

Faculty Approved Course Description for Division II Immersion Course

I. Overview:

WX 8321 Theology and Ministry in Global Contexts.

A study of Christian missions and inter-religious relationships in a cultural context different from the students' own cultural context, usually outside the United States, with special attention to the role of theological reflection in an environment affected by globalization in all its dimensions. The course will be a focused, on-site study in a particular region of the world. It will include reading assignments and a day long orientation done off-site before the course, and a debriefing after the on-site portion of the course. Prerequisites will be the permission of the instructor, relevant divisional pre-requisites, and any other pre-requisites assigned by the instructors. The specific topic will vary with each offering. It may be repeated for additional academic credit.

In accordance with the decision of the Perkins Faculty this course will be offered pass/fail.

II. General Requirements

- Regardless of the content of the course participants should be engaged with Christians from the local context in reflection on the content of the course and its relationship with the situation of the immersion experience. (Thus, for example, a New Testament exegesis course taught in the context of Palestinian Bethlehem might include interaction with Palestinian Christians on how they understand hermeneutics generally, their interpretation of specific passages, and their approach to particular themes relevant to the course content. Or, for example, a course in Worship taught in Cambodia might include interaction with Cambodian Christians, how they understand and experience worship, and how their own cultural resources influence their worship.)
- All participants should have the opportunity to meet with community and church leaders to learn more about the context, and in particular how, and to what extent U.S. religion, government policy, and economics influence the lives of people in that context.
- The course content should be presented primarily by persons familiar with and working from the perspectives of the immersion context.
- All participants will attend a pre-immersion experience orientation on the Dallas campus. (See IV. B).
- All participants will be required to attend a post-immersion seminar on the Dallas campus in order to both reflect on their experience and share that experience with other immersion students who took the course in different contexts.
- All participants should gain an understanding of the issues related to planning and participating in cross-cultural travel.
- As far as possible participants should participate in the local culture and lifestyle.
- All participants will be required to complete appropriate pre-requisite reading or classes related to both the context of the immersion experience and the specific content of the course.
- All participants will be required to keep a reflective journal on their experience.

- All participants will be required to complete a self-evaluation related specifically to the experience of learning in a non-U.S. context as well the course evaluation.

III. Specific Course Requirements

Specific readings and written assignments will be specified by the faculty member proposing to offer the course, in accordance with Perkins' and Division standards.

IV. General Course Requirements

A. Required Reading List

The following readings should be undertaken by all students preparing for a Cultural Immersion Course.

- *Cultural Intelligence: Improving your CQ to Engage our Multicultural World*, David A. Livermore. 2009
- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freiere
- *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*. Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, Orbis, 1983
- "Theology and Mission in a Postcolonial World", Joerg Rieger, Mission Studies 2005
- "Globalization and the Transformation of Christianity," Philip Jenkins, *Foreign Policy Research Institute, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2002*

B. Orientation

All students enrolled in the cross-cultural immersion course will be required to attend an orientation seminar that will cover both practical and theological issues related to living and working in a culture outside the U.S.

This orientation will be offered by the Director of Global Theological Education and other resource persons as necessary and appropriate.

At the orientation students will be required to show proof that they have a valid passport, necessary visas, and meet any health and fitness requirements for the particular immersion experience. They will be required to state in writing that they have read and understand all the material related to these issues, and will release the GTE program, Perkins, and SMU from any liability relating to the student's inability to participate in the course.

V. Personal and Course Evaluation

All students enrolled in the cross-culture immersion course will complete a standard course evaluation in relation to the specific content of the course.

All students enrolled in a cross-cultural immersion course will be required to prepare an evaluation of the experience in relation to:

- Relation of the initial required readings to the experience
- The orientation
- What the student learned from the experience beyond the specific content of the course.

- Suggestions for improvements and changes in the way the non-academic parts of the experience were organized.

VI. Requirements Related to Travel and Accommodations for the Immersion Experience

A. Passport and Visa

All students are required to possess a valid passport. If a visa is required for the country in which the immersion experience takes place, or for any country through which the student will transit, the student is responsible for applying for such visas.

B. Insurance

All students currently registered in SMU are required to have and prove possession of medical insurance which covers accident, injury, or illness outside the United States. SMU students will be automatically enrolled in the HTH insurance program when they complete the travel registration procedure. Additional travel insurance covering the cost of transportation to the U.S. in case of illness, as well as costs associated with flight delays, cancellations, and loss of accommodations is not required. Individual students are encouraged to purchase such insurance.

C. Health and Fitness

Pursuant to SMU policy the GTE program will seek immersion experience options for students with special dietary, health, or fitness requirements. Since placements will be outside the U.S. it cannot be guaranteed that *all* placements will have adequate facilities for those who are disabled and students should consider carefully whether any particular immersion experience is consistent with their personal needs.

D. Waiver and Consent

All students must complete University required documents releasing SMU from liability for injury, accident or loss while on the immersion experience, and granting SMU faculty or staff accompanying the group the right to consent to emergency medical treatment on behalf of the student.

E. Communication

Not all immersion sites will have ready access to international telephone, fax, or email contact with the United States. Students with ongoing obligations and responsibilities in the United States should prepare to be out of contact with family members, work colleagues, and other Perkins' students, teachers and administrators for the entire duration of the course. If this is not possible then students will be responsible for insuring that the immersion has the communication facilities that they will need. As this is an immersion experience students should plan to devote all their time and energy to the course for its duration.