

**2014 Odyssey Program: Development Ethics in the Rwandan Context**

Call for Student Applications

Dr. Daniel Whelan (Department of Politics & International Relations), who holds the Charles Prentiss Hough Odyssey Professorship, in conjunction with Dr. Kim Maslin (Department of Politics & International Relations) and Dr. Allison Shutt (Department of History) invite student proposals for a two-week Odyssey Program in Rwanda in May/June 2014.

Rwanda provides an excellent case for exploring many questions relating to the ethics and politics of development. The government of Rwanda seeks to become a middle-income country by 2020, and has deployed a development model that it feels is appropriate for meeting that goal. The success of this strategy is partially predicated on the government’s ability to foster a post-ethnic society that can overcome the deep ethnic divisions of its past. The purpose of the Rwanda Program is to explore some of the tensions and challenges evident in contemporary Rwandan society, focusing specifically on a variety of ethical aspects of its development and post-conflict reconciliation strategies. Some of these would include:

* Development and environmental sustainability
* Eco-tourism
* Ethnicity and post-conflict reconciliation strategies and programs
* Decentralization and development
* Women’s participation in politics and development policy/programs
* Human rights approaches to development, or development vs. human rights (e.g. civil & political rights)
* Civil society, development NGOs, and donor priorities
* The ethics of aid and humanitarianism in Rwanda
* Genocide and the politics of memory

Following the guidelines set above, the Odyssey program in Rwanda will consist of numerous site visits around the country, allowing students to meet and interact with local communities, government officials, local and international NGOs, and international and bilateral assistance organizations. We will tailor these visits based on the interests and research goals of students who are accepted to the program—in other words, students will guide the specifics of the program’s parameters in Rwanda.

This program seeks to attract two types of proposals from students enrolled in any relevant course of study at Hendrix. We are especially keen to have a mix of rising sophomores, juniors and seniors who are at different stages of their academic programs, in order to foster a mentoring relationship between more senior students and their younger classmates.

Undergraduate Research: we especially seek to attract students who are working on advanced-level research projects such as senior theses/capstones in any areas touched upon in the program rationale, where a research visit to Rwanda will yield material for case studies or other valuable research to deepen the scope of their research. In their application, UR students should include a detailed research proposal for their work in Rwanda, including how they intend to fulfill the requirements for UR credit as outlined in the 2012-2013 *Odyssey Guide*.

Global Awareness: This option is especially relevant for freshers and sophomores who would like to use this opportunity to expand upon and deepen work they have done in courses they have already taken, and who seek to begin exploring questions relevant to the program rationale for future research. Students submitting GA proposals should list relevant past or current coursework, and how this program will contribute to your future course of study. Proposals for GA credit should carefully craft their proposals in accordance with the 2013-2014 *Odyssey Guide*.

While there are no specific previous course requirements for applying, student proposals should discuss specific relevant coursework they have already taken, and how those courses inform their overall project proposal. Relevant courses can be from any program and/or department (e.g., Africana Studies; Anthropology; Economics; Environmental Studies; Gender Studies; History; Politics and International Relations; and Sociology).

**Program Requirements and Recommendations**

* If accepted, students participating in the program will be expected to contribute $1,000 to the overall costs of the trip. In addition, students will be responsible for covering related travel expenses on their own (e.g., passport fees; required/recommended immunizations).
* Accepted students will be expected to attend a series of pre-travel seminars during the Spring semester. These will be scheduled throughout the term and will focusing on a number of essential background readings to prepare students for their visit.
* While not a requirement, students who are accepted into to the program should seriously consider enrolling in POLI 285: *Ethics and Development* and/or HIST 130: *Colonial Africa* during the Spring 2014 semester.

**Due Date for Proposals**

Please use the special Odyssey form for this Program. Please submit the form, your project narrative and an unofficial transcript no later than Thursday, November 21st at 2:00pm, to Dr. Whelan in Mills 217.

**About the Faculty**

Kim Maslin (Politics & International Relations) teaches courses in American institutions, political philosophy and gender. She has traveled to Rwanda five times in various capacities. She is currently interested in examining the role of various types of gender quotas in women’s substantive representation.

Allison Shutt (History): teaches African history and will offer HIST 281: *Aid, Humanitarianism and Development* in Fall 2014. This course will focus exclusively on Rwanda. She has lived and studied in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Togo, and visited Kenya. Along with Carol West (English Department) she led an Odyssey project with seven Hendrix students to South Africa in 2007.

Daniel Whelan (Politics & International Relations) teaches courses in development, international law and human rights. He accompanied the first group of Hendrix students who traveled in Rwanda in 2007, and later led a team of three students working on individual research projects in Rwanda (on the politics of land reform; women and microfinance; and the implementation of programs financed by the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria). In Rwanda, he is interested in deepening his understanding of the tensions between human rights and development.