



## xiv. Kierkegaard: The Individual in the Global Society

### 2010 Global Summer Program Report

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<b>University of Copenhagen</b>	
<b>Brief description</b>	<p>A study of the works of Copenhagen's most radical author, the 'father of existentialism,' Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855). Kierkegaard's entire authorship is centred around the existential project that every human being is confronted with: to become oneself and none other than oneself. And as he sees it, becoming oneself does not happen passively and is never achieved once and for all, but rather requires constant effort. He thus often describes this project as one of taking responsibility for "choosing," "gaining," or "finding oneself."</p> <p>This course examines his witty, humorous, but also deeply earnest exploration of the psychology of self identity. And Kierkegaard's thoughts about the struggle for personhood take us through perhaps unexpected territories: beginning with the breakdown of culture-specific ethnic and religious that have traditionally defined the self, he explores the culturally destructive power of Socrates' irony, the art of seduction, theories of beauty and boredom, a scathing critique of religious culture and politics, religious demands that conflict with ethical duty, the chronic sicknesses of the soul, the look of the Other as a defining factor in self-identity, the struggle to see with the eye of faith, the joy of being embodied here and now, and finally, love.</p>
<b>Course duration:</b>	5 – 30 July (26 days)
<b>Tuition fees:</b>	Exempted
<b>Accommodation:</b>	USD \$486 - 520 (DKK2,800 – 3,000)
<b>Field trip:</b>	USD \$35 (DKK200)
<b>Course facilitator(s):</b>	Brian SÖDERQUIST

## 2. Participant and teaching staff data

	University	Number of Students	Teaching Staff
IARU Partner Universities	Australian National University	2	
	ETH Zurich		
	National University of Singapore		
	Peking University		
	University of California, Berkeley	2	
	University of Cambridge		
	University of Copenhagen	7	
	University of Oxford	2	
	The University of Tokyo	1	
	Yale University	1	
	<b>Total IARU partner involvement</b>	<b>15</b>	
Non-IARU Partner Universities	University of Amsterdam, Ghent University, Oslo University, Aristotle University, University of British Columbia, Århus University, Copenhagen Business School	11	
	<b>TOTAL Non-IARU partner involvement</b>	<b>11</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	

## 3. Successful aspects of the course

*Please outline the successful aspects of the GSP course, where possible, referring to feedback gained from students and/or staff involved in the course. Feel free to incorporate photos into this section of the report. (Est. 500 words)*

The most successful part of the GSP course was the atmosphere and learning environment that arose naturally between the students. Roughly half the students were from Denmark, half from other GSP member universities, which was a very fortuitous combination of those who were familiar with the city and those who weren't. A large group of students went out for coffee every day after the conclusion of class.

In addition, toward the beginning of the course, we took a weekend bike trip to Northern Zealand to see some of the sites Kierkegaard incorporates into his authorship. We read passages from K's authorship while we were at the various sites, but the primary aim of this weekend tour was to let the students get to know each other. Their familiarity with each other from outside class meant that they were comfortable asking questions, and discussing and debating Kierkegaard's thought. The students were also especially talented, well-prepared, and committed to class. First off, the students are well-educated from their home universities. Secondly, because they travelled to

Copenhagen to take the class – and because many of the Danes simply wanted to take the class – the academic level of discussion was especially high. In fact, it might be the best single class I have ever dealt with.

The students had very different backgrounds, but they were able to bring what they already knew to class discussion and their research papers. The student evaluations were very high. They pointed to a stimulating class environment and the relaxed Danish summer attitude in particular.

#### 4. Challenges and concerns for the future

*Please outline aspects of the course and/or the wider GSP that presented difficulties for your University. (Est. 500 words)*

There were very few academic problems or challenges in this class. The students recommended continuing the same pattern for next semester. Administratively, the course functioned smoothly, and we hope to be able to repeat this success in the future. Inviting and housing our guest lecturer, George Pattison, presented some challenges initially, but there were no problems that present a challenge next summer. In general, this course was a rare an example of what can go right when everything falls fortuitously into place.

## 5. Gallery

