Intercultural Leadership Seminar

The Intercultural Leadership Seminar (ILS) is designed for international and U.S. students who want to learn how to be more effective in a global environment. ILS includes brief lectures, discussion, experiential activities, and small group work. While at ILS you will:

- Increase your awareness of the impact of culture on communication styles;
- Gain skills necessary for effective intercultural communication;
- Discover your own leadership potential; and
- Develop and enhance your intercultural competence.

ILS is part of the M-LEAD[1] collaborative of leadership programs for students, and it is connected to M-Lead's Collective Impact Framework[2] and competencies[3]. Participating in ILS will help you to gain skills and knowledge of the following competencies: Adaptability[4], Authenticity[5], Building Relationships[6], Empathy[7], Feedback[8], Meaning-Making[9], Resilience[10], Self-Awareness[11], Vision[12]

Date, Time and Location

ILS will be held on Monday, October 19, 2020, 10am-4pm, Kuenzel, Michigan Union. The program curriculum has been designed with the expectation that participants will attend its entire program. Attendance is free.

Application

Due to limited space, this program is only available for students who are currently enrolled at U-M Ann Arbor campus. Applications will be available in late September.

Questions? Contact the International Center at icenter@umich.edu[13]

ILS Participants' Reflections
"The Intercultural Leadership Seminar was something I had been searching for to further develop my communication skills for my students, career, and personal life. Being at the University of Michigan I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful international students from various cultural backgrounds. With my lifelong goal of someday going to Japan and possibly teaching there, I wanted to be able to learn from people different from myself. Additionally, I have always desired to be a inclusive educator to every student I encounter. Therefore, it was imperative for me to understand different perspectives and norms from my own. One of the most important skills I learned at ILS was being able to take into consideration how different backgrounds and what we assume to be normal in our home country can influence how we view things. Also, at Michigan I have met an international student from China who has now become a very close friend of mine. In the beginning, she and I had certain issues with communication because of the different social norms America and China have. I particularly hope to remain open minded, patient and understanding when dealing with issues of miscommunication." – Allura Casanova, LS&A
“Participation of ILS during fall break was a beautiful mistake. While I expect it to be more like leadership team building workshop, it happens to be personal value reflection, with a bonus of inspirations.

I am fortunate enough to meet a very diverse, yet like-minded group of student in ILS. Although we are from different background and level in education, I am very glad that we are still keeping contact. Despite the fact that I am a graduate student, being a new comer to the University, ILS workshop has expose me to a sneak peak of the extent of inclusiveness the school community and potential work environment in the US.

With the influence of social media and technology today, human behaviors are more alike, partly due to globalization. However, due to the fact that we are born and raised in different cultures, we tend to react slightly different in different circumstances. Through the interaction and discussion in the one-day workshop, I am more aware of the differentiation among us. The undergraduate participants are very energetic and reminded me of the passion I used to have. Thus, I have also learnt from other post-graduate participant about priceless opportunities they encountered during their pursuit of academic success. All the stories that I heard are very inspiring, and it excite me further excel my potential with resources and opportunities at University of Michigan.” – Judy Chu, Taubman College
“After taking ILS I now try and look at every encounter with different cultures as an opportunity for growth and mutual understanding instead of being anxious and worried that I will offend the other person. I have also learned to reassess myself through the process and remember to take a step back and breathe when I feel on edge. And probably most importantly I learned to remain humble in my perspective because what I may think to be 100% true may not be the same in a different view. I’m very interested in learning more about high context versus low context cultures and how that can cause a discrepancy in understanding. I deeply enjoyed ILS because I was around people who wanted the same thing I did: to learn more about other people’s cultures in a free environment and to take that knowledge and do something helpful with it. ILS has made me look introspectively and check myself at all times that I am giving out an energy that says I want to be better and know more about other people instead of putting them down before they’ve said a word. I challenge myself to find connections with people whom I may consider different than me.” – Taylor Murray, College of Engineering
"I appreciated the opportunity to interact with students from different countries and of different cultural backgrounds during the Intercultural Leadership Seminar. As someone of Chinese heritage, I found it particularly interesting to hear what my Chinese peers observe about the differences in cultural communication between the United States and China, which I have never visited. A piece of advice I found valuable was that it is important to modify our ways of relating with others based on the environment and context we are in. After participating in this seminar I feel encouraged to modify my communication styles in different cultural settings in order to create effective dialogues and have success in any particular environment. I plan to continue to learn how to practice personal leadership while showing empathy and understanding when faced with cultural practices that I am unfamiliar with. I also understand now that I will never be done learning how to be interculturally competent, which is a good thing.” – Emily Dodge, LS&A, Peace Corps Prep Program

Additional Quotes from the Former Participants:

"I really enjoyed interacting with other participants... It is rare to be in environment where people are open so quickly...I realized how often I stay in my comfort zone and how I must miss so many opportunities to interact with people and grow."

"I've been thinking a lot about my vision for life but was struggling to generate a statement and this was spot on. Thanks for this!"

"It provides us with an opportunity for introspection and actually works on aspects of our personality that we expect from others. The tips provided for the critical moment dialogue are very helpful and I personally believe that i could use them in several situations to great effect."

"I think this was obviously a very thoughtful seminar. Despite my familiarity and experience with the
subject I still felt like it was valuable and provides me concentrated time to reflect within a useful framework. Thank you for your time offering this opportunity!

[1] https://mlead.umich.edu/
[2] https://mlead.umich.edu/about/
[3] https://mlead.umich.edu/competencies/
[8] https://mlead.umich.edu/competency/feedback/
[9] https://mlead.umich.edu/competency/meaning-making/
[10] https://mlead.umich.edu/competency/resilience/
[12] https://mlead.umich.edu/competency/vision/
[13] mailto:icenter@umich.edu
[14] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/prep