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New Trends in Multicultural Education:"Disability in a Global Context", an Intersession Course in Ghana, Africa

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In an increasingly mobile and interactive world, occupational therapists need to consider culture as part of the education process. Fifteen interdisciplinary New York University students and two occupational therapy faculty members traveled to Ghana to study disability and culture. In both verbal and written assignments students reported career altering experiences.

Objectives: Uniquely structured visits to Ghana's health facilities, schools, and everyday settings promoted learning about physical and psychosocial disability. Students uncovered surprising cultural similarities and differences, gaining respect for personal values and those of another culture. A reflective teaching model, along with readings, Blog journals, interviews and a paper relating to each student's future career encouraged deeper learning. A multidisciplinary approach was used to learn about culture and disability, and occupational therapy students defined their distinct areas of expertise.

Practice Implications: The course, "Disability in a Global Context" can be adapted to other global locations. Research possibilities include exploration of health and cultural issues, and educational approaches to these subjects that apply.