

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

GRANT DUE DATE: APRIL 4TH

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant: Adnan Dakkuri , PhD

Team members: Emily Pietrowicz, FSUubuntu President

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II. Event Title

Bridging Cultures and Faiths

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address.

This event will directly address section 4 of the Diversity plan: “[to] create environments for student learning that are inclusive of and sensitive to a diverse student population.” This venture provides Ferris faculty with the opportunity to infuse diversity learning into their curriculums by giving American students the chance to learn more about another culture.

In regards to the University Strategic Plan, this event will foster global engagement and cultural awareness by promoting a dialogue between two cultures and allowing students to explore another way of life and compare it to their own.

IV. Abstract (150-200 words)

The event will consist of approximately 100 American Ferris students recruited from religion, communication, philosophy, marketing, and international business summer and fall classes. They will travel to Grand Rapids to observe Friday prayers at the Islamic Mosque and Religious Institute (At Tawheed Mosque). Following the prayers, students will experience Middle Eastern cuisine at the mosque. During the meal, professional members of the Muslim community will facilitate open discussion about Islam. Students will also have the opportunity to visit a Bosnian mosque, ICC Behar, which is next door to the At-Tawheed mosque. They would then appreciate the differences that occur between different types of mosques and the nuances in the cultures that use them.

Ideally, we will take buses over the course of two Fridays to extend our impact and maximize the experience for everyone involved. The dates will be staggered in order to accommodate summer and fall classes. Drivers will be provided by the Office of International Education and paid as part of the budget. Professor Dakkuri will chaperone each trip along with additional interested faculty/staff. Grant funding will cover food and travel expenses for this project. Participants will also complete a short survey covering their satisfaction with the event and explaining new insights they learned. This data will be collated and returned to the grant office as part of the Final Report.

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single spaced)

This event will bolster Ferris' long-term commitment to diversity and inclusion by increasing awareness about another culture and creating an important dialogue between American students and international students. Students who receive this type of learning experience will be able to assimilate their understanding in their daily lives and apply it toward professional networking in the global marketplace. Experiential learning about other cultures will promote the students' personal growth to become culturally sensitive and inclusive in their lives and workplaces.

The goals of this event are to build cultural awareness in American students participating in the event and create dialogues about different cultures and their similarities, both with the Muslim professionals at the mosque and their peers who are members of the Saudi Student Organization and/or Muslim Student Association (RSOs). By choosing to focus on Islam, we hope to foster greater understanding about the Muslim culture and counter some of the stigma that has been spread by American media in recent years. Some of the specific learning outcomes include:

- 1- What is Islam and how is it related to other Abrahamic religions?
- 2- What are the components of the prayers? What are the tenets of Islam?
- 3- What are some common threads between Christianity and Islam?
- 4- Why do some Muslim women wear hijab? Is it the religion or tradition?
- 5- What is the difference between Arabs and Muslims? (to address a common misconception)
- 6- What does a mosque look like (architecture)? How is the mosque used differently in the US compared to the Muslim world?

This event is not limited to one specific discipline, but would be a valuable opportunity for experiential learning for religion and philosophy classes that cover Islam in class. Additionally, international business and marketing classes would benefit from this experience because of the role that the Arab and Muslim worlds play in the global marketplace.

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The timeline of this event is outlined below.

May 20: First day of summer classes

Early May: Email all target summer classes with invitation, student recruitment.

June 13: Friday trip (1 large bus/56 students). Depart 11:30 am; prayer begins at 1:30 pm in Kentwood. Lunch following.

August 25: First day of fall classes

Early September: Email all target fall classes with invitation, student recruitment

September 26: Friday trip (1 large bus/56 students). Depart 11:30 am; prayer begins at 1:30 pm in Kentwood. Lunch following.

November: Submit final report

American students will be recruited from summer classes in religion, communication, philosophy, marketing, and international business. We will invite professors of these courses to send students from each of their classes and will open the attendance to members of registered student organizations (RSOs) in good standing with the University that have a connection to global and cultural awareness. The target range of participants is approximately 100 students.

This event will have an impact on Ferris through the American students that participate in this experience. They will be able to share their new worldview with their peers and interact with students of other cultures in a new, more open and inclusive context. This event will build on Ferris' inclusive and global awareness programming that typically takes place during the academic year and extend it to a summer program.

A follow-up assessment will be administered to measure the overall impact of the event. It will be included in the final report and used to evaluate its efficacy for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Office of International Education.

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VI. Budget

Budget Overview			
	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
Stipend	-		
Honoraria	-		
Travel (includes bus rentals, driver fees, mileage)	\$1100		
Food (for 100 students, chaperone, faculty/staff)	\$1150		
Rentals	-		
Printing & Duplicating	-		
Promotion	-		
Supplies & Postage	-		
Resource Materials	-		
Assessment Tools	-		
Other	-		
TOTAL	\$2250		

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VII. Final Report

The final report will include a reflection/self-evaluation of the success of the event in meeting our objectives that will include student feedback. Attendance will be measured for each trip and so our overall reach can be tallied. A final budget will also be attached.

The student survey is below:

Name: _____ Student ID #: _____

Class (recruited from)/professor: _____

1. Before attending this event, please share one thing that you knew about Islam, Muslim culture, etc.

2. What are two things you learned as a result of this event?

a. _____

b. _____

3. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your overall satisfaction at participating in this event (well planned, new information was presented, etc.)? Explain.

1= worse than expected, 5 = better than expected

4. What is the one thing that you would recommend for improvement if we did this event again next year?
