

**University at Albany  
School of Education  
Department of Educational Administration & Policy Studies**

*EEPL 450/550 – Institute in Higher Education:  
Leading with Cultural Intelligence  
March 14 – 12, 2020*

**(1 credit hour, spring break service-learning/leadership course in La Fortuna, Costa Rica)**

**Instructor:** Martha Jo Asselin, PhD  
**Office:** Center for Leadership and Service, B92, Campus Center West  
**Email:** masselin@albany.edu  
**Phone:** 518.442.5445  
**Office Hours:** Daily – throughout the duration of the course  
**Location:** TBD

**Course Description:**

This study abroad experience will blend online learning with a face-to-face experience in Costa Rica. Students from UAlbany, from any academic discipline, will have an opportunity to work with a partnering not-for-profit agency in Costa Rica in an effort to advance learning, serve the community, and to contribute local knowledge to bridge cultural understanding. The course will introduce students to the leadership pedagogy of cultural intelligence through service learning opportunities.

Using immersive and experiential learning techniques, students will develop: 1) their cultural intelligence (ability to cross boundaries and thrive in multiple cultures); 2) their leadership skills required to lead in situations where they have no formal authority; 3) their networks, locally and globally, with fellow students, contributors and regional employers; and 4) skills required to quickly understand and address complex issues.

The University at Albany is committed to preparing its students to be globally engaged citizens and to serving our local and global communities. Undergraduate students complete thousands of hours of community service each academic year in the Capital Region and beyond. This course exposes these students to a new beyond: the Arenal Volcano region of Costa Rica, 75 miles from the country's capital, San José.

Emphasis will be on development of leadership skills in an international context, diversity, innovation with regard to social change, and the development of collaborative relationships. Application of foundational knowledge and integrated learning will be demonstrated in written assignments, oral presentations, and performance.

For eight days, students will immerse themselves in Costa Rican culture and broaden their cross-cultural understanding. Living with host families, they will improve their communicative Spanish and become acclimated to “tico” customs. Visiting a local farm, they will better understand Costa Rican agricultural practices which play a large role in the country’s gross domestic product. Cooking classes and adventure-based activities round out the experience.

Service projects will be done in La Fortuna. Nearly one quarter of Costa Rica’s land area is protected – the largest percentage of any country in the world – and students will spend half of their week abroad volunteering at Proyecto Asis, an eight acre ecological reserve on the edge of the rainforest. Proyecto Asis is home to rescue monkeys, parrots, and sloths among other animals, and students will help take care of the animals by feeding them, cleaning their cages, and assisting in repairing or building new cages.

For the second half of the week, students will volunteer at a local elementary school. Projects at the school may include leading activities and craft projects with children and/or providing support to ongoing maintenance projects such as painting or refurbishing classrooms.

Through students’ active engagement at both volunteer sites during the course of their stay in Costa Rica, they will develop a better understanding of life in – and the impact of service on – La Fortuna. From financially supporting local businesses and community members to spending time with animals and children, students will be able to temporarily engage themselves in a community other than the University at Albany’s for the better.

### **Course Objectives**

The primary objective for Life and Service in La Fortuna is for students to understand the impact of their service on meeting community needs abroad. The secondary objective is for students to gain a broader global perspective. The overarching purpose of the course is for students to foster a lifelong commitment to service and civic engagement both at home and abroad.

### **Course Credit**

This program counts as a 1-credit course, S/U grading. The course is equivalent to EEPL 450 (EEPL 550 for graduate students) – Institute in Higher Education: Leading with Cultural Intelligence.

### **General Education Information for UAlbany Students**

Credits earned on this program will automatically satisfy the International Perspectives requirement. No additional approval is required for you to earn these general elective credits.

### **Major/Minor Information for UAlbany Students**

Courses may also satisfy major and minor requirements, upon approval by the department.

### **Transcript**

All courses taken abroad count towards UAlbany General Elective credits. Credits and grades will appear on your UAlbany transcript. You may file a request to have additional courses approved for equivalency as necessary. **NOTE:** This course is S/U graded (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

Throughout the three stages of the experience (to include the week prior, the week of the experience abroad and the week following the experience), students will work toward the following learning outcomes:

- 1) Understand and identify cultural intelligence (Foundational Knowledge and application):
  - a. Students will be able to analyze their own behaviors,
  - b. Students will recognize biases and understand how these can affect their behavior; and
  - c. Students will develop a framework they can use to cross boundaries and be more effective in a globalized world.
- 2) Develop broader networks and relationships with others, locally and globally (Integrated Learning);
  - a. Students will develop relationships with fellow students, contributors and leading employers;
  - b. Students will learn how to collaborate across boundaries and with diverse groups; and
  - c. Students will understand the value of different perspectives and experiences.
- 3) Confidently describe and apply social change model, skills and behaviors in real world (Foundational Knowledge and Application);
  - a. Students will understand how to lead beyond their circle of influence while adapting faster to new environments and situations; and
  - b. Students will understand how to build teams to better create change.
- 4) Demonstrate excitement about innovation around complex social challenges (Caring and Human Dimension).

### **Course Readings & Materials (see Blackboard)**

Ott, D. L., & Michailova, S. (2018). Cultural Intelligence: A Review and New Research Avenues. *International Journal of Management Reviews*. Vol. 20, pp. 99-119.

Komives, S. R., & Dugan, J. (2011). *Contemporary leadership theories*. Political & Civic Leadership. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Retrieved from <http://www.sagepub.com/northhouseintro2e/study/chapter/handbook/handbook1.1.pdf>.

Komives, S., Wagner, W. & Associates (2016). *Leadership for a better world: Understanding the social change model of leadership development* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## **Writing Expectations**

Leaders have a continuing responsibility for effective communications within their organizations and with their communities. They are frequently called upon to present concise, detailed communications that address a broad range of public and professional concerns. As a majority of these communications are written, their ability to structure ideas clearly and to express them effectively in suitable format is a major consideration in preparing students for the challenge of their professional work.

The evaluation of student work will be based on the concept of developing the student as an effective leader. To this end, the student should strive for all writing to be of a professional quality, that one would be willing to share with leaders in the workplace. All work will be evaluated based on clarity of thought and organization of paper; incorporation of salient and cogent resources and/or evidence; and assertion of autonomous judgment.

For each assignment, students are expected to draw on a breadth of materials to support arguments and ideas. Sources should generally be limited to books, peer-reviewed articles, and primary data sources. While convenient, the internet can be a precarious source of information as the accuracy of information is often questionable. Only use internet sources if you are certain of the veracity of the source. Viable internet-based sources might include electronic journals, government reports, and on-line databases.

Finally, except when otherwise stated, all papers submitted by students are expected to abide by the standards and policies of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fifth Edition).

**All assignments must be original work.** Students are expected to abide by professional ethics and university policies in regards to plagiarism. According to the Undergraduate Catalog (and it applies to this course): "It is every student's responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Claims of ignorance, of unintentional error, or of academic or personal pressures are not sufficient reasons for violations of academic integrity." (For information on the University's classification of academic dishonesty and the repercussions for engaging in such actions, please visit [http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate\\_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html) ).

### Basic Expectations for Student Writing

- Any paper with excessive grammatical mistakes and/or misspellings will be not be graded – be sure to proof read.
- All papers should be of a professional quality reflective of your status as an emerging leader.
- Do not make unsubstantiated claims or suppositions.
- **Properly cite everything that is not your own.**
- Ensure the paper flows smoothly between ideas and that transitions are provided to ensure uninterrupted continuance of thought.

## **Course Requirements**

In order to receive a satisfactory grade, "S", for this course, the following must be completed:

- **Engagement at Volunteer Sites: 50%**

Students will spend anywhere from three to eight hours at the two service sites on a daily basis while in Costa Rica for a total of approximately thirty-two hours of service abroad. Their willingness to engage in at-times laborious tasks as assigned by service site coordinators is crucial. Failure to participate in projects will negatively impact students' successful completion of the service program.

- **Reflective Journals: 25%**

On a nightly basis while in Costa Rica, students are expected to spend anywhere from thirty minutes to an hour writing reflective journal entries about their experiences, highlighting the specific service-based tasks and cultural activities they were exposed to and/or participated in on that particular day. The completion of these journal entries will serve as a catalyst for students' final essays to be written upon return to the University at Albany. Journals will not be evaluated for content but rather for completion and consistency. One journal entry per day of service while abroad will contribute 25% towards a student's ultimate grade of satisfactory.

- **Final Reflective Essay: 25%**

Students will be expected to submit (on Blackboard) a final reflective essay. This final essay is an opportunity for students to reflect on their experience abroad. Students should respond to at least four of the six following questions:

- How has the experience in Costa Rica changed you and/or affected your life?
- How have you impacted the organizations you worked with in La Fortuna?
- What does it mean – to you – to have a global perspective?
- What does civic engagement mean to you? Why is this important?
- What has this experience suggested to you about your strengths?
- How did the experience help you identify opportunities for personal growth?

The content of students' reflective essays may include anecdotes and/or experiences from students' time spent at Proyecto Asis, the elementary school, or both service sites. Minimum requirements for a satisfactory paper:

- 4-6 pages answering a minimum of four of the six questions outlined above
- Double-spaced with 12 point Times New Roman font and one inch margins
- Thoroughly reviewed for grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors

### **Accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of the Disability Resource Center. That office will provide the instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations. Please do this in a timely manner.