**IDCC 260 Cultures and Ecosystems of Malaysia and Borneo**  
Syllabus, Spring – May Term 2017

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**TRAVEL DATES:** May 22 – June 17, 2017  
**COURSE DATES:** May 25 – June 16, 2017

**PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING TIMES:**  
• February 18, 6-9 PM: Malaysian Dinner, Lindquist Home  
• March 12, 7-9 PM: Trip Preparation, K104  
• April 1, 7-9 PM: Travel Clinic for Southeast Asia, K104  
• April 9, 6:30-8 PM: Health and Safety in an International Environment, F110  
• April 16, 6:30-8 PM: Cross-Cultural Adjustment & Communication, F110  
• April 30, 7-9 PM: Trip Preparation, K104  
• May 7, 7-9 PM: Trip Preparation, K104  
• May 22, 4 PM – Final Baggage Weighing and Preparations, Lindquist Home

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will introduce students to the multicultural, hospitable people and tropical ecosystems of Malaysia. We will explore the complex interactions between human civilization, biodiverse zones and the physical environment of the Malay Peninsula and Borneo. We will consider the interactions of biological and geographic factors across the full range of Malaysian subcultures; from the traditional, rural Orang Ulu to Malaysia’s urban, cosmopolitan culture. Students will witness and experience the breadth of Malaysia’s culinary offerings, traditional dance, weaving, cloth batik, ethnic music, and other cultural artistic expressions. There will be ample opportunity to observe important global biological treasures, such as, Asian elephants, flying foxes, hornbills, proboscis monkeys, parachuting treefrogs, pitcher plants, orchids, *Rafflesia* flowers, and the endangered orangutan. While in the region south of Kuching, Sarawak, bordering Indonesia, Messiah College students will live among a community of the Bidayuh ethnic groups, a people formerly known to the world as fierce warriors and headhunters. In the urban setting of Kuala Lumpur, Messiah College students would be welcomed into the homes of families of students from Methodist College and local churches of Kuala Lumpur. This course will endeavor to explore human and environmental knowledge and challenges, not only from a Western point of view, but from an arguably better, authentic perspective from within this non-Western country. There will be an emphasis on attaining foreign experience in urban, rural and remote settings of Malaysia. This non-majors’ honors course will fulfill the general education core cross-cultural experience course (or the non-Western requirement by formal petition). 3 credits.

**TEXTS:**

1. **Required**

   **Course Reader**
   
   
   
   
   
j. Other books or articles as deemed timely or important.

**Key Required Cross-cultural Text**

**One of the following**

**One of the following as assigned in a pre-travel class meeting**

2. Recommended

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

**General Learning Objectives**
1. Identify most relevant information about the host culture's history, traditions, politics, geography, including relevant regional differences, if applicable.
2. Identify facets in which the host culture differs from their own.
3. Identify facets in which the host culture is similar to their own.
4. Explain insights learned about themselves or their own relationships by directly interacting with individuals and groups from the host culture.

**Specific Behavioral Objectives**
1. Introduce students to the extensive cultural and biological endemism of the Malay Peninsula and Borneo region of Southeast Asia.
2. Provide a framework for understanding issues relating to ethnic/national inequities of the region.
3. Provide opportunities for students to observe on endemic, colonial, and hybrid cultures of maritime Southeast Asia.
4. Develop an understanding of the conceptual basis of historic and contemporary thought as it pertains to ecology and cultural anthropology.
5. Introduce students to recent and historic literature on the region.
6. As a result of the activities in this course, the student should be able to:
   a. define biological and cultural diversity.
b. describe several environmental and human issues pertaining to the loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation.
c. discuss the theories of evolution by natural and sexual selection as an explanation for biological diversity.
d. provide examples of human-environment interdependence.
e. demonstrate an understanding of the mechanisms of genetic change and physiological/development acclimation functioning within populations.
f. demonstrate an understanding similarities and differences of local ecoregions.
g. apply the ethnographic method to cultural understanding.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:
1. The Sciences of Cultural & Natural History
2. The Physical Setting
3. Ecology (Interactions among organisms)
4. Endemism of the Malay Peninsula and Borneo
5. Ethnographic Study of the Malay Peninsula and Borneo
6. Culture and Geography
7. Contemporary Culture in Historic Setting

COURSE STRATEGY:
1. Lectures/Readings – On most days we will rise early to enjoy morning’s first light. Lecture time will be designed to introduce you to the theoretical aspects of the course with the culture and nature serving as the setting. You should review the course reader and any handouts in advance of our discussions.
2. Exams – There will be four 50-point exams over the material covered in the course.
   - Exam #1: Pre-travel Readings and Basic Concepts on Cultures and Ecosystems (May 23rd)
   - Exam #2: Cultures of Peninsular Malaysia (June 3rd)
   - Exam #3: Tropical Ecosystems and Organisms (June 10th)
   - Exam #4: Cultures of Singapore and Borneo (June 16th)
3. Urban and Rural Ethnographies – An ethnographical essay on modern urban and rural residents will be based upon your readings and personal interviews of locals.
4. ELI Diversity Project – This exercise will seek to have students synthesize their experiences abroad with their own culture. Students will be asked to reflect on themes that specifically connect aspects of human, biological and cultural diversity in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Each student will work with the instructor to develop a theme that intersects multiple facets of diversity. The student may choose a multimedia poster or digital storytelling format to present and unify their ideas. Additionally, students will set their own learning objectives while traveling to Southeast Asia, recursively engage the objectives while learning, interacting and traveling to/within our course locations, and finally answer the Outcome Reflection Questions outlined in the general ELI requirements (outline in point G below).
5. Lecture/Field Exercises – Field time for both ecological and ethnographical sections of this course will involve both theoretical lecture/discussions, group opportunity for first hand examination of these principles, and time for individual investigative study. Your travel notebook/journal will be your record of day-by-day activities and will serve as the basis for your reflective journal entries. An exemplar of the travel journal will be provided during one of our pre-departure meetings.
6. Bornean Endangered Species Presentation – Borneo is a superbly biodiverse island in the Malay Archipelago with many opportunities to see interesting flora and fauna. Unfortunately, its remote forests also harbor illegal poachers that permanently reduce viable populations to the brink of extinction. Students will select a species that is endemic to Borneo and write a report on the reasons for its endangerment, as well as efforts to secure its future. This presentation will take place during our stay in Ulu Temburong National Park and should be electronically submitted to the professor before leaving Singapore.
7. **Cultural Exchange Vignette** – Each student will prepare a 5-minute presentation on a unique aspect of his or her American culture (or otherwise for international students). This will be part of a presentation exchange with our Methodist College student counterparts. Students will be expected to take notes on Malaysian presentations for their journals. A special handout with detailed instructions will be provided in a pre-departure meeting.

8. **Student Presentations, Contributions and Attitude** – Each student will report back to the group on the results of your personal and group observations and will record the details of these in your notebook/journal. Establishing and maintaining a good travel community “vibe” is essential to all on the travel course. Your good attitude is essential. Reluctance to participate or cooperate will result in a loss of overall points.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS:**

1. Attend class preparatory meetings and participate in discussions
2. Timely completion of assignments
3. Participation in field/cultural/biological excursions
4. Preparation for exam
5. Travel responsibility and good attitude
6. Textbooks, journal, and other required readings
7. Maintaining a outwardly positive and good attitude toward all members of our travel group
8. Online Evaluation: Students must complete an online course evaluation following their return from the course trip. Failure to submit the evaluation will result in a course grade of incomplete

**COURSE OUTCOMES:**

A. **Grade** - Your work in the above areas will be evaluated by your mastery comprehension of fundamental concepts and underlying principles.

B. **Composition** - Your grade will be determined by your performance in each of the following.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Exams (May 23, June 3, June 10, and June 16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Cultural Exchange Vignette on Personal “Americana” (May 30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Bornean Endangered Species Report (June 5 Turn-in; June 9 Presentation)</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>Field Notebook/Ethnographic Reporting/Journaling (June 17)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ecosystem and organismal notes (10%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Urban micro-ethnography from home-stay experience (Kuala Lumpur) (7.5%)</td>
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<td>• Rural micro-ethnography from community longhouse experience (Borneo)(7.5%)</td>
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<td>• Personal intercultural reflections (10%)</td>
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<td>• Organization and neatness (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>ELI Diversity Project (due June 20)</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>93.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87.0</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83.0</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67.0</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60.0</td>
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*an average below 60 is not a passing grade*
C. Grading Rubric

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent mastery of conceptual content &amp; most examples, terms, and detail &amp; enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Excellent mastery of conceptual content &amp; most examples, terms, and detail, yet not enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Good mastery of fundamental concepts, examples, terms, and detail &amp; enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good mastery of fundamental concepts, examples, terms, and detail, yet not enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Average mastery of the course material &amp; enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Average mastery of the course material, yet not enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Below average, but passing mastery of course material &amp; enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>Below average, but passing mastery of course material, yet not enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Lack of conceptual understanding of basic concepts, examples and terminology &amp; enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lack of conceptual understanding of basic concepts, examples and terminology, yet not enthusiastic about culture learning</td>
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D. Investigative Protocol - This is a cross-cultural course with a focal biological and anthropological component, which means a lot of time outside and amongst people and nature. Not only do I want to illustrate, but also enable you to connect, many of the principles we discuss in lecture from observations of nature and the peoples of Malaysia, Singapore, and Borneo. The goal is to equip you to see things about human interactions with the natural world that you have never seen before, by helping you not only to identify components but, even more importantly, to recognize processes and perceive questions of which you have not conceived before. That's a big goal. My job will be to provide you with the appropriate information and selective exposure to and interpretation of habitats and cultures. Your job will be to give it your best, submitting to a variety of field protocols. Specific details will be explained in class.

E. Field Behavior - I want our forays into the field and cultures to be seen as opportunities for adventure and discovery. Following protocols that help rather than hinder the experience for yourself and others in the class can do this. Much of this is so intuitive that it should go without saying, but differing backgrounds and personalities of previous students have demonstrated that it doesn't always go without saying.

Appropriate field protocol involves the following absolute essentials, over which you will be graded:

1. **Treating all wildlife, in the field, town or city, with respect**: This includes refraining from harassment of animals in any way; collecting or damaging plants or animals without appropriate permission, permit, or license and without legitimate purpose.
2. **Treat all people with respect**: We are here to understand the cultures of Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei from multiple perspectives. Probe the culture with the questions of an ethnographer. Do not lobby to make a point. Please represent our culture, institution and Lord as best as possible.
3. **Full participation in all course activities**: This includes bringing appropriate materials (especially notebooks); keeping necessary written records; staying with the group; paying attention to and heeding field instructions, often given orally, just once.
4. **Support of group collaboration**: Fieldwork is often a group process. We need to work together.
F. **Field Notebooks** – Forty percent of your grade will come from a field notebook and journal, which should have three distinct and clearly marked sections. 1) notes from lecture discussion sessions; 2) field observational records on the species, cultures and ecological communities we observe and study; 3) a more personal one which might be called a reflective or an intellectual journal (see point F below). In the first section you should include notes taken in the field, classroom and during guest lectures. Students, if they wish, may keep several notebooks to keep entry categories separate.

Many scientists, travelers, explorers, missionaries, political leaders, naturalists, environmentalists and other intellectually productive and creative people keep journals. A journal is more than an historical or even a personal introspective diary (although it should include elements of that). It is a record of your intellectual development, a kind of "captain’s log" to the voyage you take in the discovery of ideas and perceptions of the world. It should be a chronicle of your thoughts, observations, feelings, insights, connections, analyses, and conclusions related to certain ideas; but it should also contain your unanswered questions, sources of confusion and possible plans for resolving them. As a field notebook, or naturalist’s journal, it should also be rife with descriptions, perceptions, and observations about the world around you. You should have one significant journal entry per day. This is not to be an analytical or scientific document, but rather one where you allow your inner being to reflect on events and observations.

G. **Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI) Reflection and Deliverable**

Students will design learning objectives at the beginning of the ELI experience that are driven by the overarching ELI objectives of meaningful career development and community engagement. Students will answer the common ELI reflection questions. Faculty may build this segment into the reflection component of the course through journals, ePortfolio or other methods.

To ensure that the ELI leads to the stated outcomes of career development and community engagement, students will be required to translate the learning from their reflection into a “deliverable” that is contextualized for an external audience relevant to the students’ future goals (employer, graduate school, etc.). Faculty will determine the format of the deliverable (i.e. ePortfolio, blog, digital storytelling, cumulative reflective essay, etc.).

Note: Faculty will score student responses to reflection questions and deliverable according to the ELI assessment rubric and submit the results to the Off-Campus Programs Advisory Committee for ELI.

**Common Objectives and Outcome Reflection Questions**

- **Objectives:** At the outset of the course, students will personalize specific objectives in all of the following categories, in light of their unique situation and goals:

  **PERSONAL**
  How do you expect to grow personally (e.g. in your self-awareness, your spirituality, and how you relate to others) through this experience?

  **PROFESSIONAL**
  Regardless of whether or not your ELI relates explicitly to your career goals, what specific skills do you plan to develop/enhance that would be transferable to your professional goals?

  **ACADEMIC**
  In what specific ways do you hope to grow as a student? How do you hope your ELI will connect to your major and classroom experiences?
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What do you hope to learn about the "bigger picture" of community (local or global) from your ELI?

Educator-advisors will provide feedback on student learning objectives, and then touch base with students minimally at the beginning, mid-point and end to monitor their progress. At the end of the experience, students will reflect on their learning outcomes:

- **Outcome Reflection Questions:** Near the end of the course, students will be asked: Please reflect on the experiences you’ve had, lessons you’ve learned, and ways in which you’ve grown. There is a lot to ponder, so we’ve provided a few questions we’d like you to answer to help you reflect. As often as possible, try to think of specific examples, stories, situations, or problems you faced during your ELI experience to help answer the questions.”

As a result of your experience in the ELI...

1. Discuss a significant moment during this experience that left a lasting impact on you. Why was this experience significant for you?

2. What did you learn about your strengths or weaknesses? What did you discover about yourself as a person...
   a. Professionally? ________________________
   b. Intellectually? _______________________
   c. Personally? _________________________

3. How has this experience impacted or shaped your ideas about who you are called to be in a more long-term way?

4. How did this experience influence your specific career goals?

5. Please provide specific examples of two transferable skills (i.e. skills that you will be able to use beyond your ELI) that you gained or enhanced during your ELI.
   a. Transferable Skill 1: _______________________
   b. Transferable Skill 2: _______________________

6. Please provide one example of something that you had learned in a course at Messiah (e.g. a theory, concept, strategy, etc.) that you were able to apply during your ELI.

7. How did your ELI experience deepen your understanding of your major and your broader educational experience (inside or outside of the classroom) at Messiah? How does your ELI experience apply to your major and/or future courses?

8. As a result of your experience in the ELI, what is one specific way you foresee your future self...
   a. Contributing to your community over the long-term?
   b. Having purposeful influence in church and society?
   c. Pursuing the work of reconciling individuals with God, each other, and/or creation?
   d. Demonstrating the love of God in service to others?
LATE POLICY: Assignments that are turned in late will receive a deduction of 10% per day.

ATTENDANCE: Regular class and pre-travel meeting attendance is expected. If a student is unable to be present for these, EVERY effort should be made to secure an excuse from the professor before the event. When an excused absence exists, then I will assist you in making up the material. Excessive absences can result in point loss at the discretion of the professor.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The following will not be tolerated. Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer’s exam. Submitting as one’s own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written) that is copied, paraphrased or purchased from another source, including on-line sources without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another’s work as your own, etc. Depending of the severity of the case, plagiarism will be countered by: 1) receiving a zero on the graded work, 2) receiving a zero for the course, or 3) disciplinary measures taken by the College.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: Any student whose disability falls within ADA guidelines should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester of any special accommodations or equipment needs necessary to complete the requirements for this course. Students must register documentation with the Office of Disability Services (Hoffman 101). If you have questions, call extension 5382.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY: Remember, we are traveling in this course to be IN THE CULTURE. A major barrier to our learning objectives is having course participants unnecessarily drawn toward their lives and comforts back in the United States. What happens in the United States should stay in the United States for our travel duration. We are confident that God has wonderful things in store for our personal and academic growth!

A. Cell Phones - Out of courtesy to faculty and peers, students are required to leave their cell phones in the United States. You will occasionally be given personal time to contact loved ones from a phone center or by e-mail, but understand that this will not be a daily opportunity. Trip leaders will have a course cell phone that is purchased in the region for emergency support and for student contact while in each country. Numbers of these cell phones will be determined in country. Should a family member need to contact us for emergency reasons only, they should contact the Intercultural Center at Messiah College at 717-796-1800 ext. 7373, or the Dispatch Office at 717-766-2511. iPhones and their non-Apple counterparts are to be left in the United States (even if it is your only camera).

B. Media Players and Headsets – Use of these are only allowed on long haul flights, buses, trains and inside hostel rooms. Use of these technologies outside of this prescribed window may introduce the following undesirable situations: 1) they may put our group in harm’s way by displaying wealth to the criminally-inclined; 2) they will provide a social barrier to the poor with whom we interact; and 3) they will hinder our ability to be relational within our course travel community.

C. Course iPads – We will have three iPads that will travel with the class for use in our learning and digital storytelling projects. Use of communication applications (e-mail, Skype, Facetime, chat/text and others) must have authorization of course leaders. Internet cafés will be available in many cities within which we travel.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT: binoculars, field notebook/reflective journal, textbooks, field clothes, urban clothes. Your binocular, notebook, and field guides should be readily available whenever we go into the forests.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>CWEO</th>
<th>DIMENSION</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>NO ATTEMPT</th>
<th>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</th>
<th>PROFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful Careers</td>
<td>5.d - interests, abilities, and limitations</td>
<td>Identifying Personal Strengths/Abilities (Questions 1, 2, and 5)</td>
<td>Student clearly and accurately connects their intellectual, professional and personal strengths and abilities to their ELI experience</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5.c. - sense of vocation/career that transcend career choice</td>
<td>Sense of Vocation (Questions 3 and 4)</td>
<td>Student clearly articulates how their experience enhances or informs their vocation (sense of purpose for their interests and abilities)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic integration</td>
<td>4 – major 1-3, 5-7 – QuEST</td>
<td>Academic Integration (Questions 6 and 7)</td>
<td>Student identifies specific ways in which academic learning informs ELI experience and/ or ELI experience informs classroom learning</td>
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<td>Community Calling</td>
<td>5.e. - role in community</td>
<td>Role in Community (Question 8a)</td>
<td>Student develops and specifically demonstrates awareness of his/her role, both personally and professionally, in society</td>
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<td>7.b. Leadership - civic responsibility</td>
<td>Leadership (Question 8b)</td>
<td>“Student identifies specific ways in which (s)he does or could have purposeful influence in the broader church and society” (definition of leadership from</td>
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<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>7.c. – Reconciliation-acting responsibly and redemptively</td>
<td>MC Leadership Model</td>
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<td>Reconciliation (Question 8c)</td>
<td>Student identifies specific ways in which (s)he does or could seek to pursue the work of reconciling individuals with God, with each other, and with all of creation in the broader church and society” (definition of reconciliation from MC foundational values document)</td>
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<td>Service (Question 8d)</td>
<td>“Student identifies specific ways in which (s)he does or could seek to demonstrate the love of God in service to others” (service phrasing from MC foundational values document)</td>
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<td>Completion of Deliverable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student has completed deliverable project in the format appropriate to bucket area and in a way that clearly summarizes ELI outcomes and reflections to an external audience</td>
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*In order for students to successfully fulfill the ELI Requirement, **they must obtain at least eight (8) points on this rubric**