



The Chalmers Center

FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Upcoming Chalmers Center Distance Learning

Microfinance and Microenterprise Development – For those ministering to the poor in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the Chalmers Center offers a series of three distance courses on conducting Christian microfinance and microenterprise.

The initial course is called *Foundations and Principles of Holistic Ministry* (International Ministry Track). The *Foundations* course helps you understand appropriate goals and strategies for conducting Christian economic development in poor communities. It addresses questions related to poverty, proposes a Biblical framework for understanding poverty and holistic development, and examines the role of the local church in the economic empowerment of poor people. The course actually will benefit anyone preparing for Christian outreach and ministry among the poor, whether they plan to implement an economic development strategy or not.

This year the course will be offered September 7 – October 2, 2009, and again November 9 – December 4, 2009. Cost of this four-week course is \$120 (USD) plus the cost of separately ordered course material.

The second course in the series is called *Principles and Practices of Christian Microfinance and Microenterprise Development*. It gives you an overview to microfinance and microenterprise development and orients you to the selection and design of a holistic intervention appropriate for your ministry context. The next class is scheduled for September 7 - October 23, 2009. Cost of this seven week course including materials is \$230 (USD). Note that the *Foundations* course is a prerequisite for this course.

The third course in the series is an eight-week course called *Promoting Church-Centered Savings and Credit Associations*. This skills-based course provides practical tools and knowledge related to the basic principles of savings and credit associations so that course participants can promote such groups as a ministry tool for their church, mission organization, or ministry. This course is scheduled for October 26 – December 18, 2009 and is available to those who have taken the prerequisite *Principles and Practices of Christian Microfinance and Microenterprise Development* course. Cost of this course including materials is \$300 (USD). Note that the *Principles* course is a prerequisite for this course.

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Economic Development Ministry – For those ministering to the poor in the U.S. or Canada, the Chalmers Center offers a series of two distance courses on conducting economic development ministry.

The initial course is called *Foundations and Principles of Holistic Ministry* (U.S./Canada Ministry Track). The *Foundations* course helps you understand appropriate goals and strategies for conducting Christian economic development in poor communities within North America. It addresses questions related to poverty, proposes a Biblical framework for understanding poverty and holistic development, and examines the role of the local church in the economic empowerment of poor people. The course actually will benefit anyone preparing for Christian outreach and ministry among the poor, whether they plan to implement an economic development strategy or not.

The next class will be offered on August 3 - 28, 2009. Cost of this four-week course is \$120 plus the cost of separately ordered course materials.

The second course in the series called *Principles and Practices of Economic Development Ministry*. It addresses economic development ministry in the areas of savings, asset accumulation, financial literacy, job training, and housing. The next class is scheduled for the summer of 2010. Cost of this four-week course including materials is \$200. Note that the *Foundations* course is a prerequisite for this course.

About Distance Learning – The Chalmers Center distance learning courses use the Internet to create a virtual classroom and a training process that does not require the instructor and the participants to be engaged in the learning process at the very same time. The courses take place in weekly lessons that are facilitated and managed with e-mail and web deployed/accessible course material and resources. The courses feature a weekly reading and written (Internet-based) assignment, peer-learning with Internet threaded discussions, and a weekly lesson summary by the facilitator that reflects on the assignment responses from the course participants. Direct personal feedback from the instructor increases as the participant progresses from the initial course to skills-based implementation courses.

Because the courses are email-based, slow dial-up speed will not limit participation. There are no set class times, only due dates for weekly assignments. The training goes in depth and, depending on the course, will require an average of 4-8 hours of work per week (longer if English is not your primary language). Also, prior financial or economic experience is not required to participate.

Registration – To register or learn more about the distance learning courses, including information about our group and indigenous discounts, visit www.chalmers.org. When registering, use Reference Identifier MK-06/09. For questions, email chalmers@covenant.edu or call 1-706-419-1805.