second, as mentioned above, moderately priced hotels were chosen for out-of-town trips, along with double occupancy, which lowers cost, as fewer rooms are needed. The tours span a wide range of cultural experiences for the lowest available price as given by the bilingual scholar/escort. Salary for host country instructional and administrative personnel was calculated based on the best available information given to the project director by the host country coordinator. Finally, there is free time built into the overseas itinerary for participants to experience Vietnamese culture on their own at low or no cost, such as interacting with Vietnamese people, doing walking tours or going to the movies.

The project costs are related and proportional to the project objectives. The first objective of language learning through immersion in the language is reflected in registration costs for Vietnamese classes. Other related costs for this objective include the salary for the Vietnamese instructors, and Vietnamese textbooks. The second objective – to develop lesson plans that support and enrich the curriculum by integrating Vietnamese culture and language into English,

history, and art classes – will be accomplished through the costs incurred in: airfare to Vietnam, transportation and various cultural tours within and beyond Thai Nguyen, and hotel costs in cities/towns outside of Thai Nguyen, as well as interaction with the Vietnamese natives. The third objective of the project – developing pre-service teachers’ intercultural competence – will be achieved through the linguistic and cultural knowledge gained by the costs incurred in achieving the first two objectives.

IV. EVALUATION PLAN

The project’s evaluation plan is thorough and comprehensive and will consist of both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure that project goals are met during each phase of the project. We have already consulted a program evaluator to (1) ensure the methodology is sound and that there will be sufficient information gathered and (2) ensure that appropriate data collection procedures and evaluation tools used are utilized. The evaluation plan will focus on the project’s four goals: (1) to increase participants’ knowledge of the culture and language of Vietnam; (2) to develop lesson plans that support and enrich the curriculum by integrating Vietnamese language and culture into history, English, and art classes; (3) to develop intercultural competence skills in pre-service teachers; and (4) to develop a collaborative service-learning project with the students from St. John’s University and three New York City public schools with Vietnamese students.

During the Pre-Departure phase, data will be collected by the Project Director and Key Personnel and reviewed to assess the extent to which activities were successful in meeting the project’s Pre-Departure goals. Pre-program surveys will be used to evaluate participants’ general intercultural competence and knowledge of Vietnamese language at the beginning of the

project. The survey from *“The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States”* by Dr. Darla K. Deardorff, Raleigh NC: North Carolina State University, 2004, will be used to measure participants’ subjective experiences of cultural differences. At the end of the Pre-Departure orientation, all participants will complete an evaluation of the various orientation activities and the experience as a whole. The on-going review and analysis of the feedback will allow for adjustments to in-country activities if necessary and may also be used to address participants’ expectations and concerns.

Formative evaluation will be a major priority during the six weeks in residence in Vietnam. Therefore, during the in-country phase of the program, regular meetings to assess progress, evaluate effectiveness, and determine if adjustments are required will be held. Data will be obtained regarding the various components of the project including: activities, site visits, content from lectures, language instruction, and curriculum development and be used to maximize the participants’ learning experiences. Participants will also report on their experiences toward meeting their school and community service learning project goals. In addition, they will also provide feedback on the ways in which they are making sense of their learning and academic/professional experiences, including their progress in writing culturally relevant lesson plans. The journals will record participants’ reactions to their daily experiences, field assignments, excursions and school visits. Project personnel will assess the progress of the trip during its implementation, as well as to gain insights into what the participants learned, what aspects of the program are working well, and what the participants’ early plans are for inclusion of the experience in their lesson plans. The evaluation will also assist in modifying the travel seminar (if necessary) as it progresses in order to meet participants’ needs and meet

project goals. Through questionnaires, focus groups, discussions, one-on-one interviews, and reflective activities, Project Personnel will obtain useful data for evaluating the project. Participants will be asked to participate in an online private blog documenting their initial reactions and their daily experiences during their journey, which will assist them in writing their final summation. The Project Director will obtain feedback from all seminar participants involved in the project including, all project personnel, guest lecturers, key personnel in Vietnam, in addition to the Vietnamese educators. Feedback from the mid-project evaluation will be used to make changes and additions, if necessary, to the second half of the GPA seminar. Participants will submit mid-program and final evaluations of their experiences based upon the following: 1) quality and usefulness of information; 2) efficiency and adequacy of program planning, including language, content, and site visits; 3) extent to which the in-country experience prepared participants for writing culturally responsive lessons plans; and 4) overall quality of the GPA seminar.

Upon return to the United States, the project goals will be measured using quantifiable and qualitative methods to determine accomplishment of project goals. (*see Appendix D Table II*). As part of the follow-up sessions there will be interviews with participants to evaluate and capture the perspectives of participants on their learning experiences. All interview sessions will consist of a structured questionnaire followed by an in-depth recorded interview to provide a well-rounded assessment of the project and to analyze any common themes. The participants will complete post surveys and an evaluation form of their overall experiences and the impact of the seminar on their ability to create lesson plans that include Vietnamese language and culture that support and enrich the curriculum. It will also ask participants for feedback on how the trip could be improved in the future. All reports will be made available by the Project Director on

the same website as the participants' lesson plans, photos of highlights of the study abroad seminar as well as the upcoming service-learning projects that will be held during the year. The Pre-Departure and the Post-Seminar surveys that are designed to get feedback about the experiences as a whole will be brief and will be disseminated using online tools (e.g., Survey Monkey) so as to make completion as easy as possible. An overall summative evaluation of the project will be produced by the Project Director and Key Project Personnel with input from staff, faculty, and participants. Overall results will be tabulated by an outside program evaluator. (See Evaluation Data Tables in the appendix.)

V. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

To accomplish project objectives, the participants will have access to a variety of resources. First, the applicant will collect information on Vietnam from the Vietnam Consulate in New York City. Second, the STJ library will be an important resource. It will be available for the applicants to access various media and different kinds of information on Vietnam as she prepares for the seminar project. STJ's printing office, where materials will be duplicated for advertisement and promotion of the seminar and for instruction of participants, will also be available. Technical equipment and personnel will be available to assist and instruct the applicant. In addition, the applicant will have access to resources from school districts, such as lists and statistics, which will provide a pool of eligible prospective participants for the seminar. Finally, the applicant will use key host country personnel as resources to plan the overseas phase.

STJ will provide adequate resources during both the pre- and post-project phases. There will be office space out of which key personnel can operate and where they can complete vital tasks; administrative support will be available to assist in word processing assignments; and instructional rooms will be provided for special orientation sessions. These rooms will be

equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. As STJ is a wireless campus, participants will be able to have classroom Internet access and will have access to STJ's large, well-stocked library, which is staffed by highly trained, proficient personnel. The library's resources will provide opportunities for development and application of knowledge and skills. The library is also accessible by computer from the homes of participants, which will assist participants to research assigned topics and complete work in a timely and satisfactory manner.

During the overseas phase, TNU's Department of Linguistics and Literature, which offers an excellent program of Vietnamese for foreigners and that matches the goals of the seminar, will serve as the host department for the seminar. The department will provide office space and telephone and duplication services for the project director to carry out her overseas responsibilities, and instructional space will be provided for language classes for the participants. A classroom at the host university will also be designated where the project director will meet with participants for working sessions and for general discussion. Laptops, which students will bring with them, will allow them to write their journals, and thus to document their experiences, as well as to prepare their Culture Portfolios and to obtain Internet access to STJ's and TNU's libraries and other websites within and beyond Vietnam. Digital cameras will also be used to document experiences. One of the highlights of TNU is its library, distinguished as one of the best and most comprehensive in Southeast Asia. Needless to say, the library also houses computer labs which will be available to all participants for research and study. Chartered buses will be provided for almost all in-country educational/cultural tours. Finally, the host institution will provide adequate housing and dining facilities for all participants throughout their six-week stay in Vietnam. For additional practice the language lab is available to participants for the six-week seminar.

VI. IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

The project will potentially have a multifaceted impact on the development of modern foreign language studies in the United States. It is expected that this overseas-based experience will move participants toward developing programs of language study that are based on more meaningful and situated uses of language rather than on a disproportionate focus on language rules and structures. Second, the project affords participants the opportunity to experience language not only as an object of study, but also as it is embedded in a culture. Having learned first-hand the subtle cultural understandings that often accompany language use, participating teachers can potentially bring that experience to bear in foreign language studies in the United States by foregrounding this cultural component to language teaching in their own practice. Third, this type of project can be easily replicated in Vietnam and in other non-English-speaking countries around the world. Replicating this project can also potentially expand the number of teachers trained in, and capable of, teaching a wide variety of foreign languages, such as Japanese, Russian, or Swahili. American schools will benefit from having a cadre of language teachers who are both fluent and highly trained in a variety of modern languages.

The potential impact on area studies in culture will be equally far-reaching for teachers and for U.S. education. The most obvious benefit would be increased knowledge of a culture through first-hand experience as a teacher/learner. Experiential knowledge of an area's culture can enhance the quantity and quality of content taught in that area. Such knowledge can also be used for curriculum development. Second, as the United States is the economic and cultural center of an increasingly interconnected world of diverse cultures, it has become imperative for U.S. education to be more culturally informed and responsive. Seminars such as that proposed here can begin to address this need, pushing U.S. education toward a more global outlook,

targeting various areas for study such as Southeast Asia that most affect the United States in terms of a an increasing number of immigrants and economics. Finally, if U.S. education is to become truly culturally responsive, teachers will need to be knowledgeable about the areas and culture from whence a vast number of immigrants hail in order to create curricula and classrooms that are culturally sensitive and that build on their students' prior knowledge. A seminar such as the one proposed here could begin to move the education system in that direction.

Impact on Teachers (K-12): For teachers who successfully complete the seminar, the possible long-term benefits of the project include the following: 1) they will develop knowledge and understanding of the Vietnamese language to communicate (albeit basic). Undoubtedly, their knowledge of Vietnamese will also help them on a professional or personal level in future travel to Vietnam, and they will have more empathy for their non-English speaking students' language learning process having gone through that process themselves; 2) they can become more competent intercultural communicators with their students and their families, paying more successful attention to the cultural nuances underlying actual language use; 3) they will have a deeper understanding of, and respect for, how culture influences students' beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and learning after having experienced first-hand the environment in which their current or future immigrant students are raised (this is likely to enhance their cultural sensitivity in the class, make their teaching more culturally responsive, and make them more tolerant of diverse worldviews in the classroom and beyond); 4) they can integrate knowledge of the foreign language and culture into their subject matter and, by so doing, enrich their teaching; 5) they are likely to extend the cultural knowledge and sensitivity gained from their overseas experience to their interactions with all students. Above all, teachers who study abroad are more likely to

return with a new sense of authority and a greater desire to share their experience and knowledge with others (Marten, 1991).

Impact on Pre-Service Teachers: The insights that the pre-service teachers will gain from this seminar will be both positive and far-reaching! They will now have the knowledge and experience to be able to create dynamic and interactive presentations, lessons and lesson plans in their education classes (and to the wider community) concerning their experiences acquired in Vietnam. These lessons will be authentic, personal and meaningful. At the same, as these pre-service teachers share their lessons and units in their classes, others will also benefit from their presentations as well. In addition, pre-service teachers will acquire intercultural sensitivity and openness to diversity — important tools to bring into New York City’s linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. Furthermore, the seminar will also help shape pre-service teachers into becoming globally-minded and culturally responsive teachers.

Impact on *the students* of Participating Teachers (K-12): Students, both immigrant and native-born, will benefit from having teachers who, having had a truly *lived* experience in another culture, are more open to engaging *difference* positively in the classroom. Immigrant students will thus have teachers who can effectively interact with them and who can better understand them and their families both linguistically and culturally. This can potentially increase immigrant students’ understanding of subject matter and comfort level in the class. Native-born students, for their part, will benefit from teachers who can bring to the classroom first-hand knowledge of foreign cultures. This will enrich their educational experience by giving them a more global perspective on learning. At the same time, it can potentially spark their interest in learning foreign languages and in seeking more information about and/or visiting foreign cultures in the future. Moreover, students will be enriched through standards-based

lesson plans incorporating area studies that their teachers have created for them throughout the seminar.

Colleagues of participants in this seminar can benefit from the linguistic and cultural knowledge that participants can potentially share with them, which can enrich their teaching. Participants can initiate collaborative teaching projects with colleagues on the area and culture that they studied and experienced and can enlist the aid of students from those countries in that process.

Impact on the Greater Educational Community: Both schools and the wider community can benefit from participants' successful completion of the project. As the Vietnamese population increases over the next decade, having teachers in schools who can speak Vietnamese will assist in integrating these students into the new school culture much faster. Foreign language classes will also benefit from a new type of language teacher, one who is more culturally attuned.

Participants in this seminar can help to build bridges between the school and the community. Immigrant communities are likely to feel more connected with schools if they know that teachers are knowledgeable about their languages and cultures from first-hand experience. In the long run, communication with immigrant children's families and with community members can be greatly enhanced if teachers are deeply familiar with the relevant language and culture.

VII. RELEVANCE TO INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL GOALS DEVELOPMENT

St. John's University boasts a three-fold mission – Catholic, Vincentian, and Metropolitan. Inspired by St. Vincent de Paul's compassion and zeal for service, the institution emphasizes respect for the individual and service to the underprivileged. As a metropolitan university, STJ benefits from the cultural and linguistic diversity and from the intellectual and

artistic resources available in an international city such as New York, and the institution harnesses these rich resources to help prepare students to be informed, responsible and productive citizens in an increasingly dynamic, interconnected and global world.

In keeping with our mission to prepare diverse learners for a global world, STJ has made a concerted effort to partner with academic institutions overseas in order to provide a quality international and intercultural education for students. Such partnerships have resulted in fruitful intellectual and cultural exchanges between the institutions and have afforded both faculty and students an opportunity to learn, think, and grow from a more diverse perspective. These partnerships and exchanges, moreover, enhance the international profile of the university and provide well-established precedents for the proposed seminar. For example, STJ has regularly scheduled study abroad programs that involve language and culture studies for students traveling to such countries as Italy, Spain, Greece, Brazil and The Gambia.

One of the outcomes of STJ's trips abroad has been the internationalization of its curricula; STJ has broadened and expanded course offerings and enhanced content in both foreign languages and area studies in every school/college within the university, including history, art, business and law.

Collaboration between STJ's schools/colleges has been another positive outcome and a goal to which STJ has committed itself. Last year, for example, the School of Education collaborated with the School of Arts and Sciences to bring a group of students to South America to study the culture of Argentina. This proposed project to Vietnam will again allow for collaboration between the School of Education (TESOL Program) and the School of Arts and Sciences (Psychology Department) as the cultural and language experiences of this proposed

seminar will provide a foundation for creating a new course to be offered in Vietnam in spring 2012.

Furthermore, STJ partners with local private and public schools, both at the elementary and secondary levels. Often STJ is called on to conduct professional development and training, coach teachers in area studies and assist in planning and developing curricula. Having studied abroad, STJ faculty can provide foreign language and area studies teachers with rich and first-hand experiences. The proposed seminar to be held in Vietnam is another step in STJ's broader international goal as it will prepare our teachers to practice their profession from a more global, culturally informed perspective.

VIII. NEED FOR OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE

The objectives of the project, as articulated in earlier sections of this narrative, can only be met through a cultural immersion program that provides first-hand overseas experience. By participating in this project, teachers will experience the sights, sounds, and smells of their students' home country. They will, for a time, live and grow within a unique culture that has, directly or indirectly, influenced every aspect of their students' lives. Such an experience will add immeasurable value to their efforts to serve this student population.

Second, teachers instruct from school curriculum and teaching materials that tend to mimic and echo the same old beliefs and stereotypes about peoples and their cultures (Bacon & Kischner, 2002) without enriching and expanding their lessons and methods. A direct and personal experience overseas will enable teachers to move beyond exclusive and limited information often found in the textbook; rather they will bring stimulating and relevant materials into the classroom, including realia and artifacts directly from Vietnam.

Given the proliferation of ELLs in NYC public schools, the fact that many teachers are ill equipped to provide effective culturally responsive classroom instruction presents a serious and pressing issue for the school system. Cross-cultural training for teachers is a prerequisite for meeting the unique needs of Vietnamese and other culturally diverse students. While books and articles can provide some insight for teachers, an overseas experience will provide participants with a valuable and exceptional experience of immersing themselves in the Vietnamese culture, where they will learn about the people, their traditions, their language, and their way of life first hand.

Finally, an overseas experience such as that proposed here puts teacher participants on par with their NYC students, albeit for the duration of the program. During this time, participants experience first-hand what it is like to have to struggle with a language, to hear others speak and not understand, to go through the stages of second language acquisition and feel frustration and anxiety as they survive in a different culture — just as their students do every day. This experience is key to their understanding of what their students experience when they arrive in the United States and when they study in U.S. classrooms.

IX PROGRAM PRIORITIES

St. John's University meets both the absolute and the competitive priorities established for this year.

Absolute Priority — This application meets the absolute priority in that it focuses on Vietnam, one of the specified geographical regions as detailed in the *Federal Register Notice* and on the Vietnamese language, listed as one of the less commonly taught languages.

Competitive Preference Priority I — Project participants will receive substantive training in the Vietnamese language, one of the 78 priority languages selected by the U.S. Department of

Education. During the pre-departure phase participants will receive 12 instructional hours and during the overseas phase 96 formal instructional hours, three hours a day for four days per week. In addition, during the overseas phase project participants will meet in small conversational groups of three with their respective Vietnamese tutors (Monday through Thursday for an hour) -- an additional 24 hours for six weeks. In total there will be 96 instructional hours in the Vietnamese language!

Competitive Preference Priority II — The project fulfills this priority. Through a six-week immersion experience seminar in Vietnamese language and culture, K-12 teachers will acquire the linguistic and cultural expertise they need to enable them to develop curricular materials for use in their respective schools. Throughout the pre-departure and in-country phases, K-12 teachers will develop and add to curriculum through designing enriching lesson plans. These materials will ultimately be disseminated widely through district and school workshops and through regional and national teacher conferences. In addition, the project further meets this priority as 8 of the 13 of project participants will be K-12 teachers: 2 elementary school teachers; 3 middle school teachers; and 3 high school teachers. Teachers will be English language arts, social studies, and art teachers. In addition, the seminar will include 3 pre-school teachers: 1 in elementary education and 2 in secondary education. Finally, a curriculum specialist will provide on-going training and guidance to project participants throughout all phases of the seminar to ensure that teachers produce lesson plans that are appropriate to their grade levels, enriching and culturally relevant.

In addition, plans are now underway at STJ to bring together two programs within the university from very different areas. In an effort to internationalize the curriculum at STJ, the College of Arts and Sciences (psychology program) and the School of Education (Teaching

English as a Second Language) are in the process of designing a course to be offered in the spring 2012 in Vietnam! It will offer students in both areas an opportunity to study and do community service-learning together. Dr. Pratt-Johnson (project director) and Dr. Samuel Ortiz (psychology professor), along with Cathy Lancellotti, Director of Vietnamese Initiative at STJ are involved in this endeavor. This proposed seminar will undoubtedly provide invaluable information and input into this collaboration between the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Education at STJ as our project participants will, among activities, be involved in service-learning projects. Dr. Pratt-Johnson and project participants enthusiastically look forward to sharing our knowledge to his future collaborative effort.

Competitive Preference Priority III — This project meets this competitive priority as plans are now underway for two programs within SJU to create a new course. The proposed seminar will lay the foundation for a return trip to Vietnam where STJ's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Dr. Samuel Ortiz – the psychology program) and the School of Education (Dr. Yvonne Pratt-Johnson – TESOL program) will collaboratively design a course. Their goal is to work collaboratively to create a course for pre-service teachers that can be included as part of the teacher education curriculum to be approved by the School of Education and offered to students by the spring semester 2012. A part of the course requires students to academic-service learning in Vietnam.