Student/Faculty Collaborative Research Experience

EPIC ADVANTAGE: Baltic Knitting Traditions

Dates: May 17 - June 7, 2019

Leaders: Callie Maidof

Credits: 3 credits (credit/no credit)

Application Deadline: October 15, 2018

Description of Experience and Research:

On this EPIC Advantage program, students will be steeped in the knitting and fiber arts traditions of the Baltics, gaining practical skills in the fiber arts (particularly knitting, beading, and embroidery) while also learning about the place of these traditions historically and culturally in Latvia and Estonia. Students will learn a set of knitting skills that are specific to these traditions, including stranded colorwork knitting (particularly mittens and socks), fine beadwork on wristbands, and Estonian lace.

The first week of the program will be based in Tallinn, Estonia, but will include excursions to Haapsalu (home to the country’s Lace Center), Kihnu Island (famously one of world’s last remaining matriarchal societies), and Tartu for the Estonian National Museum, which houses a large collection of folk art.

From there, we will travel to Latvia, starting with a three-day program hosted by the Sena Klets National Costume Centre. After this, we’ll head to Riga, and then to the Latgale region of Latvia, where we will visit Rezekne, Kraslava, and Ludza, where we will continue to learn about the fiber arts, as well as the impact of the Cold War in this region. Finally, we will return to Riga, where students will depart.

In each of these places, we will learn about local history and culture, and meet with local fiber artists for workshops and lectures on knitting, weaving, embroidery, garment design, etc. We will also be joined for much of the trip by Carla Meijsen, a recognized authority in Baltic knitting traditions.

Faculty:

Callie Maidof is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology. In addition to her ethnographic work on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, she is an experienced knitter and knitwear designer, with designs published and sold in magazines and online. She previously led the EPIC Advantage trip to the Shetland Islands, also on knitting traditions.

Expectations for Students:

Students will stay together in hostels in the previously mentioned locations. By the end of the program, they will have mastered or at least begun a set of regional knitting skills, and will have produced small samples demonstrating this. In addition to these samples, students have the option to produce a larger-scale knitting project to be knit after the program using their new skill set. This may be something strictly traditional or a new design by the student. Earlham will provide materials for this project.
**Dates of Experience:**
May 17 - June 7, 2019

**Travel To and From Site:**
The program begins in Tallinn, Estonian, and ends in Riga, Latvia. Students may travel on their own to and from these places. A recommended itinerary will be provided leaving from either Dayton or Indianapolis for those who prefer to travel in a group.

**Application Dates:**
Applications can be received from students starting on Sept. 15, 2018. Application window closes on Oct. 15, 2018.

**Link to Application:**
Apply in Handshake

**Preparation:**
Students will be required to take a 1 credit EPIC Advantage Orientation seminar during the Spring 2019 academic semester. This seminar will provide the necessary background and travel logistics for students to maximize the experience. Class meeting dates/times will be determined in the future.

**Student Eligibility:**
Rising Sophomores, juniors, or seniors are eligible to apply.

**Cost to Student:**
This experience is funded as an EPIC ADVANTAGE opportunity. Funding includes travel, room and board, and other expenses required by the program. Passports and immunizations as well as other personal expenses will be covered by students. Students who are accepted and withdraw after January 15, 2019 must reimburse the college for all expenses committed on their behalf.

**Program plans subject to change.**

**Program Policies:** https://earlham.edu/academics/off-campus-study/program-policies/