

# the **epic** ADVANTAGE

## **Student/Faculty Collaborative Research Experience**

### **EPIC ADVANTAGE: :**

**Global Issues & Local Initiatives: Comparing Urban & Rural Community Health and Sustainable Development in The United Kingdom, Iceland, and The United States**

**Dates: May 7- May 26, 2018 (Tentative)**

**Leaders: Kelly Szott and Jennifer Cardinal**

**Application Deadline: November 6, 2017**



### **Description of Experience and Research:**

We will compare sustainable development and community public health initiatives in urban and rural sites in Iceland, The United Kingdom, and The United States. This program is geared toward social science students. At the end of the program students will know how to conduct preliminary ethnographic research, including forming research questions and research design in a comparative context. We will conduct preliminary explorations of a range of sites, including mobile needle exchanges, visits to drug policy organizations, sites of sustainable tourism development, urban and community gardens, and more. We will explore the connection and disjuncture between various vectors of community well-being, and between community places and practices. How are these global issues addressed in local contexts? Are different approaches taken in urban and rural contexts? How do community health and sustainable development practices compare in different national contexts? What is the relationship between public health and environmental, economic, and sociocultural sustainability? We will explore these questions in depth through sustained reflection in discussion groups and within field notes each student will take in preparation for a final presentation of learning upon our return.

### **Location:**

This three week collaborative research experience will explore these global issues in the local contexts of Reykjavik; London and several surrounding rural and small cities; Chicago; and Richmond. In Reykjavik we will visit sites of innovative public health and sustainable development initiatives. After spending several days in London visiting public health organizations, an urban farm, a community “library of things,” and other sites of sustainable community development, we’ll visit small towns with innovative drug policy and sustainable development initiatives, such as an intentional community in Sussex, a sustainable tourism program in The Cotswolds and an organization in Bristol advocating for innovative drug policy reform. Visiting smaller rural towns in the English countryside will offer a comparison of sustainable development with urban initiatives. Chicago will offer an urban US comparison to public health and sustainable development initiatives in Iceland and The UK. Finally, we can compare the strategies and projects we’ve observed to initiatives here in Richmond that we will explore during the spring orientation course.



### **Expectations for Students:**

Students must attend the 1 credit Epic Advantage orientation course\* during the spring semester. During these orientation sessions we will discuss and practice relevant background in community health and sustainable development, qualitative research methods and ethics, practical travel considerations, and student and faculty expectations for our collaborative research trip.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Through this collaborative research experience students will learn and practice qualitative place-based research methods; formulate research questions and project design in a comparative context; understand ethics associated with ethnographic research; gain an understanding, respect, and appreciation for a wide range of local initiatives addressing global issues associated with community health and sustainable development.

\*This credit does not count toward your 18 maximum

### **Faculty:**

**Kelly Szott** is a medical sociologist who studies the ways addiction among the poor is handled within public health programs and health care institutions. As a National Institutes of Health Behavioral Science Fellow she studied the health care interactions of low-income people who use drugs in New York City. She is currently researching public health programs, such as needle exchange, in rural settings within the Midwest. Kelly earned her PhD along with a Certificate in Advanced Study in women's and gender studies from Syracuse University. At present she is a visiting assistant professor in the Sociology/Anthropology department at Earlham College.

**Jennifer Cardinal** is a sociocultural anthropologist with research interests in sustainable community development, tourism, space, place, and mobilities. These research interests converge in her current research on sustainability and community development in Richmond, Indiana, and were the focus of her dissertation, "Paradise Found? Local Cosmopolitanism, Lifestyle Migrant Emplacement, and Imaginaries of Sustainable Development in La Manzanilla del Mar, Mexico." Jennifer earned her PhD from The University of New Mexico, and is currently a postdoctoral teaching fellow in the Sociology/Anthropology department at Earlham College.

### **Dates of Experience:**

May 7- May 26, 2018 (Tentative)

**Application:** Applications can be received from students starting on Oct. 15, 2017. Application window closes on Nov 6, 2017.

**Link to Application:** Apply in Handshake

**Student Eligibility:** Rising sophomores, rising juniors, or rising seniors may apply. The program is geared toward social science students who want to gain experience in preliminary ethnographic research.

**Cost to Student:** This experience is funded as an EPIC Advantage opportunity. Funding covers passport, visa, travel, room and board, and other expenses required by the program. Additional personal expenses will be covered by the student.

**Program plans subject to change.**