

CCCU-LASP
Regional Study Travel
Fall 2018

Program Director: Dan Siefken Office Hours: 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Contact: dsiefken@bestsemester.com	Credit hours: 1-3 Seat Time: 16 hrs. appx. Experiential Learning Time: 150 hrs. appx.
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Welcome to Regional Study Travel

CCCU Best Semester programs are distinctive because of their **experiential learning** components. LASP's Regional Study Travel course provides different experiences and spaces of reflection outside of the classroom to experience, first hand, realities of Central America. This course has three components: multiple Study Trips, Street Interviews, and experiences in diverse Christian faith traditions in Central America.

Objectives

The Regional Study Travel course is designed to give you opportunities to:

1. Demonstrate appreciation for and contrast the diversity of Latin American cultures by comparing Costa Rica and other countries in Central America.
2. Contrast indigenous Costa Rican worldviews as well as the contemporary Afrocaribbean experience via study in other areas of Central America.
3. Examine the process of building relationships with host communities and churches in each country.
4. Analyze similarities and differences in environmental approaches between different governmental structures.
5. Experience various church traditions in Central America and describe similarities and differences with your own Christian heritage and practice.
6. Practice the following attitudes:
 - a) see the diversity of peoples as a good, valuable and productive force,
 - b) see challenges as means to learn new facts, gain new understandings, change old opinions, shape new interpretations, and make new commitments,
 - c) practice cross-cultural learning without being a tourist – engaging in the culture, practicing good listening and observation, and cultural humility,
 - d) form the relationships necessary for culture learning,
 - e) have a meaningful sense of reciprocity and a willingness to engage in mutual or cooperative interchange.

Course Readings

- For every activity of the Regional Study Travel course students will have classic reading selections as well as recent research and opinion pieces. All readings MUST be completed prior to each excursion. See below: “SEMINAR CALENDAR AND READING SCHEDULE”

Learning Tools (used to accomplish course goals)

1. Active Participation, Listening and Questioning: Activities include multiple trips and interactions with speakers and local people during street interviews. To maximize these experiences, we expect you to be attentive and engage the opportunities to critically reflect on the different realities and opinions of the people in the diverse contexts. Engage people you meet in dialogue. Practice flexibility, humility, generosity, openness, and patience in all activities. Place your personal preferences/tastes below those of your larger community.

2. Comparative Presentation: The Comparative Presentation requires you to analyze a specific topic from a comparative lens. You will pick a specific social/political/religious issue to compare between Costa Rica and another country in Central America. The purpose of this activity is to engage locals in the areas you travel to in discussion about the realities of their lives and to exercise critical thought in understanding similarities, differences and solutions to broader issues, questions or challenges you identify. You are going to create a presentation in which you will choose from the following topic (or create your own) and respond to the following questions (or others). For each of these topics, you should include a faith response as well as a response to the questions below, utilizing a comparative lens.

1. Politics: What are the similarities/differences between Central American countries politically? What are the comparative advantages of Democratic systems? Communist states? Who are the winners and losers in each system? What is the biggest challenge/problem politically faced by each country today? What are the root causes of this problem? What solutions do you propose?

2. Religion: What systems of religion exist in each country and how are they similar and different? How do people interact with religion in each country? What values are reflected in each religious system? How has history impacted the dominant/non-dominant faith traditions in each country? How is God working in each country, or between countries? How does faith inform political, social and economic decisions and relationships in each country and why might it look different depending on the country?

3. Education: What is the educational system like in each country? Is education free, cheap, public or private, guaranteed, up to what level, literacy rates? How do people view national systems of education in each country? What are the outcomes of education in each country statistically? How equipped are students to compete on a global scale?

4. Environment: How protective of the environment is the government? The people? What measures have been taken to ensure/erode environmental sustainability? What environmental characteristics are unique to each country/region to merit conservation/protection? How

successful are policies in protecting the environment? Or is an alternative motive being achieved? How does each country 'market' itself as being eco-friendly? What are the biggest threats to sustainability in each region?

5. Economics: What is the economic reality of the country from a global standard? In what ways does the government support its people economically? What are the advantages/disadvantages of Capitalism, socialism and mixed economies? Do people feel financially supported by their government? How do most people support their families?

6. Arts: Compare/Contrast the arts (music, dance, visual arts, literature...etc) between Central American countries. What are general trends in the arts? Are the arts globalized or localized in each country? What are the political, historical, cultural and social forces influencing the arts?

What the process looks like:

- a) Initial research and reading: Read the literature and conduct at least three interviews in different locations in Costa Rica and at least two interviews outside of Costa Rica. Attempt to interview people of diverse races, ages, genders, and socioeconomic classes. You are not allowed to interview a member of the LASP staff, Spanish professors or any host family.
- b) Record your experience in a 10-15 minute presentation, where you will answer the given questions in a creative way.
- c) Present to your peers and the LASP faculty.

Guidelines for Presentation:

- I. Content: Clearly answer the stated questions. Content must specify in detail the subject and the objectives of the selected topic. It must extend to the content discussed throughout the course. Integrate faith perspectives in your response. Must be comparative of various perspectives and experiences in Central America. Can incorporate perspectives of other countries or cultures from research.
- II. Media: Images/videos must be relevant and appropriate for the topic. The images or videos must be of good quality. Any music or sound should have connection to the topic.
- III. Sources: Presentations must include an accompanying paper bibliography (Interviews, charlas and readings).
- IV. Length: Presentation length should be between 10 and 15 minutes.

COMPARATIVE PRESENTATION EVALUATION RUBRIC			
CATEGORY	3	2	1
Sources	Support your analysis, position and recommendations with references to readings, interviews and charlas	Mention few sources, or a single type	No bibliography provided
Content	Analyze diverse answers of the given questions and offer different perspectives on the topic	Present diverse perspectives but don't analyze them	Present only one perspective. Lacks analysis or comparison.
Relation between your position/recommendations and teachings of Jesus	Articulate the relationship of your position/recommendations to the teachings of Jesus	The relation between your position/recommendations and the teachings of Jesus is mixed with other ideas	The relation between your position and the teachings of Jesus is unclear

Time-limit	Respect presentation time limits: 10-15 minutes maximum	Presentation is +/- two minutes of time-limit	Presentation is more than +/- 2 minutes of time-limit
Creativity	Presentation motivates the audience to want to learn more about your topic		Presentation is boring or doesn't capture the attention of your peers
Presentation in general	Media are relevant and appropriate for the topic and are of good quality. The presentation is professional, high quality, clear, understandable and well structured. Presentation demonstrates strong understanding of topic and command of material.	Media is clear most of the time. Visuals are not very useful. Presentation demonstrates sufficient understanding of topic, professionalism, clarity and structure.	Video/media could not be understood. Presentation is poorly structured, disorganized and/or difficult to follow. Does not demonstrate understanding of selected topic

3. Central America Study Trip:

- 1) **Active Participation:** Engage locals in dialogue. Practice flexibility, humility, generosity, openness, and patience in all activities. Place your personal preferences/tastes below those of your larger community.
- 2) **Written Reflection:** Identify one person who impacted you during your experiences (a member of your host family/community, a speaker, someone you met at church/on the bus). **Create a poem, song or reading that speaks to why/how this person impacted you.** You will share your work in a small group setting prior to your return to San Jose.

4. **Travel Journal:** Refer to The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning by J. Daniel Hess for guidelines on writing a study journal (included in your reading packet). Use a combination of description and **analysis** in your journal entries. See the attached topics/questions list to assist you in selecting themes about which to journal. Journals should include entries from each day of excursions (Limon, QERC)

5. **Church Traditions Essay:** During the first five weeks, you will visit a different Church denomination every Sunday. Additionally, you will connect with an organization with a strong church orientation; and during the second part of the Seminar you will visit and discuss different Church traditions. At the end of this process you will compose a final essay on this topic. Additional information for this assignment can be found on page six of this syllabus.

Grading and Assessment

<u>COMPONENT</u>	<u>CRITERIA</u>
Active Participation 20% of grade (5% for each component: Limon, QERC and Church visits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attendance</i> • <i>Preparation:</i> Student has completed necessary assignments and comes prepared to contribute during the activities. • <i>Attitude:</i> Student evidences a quest for understanding and courtesy toward others – consideration of the group and timeliness.
Comparative Presentations 25% of grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Faith Integration</i> • <i>Critical analysis</i> • <i>Creative synthesis</i> • <i>Faith reflection</i>
Travel Reflection 10% of grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organization</i> • <i>Content (reflection rather than description)</i> • <i>Critical analysis</i> • <i>Faith reflection</i>
Travel Journal 25% of grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organization</i> • <i>Content (reflection rather than description)</i> • <i>Critical analysis</i> • <i>Faith reflection</i>
Church Traditions Essay 20% of grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Faith Integration</i> • <i>Critical analysis</i> • <i>Creative synthesis</i> • <i>Timeliness</i>

LASP Grading Scale

A = 90-100 Excellent, creative and integrative work, revealing superior analysis and content
 B = 80-89 Good, competent and complete work
 C = 70-79 Adequate performance
 D = 60-69 Poor, does not fully meet requirements
 F = 0-59 Substandard performance

A 93-100 B+ 88-89 C+ 78-79 D+ 68-69 F 0-59

A- 90-92 B 83-87 C 73-77 D 63-67
B- 80-82 C- 70-72 D- 60-62

Late Submission: There will be a 5% per day grade reduction for any assignment that is turned in late.

Academic Dishonesty: In the event of plagiarism, no credit will be granted for the assignment. Other disciplinary action will follow.

Language Requirements: Advanced Language and Literature Concentration participants or other students wishing to receive Spanish credit from their home campus for this class are required to complete all written work in Spanish with additional Spanish readings. Latin American Studies Concentration and International Business Concentration participants will receive 2% extra credit for assignments completed in Spanish.

Key Dates

- **Oct. 23** Travel Reflection – 9:30 a.m.
- **Nov. 5** Travel Journal – 9:00 a.m.
- **Nov. 9** Church Traditions Essay – 9:00 a.m.
- **Nov. 16** Comparative Presentations – 1:00 p.m. (LASP)

Comparative Presentation

25% OF YOUR TOTAL GRADE

Due date: Friday, November 16th – 1:00 p.m. @ LASP

Travel Reflection

10% OF YOUR TOTAL GRADE

Due date: Tuesday, October 23rd – 9:30 a.m.

The poem/reading, or song created by each student will be utilized during the group reflection process at the end of the trip. Each student will share their work with the group in the morning reflection time and students will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue on their experiences to critically reflect on their time in the communities. Clean, legible copies of the works must be turned in for grading at this time.

Travel Journal

25% OF YOUR TOTAL GRADE

Due date: Monday, November 5th – 9:00 a.m.

Readings:

- Hess, Daniel. Journal Keeping and Critical Reviews –*The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning* 1994
- “Critical Reviews.” Source Unknown.

Potential Topics to Analyze in the Travel Journal

Community:

1. What do the community members know about the history of the community? When was it founded? What is it known for?
2. What are the principle forms of employment in the community?
3. Have you had contact with any community organizations (churches, hospitals, NGOs, etc.), what do people know about the histories of these institutions – challenges and successes? How are these organizations funded?

Public Systems:

1. How does the local school system operate? What is the average level of education in your community? How is education funded? Are educators paid fairly?
2. Do people have access to health care and medication in your community? If so, do they find the services provided to be adequate? Is the health care public or private? Is it affordable?

United States:

1. How do people view the United States? US foreign policy? US citizens? Tourists?
2. How do they perceive US culture?
3. What do they think about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?
4. Do they have an opinion on President Trump?

Faith:

1. How do people express and understand their faith?
2. What do the people recognize as the central message of the Gospel?
3. How do people define the Kingdom of God (el Reino de Dios)?
4. How does faith inform their political decisions?
5. How does faith inform family life – gender roles, treatment of children?

Politics:

1. How do people describe the current state of their country?
2. What are its strengths and weaknesses? What solutions do people offer? What are their hopes for their country?
3. How do they feel about their president and other political representatives?
4. How do people feel about the local and national electoral or appointment systems?

Economics:

1. What needs have you observed in your community?
2. Are people content with their economic reality? Does being content mean that nothing more is needed?
3. How do people spend their money? Support their families? Plan for the future?
4. Where do people go for assistance in the event that basic needs go unmet?

Culture:

1. How do people spend their time? What do they do for enjoyment?
2. 3. How do people express themselves? Poetry? Art? Music?

Church Traditions Essay

20% OF YOUR TOTAL GRADE

Due date: Friday, November 9th – 9:00 a.m.

Content and organization:

1. Respect length requirements: minimum of six pages, maximum of eight pages. Work must be double-spaced and typed (or highly legible handwriting) with few errors in spelling and grammar. Essay can be sent via email.
2. Include a focused introduction.
3. Provide a description about your experiences during the different church services you attended. INCLUDE all of the following: church like your own; Catholic Mass; Pentecostal service; Limón church; Basilica de los Ángeles
4. Analyze differences and similarities with your own faith tradition.
5. Integrate your personal faith practices with your analysis.
6. Integrate readings, lectures and other experiences in your analysis.
7. Summarize findings in a clear conclusion.

CHURCH TRADITIONS ESSAY EVALUATION RUBRIC				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<i>Comparison and Contrast</i>	Articulates multiple points of similarity or difference between Latin American settings and own worship practices	Articulates multiple points of similarity or difference between the Latin American settings but does not include own practices	Articulates one or two similarities or differences between Latin American settings and own worship practices	Describes only one point of difference or similarity, or multiple points in very vague ways.
<i>Synthesis & integration</i>		Cites multiple speakers or authors to clarify or support argument	Includes quotes from 1-2 additional sources	Does not reference speakers or texts
<i>Reflection</i>		Clearly articulates reflection on more than one personal faith practice or preference while acknowledging reasons for the customs and preferences of others	Describes LA faith practice experiences in relation to own practices in a limited or general way; or focuses on a single aspect	Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases (even those shared with own cultural group(s)) (e.g. uncomfortable with identifying possible cultural differences with others.)
<i>Content</i>	Clearly describes worship services in all settings (similar to own tradition, Catholic Mass, Limón, Pentecostal)	Describes all 4 worship settings in general way, or only describes 4	Vague descriptions or describes 3 or fewer settings	Leaves out 2 or more assigned worship settings

	in some detail			
<i>Mechanics (Grammar, vocab)</i>	Virtually no errors in spelling, 1-2 errors in complex structures; appropriate specific vocabulary for specific topic, varied	A few spelling or grammar errors, most occur in complex structures; Appropriate vocabulary but quite generic	Frequent errors in agreement or spelling but do not interfere with message; use of mostly generic vocabulary	frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, so much so that message is lost, or multiple erroneous word choices
<i>Structure</i>	Contains focused introduction, logical progression, strong transitions between tightly-structure paragraphs, and clear conclusion	Has introduction, paragraphs, conclusion, few transitions or unclear progression of ideas	Has introduction, paragraphs and conclusion but multiple ideas in one paragraph or lacks transitions	Missing at least one of: introduction, conclusion, coherent paragraph structure
<i>Length, format</i>		At least 6 but not more than 8 pages. Double-spaced or highly legible	5 or 9 pages, or single-spaced	Less than 5 or more than 10 pages, or illegible

CALENDAR AND READING SCHEDULE

CHURCH SERVICE SIMILAR TO YOUR HOME FAITH CONTEXT

Sunday, September 9th

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN LATIN AMERICA: STUDY TRIP TO LIMÓN PROVINCE

Street Interviews: Wednesday, September 12th 8:00am

Study Trip: Friday, Nov. 2nd through Sunday, Nov. 4th

Departure/return times: 7:15am

Guest Speakers: Delroy Barton Brown / Jorge Edwards Nicholson / Gloria Mayorga

Readings

- Hutchinson Miller, Carmen. “The Province and Port of Limón: Metaphors for Afro-Costa Rican Black Identity.” *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 1.2 (2012): 1-17. Print.
- Perkins, Nate. “A Land of Diversity and Wonders” from *The Tico Times* – 2010
- Dyer, Zach. “Protecting indigenous land rights could deter drug trafficking in Central America, says new report.” *The Tico Times*. 18 March 2014. Web. 13 September 2018.
- McDonald, Mike. “Race Casts Shadow on Limón’s Past, Future.” *The Tico Times*. 15 October 2010. Web. 13 September 2018.

- Boddinger, David. “Costa Rica Will go All-in on Pineapple Exports. But is that a Good Thing?” *The Tico Times*. 16 September 2014. Web. 13 September 2018.
 - Kinzer, Stephen. “The Overlord: The United Fruit Company” from *Bitter Fruit* – 1983
 - LeBlanc, Terry. “Reclaiming the Word.” *Sojourners*. March 2014. Web. 13 September 2018.
 - “El Caribe Vive.” *Programa Corredor Cultural Caribe, Ministerio de Cultura y Juventud Republica de Costa Rica*. 3. Septiembre 2013.
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CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICE

Sunday, September 16th

AFROCARIBBEAN METHODIST CHURCH SERVICE

Sunday, September 23rd

PENTECOSTAL CHURCH SERVICE

Sunday, September 30th

QERC Study Trip (with Basilica Visit)

Street Interviews: October 6th

Study Trip: Friday, October 5 – Sunday, Oct. 7

Departure/Return Time: TBA

Guest Speakers: TBA

Readings

- Vuola, Elina. “Intersectionality in Latin America: The Possibilities of Intersectional Analysis in Latin America Studies and Studies of Religion.” *Bodies and Borders in Latin America*. 2012.
- Neuenschwander, Dwight E., and Leo R. Finkenbinder. "The Chainsaw and the White Oak: From Astrobiology to Environmental Sustainability." *Radiations Spring*, 2001: 5-11
- Feldt, Lindsay. “Where the Quetzal Lives.” *The Tico Times*. 25 July 2013. Web. 12 September 2018.
- Olguin, Michel and Rojas, Diana. “El Quetzal, en Peligro de Extincion.” *Desinformemenos*. 8 Noviembre 2017. Web. 12 Septiembre 2018.