

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR GLOBAL LEARNING

“The Aleph?, I repeated.

Yes, the place where, without admixture or confusion, all the places of the world, seen from every angle, coexist.”

-Jorge Luis Borges, The Aleph

On one wall, a student-produced slideshow of images depicts literary themes in public architecture in Germany; by pressing a button, one listens to the narration of the slideshow, in German, by the student who developed it. In a 3-D display, visitors can hear the voices and smell the cooking fires of the village in Ghana that hosted last spring term's course in the economics of developing countries. An open classroom reveals small groups of W&L students in animated conversation with groups of Italian students at one of our partner institutions abroad. A large screen helps viewers walk through an archeological site in Turkey where W&L students and their professors discuss the importance of a recent discovery. In the virtual classroom, art history students join their professor on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to examine the details of the recent restoration. Next to the News of the World bulletins, three ESOL volunteers use a new distance learning tool to tutor children in a Houston afterschool program.

Washington and Lee University's Center for Global Learning will emphasize liberal arts for the 21st century by integrating global learning and engagement into every level of a W&L education. The building will serve as the physical focus for an innovative, coherent and comprehensive program in global learning that will prepare all Washington and Lee graduates for the challenges of the 21st century. As global learning strategies spread throughout the campus, the Center can act as an incubator for experimentation with new pedagogies and technologies in innovative teaching spaces. Anyone entering the building will sense immediately how its architecture, technology, design, and programming combine to create a global marketplace of ideas and activities that are diffused throughout the campus.

As W&L's window on the world the facility will showcase interdisciplinary approaches to global learning as cross-cultural knowledge, encompassing both domestic and foreign issues. It will incorporate innovative tools, technologies and spaces to promote engagement with ideas and with people, on campus and beyond. Merging existing institutional program perspectives with broader viewpoints will enable the larger university community to form an integrated vision of global learning that will radiate from the building and across the campus. As a result, in addition to the innovative new spaces and activities, current related endeavors will acquire an entirely new context within which to flourish. Our foreign language students will have a local context in which to apply their skills; our international scholars and students will have a “home” in which to engage the W&L community; our interdisciplinary programs will thrive as they face together those contemporary issues that can only be addressed in a global context. By functioning as a viable, fully-integrated hub for the university, the Center for Global Learning will be a major factor in W&L's effort to fulfill the promise of its mission to prepare graduates for “*engaged citizenship in a global and diverse society.*”