

**International Community Development:
Travel Study in the Dominican Republic**
3 credits
**Prerequisite(s): DVST 210 or permission
of the department**

Class Information		Instructor Information		First day of classes:	n/a
Days:	May 2-21, 2016	Instructor:	Dr. Randy Poon, PhD	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	n/a
Time:	n/a	Email:	rpoon@ambrose.edu	Last day to request revised exam:	n/a
Room:	A2133	Phone:	(587) 893-4730 (cell)	Last day to withdraw from course:	n/a
Lab/ Tutorial:	n/a	Office:	L2055	Last day to apply for time extension for coursework:	n/a
Take-home pre-course exam: Due Saturday, April 30 (email to professor)		Office Hrs.:	By appointment	Last day of classes:	n/a

Textbook and Readings:

Corbett, Steve & Fikkert, Brian. 2012. When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself. Chicago: Moody Publishers.

Myers, Bryant. 2011. Walking with the Poor: Principles & Practices of Transformational Development. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Additional assigned readings (TBD)

Course Description:

This travel study course offers experience-based learning opportunities for students to see first-hand how international community development impacts individuals and communities abroad. Students will develop an understanding of a range of topics in the field, including: poverty and transformational development, key approaches used by development practitioners, issues associated with community development, and evaluation techniques like asset-based community development and appreciate inquiry.

The travel study builds on and draws upon DVST 210 International Community Development and focuses on observing the practical application of community development in an educational context. The trip will include activities such as: meeting with a wide variety of stakeholders (including microbusinesses, schools, community and student leaders free-zone factory managers and workers, and remote village communities) to observe and interact with individuals to see how their lives are being improved, to ascertain the existing resources that are available to them, and to facilitate dialogue regarding community development strategies.

Students will also have the opportunity through field trips to Santiago and Santo Domingo to learn about the economic, political, and cultural context of the country.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

The aim of this course is for students to develop practical understandings of international community development within the context of the Dominican Republic. Specifically, the course aims to achieve the following learning outcomes by having students:

- Understand the basic principles and definitions of community development
- Understand key approaches utilized by development practitioners in the field.
- Understand a variety of techniques for implementing community development, including asset-based community development and appreciate inquiry.
- Develop an understanding from the perspective of the poor of the challenges communities face through various meetings and interactions with micro-business owners, as well as community, school, and student leaders.
- Gain an appreciation for the similarities and differences in historical, cultural, social and spiritual aspects between the Dominican Republic and Canada
- Gain introspective insights about themselves and their own personal values, beliefs, life goals, career aspirations, etc., by travelling in a cross-cultural setting and living temporarily in a new group-based environment
- Improve skills in qualitative research, writing and presenting ideas both formally and informally

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Course grading and evaluation will be conducted according to the following:

Take-Home Exam (due Saturday, April 30)	20%
Personal Learning Journal (due Saturday, June 4)	25%
Research Paper (due Saturday, July 23)	30%
Participation	25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six blog posts during the trip• Group presentation• Active engagement throughout the trip	

Submission of Assignments:

All assignments (unless otherwise notified) are to be submitted via email by the dates indicated above. Late assignments may lose 10% per day late. The instructor has the discretion to not accept assignments that are more than 7 days late.

In the case of legitimate or approved absence, and at the instructor's discretion, the assigned date may be rescheduled to a later date, or if this is not practically possible, the marks may be reallocated to other components of the course grade.

Course Assignments:

Take-Home Exam:

Prior to the travel study, students will be required to answer a set of take-home exam questions relating to International Community Development based on the Corbett and Fikkert, and Myers textbooks. The exam will be emailed to students by April 15. Exam responses are due via email by Saturday, April 30.

Personal Learning Journal

Each student will be required to hand in a personal learning journal that describes and analyzes his or her personal experiences and aspects of learning throughout the trip. This will include areas such as:

- Insights on international community development, poverty alleviation, education development, sustainability, or economic development gained from the various meetings and interactions with local business owners, community leaders, teachers, students, and TEARS staff
- Aspects of cultural, social, spiritual and/or historical learning from your time in the Dominican Republic
- Personal observations and insights about yourself and your own values, beliefs, goals, habits, behaviors, etc., gained from travelling in a cross-cultural setting and living temporarily in a new group-based environment

The point of the journals is to focus on what you've learned in a variety of aspects and not simply to tell about what we did each day and where we went – instead of outlining the trip itinerary, your journal should highlight what you actually learned and reflected on through the trip. Students are encouraged to bring along a journal and make notes daily on their experiences throughout the trip to facilitate this assignment.

Please utilize the reflecting writing tips on the next two pages.

Daily journal entries will vary in length and could be anywhere from a paragraph to a page. They can be typed or hand-written. The journals are due via email by Saturday, June 4.

JOURNAL WRITING TIPS

What is reflective writing?

Reflective writing is evidence of reflective thinking. It involves:

- Looking back at something (an event, idea, or object)
- Analyzing the event, idea, or object (thinking in depth and from different perspectives)
- Thinking carefully about what the event, idea, or object means for you (particularly to your understanding of the people you meet in the Dominican Republic, your notions of poverty, and about the various approaches to international community development)

As such, reflective writing is more personal than other types of academic writing.

A possible structure for reflective writing (this isn't the only model):

1. Description (keep this short!)

- What happened?
- What were the responses/reactions of others?

2. Interpretation

- What is most important/interesting/useful/relevant about the event, idea, or object?
- How does it relate to what you have read/learned (including author's names) about topics we have studied such as, transformational development, poverty, asset-based community development, etc.?

3. Outcome

- What have I learned from this? About yourself? International community development, poverty, education, microfinance, etc.? About the people you have met and the country?
- What does this mean for my future?

Other tips regarding reflective writing:

- Reflective writing is an exploration and an explanation of events – NOT just a description of them
- It reveals anxieties, errors, weaknesses AND strengths and successes
- Reflect forward to the future as well as reflecting back on the past

VOCABULARY AID

Interpretation:

- For me, the most {meaningful/significant/important/relevant/useful} {idea/issues/elements} were learning {resulting from/that happened when}
- {Previously/initially/subsequently} I {thought/felt/knew/noticed/realized OR did not think/did not feel/etc.}
- Alternatively, this {might be/is probably} {because of/explained by/related to}
- This {reveals/demonstrates}

Outcomes:

- Having {experienced/learned/applied} ... I now {feel/think/realize/question/know} ...
- {Furthermore/most importantly} I have learned that
- I have {significantly/slightly} {developed/improved} {my skills/my understanding of/my ability to} ...
- {This means that/this makes me feel}
- This {knowledge/understanding/skill} {is/could be/will be} {essential/important/useful} to me as a learner because ...
- Because I {did not/have not yet/am not yet certain about/do not know yet/do not yet understand} I will now need to ...
- As a next step, I need to

Research Paper

Following the trip, students will be required to develop and write a research paper (double spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font, approximately 3500 – 4000 words) on a topic of their choice that relates to an area of international community development in a Central American context. It must follow correct APA or MLA style for documentation and citation of your sources.

All topics must be approved by the instructor through submission of a brief topic proposal (no later Saturday, June 11). The paper will provide an overview and background to the topic, an in-depth discussion of community development and key issues, what impact the topic is having on key stakeholders (i.e. students, staff, the poor and their families, businesses, communities, developing countries, governments and public policy, international donor agencies, etc.) at various different levels (i.e. individual, community, organizational, national, regional and/or global), analysis and application to principles presented in the travel study activities and readings, and future direction or outlook for the topic. If appropriate, you are welcome to include anecdotal accounts from the travel study (in particular, results from conversations with local Dominicans) and results from the asset-mapping exercise that complement your topic. Students are encouraged to select a topic relevant to their own career or personal interests. The research paper itself is due via email by Saturday, July 23.

Trip Participation & Code of Conduct

Participation in the travel will include the following:

- Writing and posting six blog posts to the travel study's blog page
- Taking notes of interviews and preparing and presenting a summary presentation to the TEARS's (the host organization) leadership team. This presentation will draw upon your interview notes and your journal reflections.

Students are also expected to participate in all aspects of the trip including group visits, meetings and discussions, and attend all

events outlined in the trip itinerary. Failure to participate in one or more of the outlined activities, including pre-trip readings may result in deductions to the overall course grade at the instructor's discretion. In addition, if any student engages in personal behaviour that is deemed to be detrimental to the group or contrary to code of conduct expectations, academic penalties may be applied including receiving a failed course grade.

Assignment Rubrics

Grading Rubric – Journal Entries/Research Paper

Rubric Criteria (weight)	Excelling (85%–100%)	Accomplished (72%–84%)	Developing (60%–71%)	Beginning (0–59%)
Purpose and Content Journal Entries (35%) Research Paper (25%)	<p>My journal entries/paper fully address the assignment's objectives. The journal entries reflect the journal writing tips (noted above). The paper is well-developed and supported by external sources. I develop my ideas and focus on relevant details. There is a unified wholeness to the paper.</p>	<p>My journal entries/paper largely address the assignment's objectives. The journal entries mostly reflect the journal writing tips. It is mostly developed and supported by external sources. I generally develop my details, although I do get a little unfocused occasionally. The paper is mostly unified.</p>	<p>My journal entries/paper miss some of the assignment's objectives. The journal entries generally reflect the journal writing tips. The ideas are not well developed or lack clarity. The paper is not very unified.</p>	<p>My journal entries/paper do not really get at the assignment's objectives. The journal entries do not reflect the journal writing tips. The paper does not have a sense of direction, it is often unclear, or fragmented.</p>
Critical Thinking Journal Entries (35%) Research Paper (20%)	<p>With respect to the journal entries, they are highly thoughtful, reflective, and frequently raises insightful self-observations.</p> <p>My paper goes above and beyond identifying the most obvious issues and arguments, and raises intriguing issues that are well supported. I challenge existing assumptions.</p>	<p>With respect to the journal entries, they are thoughtful and reflective. I raise insightful self-observations.</p> <p>My paper addresses the most obvious issues and arguments, and raises issues that are moderately well supported.</p>	<p>With respect to the journal entries, they are somewhat thoughtful and reflective. I make some insightful self-observations.</p> <p>My paper some of the key issues and arguments, not all of which are relevant, nor are they well supported.</p>	<p>With respect to the journal entries, they are not thoughtful and reflective. I make some self-observations.</p> <p>My paper does not address key issues and arguments.</p>
Voice and tone Journal Entries (30%) Research Paper (15%)	<p>It sounds like I care about my journal entries/paper. That which I care about is embodied in the assignment. There is a sense of passion or enthusiasm in my writing.</p>	<p>My tone is OK, but my journal entries/paper could have been written by anyone. I need to tell how I think and feel. The passion or enthusiasm is somewhat lacking.</p>	<p>My writing is bland or pretentious. There is either no hint of a real person in it, or it sounds like I'm faking it.</p>	<p>My writing sounds as if I don't really care about the assignment. There is a sense that I'm simply trying to pump something out.</p>
Organization	My paper is well	My paper/ report is	My paper/ report is	My paper/ report is not

Journal Entries (doesn't apply) Research Paper (15%)	organized and structured. There is a excellent sense of flow throughout the document. Overall, there is a compelling opening, an informative middle, and a very satisfying conclusion (that strongly links the ideas together).	relatively well organized and structured. There is a good sense of flow throughout the document. Overall, there is an acceptable opening, middle, and conclusion (that links the ideas together).	somewhat organized and structured. There isn't really a sense of flow within the document. Overall, my organization and cohesiveness are rough but workable.	very organized or structure. There are many breaks in flow in the document. Overall, my writing is aimless, disorganized, and lacking in cohesiveness.
Mechanics: Conventions and Sentence Fluency Journal Entries (doesn't apply) Research Paper (15%)	My paper uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. My sentences are clear, complete, and of varying lengths. I follow the conventions of the APA or MLA writing style and use these for citations in the document and in my reference/works cited section.	I have a few errors to fix, but I generally use correct conventions. I have well-constructed sentences. My paper marches along but doesn't dance. I generally follow APA or MLA writing style, but I'm inconsistent in its usage.	I have enough errors in my paper to distract a reader. My sentences are often awkward, run-ons, or fragments. My case study suggests that I have an idea what APA or MLA is, but I am mostly guessing as to what is a writing style.	Numerous errors make my paper hard to read. In addition, this is compounded by many run-on sentences and sentence fragments. My paper/report suggests that I don't know what APA or MLA is or I don't cite my sources.

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<i>% Grade</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Description</i>
95% to 100%	A+	Excellent
90% to 94%	A	
85% to 89%	A-	Good
80% to 84%	B+	
76% to 79%	B	
72% to 75%	B-	Satisfactory
68% to 71%	C+	
64% to 67%	C	
60% to 63%	C-	
55% to 59%	D+	Minimal Pass
50% to 54%	D	
0% to 49%	F	

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform College-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after August 15 unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by July 31; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.