Thinking Globally

GE Description
Changes in economic, political and environmental conditions are contributing to an increasingly interdependent and connected world. Students will study cultural, religious, political or economic practices with an eye to appreciating interactions between people from different ethnicities and world contexts. In the process, they will better understand other perspectives and world views – extending beyond those rooted in “Western” experiences – and will appreciate the deep influence of culture on the categories one uses to understand the world. Acquiring a global perspective equips students to be informed agents of redemption and justice in a rapidly changing world.

Interpretive Statement
The concept of “global” should be understood as more than a “Western” perspective on other cultures and ethnicities. Thinking Globally courses should incorporate a transnational and interdisciplinary approach that considers perspectives rooted in various world “regions” and recognizes competing bases from which to perceive and interpret issues. The distinctives of "global" vs. "Western" thinking must be clearly identified within the course content. Study abroad programs do not automatically produce "global" thinking.

The Diversity Learning Standard provides an additional framework within which to interpret the imperatives of the Thinking Globally description. In particular, instructors of Thinking Globally courses should provide students with tools and a venue for thinking about Christianity in the context of differences such as relativism, pluralism, and social construction.

Proposed Thinking Globally Learning Outcomes

1. Students can describe differences between at least two cultures (one of which is non-western) and can offer explanations or historical contexts for those differences.

2. Students recognize the value and significance of other cultures without romanticizing.

3. Students can identify ways in which cultures influence formulations of knowledge. They will identify ways in which they personally are affected.

4. Students recognize global inequities, injustices, and/or inter-religious issues and commit themselves to thoughtful, concrete responses growing out of their Christian faith.

5. Students will have an appropriate sense of the limits of their global understanding.