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International Affairs
Lehigh University

**Faculty Grants for International Connections
Summer 2010 Proposal**

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Proposal Summary

I am requesting support to meet with researchers at the Laboratory for Ethnography and Studies on Communication, Culture and Cognition (LEECCC) at the Universidade Federal Fluminense, RJ, Brazil, June 15, 2010-June 30, 2010. The purpose of this two week trip is to develop a collaborative research project based on my work in Cuba, Brazil and the United States. These meetings will also center on creating future research and scholarly exchanges between the students and faculty of Lehigh University and the Universidade Federal Fluminense. Obtaining funding for this trip will also increase my chances of obtaining future research grants from Fulbright and the National Science Foundation.

Project Description

This new research project will expand upon my doctoral research on music-based social movements in the Americas. My doctoral research focused on how Cuban artists and intellectuals have used the global Hip Hop movement as a tool for political change in Cuba. Since 2008, I have published five peer-reviewed journal articles on this topic, and I am completing two book manuscripts on this topic. The first is a solo authored manuscript on the role that Black identity politics has played in creating music-based social movements in Cuba. I will submit the book proposal for this manuscript to University of Minnesota Press in August 2010. The second manuscript is an anthology about the relationship between Hip Hop and social change in Cuba. I will be submitting the first draft of this edited volume to Duke University Press in May 2010.

My overall research agenda is to study the relationship between Afro-Diasporic cultures, music-based activism and social change in Latin America. This summer, I will begin a new phase of my over-all research agenda: to focus on music-based social movements in Brazil. I am particularly interested in studying how poor, urban, Black populations in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo have used Hip Hop as a strategy to bring people out of poverty, to reduce poverty-related crime and to successfully promote the public policy necessary to address these issues. This study has significant policy implications for addressing similar issues in communities throughout the Americas, including the United States.

Brazil is a particularly interesting case study because it is considered to be the second largest African nation in the world (with Nigeria the most populated African nation). Brazil has more people of African descent than the majority of nations on the African continent. Additionally, Brazil has emerged as a significant economic and political player, regionally and globally. It is also the second largest country in the Western hemisphere after the United States, with a population of nearly two hundred million

people. Because of Brazil's increasing political and economic power, there has been a significant increase in research about Brazilian culture, which is largely an Afro-Diaspora culture. As such, given the African basis of Brazilian culture, it is common for Brazilian communities to use music-based activism as a way to address social and political tensions.

During the 2009/2010 academic year, I used a portion of my start-up funding to begin learning Portuguese and to network with Brazilian scholars who focus on this topic. These scholars are internationally renowned scholars who teach at Brazil's Federal Universities, the top ranked universities in the country. I will apply for a Fulbright as well as an NSF grant to conduct research in Brazil. In order to obtain these grants, I have to have a very detailed research proposal prepared, and I need a sponsorship from a Brazilian university.

In February I received notice from Julio Cesar de Tavares, a full professor of Anthropology and Communications at the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro (the Fluminense Federal University in the city Niteroi, in the state of Rio de Janeiro), that he received a prestigious affiliation with the National Research Council of Brazil. De Tavares established a research institute at the Universidade Federal Fluminense, entitled the Laboratory for Ethnography and Studies on Communication, Culture and Cognition (LEECCC). He and I spoke at length about my work during my last trip to Brazil in November 2009. We share very similar research interests. Because he is now affiliated with the National Research Council of Brazil, he is now able to invite international researchers to carry out their work at the LEECCC. As such, he has invited me to come to Brazil this summer, to present my work to other researchers at the LEECCC, and to focus on developing my research agenda in time to submit the application for the 2011-2012 Fulbright program. Additionally, we will use this time to outline a proposal for research and intellectual exchanges between Lehigh and the Federal University Fluminense.

My ability to travel to Brazil this summer is contingent upon funding and the completion of additional language training before my trip, as I have to make my presentation and conduct all of my meetings in Portuguese. Within 1.5 months, I achieved intermediate level fluency in Portuguese. Therefore, there is no doubt in my or my colleagues' minds that I will reach the advanced level within the next three months. I have included an estimated budget detailing the costs for a two week trip (including additional language preparation). My total estimated is \$6,885.00. I have also included an e-mail from Julio inviting me to the Federal University Fluminense.

Estimated Costs

Item	Estimated Cost	Estimated Total for Two Weeks
Accommodation Per Week	\$860	\$1720
Flight NYC-Rio Return	\$800	\$800
Language Training at Brazil-Ahead*	\$860	\$2580
Meals and Incidentals **	\$119	\$1785
Estimated Total		\$6,885

*Brazil-Ahead is a language institution that specializes in language and cultural training for academics and business people traveling to Brazil. Brazil-Ahead charges \$860 per month of lessons. I will need another three months of language training (April, May, June) to ensure that I will be at the advanced level when I return to Brazil to meet with Federal University academics and researchers.

** Meals and incidentals are based on the Federal Per Diem estimates for Rio de Janeiro.

Dr. Tavares is traveling internationally at the moment in Southern Africa and Western Europe. He sent an e-mail for Faculty Grant for International Connections' application. However, he sent the e-mail in Portuguese. He offered to send a more thoughtful e-mail once he returned to Brazil in a few weeks. I pasted the Portuguese e-mail below, with an English translation.

from julio tavares <tavjulio@gmail.com>
to Tanya <tas207@lehigh.edu>

[hide details](#) Mar 14

date Sun, Mar 14, 2010 at 11:37 PM

subject Re: Heya
signed-gmail.com

by

Oi, Tanya (Hi Tanya)

Primeiro, parabéns pelo seu português, quase esqueci que não estava falando com uma nativa. ***(First I want to congratulate you on your Portuguese. I almost forgot I was not talking to a native)***

Bem, pensei em apresentar o seu proposal para o período que você permanecer assim ***voce teria um vínculo institucional efetivo, o departamento de antropologia***. Creio que você deve falar de seu trabalho como um todo e da porção de pesquisa que a traz durante o nosso inverno aqui (o verão é seu e não o nosso). É isso mesmo.

(Good, I want to present the proposal while you were here, so that you will have the official support of the Anthropology department. I think you should talk about your work as part of a larger body of research that you will do during our winter here (or summer is yours and not ours).

Me parece que a reflexão maior deva ser Performance, Política e Rituais Comunicativos no Hip-Hop nos EU, Brasil e Cuba. Este seria o escopo maior o que a aproxima de meu trabalho com diáspora africana, corporeidade e grupos jovens....

(It seems to me that you should reflect mostly on Performance, Politics and Ritual Communication in Hip Hop in the U.S., Brasil and Cuba. This would be a better way to link my work on the African Diaspora, corporality and young people.)

best,

julio/