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A STUDY IN COMPARATIVE EDUCATION
SIERRA LEONE, AFRICA

Introduction

A program in comparative education is being offered by Otterbein College for a limited number of students enrolled in a teacher preparatory program. These students, fifteen in 1969-1970, spend ten weeks during the Winter term of their junior or senior college year in Sierra Leone, West Africa working about half time as teacher aids in the African schools. The other half of the time is spent doing research on a previously approved topic concerned with the culture, government, history, education or social values of the Sierra Leone people.

Objectives of the Program

The major objectives of the program are:

1. To provide deep inter-cultural experiences in a professional setting for students and faculty.
2. Through direct experience, to develop an understanding of other people, their history, economic conditions, community life and family life.
3. To develop in teacher candidates and college faculty empathy for people whose backgrounds and values are different than their own.
4. From the perspective of the people in another nation, to see our own country and culture in a broader sense.
5. To better prepare teachers to work with students in disadvantaged communities and to teach effectively with limited facilities.
6. To develop in teachers a greater sense of world problems and to enhance the international aspect of education.
7. Through conversation on return to the campus, newspaper items and research reports, to develop in the entire college community a better understanding of Africa and the world community.
8. To develop a greater understanding of the contribution the church missions have made to the people of developing countries.
9. To examine the influence various religious philosophies have on the cultural patterns of people.
10. To gain experience and understanding of an educational system organized

differently than our own.

Organization and Procedures

Students apply for the program in the Spring preceding their participation in the program. Selection of students to participate is made by the Education Department subject to approval by the Foreign Study Committee. Criteria for selection includes, 1. junior or senior standing, 2. admission to a teacher education program by the Teacher Education Committee, 3. ability to successfully carry out an independent study project, 4. a schedule that will permit one term off-campus

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without delaying graduation. The program is open to men and women following either an elementary or secondary teaching program.

Participants register for four courses of special problems. One half course of credit is given in the Autumn term for a seminar of orientation and preparation. Each student must identify and write a proposal for a research problem to be carried out in Sierra Leone. After a week of instruction in the Universities, the students are assigned to schools scattered throughout the country where they work half time as teacher aids and gather the data for their research projects eight weeks. During the final week in Sierra Leone, the students return to the Universities for a summary and consolidation of their experiences and return to the United States. Three courses of credit are given for the term in Africa. In the Spring term, again on the Otterbein College campus, the students take a one half course seminar to interpret their experiences and to write the final research reports. The faculty member responsible for supervision will be rotated to provide experiences in comparative education for several faculty members.

It is expected that the students who participate in the program will be available for speaking to groups in schools and churches.

Finance

Participants in the Sierra Leone program will pay the college comprehensive fee for resident students. They will obtain and pay for passports, visa, vaccinations and shots that are required. They will pay their round trip transportation costs from their home to Kennedy International Airport in New York.

The budget for the program includes round trip air transportation as required in Sierra Leone, board and room, and instructional costs. The budget amount for the 1960[1969] - 1970 academic year was \$26,689.00. Private donations and church grants are supporting the program. No government funds are used at the present time.

[Transcribed by: Sara Ross 08-10-2021]