
University of Pittsburgh, Swanson School of Engineering
Summer 2024 Term **DRAFT**

Course: Empathic Global Leadership for Social Change: South Africa

ENGR 1276: Empathic Global Leadership for Social Change: South Africa (3 credits)

Description: Despite being listed as an engineering course (ENGR), this course is open to any student with an interest in developing leadership skills related to multidisciplinary social challenges.

In this experiential learning course, students will see the social consequences of leadership decisions made by companies and other organizations in Africa and discuss the rationale that led to those decisions during meetings with leaders, decision makers, and other representatives from those parties. The course aims to provide students across a range of disciplines the opportunity to interact and work together to ideate and develop strategies for tackling both broad, complex problems and specific, service, and socially focused challenges based on principles that are rooted in empathic problem solving. Students will contextualize what makes specific approaches for problem solving successful locally, regional, nationally, and internationally. The course will develop the students' skills to work across cultures to ideate and iterate through the process of problem-solving, while appreciating the social and cultural challenges that lie within.

Instructors:

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Pre-requisites: None.

Objectives: By the end of the course the students will:

1. Have a basic understanding of the fundamental principles of empathic problem solving;
2. Have participated in team-based observation, data collection, analysis, and ideation;
3. Develop an appreciation of the social complexities associated with the need to ideate solutions to complex problems in cultures that are different than those in which they were raised;
4. Gain experience in assessing the differences between meeting these challenges on local, regional, national, and international scales.

Contact Hours: The course will be composed of 45 contact hours, delivered as follows:

- 12.5 hours will be comprised of classroom instruction , which will be conducted during the spring term.
- 32.5 hours will be comprised of the international field component of the course (conducted during the time in Africa).
- The field component will also include a number of social, historic, and tourist experiences that are not included in the 45 contact hours.
- See details under the Lectures section of this syllabus

References: References, papers, and other course materials to be provided by the instructors.

Text: N/A

Lectures:	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topics</u> (Details subject to change)
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Pre-departure meetings	TBD	3-4 pre-departure meetings will be held during the spring term to discuss safety, history, current culture, and travel logistics
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4/28/24-5/12/24	In country
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Assignments and Methods Evaluation:

Homework and other special assignments will be project-based. A final course presentation (Team based) will also be assigned.

In addition to attending and participating actively in all classes, which involves engaging in discussions, responding to questions, and sharing observations and documentation from field trip work, students are required to complete the following:

- a) Expectation essay, which should include the goals the student has for the course and what each hopes to achieve/learn/advance in terms of knowledge from technical, societal, academic, and practical application perspectives. This should be 1 or 2 pages in length.
- b) Journal, documenting each site visit. This can include written information, observational drawings, and photographs relevant to class topics. Each entry should be a minimum of 1 page in length. Journals will be maintained electronically using Microsoft Yammer.
- c) Thank you letter writing. Each student needs to prepare 1-2 letters to thank our hosts and companies for their experience. These letters will be approved by all students and sent to the aforementioned parties by each group before departing Africa.
- d) Course Team Project: Teams of 4-5 students (including students from South Africa) will perform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis on one of the companies that was visited. Deliverables will include a 10-15 minute PowerPoint presentation and a 3-5 page written report.

Grading Policy:

<u>Item</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Class Participation	35%
Expectation Essay	10%
Program Journal	15%
Thank you letters	10%
Written SWOT Analysis & Final Team Presentation	30%

	100%

Course is graded on F to A grade field.