

**Engage, Interpret, Adapt: Growing Student Intercultural Intelligence**  
Columbia Theological Seminary  
Executive Summary, January 2024

The 2023–2028 Quality Enhancement Plan of Columbia Theological Seminary, a graduate institution affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA), is titled “Engage, Interpret, Adapt: Growing Student Intercultural Intelligence.” This plan is designed to increase student capacities in intercultural intelligence in order to equip students for ministries in increasingly diverse, interconnected, and conflicted social contexts.

Students will increase their abilities to engage people of other cultures with openness, their skills in interpreting intercultural interactions from multiple perspectives, and their capacities to adapt to different cultural contexts in ways that foster respectful, generative, and ongoing relationships. These attitudes, cognitive capacities, and behaviors will require students to develop active listening and empathy when encountering individuals and groups from differing cultural backgrounds and identities. In addition, students will acquire skills of self-articulation, contextual analysis, effective transcultural communication, dialogue, and conflict transformation.

A thorough redesign of the integrative course curriculum for the Master of Divinity degree program will produce an integrative course sequence that teaches the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for intercultural intelligence, and co-curricular programming will amplify and support the curricular changes. Students will put their learnings into practice during a contextual immersion travel seminar and reflect on learnings afterward by revisiting and expanding their learning during a final capstone integrative course, as well as producing a portfolio that demonstrates their learnings in intercultural intelligence. Columbia faculty will also participate in a series of intensive immersion experiences to advance their capacities to teach with intercultural intelligence, while staff and administration will receive a series of scaffolded workshops that offer the opportunity to increase intercultural learning and capacities.

In order to measure change over time, Columbia will undertake repeated institution-wide assessments with the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). Students will receive interpretations of their scores upon matriculation and graduation, as well as individualized plans to develop their capacities for mutually positive intercultural engagement. Faculty, staff, and administration will also receive periodic IDI assessments to compare against a 2023–2024 baseline. Moreover, anonymous juries will assess student intercultural portfolios to measure changes in student intercultural attitudes, cognitive capacities, and behaviors.

**Contact Information:**

Dr. Brennan Breed  
Associate Professor of Old Testament  
Columbia Theological Seminary  
701 S. Columbia Dr.  
Decatur, GA 30030  
[breedb@ctsnet.edu](mailto:breedb@ctsnet.edu)