

Luther Center for Global Learning J-Term 2027 Off-Campus Courses

1st Round Priority Application: April 1 – April 24, 2026
2nd Round Application (for space-available programs): August 17 – September 14, 2026

Course Information: The academic discipline, course number, title of course, location(s), instructor(s), and brief description for each off-campus J-Term course are listed below. In addition, the information highlights the number of credits, whether or not the course fulfills the international studies minor immersion requirement (INTL) and/or language minor immersion requirement (LANG), and the All-College Requirements fulfilled through the course. The Core Curriculum Requirements are listed online at <https://www.luther.edu/academics/approach-to-academics/core-curriculum>. All courses are offered graded (A-F) unless otherwise noted. For additional details visit the Center for Global Learning (<https://www.luther.edu/academics/centers-resources/global-learning>) or stop by Loyalty Hall 104.

Applying Online: Applicants must apply online. The online application will become active on **April 1 at 8:00 AM. Must have a 2.0+ GPA to apply.** Go to www.luther.edu/academics/centers-resources/global-learning/january-term/study-abroad-courses. Click on the course to which you want to apply. On the next page, click **Apply Now**. You will be prompted to login to the Via-trm system with your **Luther username and password (NorseKey)**. Once you have selected a term (J-Term, 2027), you will be on the application page for the program. In addition to completing the application, make sure you also complete the **recommendation section**. You will apply for your 1st choice program and may indicate 2nd and 3rd choices. Make sure you click on **SUBMIT** in order to complete the process. **Questions?** Contact the Center for Global Learning (x1055) or global@luther.edu.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Paideia 450: People and Parks: Pastoralism and Conservation in East Africa (Tanzania)

INSTRUCTORS: Molly McNicoll (Biology); Anita Carrasco (Anthropology)

Course Description: This course examines the intersections of the conservation of natural habitats and cultural identity, through the lens of the Maasai people of northern Tanzania. One primary focus is how wildlife conservation efforts and ecotourism have impacted the relationship of the Maasai to their environment, in turn causing rapid cultural change such as shifts from herding to agropastoralism and wage labor. Associated western influences, frequently referred to as “development,” have led to the modification of coming-of-age rituals; and increasing adoption of formal modes of education and Christianity in place of or alongside traditional modes and beliefs. Our parallel focus is to understand wildlife and habitat conservation through the lens of Tanzanian ecologists and conservation biologists. From bases near the city of Arusha and the small town of Monduli, we will study “traditional” Maasai culture and examine the ways in which the Maasai of northern Tanzania are adapting to changing social, political, economic, and environmental conditions. Students will interact with Maasai people in urban and rural marketplaces; in schools and places of worship; and at Maasai bomas (multi-family homesteads). We will interact with conservation researchers and biologists and visit Tarangire National Park and other designated conservation areas in order to explore points of intersection between wildlife conservation programs, ecotourism, and pastoralist societies.

Credits: 4
 Immersion: INTL
 All College Requirement(s): Paideia 450
 Prerequisites: 60+ credits, Paideia 111 and 112, Consent of Instructors

Est. Cost: **\$4950 - \$5850**
 Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$100
 Max. Enrollment: 16

Global Health/History 239: Apartheid and Health Care in South Africa (South Africa)

INSTRUCTORS: Scott Carlson (Biology); Richard Mtisi (History/IDS)

Course Description: During the era of apartheid in South Africa (1948-1994), the government enforced racial segregation and discrimination through laws governing where people lived, worked, and socialized. The health care system served to reinforce these principles, limiting access of Black South Africans to health services and negatively impacting broader social determinants of health. Following the end of apartheid, the new democratic government sought to create a unified, equitable health care system through governmental policies and investments in training and resources, but despite these advances inequalities have persisted. This course will use Durban, South Africa for studying post-apartheid health care strategies. Through our partner organization, Child and Family Health International, students will spend two weeks learning about health determinants and current realities through clinical and public health observation in various settings, including public hospitals, private clinics, hospices and NGO's. Students will learn about infectious and non-communicable diseases and witness the challenges faced by the post-apartheid public health care system. During this time, students will be immersed in local culture through home stays, during which time they will explore local museums, visit area markets and shops, and tour other sites of historical and cultural interest. Following our time in Durban,

we will travel to the town of Hlabisi where we will visit the large missionary-run hospital and tour the nearby Hluhluwe national game reserve. The final week will be spent in Cape Town, where we will explore the city and visit important museums and cultural sites, along with touring regional medical facilities. This course is open to students of all majors.

Credits: 4
 Immersion: INTL, GH301
 Core Requirement(s): GE, EXPL

Est. Cost: **\$4950-\$5950**
 Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$350
 Max. Enrollment: 18

Prerequisites: Consent of Instructors

SOUTH and EAST ASIA

Paideia 450: Gender, Embodiment, and Culture in Cambodia and Thailand (Cambodia/Thailand)

INSTRUCTORS: Char Kunkel (Sociology); Scott Hurley (Religion)

Course Description: This course will examine the history and performance of gender relations and gender identities as aspects of embodied being in Thailand and Cambodia. In conversation with practitioners of traditional medicine, dance, martial arts, and Buddhism, students will examine the concept of the body as a site of cultural knowledge, creativity, and power; conversely, they will consider the ways the body is controlled and surveilled in Thai and Cambodian society. In doing so, they will not only explore how harmful ideologies such as patriarchy, heterosexism, and classism (among others) have been transcribed in/on the body, reinforcing systemic inequity, but will also observe how the body has become a site of resistance to these ideologies. For example, students will investigate how some contemporary women derive power from inhabiting roles historically ascribed to them such as mediumship, midwifery, and traditional dance, while others find success in roles classically assigned to men, such as in the study and practice of classical Khmer and Thai martial arts. Finally, while Thailand and Cambodia share much in common, they, nevertheless, have different histories, economies, and political systems. Students will become familiar with these differences and reflect on how they shape the experience of gender within Thai and Cambodian cultural spheres. Students will also engage with Thai and Cambodian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are addressing the needs of the most vulnerable including ethnic minorities, sex workers, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and those of low socioeconomic status.

Credits: 4
 Immersion: INTL
 All College Requirement(s): Paideia 450
 Prerequisites: Junior/Senior, Paideia 111 and 112, Consent of Instructors

Est. Cost: **\$4850 - \$5850**
 Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$300
 Max. Enrollment: 20

LATIN AMERICA and THE CARIBBEAN

International Studies 240: Ethical Engagement in Postcolonial Roatan (Roatan, Honduras)

INSTRUCTORS: Britt Rhodes (Social Work); Jon Jensen (Environmental Studies)

Course Description: This course uses the island of Roatan as a case study to examine how individuals can engage mindfully with social and environmental challenges in the developing world. Roatan, Honduras is home to the world's second largest coral reef and the tourist industry it supports, as well as a long history of colonialism that has left the island with an ethnically and linguistically divided population, widespread poverty, and environmental degradation. During their time on the island, students will examine the ways in which the people, culture, and ecosystems of Roatan are responding to changing social, economic, political, technological, and environmental factors. Daily internships at a local health care clinic, international school, and environmental NGOs, provide students with direct observations on the individual loci of change, and help them explore the systemic forces that are shaping the island. The course will also include regular presentations, excursions, and group reflection time, which will contribute to students' understanding of the rich history and culture of the island. The course is valuable for students of all majors and is ideal for students who dream about a life of meaningful engagement in a much larger world. **[Note to Global Health Majors:** If approved in advance by the Global Health Program Director, this course will fulfill the GH301 field experience.]

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: \$3350 - \$3700
Immersion: INTL, GH301	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$200
Core Requirement(s): GE, EXPL	Max. Enrollment: 16
Prerequisites: Consent of Instructors	

Paideia 450: Practicing Embodiment (Costa Rica)

INSTRUCTORS: Jane Hawley (Visual & Performing Arts/Identity Studies); Guy Nave (Religion)

Course Description: This course is an interdisciplinary exercise between spirituality, sustainability, and the body. While there is no single definition of "embodiment" this course will consider an understanding of "embodiment" as the practice of recognizing all human attributes (e.g. senses, emotions, physicality, sexuality, etc.) as both material and spiritual realities. The course will explore what it means to approach the human body and the earth as living partners of a sacred reality, co-creating and sustaining all physical and spiritual life. While living and working on an organic farm, students will employ techniques and practices of spirituality, somatic studies, and sustainable organic eco-farming—including harvesting and meal preparation—to critically deconstruct the dualisms between body and mind, secular and sacred, and the material and spiritual dimensions. The ethical consequences of such dualism will be evaluated and concrete proposals will be explored for developing an embodied way of living that fosters and promotes integrated and sustainable physical and spiritual lives.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: : \$4750 - \$4950
Immersion: INTL	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$100
Core Requirement(s): Paideia 450	Max. Enrollment: 24
Prerequisites: 60+ credits, Paideia 111 and 112, Consent of Instructors	

EUROPE

General Studies 106: Symphony Orchestra Residency. The Art of Writing in Vienna (Austria/Germany)

INSTRUCTORS: Kathy Reed (Music); Martin Klammer (English)

Course Description: In residence in a city renowned for its music, art, architecture, and literature, Luther Symphony Orchestra students will reflect on and develop their engagement with Vienna through writing. Specifically, they will write their observations and reflections about the city they walk, the museums they visit, and the music they hear and perform. Following introductory readings by Viennese writers, students will write a series of short, focused writing assignments, culminating in a final creative project. Such creative work may be a set of short non-fiction essays, a collection of poems, a graphic narrative, a sketchbook with written narrative, or descriptive soundscapes with recorded examples.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: TBD
Immersion: INTL	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: TBD
All College Requirement(s): Cr-L	Max. Enrollment: 95
Prerequisites: Consent of Instructors	

Paideia 450: English Theatre: Mirror of Society and of the Human Condition (England)

INSTRUCTORS: Bobby Vrtis (Theatre/Dance); Christy Vrtis (Asst Director of CELT and Instructor in Paideia)

Course Description: This course is a study of English theatre—among the richest in the world in its variety and depth—and the ways that it both mirrors and seeks to influence social values by dramatizing ethical conflict. Our exploration will be based in London, a crossroad of world cultures, with side trips to other historic sites in the UK, visiting ancient castles and watching cutting-edge performances. In the spirit of communal learning, we'll also seek out workshop conversations with theatre troops to examine the social issues addressed by their performances.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: \$4850 - \$5350
Immersion: INTL	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$500
Core Requirement(s): Paideia 450	Max. Enrollment: 24
Prerequisites: 60+ credits, Paideia 111, 112, Consent of Instructors	

Paideia 450: Green Europe (Iceland/Germany)

INSTRUCTORS: Laura Peterson (Environmental Studies); Soren Steding (Modern Lang)

Course Description: Traveling to Iceland and Germany, we will evaluate sustainable energy solutions to anthropogenic global warming. Students will learn about sustainable energy through firsthand encounters with energy infrastructure, such as hydroelectric, geothermal, and waste-to-energy power plants. We also will look at how energy is consumed and produced at the household level and the ways in which factors like government incentives, building standards, cultural values, and geography impact the adoption of sustainable energy technologies and behaviors by individuals. Course activities will introduce students to both the status quo fossil fuel-based energy system and to models for energy alternatives that are critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and stabilizing the climate system. Throughout the course, we will engage with a range of citizens, local leaders, energy industry officials, and climate activists in order to examine multiple ethical dimensions of climate change and the clean energy transition.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: \$4750 - \$5550
Immersion: INTL	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$500
Core Requirement(s): Paideia 450	Max. Enrollment: 20
Prerequisites: 60+ credits, Paideia 111 and 112, Consent of Instructors	

UNITED STATES

Biology 140/240: Ecology of the Southwest (Arizona)

INSTRUCTORS: Eric Baack (Biology); TBD

Course Description: Field study of the ecology of the arid Southwest, with a focus on adaptations of organisms to arid conditions and understanding the challenges of setting environmental policy. Course activities include strenuous hikes of steep trails in the deserts, mountains, and riparian areas of Arizona; camping in the desert; cooking course meals together; daily readings and discussions; and a research project including statistical analysis of data. Students who earn credit for BIO 240 may not earn credit for BIO 140. Offered alternate years during January term.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: \$1550 - \$1950
Immersion: None	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$50
Core Requirement(s): Sci-L	Max. Enrollment: 15
Prerequisite: BIO 151 for BIO 240, None for BIO 140, Consent of Instructor	

Communication Studies/Leadership Studies 239: Tourism Ethnography in Hawai'i (Hawai'i)

INSTRUCTORS: Thomas C. Johnson (Communication Studies); Jeff Boeke (Health Promotion & Exercise Science)

Course Description: This course analyzes tourism in Hawai'i with a specific focus on doing ethnography to better understand the interests of visitors, locals, and other key stakeholders. Topics such as mediated representations, consumer actions, recreational opportunities, leadership initiatives, and sustainability considerations will be addressed via lectures, discussions, excursions, interviews, and most notably, participant observations in which texts such as journal entries, field notes, and photographs will be created to represent key aspects of field experience. These undertakings will provide an in-depth framework as to how and why Hawai'i, with its distinct terrains, communities, and resources, is a place to value, to preserve, and to celebrate.

Credits: 4	Est. Cost: \$4450 - \$5250
Immersion: None	Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$500
All College Requirement(s):	Max. Enrollment: 18
Prerequisites: Consent of Instructors	

FIRST-YEAR ONLY COURSES

Environmental Studies 139: Know your Place (Iowa/Montana)

INSTRUCTOR: Rachel Brummel (Environmental Studies)

Course Description: What does it mean to make a place your own? And, how can you go about discerning your own place in the world more broadly as you start out your college career? In this course, students will explore place-making, community, and questions of purpose through an off-campus program based in Decorah and Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Montana. In Decorah, students will live together off-campus and engage in daily readings, discussions, and field trips in Northeast Iowa to build a stronger sense of place, purpose, and community. Topics will include place-making through outdoor recreation and exploration, through understanding history of place, and through exploring local food systems and cooking together. In the middle of the term, students will take a week-long retreat to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Western Montana as a way to deepen their exploration of their own purpose as a college student and to practice the process of place-making in a *new* place. During this time, students will take excursions to Glacier National Park, Flathead Lake Biological Research Station, and the tribal-run CSKT Bison Range. Students will close out the term by returning to Decorah and engaging in a community-based service project to deepen their connection to the broader community.

Credits: 4

Immersion: None

All College Requirement(s):

Prerequisite: Consent of Instructor

Est. Cost **\$2250 - \$2800**

Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$50

Max. Enrollment: 15

History 199: Istanbul and Rome: Empires East & West (Italy, Turkey)

INSTRUCTORS: Dan Davis (Classics); Robert Christman (History)

Course Description: Designed for first-year students, this course explores the concept of "empire" by focusing on two historic imperial cities: Rome and Istanbul. The Roman Empire in the West, governed from Rome, endured for over three centuries before the emperor Constantine moved the capital eastward to the city that bore his name, Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul, in 330 CE. While the western Roman empire waned, Constantinople thrived under the Byzantine emperors for another 10 centuries, before succumbing to the Ottoman conqueror Sultan Mehmed II, who used it as his new capital. Back in Rome, the Catholic Church increasingly took on the trappings of the defunct Roman Empire. Our goals are to (1) investigate the historical, social, and cultural factors that shaped each of these empires, (2) study their physical manifestations (landscapes, archaeological sites, museums), (3) explore the ways in which they evolved their complex historical, religious, and cultural identities, and (4) analyze what and how they borrowed from one another. The course begins on campus with an intensive investigation of the history of these two cities. Thereafter, we fly to Rome, the eternal city, where students will analyze the major monuments, temples, and churches that shaped every-day life in the Roman Empire. We then proceed eastward to Istanbul to examine a city that experienced momentous historical events, developed a distinctive Byzantine and then Ottoman 'imperial' architecture on grand scales, and served as the home of three world religions. These experiences are designed to help students comprehend the ways in which empires are established, grow, and ultimately collapse.

Credits: 4

Immersion: None

Core Requirement(s): Soc-L

Prerequisites: Consent of Instructors

Est. Cost: **\$4200-\$4650**

Est. Add'l Meal Cost: \$250

Max. Enrollment: 24

GENERAL INFORMATION

COST ESTIMATES

We are currently in the process of estimating costs for all J-Term 2027 programs. Costs for each program will be established by the time the application goes "live" on April 1. Students may review costs estimates online at that time.

We try very hard to estimate costs as accurately as possible. However, all costs are subject to change. Factors affecting the final costs include fluctuations in airline fares; airline fuel surcharges, taxes, and fees; significant changes in the course itinerary and destinations; changes in the number of participants; and fluctuations in the dollar exchange rates.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN COURSE COST

For students on International J-Term Programs

Course costs listed in printed materials and on the website are estimates and include round-trip airfare, administrative fees, accommodations, some group meals, transportation for required study trips, program leader expenses, visas (for U.S. residents), medical and self-insurance, entrance fees, and tickets for scheduled group events. Costs not included are individual meals, passport fee, transportation to/from airports in the United States, spending money for gifts and miscellaneous expenses, prescription drug costs (if needed), and pre-trip immunizations (if recommended).

For students on Domestic J-Term Programs

Course costs listed in printed materials and on the website are estimates and include round-trip airfare or other transportation costs, administrative fees, accommodations, some group meals, transportation for required study trips, program leader expenses, entrance fees, tickets for scheduled group events, and other program related costs. Costs not included are individual meals, transportation to/from airports in the United States, spending money for gifts and miscellaneous expenses, and pre-trip immunizations (if recommended).

A NOTE ABOUT FOOD COSTS

The amount of money needed for meals not included in course fees depends on the eating habits and tastes of the individual. The Luther program policy is to give students responsibility for buying most meals, thereby allowing students some control over course costs. Estimated additional meal costs are listed in course materials and on the website.

J-TERM TUITION AND BOARD COSTS

As you know, J-Term tuition is already included in the comprehensive fee for students who are enrolled full-time at Luther for either fall semester or spring semester. Any student who is not enrolled full-time at Luther for at least one semester during the 2026-27 academic year will be charged J-Term tuition. In addition, there is no food cost rebate for students who are off campus for J-Term; **Bon Appétit** has already built in an estimate for the number of students off campus for J-Term when they set the annual meal plan prices.

GENDER INCLUSIVE HOUSING OPTION

The CGL, when possible, will provide special housing assignments (similar to the Residence Life Office) to allow students to live with each other regardless of how they identify with respect to gender. Specifically, gender-inclusive housing is an option for those who identify as and/or support the LGBTQIA+ community, are exploring gender identity/expression, or choose not to be classified based on gender. Please notify the CGL if you would like to pursue this option and housing assignments, if available and where possible, will be made based on this information.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments are to be made at the Office for Financial Services. All checks should be payable to Luther College and should include "J-Term" and the student ID on memo line. Online payments may be made at *Norse Hub*.

****NOTE: J-term Cancellation/Refund policy. If you withdraw from the program after Oct. 1, you will be charged 33% of the program costs. If you withdraw after Nov. 1, you will be charged 66% of the program costs. If you withdraw after Dec. 1, you will be charged 100% of the program costs.****

For students on International J-Term Programs

The payment schedule is as follows:

Time of Acceptance: Non-refundable \$200 program deposit (you may not apply loan money toward this deposit)

September 15: \$1,500 payment (cannot use scholarship funds)

October 15: \$1,500 payment

December 1: Balance due payment (the CGL will notify you of this amount)

For students on Domestic J-Term Programs

The payment schedule is as follows:

Time of Acceptance: Non-refundable \$200 program deposit (you may not apply loan money toward this deposit)

September 15: \$1,500 payment (unless the total course costs are less than \$1,500)

December 1: Balance due payment (the CGL will notify you of this amount)

PASSPORT AND PASSPORT PHOTOS

Students participating in an international off-campus J-Term are required to obtain a passport. Passports must **not** expire before August 1, 2027. Early passport application or renewal is encouraged. Students should check with individual courthouses (or post offices) if they have questions. Applications and renewal forms may be obtained and processed at the Winnebago County Courthouse Recorder's Office, at post offices in larger cities, or courthouses in many counties throughout the United States. Details may be found online at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>

Passport photo sessions are scheduled on campus in March, April, and May during spring semester and in September and October during fall semester. The spring semester dates/times are as follows:

Thursday, Sept. 10	9:00 AM-4:00 PM	Visual Media, Centennial Union 213
Thursday, Oct. 8	9:00 AM-4:00 PM	Visual Media, Centennial Union 213
Thursday, Nov. 12	9:00 AM-4:00 PM	Visual Media, Centennial Union 213

LOCAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Almost all international J-Term programs will depart from either the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport or the Chicago O'Hare International Airport. If the program departs from Chicago, students may be given the option to reserve a seat on a chartered bus to/from campus at cost. If the program departs from Minneapolis, students will need to make their own transportation arrangements to/from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

In general, we do not permit students to travel on their own before or after the J-Term program. Since we purchase group tickets for J-Term travel to keep costs low, it is problematic to allow certain ticket holders to deviate from the schedule. In addition, we believe group travel is an important part of the overall J-Term experience. Also, because our J-Term programs tend to move from location to location very quickly, it is difficult for students traveling on their own to catch up with the group.

The CGL does make some limited exceptions for students to deviate from the schedule when it is for legitimate reasons (for example, a student will be visiting family members in the region prior to or after the J-Term program, a student is departing from the J-Term program to attend a semester abroad program). Students interested in deviating from the schedule must speak with Chelle Meyer as soon as possible and no later than October 1. Students who have been approved to deviate from the schedule are responsible for paying any fees associated with the schedule deviation. Finally, students who deviate before or after a J-Term program must understand that Luther is not responsible for their travel arrangements, managing travel glitches, and health and safety issues outside of the actual program dates and locations specified in the program itinerary.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Students do not need to register for J-Term off-campus courses during the official fall semester registration period. Staff in the Center for Global Learning will send course rosters to the Registrar's Office and students will be automatically registered.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY POLICY

The CGL staff will continue to monitor the health, safety, and security situation in all locations to which Luther College programs travel, and will work with the Off-Campus Programs Risk Assessment Committee to determine whether it remains safe for our students to travel to those destinations, or whether it is necessary to amend particular programs in order to ensure safety of participants.

Luther College's current policy on Covid vaccination is that all travelers are *strongly encouraged* to be fully vaccinated in order to travel internationally with the College. The CGL interprets "fully vaccinated" to mean that the most recent vaccine or booster has been administered within 270 days of the date of return. If the situation changes dramatically, the CGL and the Off-Campus Programs Risk Assessment Committee reserve the right to make changes to this policy, with immediate effect.