2015-2016
Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Grant Application

Name _Robert Erlewine_

Department or School _Religion_

Brief Description of Training Opportunity: _I would like to hire a German Tutor_

Amount Requested _$1,000.00_   Your Email: _rerlewin@iwu.edu_

Is this your first CPD grant application?   (Yes)   No

If no, in what year was your most recent CPD grant awarded? _____

If your proposal is funded, would you be willing for the Mellon Center to use it as an exemplary submission in the online *Handbook*?   (Yes)   No

Please complete the following checklist by placing a check mark against each item to ensure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

1. Summary of Prior CPD grants (if relevant)   ☑
2. Narrative (as per format described in *Handbook*)   ☑
2. CPD Budget Page   ☑

Signature _Robert Erl_   Date _11/18/16_

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Grant Application

Summary of Previous CPD Grants: I have never previously received a CPD grant.

Narrative:

A. Training Opportunity:

I am applying for the Continuous Professional Development Grant in order to hire a German tutor. As someone who works extensively with German texts for which there exists no English translation, I have often thought about enlisting a tutor to keep my skills sharp and to help me cope with particularly difficult texts. The prose of 19th and early 20th century German philosophers is some of the most difficult in the German language. However, I had always hesitated because the sort of tutoring I would need is quite specific. The texts I deal with are often very difficult for those who are unacquainted with 19th and early 20th century philosophy. Indeed, in the past when I have asked German literature specialists to help assist me in a translation I have found they encountered difficulty and were not as helpful as I had hoped.

This past October (2016), when I was giving a talk at my alma mater, I encountered a German professor I had worked with years ago. Jacqueline Paskow (professor emeritus at St. Mary's College of Maryland). She is very adept with German philosophy and she agreed to serve as my tutor. We would use skype to set up meetings once a week for an hour or two at a time. Prior to the actual meeting, a German text would be determined. We would read sections of difficult philosophical works together. By working through the difficult syntax with an expert in the German language would help improve the speed and accuracy of my own translations.

B. Professional development:

Many people in my field took a year to study in Germany. However, my dissertation advisor had retired in the first year of writing my dissertation. While she agreed to keep me on as a student, she strongly 'encouraged' me to finish my dissertation as rapidly as possible. Thus, I was unable to study in Germany as so many do in my field. Then, I was lucky enough to be hired by Illinois Wesleyan my first year on the job market (while finishing my dissertation). Since then I have been so consumed with research that I have not had the opportunity to further my skill with German. To be sure, I work with many German language texts, but it is not the same as working with a tutor or instructor who can provide correction and provide practice for dealing with very difficult material.

While I rely on German source material, as much as many of my colleagues in the field, I feel like it takes me longer to read material than they do (and they work at institutions with lower teaching loads and lower service requirements). Working on speed, accuracy and pronunciation would allow me to focus my scholarly gaze more ambitiously and to read more broadly with regard to German texts without English translation.

In my scholarship I work with German philosophy, particularly German Jewish philosophy. While some major works have already been translated into English, the bulk

of the works of 19th and 20th century German Jewish thought have not been translated. Indeed, even when one has access to translations, serious scholarship requires access to the original sources. Translations often obscure secondary and tertiary meanings that are available in the original language but not in English. Similarly, philosophers often chose their terms very specifically so that they resonate with the terms chosen by other philosophers, either to enhance or challenge their meanings. However, translators often are more concerned about broad access and thus cannot possibly attend to the genealogical aspects of the development of thought. Also of significant importance is the fact that most works and a wide body of secondary literature are simply not translated into English.

I have facility when it comes to reading German. My scholarship depends on the ability to access very difficult texts. That being said, there are often times when I am not entirely sure of the meaning of a clause or even a whole sentence (in 19th century German, it is not uncommon for a single sentence to be six or seven lines long). Working with someone fluent in German, who also possesses a broad knowledge of German philosophy, will help improve the speed with which I read and the accuracy of my translations. If I can read German texts more quickly then I will be able to engage with wider scholarly vistas, reading more authors and tapping into a wider quarry of scholarship.

C. **Proposed Expenses:** I request $1,000 dollars to hire a German tutor. This would allow me to have 25 hours of tutoring by Dr. Jacqueline Paskow, who charges $40.00 an hour.

D. **Timetable:** Starting in the Spring Semester of 2017, I would like to 'meet' weekly with Dr. Paskow for an hour or two at a time via skype. She charges $40 an hour. If I could have 12 and ½ weeks of regularly meeting for two hours, or 25 continuous weeks of 1 hour meetings of this (or some combination of 1 and 2 hour meetings), I am quite confident the speed and accuracy of my German would improve significantly.

CPD Grant Budget Page

Faculty Name Robert Erlewine

A. Course/Training Fees (please itemize) $ 1,000.00

$40.00 an hour
25 hours of tutoring

B. Training Materials (please itemize) $ N/A

I already have many German sources
but if needed I can access others thru
the library

C. Travel (please itemize) $ N/A
We will use skype

D. Housing/Living Expenses (please itemize) $ N/A

E. Other (please itemize)

TOTAL (Maximum $1,000) $ 1,000.00