Germany Travel Study

This year marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, dated to Martin Luther’s posting of the 95 Theses on the Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, which brought a little known monk and university professor into confrontation with the Roman papacy, ignited the Reformation in Germany, and transformed the Western world.

On May 14 through 23, thirty-seven DBU students and four professors embarked on a study trip to Germany to visit many of the historic sites associated with Luther’s Reformation—Erfurt, Wittenberg, and the Wartburg Castle—as well as several World War II monuments in Nuremberg, Berlin, and the Flossenbürg concentration camp, important to the life of the well-known German Lutheran pastor and martyr under the Nazi Third Reich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The trip was hosted by the Gary Cook School of Leadership and was led by Dr. Brent Thomason, Dr. Jay Harley, Dr. David Cook, and Dr. Michael Whiting.

Receiving credit for the travel study was a diverse cross section of students in DBU’s undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral programs.

The theme of the week that tied the legacies of Luther and Bonhoeffer together was standing firm on Christian principles as leaders and changers of culture in whatever calling and sphere of influence we are given by the Lord, despite the difficulties that may arise.

Josh Caesar, a student in the Ph.D. in Leadership Studies program, says with regard to the impact made by Luther, “How is it that God used an obscure man from an obscure town like Wittenberg to cause a movement like the Protestant Reformation to change how we worship and approach God? Luther’s time and opportunity is really another testament to God’s will in bringing up ordinary people from ordinary circumstances into the extraordinary.” In reflecting on conversations shared with other students on the trip from different vocational backgrounds, Ph.D. student Megan Cuzen says, “This unique combination strengthened my understanding of the formative makings of an effective, transformational leader.”

“Tracing the footsteps of courageous leaders like Martin Luther and Dietrich Bonhoeffer has left an undeniable impression on us all,” says Dr. Brent Thomason, Director of the M.A. in International Studies in the Cook School of Leadership. “Our students were challenged throughout the travel-study course to calculate the cost of their convictions and calling as they pursue Jesus in their respective careers. Truly our students have walked away changed by the charge to become modern-day Luthers and Bonhoeffers.”
Undergraduate Programs are now available in the CSL – Camp/Sport Leadership

Summer camp is a growing, $18 billion industry with 14 million campers served annually by 1.5 million adult workers. Public and private sports leagues are also major parts of family life and local economies. High capacity leaders are in demand for both fields, and DBU has one of the premier programs, designed to prepare students to make a positive, global impact through a career in camp and sports.

Beyond the business and economic realms, summer camp and sports are also some of the best avenues for reaching children, teens, and entire families with the good news of Christ. For over a century, Christian leaders have used camp as an effective means to remove young people from the distractions and routine of normal life to build relationships, enjoy God's creation, and start or improve their walk with God. Churches are filled with believers who started their journey with Christ at a camp.

Churches and ministries have also discovered that sports are an effective tool for presenting the gospel and building connections in the community. Local families will participate in sports leagues that serve as an introduction to purposeful relationships and an entry point for the church.

Originally formed in cooperation with the College of Christian Faith, College of Business, and College of Education, Camp/Sport Leadership became the first undergraduate program in the Cook School of Leadership in the spring of 2017. Ed Walker believes it is a school focused on producing servant leaders to make a societal and global impact, and camp and sports are perfect tools to help accomplish that vision.

This degree is not for people who just had a good time at camp or playing sports. Organizations in the field are often large and complex, with significant numbers of staff to recruit and manage hundreds or thousands of weekly guests or participants, facilities to develop and maintain, and more. It takes gifted leaders to launch or lead camp and sports organizations, and DBU has been blessed to not only have one of the largest degree programs of its kind in the country, but also some of the best students and camp partnerships. In addition to coursework, students get practical experience and build their network of professional relationships during college and develop a global vision for ministry using camp and sports.

Aaron Rogers, a recent graduate from the program, is leading a sports ministry in Berlin. In the midst of the challenges of learning the German language and navigating a new culture, he summed up his call, “What more could I ask for? I am here to connect with others in their weaknesses and to radiate the obvious strength of the Lord.”

Meet the C.P.S.L. Program Director

Ed Walker is the Director of Camp/Sport Leadership and the Director of the Center for Mentoring at DBU and brings a lifetime of camp experience to the position. He accepted Christ and made other significant decisions through church camp and began serving on summer staff, leading worship and speaking at camps during college. He received a B.A. in Business from Stephen F. Austin State University and an M.A. in Religious Education from Southwestern Seminary. While serving on leadership staff at Lake Pointe Church in Rockwall, he and his wife, Sarah, founded Sabine Creek Ranch nearby. Sabine Creek now hosts up to 300 campers each week for overnight summer camps, as well as a day camp program and retreats throughout the year. He sees camping and sports ministry as one of the most effective tools in bringing people to Christ, both in America and internationally, and is excited about helping students prepare to lead these types of ministries. Ed and Sarah have three children—Cate graduated from DBU in May 2017, Caroline is a sophomore at DBU this fall, and Cole is in 10th grade.
Lee Bratcher, the chair for the newly developed Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE) major, serves a dual role at DBU as an Assistant to the President and Assistant Professor of Political Science. Lee has a passion for inspiring students to learn more about the world and the complex challenges faced by leaders seeking to better it. He attributes this desire to think critically about global issues to the opportunity he had to accompany his dad on several international mission trips to Africa as a teenager and the opportunity to study abroad in Europe during his college years. Prior to coming to work at DBU in 2015, Lee was a police officer in Irving, TX, and before that served as a captain in the U.S. Army. Lee received a Bachelor of Arts in Education with an emphasis in history from DBU, a master’s degree in International Relations from St. Mary’s University, and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Lee married his wife, Becca, in June 2014, and they celebrated the birth of their daughter, Mckenzie, in October 2016. When not in the classroom or his office, Lee enjoys traveling, playing recreational sports, and listening to The Economist’s weekly audio analysis of business and geopolitics.

The CSL’s Newest Undergraduate Major – Politics, Philosophy, and Economics

Since its inception at Oxford in 1920, the Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE) major has attracted students who go on to become leaders and influencers in business, government, journalism, foreign service, diplomacy, law, consultancy, and the list goes on. The PPE major at DBU is specially designed for those who are prepared to answer God’s call to become scholar statesmen and transform the world.

The interdisciplinary study of politics, philosophy, and economics will have the effect of transforming students’ intellectual lives by preparing them to be cultural influencers who winsomely engage society for the glory of God.

Another important component of the program is the intense focus on internships, travel study, and making connections and meeting with politicians, businessmen, and influencers in society. PPE students will engage in transformative internships during the course of their study, making the connections necessary to find employment in the field of their choice upon graduation. A group of professional mentors in a variety of fields are ready to mentor PPE students and connect them with the practitioners who will become powerful advocates for the students when it comes time to interview.

As for the travel study component, students will develop a Christian worldview, informed by Scripture and by their experiences traveling and learning abroad. PPE students will have the opportunity to travel to places ranging from Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Oxford, England, Washington, D.C., and Boston.
FALL PREVIEW & LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

Save the date: Thursday, October 12, 2017 | 6:00 P.M.