

Report on being a Fulbright Fellow at KIST  
by Carol Shubin  
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I taught two courses, Analysis I and Mathematics I, at KIST during my Fulbright Fellowship, January – June 2007. Analysis I had an enrollment of 153 students at last count; it is a required course covering Calculus for all first year math and physics students. Mathematics I is designed for all biology, chemistry, and food science students. There were two sections of the class and I taught the chemistry and food science students with an enrollment of 180 students. Werner Horn, another CSUN Math faculty member on sabbatical, taught the biology students. Mathematics I covers basic calculus and provides an introduction to linear algebra and differential equations

The KIST students have good basic algebraic skills. In general, the students are bright, motivated, and hardworking. They lacked some preparation for the material as described in the syllabus and I believe that the syllabus should be modified to meet the students' true level of preparation. Their greatest weakness is in graphing functions. Many of the first year students are Francophones with very modest oral communication skills in English. I think this is a further reason to consider a slightly less accelerated curriculum. Indeed, I would suggest covering the material in Mathematics I in two semesters, if that were possible. As no textbooks are available for the class other than notes taken from the blackboard, perhaps KIST might consider opening a small publishing house for instructional materials. Course materials could be reused and students would not need to copy materials using up their small student stipend. It would also spare each lecturer from having to create separate homework assignments, solution sets, sample tests, and other study materials each semester. Another solution would be to make more use of the web, but I found that few students have regular access to the internet and few students made use of my course postings on the web.

When I started teaching most of the classrooms had poor lighting and insufficient blackboards. To his credit the very next day after hearing of the problem, Rector Karangwa Chrysologue did attend to the problem by installing lights to many rooms in KIST 3 and having some blackboards returned to the lecture halls. It would be very useful if the older blackboards were repainted or repaired so that they are easier to read.

My teaching load started at 14 hours a week. Mid-way through the semester it was reduced to 12 hours because of a change in the time table. I was provided with one teaching assistant who was a very nice guy but who had quite a number of other teaching responsibilities. In the end I found that Jennifer Wright and I were grading all the homework and tests for both of classes or paying more advanced students to help us grade the homework. I realize that starting a new department in mathematics is difficult and KIST is seriously understaffed. (Note: the standard US teaching load is between 6-9 hours per week. Most classes at CSUN have 30-35 students. When a US professor is asked to teach a large class with more than 100 students, he/she is usually provided with several teaching assistants. In addition most classes have graders for reading the homework.)

Since the shortage of qualified staff is apparent, I found it inexplicable that the offer of an experienced American community college teacher, Susan Taylor, was refused by the Head of the Mathematics Department, Professor Verdiana Masanja. Susan asked for no financial compensation whatsoever as her husband, Werner Horn, already received housing. In addition, Jennifer Wright, who is one semester short of obtaining her master's degree in statistics at CSUN and has run the CSUN math department's computer lab and worked as my assistant on the NASA PAIR project, was also refused work as a teaching assistant while students who had just completed their BSc at NUR were given regular courses to teach. Jennifer Wright also asked for no financial compensation whatsoever. Attached are the resumes of Susan Taylor and Jennifer Wright. The heavy teaching load of basic classes which Masanja assigned us made us extremely difficult for us to give seminars for staff development, pursuing grants proposals, working with teachers as had been described in my Fulbright proposal. The objections to carry out my proposed activities beyond teaching at KIST might have been more understandable if I had come alone, but I had arranged for three other qualified persons to come with me (Werner Horn, Susan Taylor, and Jennifer Wright).

Although only Werner Horn and I had appointments to KIST, Jennifer Wright and Susan Taylor often came to KIST to work. We were given an office in KIST 3, Room 412. The office had only one internet connection, two desks, and no bookshelves, no computer or printer. It was particularly inconvenient to print documents as the Math Department office is on the first floor and our office is on the fourth floor and the elevators are rarely in service. Also our part of the office has no working overhead lights and it filled with water whenever it rained because the windows were not cocked. I reported the situation to the Head of the Department Masanja who was not able to fix the problems. Then I asked her if we could occupy the unused office adjoining ours to which I had a key because it had two desks and a table, an internet connection, a computer, a printer, working lights and the windows did not leak. She simply said it was not possible to use the unused office. Seeing that help was not on the way, I started to use the empty office. After more than one month of working at KIST daily, I met the occupant of the office. His name is Jonathan Mwakijele, the MCM Coordinator. I introduced myself and explained the problems with our room. He was clearly upset that I was in the MCM room. I asked him who was in charge room assignments. He gave me the name and number of the Estates Officer who I met with the following day. The Estates Officer told me that I could use the MCM Office for the duration of my stay except for one week when certain visiting professors from England had been promised the space. As Jonathan Mwakijele had another office and was traveling to Europe this semester, the Estates Officer did not see a conflict with the use of the space. When Jonathan Mwakijele returned from Europe around March 16, he came by the office and left me a note asking for the key. He returned on March 19 to put a password on the computer and printer so that we could not use the equipment and asked me to move out of the office which I did. I have not seen him since. When I complained to the Head of the Mathematics Department she told that I had stolen her former student Mwakijele's office.

The Head of the Mathematics Department continued to work to undermine our experience of teaching at KIST. The Fulbright Grant is funded by the US State Department. It pays my salary and covers my travel expenses; however, the host institution is required to provide housing for the Fulbright Scholar. Housing was not available upon my arrival and when it was provided it was both exorbitantly expensive (mostly for KIST) and not at all what I had requested. I was told that it was a nice house and that the landlady had already made improvements in the property (buying a gas oven/stove). KIST insisted that I should pay an additional \$200 a month (to KIST) to cover the expense of the property although I know that KIST has paid \$1000 per month rent for another Fulbright scholar, Suk Bin Kong. I paid the \$1000 by check to KIST for housing for the duration of my stay without having seen the house because no one told me where the house was or gave me the name of the landlady so I did not know how to find the property. Since my children (ages 10 and 11) had already started school and we were living in a hotel room, I agreed to the house sight unseen based on the recommendation of the Head of the Department. She took me to visit the house for the first time two days after KIST signed the agreement with the landlady. The house did not have an adequate water tank and for the first month that we lived there, we frequently ran out of water and had no hot water. This and many other features of the house, particularly its location, were great disappointments for me given that it is not difficult to obtain housing of the type that I specified in the areas that I requested. However, I would like to add a few positive comments about the house; there were many neighbors who have children and we found a very nice family to share a carpool to Green Hills Academy. At this point I would be somewhat reluctant to leave because of the trouble in moving and finding friends and a carpool for the children.

I arrived with my children and assistant Jennifer Wright after more than two days of travel in Kigali, Rwanda on January 5, 2007. We were met at the airport by members of the US Embassy and brought to the Gorilla Hotel in Kiyovu. We remained there for 10 days at a great cost to KIST. Much to my surprise, when I left the hotel I was handed a bill for \$852 for meals for four people for 10 days which I paid.

I believe that the cost of the hotel bills, the house, and the car that I needed to rent due to the inconvenient location of the house forced me to pay \$5000-\$6000 in costs that were completely avoidable and certainly unanticipated. Recently a fairly routine problem arose at the rental house. I informed the landlady of the problem and she told me that it was not her financial responsibility. Next I called the US Embassy PAO Brian George who called Mr Papias several times. He explained to Mr Papias that the housing contract is between KIST and the landlady, Adelaide Kagwesage. I am not a responsible party of general maintenance of the property and yet, Mr Papias assisted that I was responsible for paying of the repair of a gate that had become unhinged until the determination of the financially responsible could be made later. He could just as surely have said that the landlady who is receiving \$1000 per month rent for a house which he acknowledges is probably \$650 over the market price is responsible. If KIST is responsible, he assured me that I would be reimbursed after he received the receipt. The only person is clearly not responsible for the bill is me. Indeed, I have not bothered to submit to receipt of 7000 frw as of yet; the trouble of having to make the request and likelihood of being

reimbursed in a timely manner simply does not seem worth the effort. Frankly, at this point I am so disappointed with my experience KIST and the lack of support which I have received for even the most minor problem that I can only suggest that the program's continuation should be reevaluated.

I believe that it is necessary to have a meeting with officials at KIST to review the purpose of the Fulbright program and review its obligations.

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