

Course Proposal

FP 302 Group Field Period: Environment and Culture in the Galapagos (June 18, 2018-June 29, 2018)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Environment and Culture in the Galapagos is an international, exploratory group Field Period, which focuses on the natural history and beauty of the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador. Unique biological and geologic features of this region allow students to see an environment that was the crucible of evolutionary theory. The natural history and culture of the Galapagos and Ecuador will be seen through: a) a tour of Quito, including a visit to the Santo Domingo Monastery, the equatorial line, and the Intinan Museum, b) exploring the terrestrial/marine habitats and volcanoes of Isabella, Santa Cruz, and San Cristobal Islands in conjunction with the Charles Darwin research station and interpretation centers, c) an expedition to the Mindo Cloud Forest, d) travelling through and exploring Andean villages, and e) learning about Ecuadorian culture in Riobamba and Palacio Real. Students will learn about the natural history and/or culture of each site/event and will document their experience and learning through individual blogs, pictures and structured reflections based around Kolb's Model of Learning (Appendix A) as they engage with the local communities and sights.

FIELD PERIOD INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Mark Sugalski
Chair, Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Jephson 211
msugalski@keuka.edu

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Outcomes for this course align with the outcomes for Keuka College Essential Learning (E-LEAP) goals.

COURSE GOALS:

- Learn about the culture, history and geography of Germany and Switzerland through sites seen throughout these countries.
- Students will understand the mandatory requirement of attendance at preparatory seminars prior to departure. As well as the requirement as a whole group in semi-structured debriefing sessions held during the days of visiting a specific city/country.
- Students will know that the creation of their Field Period Learning contract will be developed through the establishment of their own individual goals and a cover letter.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- A. Students will attend the preparatory seminars prior to departure. These seminars will serve as means for establishing some common foundational knowledge about the regions and will include sessions on travel etiquette.
- B. Students will participate as a whole group in semi-structured debriefing sessions held during the last day of visiting a specific city/country.
- C. Students will create a Field Period Learning contract establishing individual goals as well as a cover letter.
- D. Using their blogs and photographic collections, students will demonstrate their learning of the cultural and natural history characteristics that are unique to this part of the world.
- E. Students will demonstrate an ability to function in and interact with foreign cultures and communities as part of global citizenship.
- F. Students will show an understanding of key cultural and natural history findings, as well as the complexities of each area through journaling based on Kolb's Model of Learning (Appendix B).

- G.** Students will share an understanding about the differences in their own cultural and natural history experiences through reflective journaling.
- H.** Students will plan, develop, and showcase a public group presentation about what they learned during the Field Period for the Keuka College community.

CORRESPONDING E-LEAP GOALS:

(1) Experiential Learning

Students will develop the lifelong competency to learn from experience.

(2) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

a. Community and Society

- i. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature and functioning of social structures, institutions and processes.

b. Cultural Contexts

- ii. Students will demonstrate an understanding of their own cultural contexts and heritage, as well as cultural contexts beyond their own.

c. Self and Individual

- iii. Students will demonstrate knowledge that enhances their ability to understand themselves and others as individuals and to act with autonomy as well as responsibility in the world.

d. Physical and Natural World

- iv. Students will demonstrate knowledge of how the unique environments of the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador have shaped the evolution of local flora and fauna.

(3) Intellectual and Practical Skills

Students will engage in Creative and Critical Thinking, and Problem Solving, as well as Ethical Reasoning and Action.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Seminar participation**

Students will be required to attend the preparatory seminars prior to departure. These seminars will serve as means for establishing some common foundational knowledge about the regions and will include sessions on travel etiquette.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics Discussed</u>
Aug/Sept 2017	Interest session
Sept 2017	Itinerary, (guest speakers: Tara Bloom – Legalities for International Travel – Passport and Money) - Fundraising
Oct 2017	Get Acquainted Meeting - Fundraising
Nov 2017	Creation of FP Learning contract establishing individual goals and Cover letter; Luggage, etc.
Dec 2017	Fundraising
Feb 2018	Information session Ecuador (history, geography, culture, politics)
May 2018	Travel information session
May 2018	Final information session

2. **Debriefing sessions during the field period**

Students will participate as a whole group in semi-structured debriefing sessions held during the last day of visiting the islands or mainland. These debriefing sessions will help the Field Period participants formulate the results of their observations and their opportunities for interactions with local communities, as well as process daily events and activities based on the Kolb Model of Learning (Appendix A). Then, each debriefing session will culminate with students reflecting on assigned questions modeled after Keuka College Experiential Learning and Field Period handbook.

3. **Reflective journals**

Students will use any downtime during the Field Period for daily individual journal writing that will allow them to make self-discoveries, affirm or adjust their daily goals in accordance with their individual field period learning contracts. The cycle of Kolb's Model of Learning will be emphasized during reflective journaling (Appendix A).

4. Online Blog

Students will be asked to document their travel experiences through the creation of a blog documenting their travels through written reflections and photographic evidence using the following online environments of the following type: www.blogspot.com. The online blog will allow students' home communities to be informed about what the students are doing and learning throughout their field period. The blog will also serve as a source of information to use in the summary field period paper.

5. Presentation to the Keuka College Community

Students will be responsible for developing, planning, and presenting their experiences and photographic portfolios in a campus wide event for the Keuka College community.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Hardbound Diary for Journaling
- Camera
- Laptops

REQUIRED TEXT:

Reading resources related to each country/city's history and culture will be provided.

ITINERARY:

DATE	Destination/Activity/Topic	Assignment
June 18 Day 1 Fly to Ecuador	Depart from Buffalo, NY Arrive in Quito, Ecuador	Begin website posting
June 19 Day 2 Quito	Explore Quito Take a guided tour of Quito Visit the Santo Domingo Monastery Take an excursion to the equatorial line Visit the Intinan Museum	Journals Blogs
June 20 Day 3 Baltra/Isabela Islands	Journey to Isabela Island Fly to Baltra Continue to Isabela Island	Journals Blogs
June 21 Day 4 Isabela Island	Experience Isabela Island Volcano walk Explore flamingo habitat Snorkeling with marine life	Journals Blogs
June 22 Day 5 Santa Cruz Island	Experience Santa Cruz Island Travel to Santa Cruz Island Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station Explore the Santa Cruz Highlands	Journals Blogs

June 23 Day 6 San Cristobal Island	Experience San Cristobal Travel to San Cristobal Hike up Tijeretas Hill San Cristobal Interpretation Center Snorkeling La Loberia coastal walk	Journals Blogs Whole group debriefing session on the Galapagos' natural history and influence on the study of biology
June 24 Day 7 San Cristobal Island/Quito	Experience San Cristobal Free time in San Cristobal Fly to Quito	Journals Blogs
June 25 Day 8 Quito	Excursion from Quito Visit the Mindo Cloud Rain Forest	Journals Blogs
June 26 Day 9 Riobamba	Journey to Riobamba Travel via the Andean Villages to Riobamba Visit Andean villages	Journals Blogs
June 27 Day 10 Riobamba/ Palacio Real	Excursion to Palacio Real: Travel to Palacio Real Spend time learning about Ecuadorian culture Return to Riobamba	Journals Blogs
June 28 Day 11 Palacio Real/Quito	Excursion to Palacio Real: Spend time learning about Ecuadorian culture Return to Quito Pack to go home Depart for home	Journals Blogs Whole group debriefing session on Ecuadorian natural history and culture
June 29 Day 12 Buffalo, NY	Arrive in the USA	Journals Blogs Work on Summary Paper

APPENDIX A:

Kolb's Model of Learning

Kolb

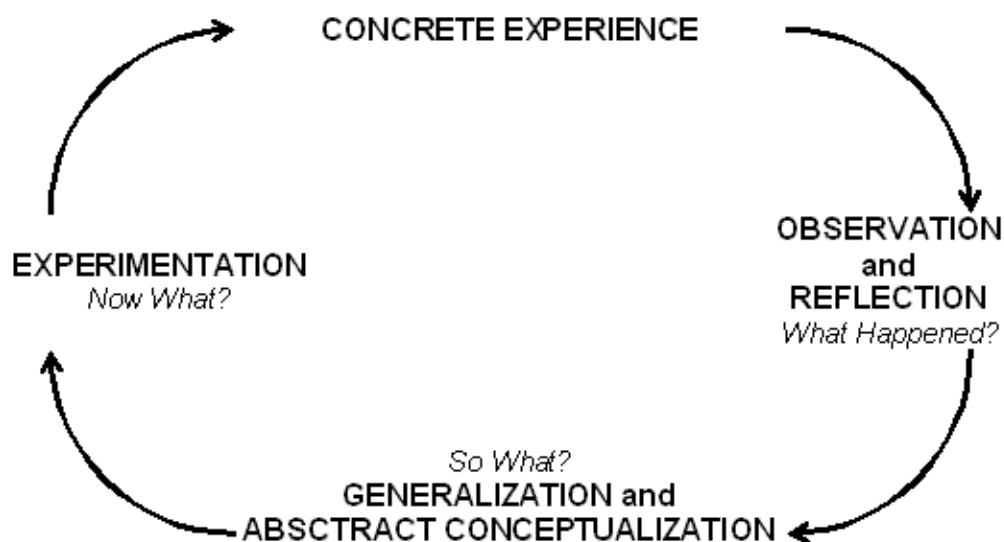
Without a doubt the most influential scholar to study experiential education has been David Kolb (1984). Kolb's experiential learning cycle model (see Fig. 1) has become the basic conceptual model for understanding the methodology. It begins with a concrete experience, followed with observation and reflection. The third step is abstract conceptualization and generalization, a synthesis of the most recent experience with previous knowledge, experiences and feelings. The final step before the cycle begins to repeat itself is experimentation in which the learner tries and evaluates the new concepts or values.

See below for a more in depth description of each of the steps.

Project Adventure has developed a very useful and understandable shorthand version of Kolb's three post-experience steps (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988). For the observation and reflection step they ask "What Happened?" The abstract conceptualization and generalization step is shortened to "So What?" And the experimentation becomes the question "Now What?" This becomes an easy way for either a teacher or facilitator and the learner to remember and understand the cycle. These questions can be excellent ways to learn from all kinds of experiences and to journal and to summarize or evaluate these experiences.

Using the cycle, Kolb has also extensively studied how individuals prefer and tend to use one of the four steps as a learning style. There is not space here for discussion of this aspect of his work; more information is available in Kolb (1984).

Figure 9: Kolb's experiential learning cycle model.



Concrete Experience

A very wide definition is used for concrete experience. Concrete experience could include events ranging from a single initiative (or game) as part of a class to a full semester Field Period. It might mean a single game or a whole season in an athlete's career. While generally it will mean an event that just occurred, it could also mean an event which took place years ago.

Observation and Reflection

To truly learn from experience you must first use your senses to collect observations (on the action, environment, personnel, etc.) from the event. These observations are critical because they become the data upon which the experience will be analyzed. These observations are generally objective – just the facts. Thus Project Adventure called this the “What Happened?” step.

You must also take the time to reflect or to contemplate the observations. Reflection can emphasize in solo meditation, writing, in talking with a peer or friend, or in a group debrief. Reflection becomes more subjective and leads without any clear boundaries to the next step of abstract concepts and generalizations.

Like any data, observation and reflection need to be recorded. This can be done in journals, as homework, or in formal papers. Talking about your observations and reflections in shared discussion with classmates, roommates, teammates, co-workers, or friends can also enhance learning.

Abstract Concepts and Generalizations

It is important that your learning from experience does not stop at reflection (like it does in too many schools and programs). After reflection, as an inductive exercise, you must also attempt to draw conclusions, principles, or theories—Kolb's “abstract concepts and generalization.” Of course, you are not a blank slate. You also have previous experiences as well as learning from classes (and the rest of your life), upon which this most recent experience is overlaid. These theories and principles that are already part of your knowledge base are tested and changed, validated, or reflected. This step is then really a synthesis in which you assimilate the learning from the experience into current knowledge. It is also important to realize that learning is not just cognitive. Skills and values are also developed, tested, and /or assimilated.

To use Project Adventure's terminology, this is the “So What?” stage. Why was experience important? What is the significance of it to you as a student, as a future professional, and as a citizen and member of a community?

Like the observation and reflection stage it is important that this synthesis is recorded, whether in a journal, as a homework assignment, or as a formal paper. Synthesis is also enhanced by meditation, discussion between you and fellow participants of the experience, and group debriefs.

Experimentation

The final step of Kolb's model is experimentation. In this stage you consider then test implications of the new concepts. This can also include an assessment or evaluation component. Are your new concepts, values, or skills correct or better? When you test them do they work? Project Adventure calls this the "Now What?" stage. How are you different because of the experience: Based on this experience, how would you view (or behave in) a future situation? This state is followed by a new concrete experience in which you can put the new learning directly to use.

Retrieved from the 2012-2013 *Experiential Learning & Field Period Handbook* (pages 24-26).