Rationale for CCE Core Requirement

The experience of Calvin faculty and staff who have been involved in cross-cultural engagement courses suggests that 20 hours of interaction with people from another culture is the bare minimum needed to begin to understand that culture in any depth. Given the logistics of placement and the need to introduce students to the culture with which they are going to be engaged, it is estimated that students in a semester-long course would be able to spend approximately 10 weeks in a particular setting. Considering the demanding nature of many students' schedules, two hours of direct experience a week for 10 weeks appears to be a reasonable minimal expectation. It is assumed that additional time will be spent in class engaging in the knowledge and reflection components of the experience—components also necessary if the objectives are to be met.

In addition, the requirement that the engagement be in a culture "significantly different from one's own" requires justification. It is difficult to define what would be a "culture significantly different from the student's own culture" for students at Calvin College. Proposals for courses intended to meet the CCE requirement should outline the nature of culture differences that exist between the students in the class and the community of engagement. For all such courses, the dimensions of time, intensity, and cultural difference should be seen as related. That is, for experiences of short duration or limited intensity, the culture differences should be greater; for semester or year-long experiences, smaller differences may be able to accomplish the same purpose. For Caucasian, North American students, if the engagement is done in North America, it should be with a different racial or linguistic community (e.g., African American, Hispanic, or non-English speaking immigrant.) In cases where significant cultural difference is not apparent, the proposal should explain how there are sufficient differences to enable the goals of the course to be met, and how the course will use these differences to meet the goals for the CCE requirement.

CCE Learning Objectives:

1. to gain skills in cross-cultural communication
2. to understand how the world might look from the standpoint of another community of interpretation and experience
3. to learn how to discern and, where appropriate, adapt to the cultural expectations of the other
4. to witness other cultural embodiments of faith, and thus to reflect on the substance and definition of one's own faith by comparison
What is a "Culturally Engaging" experience?

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Approval Process

**Complete Required Form:** All departments proposing courses for meeting the CCE requirement must submit an [IDIS-290 Course Contract](https://example.com) or [Course Proposal Form](https://example.com) outlining the ways in which this requirement will be met.

**Designation/Credit:** There are three ways in which students will be able to complete a course that provides CCE designation/credit:

- **Integral Courses** - Courses can receive the CCE designation where all students completing the course will meet the CCE requirement.
- **Optional Courses** - Courses can receive the CCE designation on an optional basis.
- **IDIS-290 Contract Courses** - A CCE credit or designation can be earned via a contract that is either student-initiated (for independent study projects) or faculty-initiated (for faculty who want to add an optional CCE piece to an existing course).

**CCE Committee Review:** after receipt of the completed application or contract, the Cross-Cultural Engagement Committee will review the proposal and send final decision for approval to the faculty applicant as well as the Registrar's Office.
Course Proposal Types

**CCE Integral Courses (all students do the CCE piece):**

*Use Course Proposal Form*

A department may propose any regular semester or interim course as a CCE Integral Course. It is probable that many departments will wish to do so with currently offered courses, especially those with a clinical, a practicum, or an internship, in which the experiential component is cross-cultural in nature. New courses can also be proposed; after CCE Committee approval, EPC (and, if approval is sought for an additional core category, the Core Curriculum Committee). Faculty Senate approval must also be sought for new courses.

It is presumed that for most of these courses, an additional semester hour of credit will not be necessary for either the student or for the faculty member. Consider current courses with required ABSL experiences; no extra credit is given because the experience (and, orientation, reflection, and evaluation) is integral to the course.

Instructors of off-campus (and even on-campus) Interim courses should consider requesting CCE Designated Course status. The orientation/reflection component can be a natural part of the course content as well as extended cross-cultural engagement made possible through the course setting. Courses that do not naturally have sufficient face-to-face engagement may add direct experience components to accomplish these ends.

For interims, course proposals seeking the CCE designation can be simultaneously presented to both the CCE Coordinating Committee and the Interim Term Committee, but it is preferable that they receive Interim Term Committee approval before seeking CCE approval. Courses receiving the designation will be so listed in the Interim catalog.

**CCE Optional Courses (CCE piece is done only by students needing to meet the CCE requirement):**

*Use Course Proposal Form*

In any given course a faculty member may include an optional experience that would give the course a CCE designation for students who choose to pursue that option. This would be similar to the way a student can take a regular course for honors designation, by contracting with the faculty member to do additional work. Unlike the honors by contract, the faculty member, before offering the option to students, must propose the optional CCE experience to the CCE Coordinating Committee and receive approval for it from the Committee. This course will be listed in the catalog as a CCE optional course.
This option recognizes that there are departments that would like to add an optional CCE piece to an existing course, but believe that the amount of extra work involved could warrant an additional semester hour of credit. For purposes of registration and record-keeping, students who choose to do the optional CCE piece will be enrolled, by the Registrar’s Office, in a course section of IDIS 290 which is attached to the CCE optional course.

It is assumed that this optional experience would relate to the knowledge base and skills taught in the course (thereby, providing a foundation for the “orientation”). However, it is assumed that the requirement for reflection and evaluation would be part of the additional component of this experiential option (in addition to the 20 hours of face-to-face engagement). It is up to the professor to decide whether to make the CCE optional piece worth one semester hour or 0 semester hours (designation only).

Although CCE Optional Courses could evolve from existing courses (e.g. a course with a service learning component) where a cross-cultural experience is optional, other “assignments” could be developed as well. For instance, the content and objectives of a given course could be enhanced with an optional assignment for students to complete an Institute for the Healing of Racism (multi-week version). This could be proposed as a cross-cultural engagement experience.

**IDIS-290 - Student-Initiated CCE Contract Courses for 0 or 1 Semester Hours of Credit**

*Use IDIS-290 Course Contract*

This option recognizes that students become engaged in cross-cultural experiences or programs while at Calvin. Furthermore, if planning and guidance (in terms of prior orientation, identifying a protocol for reflection, and specifying the type and extent of engagement) by a faculty member is included, monitoring and evaluation of that experience can lead to a granting of CCE credit or designation.

Departments whose students regularly participate in off-campus cross-cultural experiences during the summer or during a semester away from college could develop a 1-semester hour or 0-semester hour seminar for students that provides orientation, reflection, and evaluation related to that experience. The goal is that a student or a group of students would meet together with the professor to be oriented to the prospective culture and to the 5 CCE objectives, and to compare and reflect on their experiences. These courses could be open to all students who have had related experiences. Students and faculty members would contract for this course prior to the experience, and engage in reading and reflection during and after the experiential portion. They are to complete the CCE contract (IDIS-290) together and receive CCE Committee approval prior to the CCE experience. CCE credit/designation should not be given just for the experience, but for careful, informed reflection on that experience with the guidance of faculty. Examples might include these: a PE/Recreation seminar for students who work in a cross-cultural recreational program; missions seminar for students who work in a missions setting; and a foreign language seminar for students who work in another country over the summer.
Departments whose students regularly participate in affiliated off-campus cross-cultural programs (e.g. for language study) during the summer or during a semester away from college could develop a 0-semester hour or 1-semester hour seminar for students that provides orientation, reflection, and evaluation related to that experience. These students are already getting credit for the program they are in, and thus would not necessarily need CCE credit (hence the option of 0-s.h. and 1-s.h.), but the work they are doing fits exactly within the goals of CCE at Calvin. The goal is that a student or a group of students would meet together with the professor to be oriented to the prospective culture and to the 5 CCE objectives, and to compare and reflect on their experiences. These courses could be open to all students who will have related experiences. Students and faculty members would contract for this course prior to the experience, and engage in a short seminar prior to departure. They are to complete the CCE contract (IDIS 290) together and receive CCE Committee approval prior to the CCE experience. Upon return to Calvin, the students would submit to the professor a paper reflecting on their entire experience, focusing specifically on the 5 CCE objectives. CCE designation should not be given just for the experience, but for careful, informed reflection on that experience with the guidance of faculty. Examples might include these: Central College (Iowa) programs, Goethe Institute, IDEA ministries, etc.

IDIS 290 provides the necessary avenue for making pre-arrangements for these off-campus cross-cultural experiences or programs. The IDIS 290 option provides 1 semester hour or 0 semester hours of credit to students.

Developing a Cross-Cultural Engagement (CCE) Course

**Description:** Cross-Cultural Engagement is a core requirement that can be met by any course of 0 or more credit hours in which students interact directly with members of a different culture over a significant period of time. Courses fulfilling this requirement may also satisfy other core requirements.

**Curricular Criteria:** The four components of orientation, direct engagement experience, reflection, and evaluation are curricular criteria of any courses fulfilling the CCE requirement.

**Orientation:** An introduction to the culture(s) via readings, films, or other materials as a part of class requirements. This initial orientation should also review the 5 CCE objectives and Biblical grounds for pursuing cross-cultural understanding.

It is often assumed that all students in a given class come from the same culture, and that this culture is different from the one to be engaged with. Therefore, CCE proposals to be submitted need to build in an answer to the following questions:

- How can students who are from the given culture, or are from a culture different than that of the majority of students in the class, be included in this course?
- How will the objectives of the course be met by them?
Direct Engagement Experience: A minimum of 20 hours of face-to-face personal engagement with persons of a culture significantly different than the student's own culture, designed to help the student as much as possible to meet the 5 CCE Objectives listed above. These hours should be in a setting of the other culture and where persons of the other culture are active in shaping the experience. For example, if the personal engagement is in a course including tutoring persons of another culture, some of the experience should also be in church, family, or other cultural settings related to the person being tutored, where that cultural community "sets the agenda."

*Personal engagement* implies the following:
- It is more than just observation, or learning about the other culture, although those are important components, as well.
- There needs to be face-to-face human interaction with people from the other culture.
- There should be active involvement and discussion with people from the other culture.

Reflection: A careful, specific reflection component, including some written work that will be evaluated by the instructor of the course. This should include reflection on other cultures, including worldviews, expectations, traditions, and embodiments of faith, as well as on what the experience has taught students about themselves, their culture, and their own faith. (See Reflection Resources below.)

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the basis of both participation and written work. This course will be graded CR (Completed as Required) and NC (Not Completed).

CCE Reflection Exercise Resources

Reflection Exercises help students **PROCESS** their cross-cultural experience for the purposes of:
- critical reflection
- clarification of issues
- asking questions
- expressing concerns
- testing theories against experience
- sharing insights

It can be done individually (e.g. in a journal) and as a group (group discussion). A mixture of the two is probably the most effective, because it gives students a chance to express their own ideas in a private as well as a public forum.

Some suggested **ground rules for cross-cultural discussions** are listed below to provide assist in providing an environment that is safe for all. These are useful for discussions in and out of class.
- Engage people as individuals with thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.
- Be sensitive to the diversity in communication styles-understand some are linear conversationalists and some are storytellers.
• Keep an open mind to explore other ideas, values and opinions
• Respect each other’s right to have an opinion other than you own.
• Listen carefully to the ideas of others—one person talking at a time.
• Listen actively—respect others while they are talking.
• Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing (Use I statements).
• Refrain from personal attacks or stereotyped statements about a group.
• Ask for clarification instead of making assumptions.
• Allow yourself to examine personal beliefs and attitudes.

Suggested Reflection Prompts
• Reflect on what you anticipate your cross-cultural experience will be like? What will you learn, what are you afraid of, what are you excited about?
• Reflect on required readings. What emotional response do you have to the reading?
• Reflect on cultural events (festivals, lectures, art exhibits, lectures, authentic restaurants, etc.).
• Reflect on your first encounter with your cultural informant. Where there any surprises?
• What are some of the first cultural differences that you have noticed? Similarities?
• How is your cultural informant similar to you? How is she/he different?
• Have you noticed the presence or absence of racial or ethnic tension within the community that your cultural informant calls home? In the community that you call home? Elaborate.
• What international, national, or local news story occurred today that addresses the people group or country of your cultural informant?
• What are some of the cultural embodiments of faith associated with the culture of your cultural informant?
• What have you learned about yourself through this cross-cultural experience?
• What have you learned about your own culture through this experience?
• In what ways has your faith helped you to negotiate your cross-cultural experience? Explain.
• Has your actual cross-cultural experience been similar to or different from your expectations or fears? Explain.
  What was the high point of your cross-cultural experience?
• What are some of the traditions and cultural expectations in your host culture that surprised you? Give specific examples. (for international travel)
• How might you experience—reverse culture shock when you return to your home culture? How will you deal with that? (for international travel)
• What are some of the aspects of the host culture that you would like to take back to N. American culture with you? Why? (for international travel)
• If there was one thing you could change about your host culture, what would it be? (for international travel)
• If there was one thing you could change about your native culture, what would it be? (for international travel)
Suggested Criteria for Evaluation of Journals/Discussions

- comprehensive and accurate description
- ability to move beyond description to reflection on deeper meanings
- evidence of openness to understand host culture and/or culture of cultural informant
- ability to make connections between own culture and that of cultural informant
- evidence of thoughtful responses to reflection prompts
- evidence of meeting the 4 CCE objectives

Final Paper

Course Paper: faculty member’s discretion

Reflective Paper Suggestion (For IDIS-290):

(1500 – 2000 words)

a. How did you meet the CCE Objectives listed above?
b. What lessons in cross-cultural interactions from this experience will have a lasting impact?
c. How is what you learned about the nature of race relations from the readings different from and/or similar to what you learned about race relations from your cultural informant?
d. In what ways does a faith perspective differ from a secular perspective in addressing race relations? Is this helpful?
e. In what ways, if any, did your actual experience differ from what you thought this experience would be like? Explain.
f. What steps will you take to further your cross-cultural experience and deepen your cultural knowledge?