PROPOSAL TO LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL GRANTS
Faculty Research Grant Proposal

Name: Benjamin Benus                 College/Department: CMFA / Art & Design
Rank: Assistant Professor            Chair/Professorship: 
Date Submitted: 11/15/12

Start Date: June 2013               Completion Date: July 2013

Title of Project: Picturing the World in Numbers: The Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics in Global Context

Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Supplies (itemize below)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Printing &amp; Copying</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Journal Page Charge</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Travel (itemize below)</td>
<td>$3465</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Per Diem (itemize below)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Other Costs (itemize below)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3465</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Budget Justification: (Please do not attach other budget pages.)

Airfare – roundtrip from U.S. to Europe: $916
Airfare – within Europe (Vienna to Amsterdam) $179
Accommodations in Vienna ($204 x 5 nights) $1020
Accommodations in Amsterdam (two weeks) $1350*

*This figure, which is less than the US State Department lodging rates, is based on my previous experience with short-term rentals in Amsterdam.
Where would the results be published, exhibited or performed?
The results of my research will serve as the basis for articles to be submitted to peer-reviewed art and design journals (e.g. *The Art Bulletin*, *Design Issues*) and papers to be presented at national conferences (e.g. College Art Association). In the longer term, this research will allow for the completion of a book manuscript based partly on work carried out earlier for my doctoral dissertation.

What other sources of funding (internal and external) have you identified for this project?
None

If you have received any prior Loyola University grant funding within the past three years, please list the years and amounts. For each award, specify whether a final report was submitted. If any documents are outstanding, please explain why and specify whether a formal extension was granted.

Does your research involve human subjects?
No

Narrative Description of Project (use no more than one additional page and please write for a general academic audience):

The presentation of quantitative information by means of countable, identical pictures has been a standard information design convention for much of the past century [see FIGURE 1]. The origins of this design method, which constitute the subject of my 2010 doctoral dissertation, can be traced to interwar Vienna. There the Austrian sociologist Otto Neurath and German printmaker Gerd Arntz collaborated with a team of designers at the city’s Museum of Society and Economy to produce a visual sign language for use in exhibition displays and museum publications, which aimed to communicate economic and sociological facts to general audiences. Known initially as the Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics, this technique utilized reduced, pictographic symbols arranged in columns and rows, allowing for easy quantification and comparison [FIGURE 2]. With the closure of the museum in 1934 and the subsequent exile of its design team, the Vienna Method was exported internationally and found application in a wide variety of new contexts. In interwar Czechoslovakia, for example, the method served to cultivate a sense of national consciousness and historical identity through its application in geography textbooks; in the Netherlands, pictorial statistics generally served a commercial function through their incorporation into brochures and advertisements; in the Soviet Union, the method was employed to promote the policies of the second Five-Year Plan; and within the U.S., pictorial statistics were used in publications aimed at cultivating support for New Deal policies, and later, in the postwar era, to promote American commercial interests in Latin America.

Based on practical considerations, the post-Vienna episodes and global dissemination of the Vienna Method remained, in large part, beyond the scope of my recent dissertation, which focused on the origins of pictorial statistics at the Museum of Society and Economy. These later developments, however, represent key chapters in the book-length manuscript that I am currently developing based on my dissertation research. While a handful of scholars (primarily connected to the Neurath Isotype Collection at the University of Reading) have, in recent years, produced a growing body of scholarship on Otto and Marie Neurath’s contributions to information design,
the contributions of other key figures—Rudolf Modley in the U.S., for example, or Peter Alma and Willem Sandberg in the Netherlands, Augustin Tschinkel in Czechoslovakia, and El Lissitzky in the Soviet Union—have not received adequate coverage. In taking a global and inclusive view of the history of pictorial statistics, my research will provide a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the development and dissemination of this now ubiquitous design method. In so doing, my project will allow for new insights concerning the role played by visual communication in the promotion of political interests, the cultivation of national and historical identities, and the formation of public opinion.

There are a number of institutions—archives, libraries, museums, and private collections—that I have identified in the U.S. and Europe, which house documentation, publications, artworks, and artifacts that will be essential in tracing the later part of this narrative, as well as in filling in some gaps in my earlier research of the Vienna episode. These collections include the Library of Congress in Washington, DC; the National Archives in College Park, MD; the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna; the Vienna Circle Institute at the University of Vienna; the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam; the International Institute for Social History and Netherlands Economic History Archive in Amsterdam; and the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague. I am requesting the Research Grant only to cover travel and accommodations for the European portion of my research (I intend to utilize my yearly professional travel allocation to cover the per diem costs in Europe and to visit the American collections), which I plan to carry out over three weeks in June 2013. Based on the quantity of relevant material at the various collections, I have estimated spending approximately one week in Vienna and two weeks in the Netherlands.

This project envisions several outcomes, both long-term and short-term. Ultimately this research will serve, in combination with my earlier dissertation research, as the basis for a book manuscript. In the nearer term (the 2013-2014 academic year), I plan to produce several papers for presentation at professional conferences and submission to peer-review art and design journals. Planned topics for these papers include the application of pictorial statistics within German, Czech, and Russian atlases of the 1930s, and the political uses of pictorial statistics in the U.S. during the New Deal and Cold War eras.
This chart illustrates how, through the mechanization of labor, the coal mining industry in Austria had been able to increase productivity while at the same time cutting its workforce. Each figure represents 200 workers, and each cart represents 50,000 tons of coal. Thus, while in 1923 it took 1800 workers to produce 150,000 tons of coal, in 1928 it took only slightly more than half of the previous workforce to produce 200,000 tons of coal.