

**2006-715: FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM, AN OPPORTUNITY FOR
ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT FACULTY**

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Fulbright Scholar Program, Opportunity for Engineering Management Faculty

Abstract

The Fulbright Scholar Program sends 800 US faculty and professionals each year to approximately 140 countries within a large range of disciplines. Even though most of these opportunities are focused in arts and sciences, there are still opportunities available for Engineering Management faculty. Our opportunities are enhanced compared to other engineering disciplines since we can apply for grants both in engineering and business schools. In addition, the broad nature of the Engineering Management discipline provides ample scope to find valuable experiences for all the stakeholders.

This paper describes the Fulbright Scholar Program and the applicability to Engineering Management faculty. It describes how the selections are made and how faculty can enhance their probability for acceptance. It then describes a successful strategy that I followed to: 1) investigate the opportunities within the Fulbright Program, 2) negotiate with the local dean to shape the program description to provide a valuable and fulfilling agenda for both the college and me, and 3) the resulting experience in Oman. I taught one class and was utilized by the school as an external consultant. I facilitated numerous faculty meetings exercising a new strategy that utilized faculty participation and developed a strategic planning document based on those interactions. In addition, I helped them to start planning for an international conference that they want to sponsor. My experience at the Modern College of Business and Science in Muscat, Oman offered a valuable, safe and interesting break that provided an excellent reference frame to better understand what we do and how we generate value.

The Fulbright Program

For more than 55 years, the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) has helped administer the Fulbright Scholar Program, the U.S. government's flagship academic exchange effort, on behalf of the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Legislation to establish the Fulbright Program was proposed to the U.S. Congress in 1945 by Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas and signed into law in 1946. In the aftermath of World War II, Fulbright viewed the program as a much-needed vehicle for promoting “mutual understand between the people of the United States and the people of other counties of the world”. Founded in 1947, CIES is a private non-profit organization. It is a division of the Institute of International Education (IIE). CIES works with a network of bi-national Fulbright Commissions in 51 countries and 90 U.S. diplomatic posts around the world, as well as international universities and higher education associations.

The day-to-day work of CIES is carried out by 57 program officers and staff organized by world region. A six-person external relations unit assists program officers with recruitment and works with U.S. colleges and universities, professional and scholarly

associations and the media to publicize the Fulbright Scholar Program and other CIES undertakings¹.

As the flagship international educational program sponsored by the United States Government, the Fulbright Program is designed to "increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries..." With this goal, the Fulbright Program has provided approximately 275,000 participants², chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential with the opportunity to observe each others' political, economic, educational and cultural institutions, to exchange ideas and to embark on joint ventures of importance to the general welfare of the world's inhabitants. Each year approximately 800 scholars travel to 140 countries under the auspices of this program. It provides grants for Graduate Students, Scholars and Professionals, and Teachers and Administrators from the U.S. and other countries to perform research, lecture, and participate in seminars.

Fulbright Scholar Programs offer faculty, administrators and professionals grants to lecture, do research or participate in seminars through three types of programs.

1) **Fulbright Programs for U.S. Scholars** that include:

- **Traditional Fulbright Scholar Programs** offer U.S. faculty and professionals grants to lecture, do research or participate in seminars, and
- **Fulbright Senior Specialist Programs** offer short-term grants of two to six weeks.

2) **Fulbright Global Programs for U.S. and non- U.S. Scholars:**

- **Fulbright New Century Scholars Programs** bring 30 top academics and professionals from around the world together each year to collaborate on an issue of global importance, and
- **Fulbright Alumni Initiatives Award Programs** offer follow-on grants for Fulbright Scholar alumni

3) **Fulbright Programs for Visiting (Non-U.S.) Scholars** and U.S. Institutions that host them. These include:

- **Fulbright Visiting Scholar Programs** arrange for visiting (Non-U.S.) Scholars to receive grants for advanced research and university lecturing in the United States.
- **Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program: Direct Access to the Muslim World** is designed to promote understanding of the Muslims.

SRI International surveyed over 1000 Fulbright Scholar alumni and found a high level of satisfaction on their part³. They found that grantees were active in their communities, 98% of them interacted with individuals from the host country. They built knowledge and long-term relationships with their institutions and foreign colleagues, 75% continued collaboration with their colleagues, and 70% had been visited in the U.S. by host country colleagues. The grantees were inspired by Fulbright experiences in diverse forms of grant activities. These Fulbright Programs provide considerable benefits for faculty. They identify global educational organizations that seek help from U.S. faculty, and provide financial and other support while in these programs. However, it provides another value to individual faculty, which is to enable us to plan a sabbatical leave, since

very few universities will refuse a sabbatical leave to one of their professors that has obtained a Fulbright Grant. It is not only prestigious for the faculty but also for the university.

How to get a Fulbright Grant

Given the prestige of one of these grants, you might be wondering what is the chance of getting one of them? This paper deals with the Traditional Fulbright Scholar Program, and provides some insights that could help you get one too. I was awarded one of these grants, and the approach I used should be useful for you too.

As you can see from the description of the programs, there are a large number of types of awards, and in the Traditional Fulbright Scholar Program, there are annually over 500 award programs and many of them will accept more than one faculty. As you might expect, some are not all as difficult to get as others. My approach was to identify grants that were not highly sought, work with the CIES personnel and the host institution to find a good fit, and provide an application that offers to provide them precisely what they are looking for.

The first step is to obtain current information from CIES on their current needs. These are published in their “Fulbright Scholar Program: Grants for U.S. Faculty and Professionals” book⁴ that is distributed by CIES and the information is also in their web site: http://www.cies.org/us_scholars. You should register and request their program book, which is a 200 page 8.5” by 11” paperback book. It provides a country by country list of awards, describes the standard stipends and benefits structure, a guide to awards by disciplines, and application information. It is very useful information, but a little daunting particularly if you are an engineer. There seem to be few opportunities for engineers, with less than 10% of the grants listing engineering. In addition, you can only apply for one grant. So if you do not get the one you want, you don’t get any that year. However, you should not be discouraged. The deadline for submission of the application is August 1, 2005 for the programs that start in September 2006. If we were to look at a typical listing, such as the one presented in Figure 1, we would see that for this award at the Sultan Qaboos University in Oman lists opportunities in environmental sciences, oncology and veterinary sciences. However, I also had my grant in Oman and found that while I was there, at least one of the Fulbrighters in that school was a Civil Engineer. The category identifies if they are looking for faculty to teach, research, or perform a combination of the two. This is one of the choices you will have. I was interested in teaching and was able to do that. In the end of the listing they provide a couple of staff names. In this case Gary Garrison and Homa Rafiq. This is very valuable information. Gary Garrison is the program officer and Homa is his assistant and they provide great value to us. Even though the information of procedure looks very cold and bureaucratic, it turns out to be a very human and flexible system. One hint of this flexibility is in the deadline: August 1, 2005, yet this listing was pulled in January 2006, five months late. So the next step is to contact all the program officers that seem to have interesting opportunities that are open. As a matter of fact in January, 82 grants were still open, as shown in Table 1. These are the grants that are not highly sought after, and the selection

process is not yet closed. If you are applying within the deadline timeframe, you should take into account the likely competition for those spots. As you can guess, the awards in Europe and much of Latin America are attractive and much more competitive than those in the Middle East.

Figure 1. Description of a typical award

For stipend/benefits and other information on this award, click on the link below.
▶ [Middle East and North Africa|Oman](#)

All Disciplines: Sultan Qaboos University
Award #6437

Category: Lecturing or Lecturing/Research
Number of Awards: 3
Deadline: August 1, 2005

Grant Activity: Teach undergraduate and graduate courses or carry out a combination of lecturing and research activities. Contribute to curriculum and program development, administration and student advising. Classes meet 2 to 4 hours weekly, 15 to 20 students per class.

Specialization(s): Preferred fields include, but are not limited to, environmental sciences, oncology and veterinary sciences.

Language: Instruction is in English for sciences, medicine and some other disciplines. Fluent Arabic is required for Islamic studies and most humanities and social sciences. Interpreters are provided where necessary for other fields.

Additional Qualifications: Ph.D., M.D., or professional equivalent and at least 5 years of higher education teaching experience are preferred.

Location: Sultan Qaboos University
Length of Grant: 5 months to 10 months
Starting Date: September 2006 or February 2007

Comments: The university awarded its first bachelor's degrees in 1990 and has begun to offer master's degrees in some departments of the College of Sciences and Arts. Facilities include a well-equipped library and excellent computer equipment. Courtesy-level Arabic is helpful for daily living, though not essential. Correspondence with Sultan Qaboos University prior to submission of an application is strongly encouraged. Contact Mr. Sulaiman Al Shandodi, Acting Director of International Affairs, at shandodi@squ.edu.om or visit www.squ.edu.om for university information.

Staff: Assistant Director Gary L. Garrison, 202.686.4019, ggarrison@cies.iie.org or Homa Rafiq, 202.686.4018, hrafiq@cies.iie.org

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Table 1. List of awards open four months after the deadline¹

Guide to All Open Awards
<u>6051 Chad All Disciplines</u>
<u>6066 Guinea All Disciplines</u>
<u>6071 Madagascar American Literature and Civilization or Teaching English as a Foreign Language</u>
<u>6072 Madagascar Business Administration</u>
<u>6078 Mozambique All Disciplines</u>
<u>6079 Mozambique Business Administration and Engineering</u>
<u>6080 Mozambique Business Administration, Social Sciences or Teaching English as a Foreign Language</u>
<u>6081 Mozambique Educational Administration and Leadership</u>
<u>6108 Northeast and Southeast Asia Regional Research Program Social Sciences and Humanities</u>
<u>6132 Indonesia Communication, Journalism and Media Studies</u>
<u>6133 Indonesia Comparative Religion</u>
<u>6134 Indonesia International Business</u>
<u>6135 Indonesia Islamic Studies</u>
<u>6137 Indonesia Teaching English as a Foreign Language</u>
<u>6142 Japan Study of the United States</u>
<u>6144 Korea All Disciplines: Distinguished Lectureships</u>
<u>6151 Macau Sociology/Anthropology</u>
<u>6182 Azerbaijan All Disciplines</u>
<u>6184 Belarus Economics or Business Administration</u>
<u>6187 Belarus Social Sciences and Humanities</u>
<u>6189 Georgia American Studies</u>
<u>6190 Kazakhstan All Disciplines</u>
<u>6191 Kazakhstan American Studies</u>
<u>6192 Kazakhstan Law</u>
<u>6197 Russian Federation All Disciplines</u>
<u>6198 Russian Federation All Disciplines</u>
<u>6210 Uzbekistan All Disciplines</u>
<u>6211 Uzbekistan American Studies</u>
<u>6212 Uzbekistan Business Law</u>
<u>6213 Uzbekistan International Law</u>
<u>6215 European Union Affairs Research Program Fulbright Chair in U.S.-E.U. Relations</u>
<u>6274 Finland Fulbright-Nokia Award in Electronics, Information or Telecommunications Technology</u>
<u>6280 France Alsace Regional Award</u>
<u>6281 France Aquitaine Regional Awards</u>
<u>6283 France Nord Pas de Calais Regional Council Award</u>
<u>6288 Germany Beginning Professional Journalism</u>
<u>6292 Germany U.S.-Germany International Education Administrators Program</u>
<u>6308 Ireland Computer Science: Learning Technologies</u>
<u>6313 Ireland Food Science</u>
<u>6314 Ireland French</u>
<u>6316 Ireland International Business</u>
<u>6322 Ireland Tourism</u>
<u>6388 Spain Engineering</u>
<u>6402 United Kingdom Fulbright-University of Ulster School of Policy Studies Fellowship</u>

[6406 Algeria Multiple Disciplines](#)
[6407 Bahrain All Disciplines](#)
[6408 Bahrain American Studies](#)
[6410 Egypt All Disciplines](#)
[6411 Egypt All Disciplines](#)
[6426 Kuwait All Disciplines](#)
[6434 Morocco All Disciplines](#)
[6436 Morocco Applied Linguistics/TEFL](#)
[6437 Oman All Disciplines: Sultan Qaboos University](#)
[6438 Oman Business or Economics](#)
[6439 Oman English Language and Linguistics](#)
[6440 Qatar All Disciplines](#)
[6441 Qatar Economic Modeling](#)
[6442 Qatar Education Supervision](#)
[6443 Qatar Special Education](#)
[6444 Syria All Disciplines](#)
[6453 Bangladesh All Disciplines](#)
[6481 Nepal All Disciplines](#)
[6485 Pakistan All Disciplines](#)
[6486 Republic of Maldives All Disciplines](#)
[6487 Sri Lanka All Disciplines](#)
[6488 Sri Lanka American Studies](#)
[6489 Sri Lanka Business Administration and Management](#)
[6490 Sri Lanka Cardiovascular System](#)
[6491 Sri Lanka Curriculum Development in Medicine](#)
[6492 Sri Lanka Pharmacy](#)
[6493 Sri Lanka Physical Education](#)
[6494 Sri Lanka Political Science](#)
[6570 Paraguay All Disciplines](#)
[6571 Peru All Disciplines](#)
[6581 Singapore Military History](#)

Once you have an idea of which awards are of interest to you and might be a little off the beaten track, you should communicate with the program officers and ask them for advice. I received very good advice from a number of program officers I contacted, since the program officers are eager to find qualified candidates for their less popular locations. This is important since you can only apply to one at a time and should apply only after you have prepared appropriately. If you apply after the deadline, like I did, you will find that some are effectively closed even though the web site described them as open, but many were really open. You need to investigate the safety in some of these countries and your own tolerance for risk. In my case I was encouraged by Gary Garrison to apply for a grant in Oman. I investigated the country and found it to be very safe and appealing.

Once you contact a number of program officers and communicate with them, you contact the host university. In the comments section of the award description they provide a contact, in this case Mr. Sulaiman Al-Shandodi. You discuss with the host contact the various activities that you could perform and seek areas that they desire that would be of interest to you. Sometimes their stated descriptions are not representative of the actual activities. You can see in Figure 2 that the documentation describes teaching up to 16 class hours weekly plus advising students. This is the award that I received, but originally I had not been very interested in it because of this description. Sixteen class

hours per week is a lot! However, when I discussed the situation with the associate dean, I found that they were flexible, and I negotiated to teach one three hour course and also help them with a number of other activities, such as strategic planning, presenting seminars and helping them plan for a conference they wanted to sponsor.

Figure 2. Description of my award in Oman

For stipend/benefits and other information on this award, click on the link below.
▶ [Middle East and North Africa|Oman](#)

Business or Economics

Award #6438

Category: Lecturing

Deadline: August 1, 2005

Grant Activity: Teach undergraduate courses, up to 16 class hours weekly, 16 to 20 students per class. Advise students.

Language: Instruction is in English. Interpreters are provided if needed.

Additional Qualifications: Ph.D. preferred. Persons with M.B.A. and substantial higher education teaching and research experience and business experience will be considered.

Location: Modern College of Business and Science

Length of Grant: 5 months to 10 months

Starting Date: September 2006 or February 2007

Comments: Correspondence with the institution prior to submission of an application is strongly encouraged. Contact Dr. Bernard E. La Berge at bernard@mcbs.edu.om, associate dean, for information on courses and facilities. Visit www.mcbs.edu.om for institutional information.

Staff: Assistant Director Gary L. Garrison, 202.686.4019, ggarrison@cies.iie.org or Homa Rafiq, 202.686.4018, hrafiq@cies.iie.org

The first Oman example had considerable flexibility, and more defined needs are clarified by the country manager or the college contact. My grant description was discouraging, but I was easily able to negotiate better terms. Sometimes, the descriptions might be very specific, as can be seen in Figure 3. This is an engineering award, but they are looking for very specific disciplines. If they are not able to find those specific disciplines, they will likely become more flexible. How flexible you find out through discussions with the program officer and the college contact.

Figure 3. An engineering award description

For stipend/benefits and other information on this award, click on the link below.

► [EuropeSpain](#)

Engineering

Award #6388

Category: Lecturing

Deadline: August 1, 2005

Grant Activity: Teach a doctoral course in residues and collaborate with faculty in seminars and research interests. Course will require approximately 5 hours teaching and four office hours per week.

Specialization(s): Within chemical and environmental engineering: biomass and other residues as renewable energy sources and production of hydrogen by catalytic stem reform of pyrolysis liquids.

Language: Lecturing is in English, but conversational ability in Spanish is recommended.

Additional Qualifications: Rank of associate or full professor and substantial teaching experience preferred.

Location: Department of Chemical Engineering and Environmental Technology, University of Zaragoza

Length of Grant: 4 months

Starting Date: January 2007

Comments: Visit www.unizar.es for more information about the host institution.

Staff: Senior Program Officer Richard Pettit, 202.686.6240, rpettit@cies.iie.org or Jaime Oberlander, 202.686.6232, joberlander@cies.iie.org

One advantage for Engineering Management faculty over other engineering faculty, is our ability to apply not only for engineering awards, but also for business grants, and these are more plentiful. That is what I did and that increased my odds of success greatly. I applied to a business school to teach a business course.

Once you find a good fit with one of the awards, you document their needs and include it in the plans you submit in your application. In my case, my host contact worked with the U.S. Embassy in Oman to gain support for my candidacy. I was able to gain support for my application from the program officer, the host contact and the U.S. Embassy before I even had applied for the grant. That should give you an excellent chance for getting the grant. One final hurdle is the peer evaluation process that will make recommendations. Since I had most of the decision makers supporting me, my application was written to enable any peer evaluator see that I was qualified, well informed and had a clear plan of action that was consistent with the Fulbright goals.

The following advice for applicants was collected from former Fulbright grantees, review committees and CIES staff¹.

- If at any time during the application process, you have questions, please contact the CIES program officer for the country in which you are interested.
- Make sure you meet the eligibility guidelines and the application deadline.

- Plan ahead. Producing a strong application takes time, and peer review and final selection are based solely on your application and accompanying materials.
- Do your homework. A thoroughly researched, well-planned application for a carefully chosen award (the best match of applicant to award) will have a considerable advantage over its competitors.
- Realize that collaborative projects between a U.S. and an overseas scholar are more compelling to reviewers
- Have a clear strategy. Make sure all parts of your application work to form an integrated whole.
- Your application should
 - Highlight the aspects about you and your career that will give reviewers a focused yet well-rounded view of your candidacy
 - Convince reviewers that this is the best award for you and you are the best applicant for it
- Make sure your curriculum vitae clearly explains your job responsibilities
- READ and follow the instructions carefully, including formatting requirements. The instructions are your guide to creating a complete and competitive application
- Proofread!
- Have a trusted colleague review your application materials and offer feedback
- Include only the information requested. Do not exceed page limits. Pages surpassing limits will be deleted.

This process worked for me. I did receive the grant and I did go to Oman from January until May, 2005. When I arrived, I found Oman to be safer than I would find in most parts of the U.S. It was a very nice county to visit and live for a while. I found that the Omani were very friendly and proud of their country and I developed a very good relationship with my students. However, universities have only been there for a few decades and the standards in some of the schools are low but improving. The experience in an environment in which the academic environment is quickly changing provides a good context to appreciate our schools back in the States. I was very glad I went, and glad to come back.

Summary

The Fulbright Scholar Program provides valuable and prestigious grants that can be a great asset to our careers. This paper presents some insights into the program that can help any professor get one of these awards, and it is particularly appropriate for Engineering Management faculty. The keys to a successful search are:

- Communicate with the CIES program officers
- Identify countries that are not popular at the time
- Identify award opportunities that might be of interest
- Communicate with the college contact to identify their needs and negotiate a viable and mutually beneficial plan
- Document the plan within the grant application form to gain the support of all the important stakeholders, and pass the evaluator filtering process.

If you follow this strategy you should increase the odds of being selected for one of these grants and have a great opportunity to enhance your career.

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