

**Course Description:** The course's preparation and reflection components book-end the immersive experience of being in the Czech Republic for two-and-a-half weeks. The prep course acclimates students to Czech culture, introduces the academic content of the experience, and outlines trip expectations. Students conduct preliminary work on language skills, cultural research, and explaining their own baseline cultural perceptions. The reflection course in the fall semester asks students how the experience of the Czech Republic changed perceptions of culture.

**Learning Goals:**

1. Demonstrate a complex understanding of culture, including the ability to
  1. Develop a critical working definition of culture
  2. Articulate awareness of differences and similarities between their culture of origin and the one in which they are/were immersed
  3. Define and recognize ethnocentrism and ethnocentric assumptions
  4. Demonstrate critical awareness of their own cultural values and identity
2. Recognize how their attitudes, behaviors, & choices affect the quality of their cross-cultural experience
3. Reflect on personal growth, social responsibility, & the value of active participation in human society.

**Attendance Policy:** Students will be allowed 1 absence from the preparation course and 1 absence from the reflection course. Each subsequent absence will lower the total course grade by 10%.

**Grading and Schedule:**

*Preparatory Meetings: 20% (Research presentation: 10%; Letter to Yourself: 5%; Havel discussion: 5%)*

These meetings are vital to the immersion experience, not only for cultural acclimation, but also to prepare for interacting with our contacts in the Czech Republic.

<u>March 23</u>	Course introduction & ice breaking <i>research projects assigned, Havel reading assigned</i>
<u>March 30</u>	Negotiating the Czech Republic
<u>April 6</u>	The Czech Language
<u>April 13</u>	Theatre & Politics (including a discussion of the Havel reading) <i>Letter to Yourself assigned</i>
<u>April 20</u>	Being Non-Czech in the Czech Republic (Letter to Yourself due)
<u>April 27</u>	Language Review
<u>May 4</u>	Research project presentations

**RESEARCH PROJECT TOPICS:**

ECONOMY

GENDER / SEXUALITY

LIVING WELL (“THE CZECH DREAM”)

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

POLITICS / CIVICS / GOVERNMENT

RACE

REGIONALISMS

RELIGION

**PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS ON MAY 4:**

STUDENT PAIRS WILL RESEARCH AND PRESENT THE “STATE OF THE NATION” WITH RESPECT TO ONE OF THE TOPICS LISTED ABOVE. THE TEN-MINUTE PRESENTATIONS WILL EXPLAIN TO PEERS THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CURRENT DYNAMICS OF THE TOPIC AND EXPLAIN WHAT THEY REVEAL TO US ABOUT CONTEMPORARY CZECH CULTURES. PRESENTATIONS MUST HAVE A VISUAL COMPONENT, SUCH AS POWERPOINT, PREZI, OR ANOTHER VISUAL STRATEGY. PAIRS MUST SUBMIT A TYPED VERSION OF THE PRESENTATION “SCRIPT” DURING THE SESSION.

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*Immersion Learning: 30% (participation & engagement: 20%; small group discussions: 10%)*

The class will travel from May 16 to June 1. Students will meet twice during the trip for formal small-group discussions of their experiences. Professors Andes and Slavishak will facilitate these discussions. Students will compile images, journal entries, and other objects/mementoes during the trip to assist them during the fall reflective course.

Students’ conduct during the trip will count toward the overall grade assigned at the end of the reflection course. During the prep course, the instructors will explain expectations about participation in trip activities, being a good group member, the alcohol policy, caring for oneself while abroad, and looking out for each other.

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*Reflective Course: 50% (reflective essay: 35%; creative project: 15%)*

This course will take place on Thursday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM during the first seven weeks of the fall semester.

Week 1	Reflection on Immersion Experience (Assign Creative Projects)
Week 2	Ethnocentrism and Ethnocentric Assumptions
Week 3	Cultural Identity in the Czech Republic
Week 4	Marginalized Czechs
Week 5	Using this Experience
Week 6	Work on Creative Projects
Week 7	Creative Project Presentations and Reflective Paper due