Social Change in Central America: Exploring Peace, Justice and Community Engagement
Welcome from Central America Staff

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April 2015

Dear Students:

Greetings from the Central America staff of the Center for Global Education (CGE)! We are excited that you have decided to come to Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua to participate in the “Social Change in Central America: Exploring Peace, Justice and Community Engagement” program. Throughout the semester we will be exploring the dynamics of socio-economic, political, and cultural change. We will place particular emphasis on listening to the voices of people who are usually under-represented in academia and in the mainstream media. We have been busy planning the program and are looking forward to working with you.

CGE’s educational philosophy emphasizes critical thinking for personal and social transformation. Hence, our approach is both experiential and rigorously academic. We try to create many opportunities for you to meet with Central Americans who represent different viewpoints and sectors of society. Throughout the program, we encourage you to sharpen your observation skills, as well as your critical thinking skills, and to reflect upon your emotional reactions to concrete experiences in addition to critically analyzing them and the social and economic theories which shed light upon them. The first part of the semester will provide you with an experiential basis to ground your analysis of the more theoretical components that come later in the program. Finally, we challenge you to contemplate ways in which you can act upon and apply what you learn in Central America. This approach is consistent with Paulo Freire's philosophy of education which promotes social transformation and recognizes students and teachers as co-learners, in contrast to a more traditional "banking" philosophy of education, in which the teacher deposits knowledge into the minds of passive students without ever questioning the status quo.

We encourage you to read the entire manual and the following book before the program begins: *Understanding Central America, 2nd Edition* by John A. Booth and Thomas W. Walker (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993). If time permits, you may also find it helpful to read *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, One Day of Life/Un Día en la Vida* and *Upside Down: A Primer for the Looking-Glass World* (see Books and Readings section). We trust you will agree that these books provide an excellent introduction to the issues we will be studying throughout the semester. In addition, we ask that you bring a journal in which to record your experiences throughout the semester; you may wish to begin writing before you leave the United States.

Again, let us tell you how delighted we are that you will be learning with us next semester. We look forward to meeting you on August 17, 2015.

Sincerely,

Ruth Garrido                                     Fidel Xinico                                   César Acevedo

Elisa Vanegas                                Kathy McBride                                 Mark Lester
Faculty and Staff

The Center for Global Education has staff in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua who coordinate our educational programs and, in the case of Managua, maintain the guest house and vehicles. In addition, Study Abroad Facilitator, Ruth Garrido will accompany you throughout the semester. Fidel Xinico is the Program Director for the Guatemala Program and César Acevedo is the Program Director for El Salvador who will be coordinating the program in Costa Rica. In Nicaragua, Mark Lester and Kathy McBride are the Regional Directors for Central America and the Caribbean. Elisa Vanegas is the instructor for the Political course, and Kathy McBride is the instructor for the History/Women’s Studies course. Support staff in Nicaragua includes Ana María Canales, María Elena Rodríguez and José Solorzano.

Ruth Garrido

Ruth Magaly Garrido Gómez is a Guatemalan citizen who received a bilingual degree at the Instituto Guatemalteco Americano (IGA), and then studied business in Stow, Ohio from 1993 to 1995. After working at the Akron Music Center in administrative accounting, Ruth returned to Guatemala where she handled all programming and interpretation for North American student groups as the Associate Director for Central America Study and Service (SEMILLA) from 1996 to 1999. Ruth has also served as the co-coordinator for Sister Parish Linkage, accompanying North American Sister Parish delegations to Guatemala. Currently, Ruth has been coordinator of handicraft projects for the Sharing the Dream Organization, and worked as a Program Coordinator for CGE in Guatemala from 2005—2009.

Fidel Xinico Tum

Fidel is a Guatemalan citizen of the Cakchiqel Maya ethnic group. He is from a small village called Chipiacul, in the Department of Chimaltenango. He studied at the Catholic High School Seminary in Sololá, and at Francisco Marroquín University in Guatemala City, where he received a B.A. in Secondary Education and Philosophy. In 1984, Fidel received a scholarship from the New Ulm Dioceses of Minnesota to study at St. Paul Seminary at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he graduated with a M. Div. in 1988.

Since returning to Guatemala in 1988, Fidel worked with the San Lucas Tolimán Parish as director of catechists and delegates of the word, as well as teacher and high school principal in his home village. He also worked closely with Sister Parish since its inception in Guatemala, organizing parish-to-parish linkages, and working with delegations.

Fidel joined the staff of the Center in 1993 working with the Center’s short-term travel seminars, then with semester programs. Fidel feels that this work has taught him about his own society and its problems, and he really enjoys an active exchange of ideas with U.S. citizens and people from other countries who participate in the programs. He currently lives in San Lucas Sacatepéquez, a town near Guatemala City with his wife and three children.
César Augusto Acevedo

César was born in El Salvador and as a youth participated in the Christian Base Community movement and other social movements. In 1982, due to the political repression, Cesar and his family were forced to leave El Salvador. He lived in exile in Canada until returning to El Salvador in 1993. In Canada, he maintained close contact with the situation in El Salvador, primarily through his work with the El Salvador Ethno-cultural and Humanitarian Society and the Salvadoran Base Christian Community in Exile. Prior to working for CGE, Cesar was youth educator for FUNDAENID, the Salvadoran National AIDS Foundation. His work entailed training youth promoters in HIV/AIDS issues, including transmission and ways to avoid AIDS, human sexuality, gender roles, and self-esteem. He also has worked with Sister Parish in El Salvador and with organizations in Canada working on refugee resettlement.

While in Canada, César received a Social Work Diploma from Grant MacEwan College and has worked as a social worker. He recently concluded his studies in Latin American Social Work at the Salvadoran Lutheran University and completed a thesis on the process of reinsertion of Salvadoran deportees from the United States. Currently he is doing a Masters in Political Science at the Central American University.

Jonathan Pimentel

Jonathan was born and raised in San José, Costa Rica. He comes from a family composed of his mother, grandmother and one brother. He studied in the public school system from elementary to high school. He did his undergraduate studies at the Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana and the Universidad de Costa Rica. After completing his BA, he got married (he has been married for 11 years and has three children) and began working at theological institutions in Costa Rica. He completed a doctoral program at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago and also did some doctoral work in Latin American Literature and Philosophy in Costa Rica. Currently, he works at the National University in Costa Rica (UNA) and the Latin American Biblical University. He is a fan of the soccer club, he likes Club Sport Herediano, a Costa Rican team, and he is also a fan of Chicago’s blues.

Mark Lester

Mark shares the position of Regional Co-Director of Central America and the Caribbean for the Center for Global Education with Kathy McBride. In addition they share the responsibility for the Center’s program in Nicaragua. Mark began working with the Center in 1987. His responsibilities include designing educational experiences that help participants from the First World explore Third World culture and issues and understand the impact that relationship has on the lives of the local population. In addition, Mark is the representative of the Children’s Haven Foundation, part of a contract with the Center for Global Education in Managua.

In Nicaragua, Mark has also been Material Aids Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee, and represented the Wisconsin Coordinating Committee on Nicaragua in the Central Credit Committee of CEPAD in their Nicaraguan Community Development Loan Fund. He coordinates the Sub-Committee on Neo-liberalism for the Ecumenical Committee of U.S. Church Personnel in Nicaragua.

Prior to his work with the Center, Mark was a pastor of San Dionisio Parish in San Dionisio, Matagalpa, Nicaragua for two years (1985-87). He received cross-cultural and language school training with the Maryknoll Missioners Associate Priest Program in both New York and Bolivia. He was also a parish priest and high school religion teacher in Ft. Wright, Kentucky. Mark received his B.A. in Philosophy from St. Pius X Seminary in Erlanger, Kentucky and his M.A. in Theology with a concentration in Scripture from Mt. St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.
**Kathleen McBride**

Kathy shares the position of Regional Co-Director of Central America and the Caribbean for the Center for Global Education with Mark Lester. In addition they share the responsibility for the Center’s program in Nicaragua. Her responsibilities include coordinating the Central America semester abroad program, oversight of regional staff and programming, designing cross-cultural educational experiences within Nicaragua for travel seminar participants and university students, as well as teaching the History/Women’s Studies course.

Prior to joining the Center for Global Education in 1988, Kathy worked with the Christian Base Communities for three years in Nicaragua. Before moving to Nicaragua in 1984, she worked for eight years in community development in a squatters’ settlement on the outskirts of the city of Caracas, Venezuela. Her primary work involved literacy training and teaching primary health care to women factory workers. Kathy has received theological and cross-cultural training in the Maryknoll Lay Mission Program. She holds a B.A. in Latin American Studies from George Mason University and Masters Degree in Education from Harvard University with a concentration in International Education.

**Elisa Vanegas**

Elisa serves as program coordinator and instructor in Nicaragua. She holds a Licentiate in Diplomacy and International Relations and a Master’s Degree in Rural Sustainable Development from the National Autonomous University. Elisa worked for over six years (2007-2013) with cooperatives facilitating training processes that included women empowerment, lobbying and marketing strategies for farmers and their families. Subsequently she coordinated projects for promotion and awareness of Fair Trade’s principles and values through the Latin American Coordinator of Small Scale Fair Trade Farmers-CLAC. Most recently she worked for the Nicaraguan Government at the Ministry of Family Economy building marketing strategies for Small and Medium scale business.
Books/Readings

Required Reading
You do not need to purchase any books prior to the program. All of your course materials will be provided in reading packet form once you are in Central America.

Recommended Pre-Trip Reading
We encourage you to read the following book before the program begins:


You may also find it helpful to read:


General Information on Courses

Registration
Our Minneapolis staff will register you for the program based on a course registration form that is available online at https://web.augsburg.edu/global/APA/pages/Checklist.pdf.

All students should register for a “Traditional” grading option unless the home school will not accept a traditional grade.

Please keep a copy of the registration form for your own records. Any changes to your registration must be made in writing, whether this is before or after the program starts. You are responsible for knowing what classes you signed up for, and submitting any changes in writing to the Minneapolis Office (prior to the start of the program) or the Study Abroad Facilitator (after the program begins).

Some changes in registration may be made after the program has begun. The On-Site Study Abroad Facilitator will provide drop/add and grade option change forms. Deadlines for drop/adds are as follows:
- for the Spanish course (Guatemala): Friday, September 4
- for the religion course (Costa Rica): Friday, October 2
- for the political science and history/women’s studies courses (Nicaragua): Friday, November 6

No drop/adds or grading option changes will be made after designated deadlines.

Available Courses
Students may choose one of the following Spanish courses (Guatemala)
- Spanish 111: Beginning Spanish I
- Spanish 112: Beginning Spanish II
- Spanish 206: Spanish for Health Care Professionals
- Spanish 211: Intermediate Spanish I
- Spanish 212: Intermediate Spanish II
- Spanish 311: Conversation and Composition
- Spanish 316: Conversations in Cultural Context
- Spanish 335: Contemporary Latin American Women: Texts and Voices
- Spanish 336: Guatemalan Civilization and Culture
- Spanish 356: Latin American Literature
- Spanish 411: Advanced Conversation and Composition

All students will take the following course, which takes place in Costa Rica:
- Religion 366: Latin American Liberation Theologies

Students may choose 1-2 of the following courses in Nicaragua:
- History/Women’s Studies 355: Cultural Conflict and Change
- Political Science 310: Citizen Participation in Policy Formulation

See course syllabi at http://www.augsburg.edu/global/academic-information/
Spanish Instruction

This semester program is not a language immersion, but it does include four weeks of intensive language study and one week of orientation (five weeks total), and subsequent opportunities to listen to, speak, and write in Spanish.

Students will study for a total of five weeks in Guatemala. Three of the five weeks will be at the Proyecto Lingüístico Quetzalteco (PLQ) Language School in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, studying Spanish. During the fourth week students will continue studying Spanish in the small indigenous community of Cantel assisted by Spanish teachers from PLQ.

The PLQ program is comprised of five hours of daily one-on-one language study, three weeks living with a Guatemalan family, and a series of cultural activities. Students will be assessed for oral and written competency, and instruction will be designed specifically to meet the individual student's needs. Teaching methods include the use of audio-visual materials, pronunciation drills, dialogues, role-plays, and oral exercises. In Cantel students will stay with an indigenous family. For more information about PLQ, see http://www.hermandad.com

In terms of course selection, students should simply register for whichever course follows the last Spanish course they took, or if they are at the 300-level and above, whichever course most interests them. In the case of SPA 316, students do not need to have taken SPA 311 first; those two courses may be taken in any order.

Spanish 212, 311, 316, and 411 count toward the Spanish major or minor at Augsburg College. SPA 335 fulfills a Culture requirement for the Spanish major. If you are from another school and are majoring or minoring in Spanish, check to see which course will count toward your major or minor.

Check with your Spanish department BEFORE registering for your courses so that you make the appropriate choice in advance.

Comments on Courses

A full course-load is 3-4 courses, and most students take four courses. Each course is equivalent to four semester credits. If you are not registered for a particular course, it is often possible to sit in on a session or the entire course. Please consult with course facilitators in advance.

Students will note differences among the courses in the three countries. In Guatemala, the focus is on learning Spanish, adapting to Central American reality and culture, and exploring Mayan spirituality and the influence of Catholicism in Guatemala. There is a great deal of time devoted to experiencing the new surroundings and reflecting on that experience. It is expected that through their family stay experiences and outside-the-classroom experiences in Guatemala, students will get a feel for how the average Central American family lives and the challenges they face on a daily basis, and therefore the principle motivation for movements for social change.

In Costa Rica, students examine both the theory and practice of liberation theology and observe specifically church-related social movements. The course involves a great deal of participation and observation of organized church sectors and draws from the popular education models of those sectors. In Costa Rica students are exploring how the reality of the impoverished majority has affected one social sector, the Churches, even in the formulation of theology, and how they have organized to respond to that reality.
The political science course in Nicaragua engages students in public policy debates while providing a theoretical framework for discussions of governance and citizen participation. The course aims to help students understand the interplay between global processes and local participation. The history course traces gender, class and racial conflict within different historical periods beginning with the mid-nineteenth century. Students examine the root causes of conflict and the processes of social change in Central America. While these last two courses are participatory, they involve a high level of theoretical analysis.

In their progression the courses move from the concrete to the abstract, from the life experience of a Central American family, to the response of the Churches to these conditions, to an examination of organizing in general, and the economic theories that underlie current and past attempts at economic development. Through the variety of experiences in the four courses, students exercise observation, participation, and analytical skills.

**Grading Policy**

Augsburg College uses a numerical grading system so if you choose a Traditional grading option you will receive a numerical grade on your transcript. Numerical grades are used with these definitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Letter Equivalent</th>
<th># Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Augsburg Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>372-400</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>Achieves highest standards of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>A-/B+</td>
<td>352-371</td>
<td>88-92%</td>
<td>Achieves above basic course standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>332-351</td>
<td>83-87%</td>
<td>Achieves basic course standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>B-/C+</td>
<td>312-331</td>
<td>78-82%</td>
<td>Meets basic standards for the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0*</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>292-311</td>
<td>73-77%</td>
<td>Performance below basic course standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>C-/D+</td>
<td>272-291</td>
<td>68-72%</td>
<td>Unacceptable performance (no course credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>252-271</td>
<td>63-67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>240-251</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;240</td>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A 2. or higher is required for a passing grade for courses designated with the “Pass/No Credit” grade option.

**Explanation of Grades**

The following point system is used to determine grades:

Each assignment offers a certain maximum number of points to be earned corresponding to a given percentage of the total course grade. In other words, an assignment, which is worth 10% of the total course grade, will offer a maximum of 40 points. For each individual assignment, students will be given a detailed assignment description, which will break down the number of points given for the quality with which specific criteria are met. As a result, once each assignment is returned, to you, students will know exactly how many total points they have and how many more points they need to achieve the grade for which they are striving in the course.

For example, a student who is striving for a “3.0,” must achieve a minimum of 332 points, whereas someone who is striving for a “Pass” or a “2.0,” need only achieve 292 points. Many students have found that this system gives them a great amount of freedom and reduces their stress about grades, allowing them to focus more on accomplishing their learning goals. For example, depending upon the number of total points they are seeking, students may choose to omit certain assignments. (Please note that the church accommodation project is not optional.) Students who have questions about the point system should be sure to ask the course instructor.
Grading Philosophy
While students are required to take their courses for grades, we believe that grading often hinders rather than helps the learning process. As a result, we would rather spend more time focusing on the honest assessment and evaluation of student’s learning rather than on grading. What we mean by this is that we would like to create an atmosphere in which students are encouraged to reflect upon their learning styles and to honestly assess and evaluate their own academic work and academic progress, while also receiving constructive criticism from instructors and peers.

Grading Criteria
While criteria will vary slightly from assignment to assignment, most work will be graded on the following four criteria: 1.) Form (10%), 2.) Content (30%), 3.) Interpretation and Analysis (30%), and 4.) Connections (30%). The instructor considers superior work to be work which fulfills the following criteria:

1) Form (10%):
- Extremely well organized
- Articulates ideas clearly and concisely
- Correct grammar and spelling
- Legible
- Typed or handwritten on 8 ½ x 11” paper
- Accurate citation of readings and speakers (using footnotes or endnotes and bibliography)

2) Content (30%):
- Demonstrates accurate and profound knowledge of the subject
- Includes an articulate statement of your thesis and/or questions for further exploration
- Scales down information to what is most important
- Exhibits a profound understanding of the main points expressed by guest speakers and in required readings
- Employs solid logic and well-documented data
- Supports arguments with concrete examples from readings, speakers, class sessions, and other experiences

3) Interpretation and Analysis (30%):
- Presents more than just a summary of information
- Analyzes issues from different viewpoints, including views opposite one’s own
- Recognizes interrelationships among issues
- Draws upon assigned texts, class sessions and guest speakers to support own thesis
- Makes logical arguments
- Articulates complexities of the issues
- Generates critical questions not addressed fully by authors or speakers
- Applies principles and generalizations already learned to new information

4) Connections (30%):
- Demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which issues interrelate with each other
- Integrates knowledge from diverse sources, including authors and speakers
- Compares ideas of authors of required readings with each other
- Makes connections between ideas raised in required readings with those of guest speakers
- Takes new information acquired in Central America and effectively integrates it with prior knowledge and experiences
- Synthesizes and integrates information and ideas
Self-Assessment and Peer Assessments
Students will be asked to complete and hand in a self-assessment form with each assignment (except for the exam). Although the instructor makes the final determination of points, and hence grades, students are asked to honestly evaluate their own work in order to have input into the grading process and generate a constructive dialogue regarding the evaluation of specific assignments based on explicitly defined criteria. When there is a strong disagreement between a student and instructor regarding the evaluation of a particular assignment, the student should make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the disagreement.

Students will also be asked to participate in a process of peer evaluation regarding creative projects, oral presentations, and class participation.

Student Rights and Responsibilities
Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. If you qualify, please identify yourself to the instructors so that we may assist you with your course progress.

Augsburg Honesty Policy
All students are expected to follow the Augsburg Honesty Policy, which is printed in the Appendices of this manual. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed that all course work will be your own. You are not to copy the work of others. Your name on assignments will be taken as your "pledge" that you have read the honesty policy, understand it, and are following it. The first occurrence of plagiarism will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

Late Assignments
In the case of illness, students may request an extension of the deadline for a particular assignment. Requests for extensions, however, must be made to the course instructor BEFORE the assignment is due and a new deadline must be established. Assignments turned in after the time specified on the due date or after the renegotiated deadline (in cases of illness) will lose 1/2 grade every 48 hours until submitted. (i.e., a 4.0 quality paper turned in one day late without approval will receive a 3.5)

Portfolios
All students will have a portfolio in which they are encouraged to keep copies of all assignments and to which they may add additional samples of work which provide evidence of academic progress.

Revisions
Students who are unsatisfied with their work may re-write or revise assignments. They may choose either to add revised work to their portfolios in order to demonstrate academic progress or to remove the original and replace it with the revised work. All revisions must be submitted within one week of the time the original work is returned by the instructor.

Extra-Credit Assignments
Students who feel the need to try to raise their overall course grades may complete ONE extra-credit assignment worth 10 points. Extra-credit work must be given to the instructor by 6:00pm on the last day of the course.
Incomplete Grades
An incomplete grade may be given only in the case of serious emergency. To receive an incomplete grade, a student must receive permission from the course instructor; must file a form stating the reasons for the request, the work required to complete the course; the plan and date for completing the work, and comments from the instructor; and must gain the approval of the Registrar (at Augsburg and at the home school if applicable). If permission is granted, the necessary work must be completed in time to allow evaluation of the work by the course instructor and filing of a grade before the final day of the following semester. If the work is not completed by that date, the grade for the course becomes a 0.0.

Credit and Transcripts
Each course is worth four semester hours. Most students will take four courses for a program total of 16 credits. Credit is granted and transcripts issued by Augsburg College.

An official transcript is not automatically sent. Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, your written consent is required for the release of a transcript. (Faxes, e-mails and phone calls are not accepted.) You must return a completed “Transcript Request Form” to the Center for Global Education at Augsburg College to receive your transcript. This information should have been included on the Study Abroad Approval form submitted with your program application, but if it was not, or was sent via fax or scan, you will be sent a request form.

You do not need to include any money if you are requesting only one transcript. Augsburg provides the first transcript free of charge. After that, there is a $6 fee for each transcript sent.

Be sure to check with your home school regarding the proper place to send your transcript to ensure transfer of credit.

For course syllabi see:
http://www.augsburg.edu/global/academic-information/
Related Components of the Academic Program

Orientation
The program begins on Monday, August 17, in Guatemala City. All students must arrive on that date. The first few days of the program will be spent on orientation to the program components, to each other, and to the situation in Guatemala. On Tuesday, August 18, we will travel to Antigua where we will spend the night, and continue on to Quetzaltenango on August 19. You will find that the programming is intense and that the schedule is very full, so do your best to come into the program well rested.

Living/Learning Environment
An essential part of the semester experience will be creating an environment of respect and cooperation which contributes to our lives and learning together. This means that everyone will be expected to share a variety of group chores such as clearing or sometimes washing dishes. It also will mean engaging yourselves in a learning process that involves group discussion and group work. Students will share responsibility for organizing, attending, and facilitating community meetings in addition to group sessions where issues and challenges of the group are discussed.

Family Stays
Guatemala
For four weeks you will live with Guatemalan families. We consider the family stay a requirement for the program. It is not only a time to practice Spanish, but more importantly it is a time to experience how issues raised in the courses impact daily lives of Central American families. You will be placed in a family by the staff of the language school in consultation with our Guatemala staff. There will be an orientation before your family stay begins and regular check-ins during the stay.

Cost Rica
Most of your stay in Costa Rica will be spent with local families. The extended family stays will be at Montes de Oca, which is the 15th Canton in the Province of San Jose, Costa Rica. This Canton covers an area of 15.16 square kilometers and has a population of 54,288. The Capital City of the Canton is San Pedro. The Canton is known for its high level of commercial development, the number of universities and other centers of higher education, and of course for its active life.

Two other visits during our time in the country will take place: one will be in La Carpio Community. This is a poor neighborhood of around 40,000 inhabitants of whom 50% are immigrants from Nicaragua and other Central American countries and the other 50% are Costa Rican. The community is located in the north part of San Jose, in an area of about 296 square kilometers. The community is surrounded by two rivers and a landfill, which receives over 700 tons of waste every single day. The other visit will be outside San Jose, in an ecological area call Longo Mai located in Punta Arena Province.

Longo Mai began in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and France back in the 1960’s. Their main idea is living together, based on self-administration and agricultural self-sufficiency. In the late 1970’s Longo Mai Europe decided to purchase land in Costa Rica in order to provide a place for Nicaraguans who were fleeing the terror of the Somoza regime. When the Sandinista revolution ended, Nicaraguans went back to their homeland. It did not take too long until Salvadoran refugees replaced the Nicaraguans. Longo Mai is now a community made of around 500 people, mostly Costa Ricans, Salvodorans and a few Europeans. An important project at Longo Mai is providing local alternative eco-tourism; it is located about 3 hours away from San Jose.
Nicaragua
CGE maintains a house in Managua for its study programs which will be your home base for classes and other program activities. However, for most of the time in Nicaragua you will be living in a poor community with a family that is active in the local community’s cultural center. In most cases there will be two students placed per family, but there may be occasions when more students are housed with one family. A family stay orientation is held within the first week of arrival in Nicaragua. A meeting with the community is held so that students can meet the other members of the community that are hosting their classmates. Regular check-ins are scheduled throughout the length of the family stay. There is also a short rural family stay (four days) at an organic coffee co-op (in Estelí) in the northern part of the country.

Suggested Activities to Help You Feel More at Home during Family Stay
♦ Walks: with one or more family members. Visit neighbors, go to church or to the market, get acquainted with the neighborhood.
♦ Homework: help the kids, and then have them help you!
♦ Work: many families appreciate it when you show interest and assist in their daily tasks.
♦ Play: with the children in the family and in the neighborhood. Play soccer, shoot marbles, teach them to juggle, fold paper toys or to play simple games.
♦ Photos: great conversation starters about family, school, work, etc. Families often enjoy when students bring extra photos of yourself, your family, school, etc to leave with them.
♦ Cook: learn to prepare traditional local dishes.

“I liked the family stay. It was hard at times, but very good for me and my Spanish. I feel much closer to (the country) and the people because of it.”

“Definitely the most important and meaningful experience of the whole program. Many relationships developed and I had opportunities to do things I wouldn’t normally have done.”

Sample Schedules
Although the days might change, the academic schedule for a week when you are in the following countries might look like the one below:

Guatemala
In Quetzaltenango there is generally five hours of one-on-one language instruction in the mornings, and speakers or visits in the afternoon. Orientation week, as well as the rural stay period, are exceptions to this.

Sample week in Guatemala:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM - Spanish Course</td>
<td>AM - Spanish Course</td>
<td>AM - Spanish Course</td>
<td>AM - Spanish Course</td>
<td>AM - Spanish Course</td>
<td>Rural Stay—composed of meetings with community meetings</td>
<td>Hearing testimonies followed by visit to massacre site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM - Visit to surrounding community</td>
<td>PM - Speaker Evening Group Session</td>
<td>PM - Free Community Night in evening</td>
<td>PM - Talk on Mayan Spirituality</td>
<td>PM - Rural Stay Preparation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Costa Rica**

Class sessions will be held at the Universidad Biblica Latino Americana (UBL), supplemented with a variety of presentations and excursions both on and off-site.

**Sample week in Costa Rica:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic tour of San Jose; debrief tour</td>
<td>Class session at the UBL</td>
<td>Class session at the UBL</td>
<td>Presentation: Liberation Theology</td>
<td>Depart for family stays</td>
<td>Visit Irazu volcano</td>
<td>Free day/ Study time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit the National Museum of Costa Rica</td>
<td>Presentation: Costa Rica’s current situation</td>
<td>Presentation: current situation of the Catholic Church</td>
<td>12:00: Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation: Costa Rican history</td>
<td>Group session</td>
<td>Class session at the UBL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Nicaragua**

Generally in Nicaragua students have 2-3 hour sessions in the morning and/or afternoon for the two courses (either HIS/WST or POL). Class sessions are composed of lectures, visits, speakers, and student led discussions. During the week there are also group sessions and community nights as well.

**Sample week in Nicaragua:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<th>Thursday</th>
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<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM POL Course: Lecture</td>
<td>POL Course: Speaker</td>
<td>AM - HIS/WST Course: Lecture</td>
<td>Rural Stay: meetings with community leaders</td>
<td>Continue Rural Stay: hearing history of community and history of cooperatives</td>
<td>FREE</td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS/WST Course: Speaker</td>
<td>HIS/WST Course: student led discussion</td>
<td>POL Course: Visit Community Night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Session</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Tentative Calendar for Fall 2015

More detailed schedules will be handed out regularly throughout the semester. The following are tentative dates in the three countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 17</td>
<td>Students arrive in Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, August 18</strong></td>
<td><strong>Travel to Antigua</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 19</td>
<td><strong>Travel to Quetzaltenango</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19-22</td>
<td>Continuing orientation in Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23 – September 12</td>
<td>Language Study/Family Stay in Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13 - 16</td>
<td>Rural Language Schools in Cantel, Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Wrap up of Guatemala Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Travel and stay the night in Antigua Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September 19</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fly to San Jose, Costa Rica</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20 – October 17</td>
<td>Latin American Liberation Theologies (REL 366) in Costa Rica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 17 – 25</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fall Break!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, October 25</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arrive in Managua, Nicaragua</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 26 – December 4</td>
<td>Citizen Participation in Policy Formation (POL 310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Conflict and Social Change (HIS/WST 355)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday December 4</td>
<td>Last day of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, December 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Students travel home</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Changes in Itinerary**

The Center for Global Education reserves the right to change the group's itinerary or arrangements if it becomes necessary or advisable to do so.
Passport Requirements
Be sure to obtain a passport if you do not have one. If you have one, be sure that it is valid through at least June 5, 2016. Nicaragua requires that all visitors have a passport that is valid for six months past your scheduled date of departure.

To obtain a new passport, you need the following:
- Original birth certificate with an embossed seal,
  OR
- An old U.S. passport (even if it has expired),
  OR
- A certified copy of your birth certificate with the Health Department seal of the state of birth. This can be obtained from the county clerk in the county in which you were born for a small fee. (Note: A birth registration or hospital certificate is not acceptable.)
  AND
- Valid identification, such as a driver’s license.
- Check payable to the Department of State for $75 (10 year passport) plus a $25 execution fee to the facility processing the passport application.
- Two identical passport photographs

To renew your passport, you will need:
- Your most recent passport
- Two identical passport photos
- A $75 fee, payable to the U.S. Department of State

For complete information and application forms, see [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

Once you receive your passport, make three copies of the photo page. Send one to the Center for Global Education in Minneapolis, and keep two to carry with you when you travel! As a further safeguard, we request that you also bring a certified copy of your birth certificate (see above) in case you need to reapply for a lost passport during the semester.

Guatemala: Entry requires only a valid passport. If Immigration officials may ask how long you plan to remain in country give the departure date of September 19.

Costa Rica: A passport and tourist card/visa are required for entry into Costa Rica. You must also have proof of onward travel to another country, and capacity of at least $100 per month while you are in the country; CGE will take care of these things when the group travels to Costa Rica.

Nicaragua: Entry into Nicaragua requires only a passport valid until at least June 5, 2016, and purchase of a $5 tourist card. If your passport expires before this date you must request a passport renewal immediately.
SAFETY AND SECURITY

General Recommendations

In-Country Health/Safety Orientation. Upon arrival in each country, all participants are given an extensive health and safety orientation by one of CGE’s staff members. This orientation covers topics from drinking water and insects to how to deal with catcalls on the street, withdrawing money from ATMs and emergency response. At the end of the orientation, students are asked to read and sign a “Health and Safety Agreement” form.

Emergency Contact Cards. You will be given a credit-card sized emergency contact card to carry at all times. The card includes the phone numbers for the guesthouse or hotel, as well as phone numbers for CGE staff members and emergency numbers (U.S. Embassy, hospital, etc). Additionally, the card has phone numbers for local authorized taxi company.

It is very important that our staff be able to reach you in case of an emergency. Therefore, you are required to complete a Travel Information Form and give it to the CGE staff before you travel outside the country during the duration of program.

Safes. We do NOT recommend carrying passports with you, except for the visit to the U.S. Embassy. We have a safe in our office or guesthouse where you can keep your passport and other valuables locked away during your time in Central America.

On-Call System. Every evening and weekend there is a designated “on call” staff member who carries with her/him our “on-call” cell phone. This staff member can be reached at any time of the night to assist in any urgent situation. The phone number for the “on call” cell phone is widely distributed (signs around the houses, listed on participants schedule and emergency contact cards, taught at orientation). You also have all staff’s home phone numbers in case the “on call” cell phone does not work for some reason.

We urge all program participants to follow the following risk reduction measures:

1. Carry the telephone list at all times, so that you or your host family can reach us in case of emergency. It also provides other important contact numbers, such as radio taxis and the U.S. Embassy. Students who don’t have their own cell phone will have access to one when they go out.

2. Taxis - When taking taxis, always take radio taxis as they are much less risky than flagging taxis down off the street. RADIO TAXIS have to report to base every time they pick up and drop off passengers, whereas there is no control of taxis you flag on the street. Telephone numbers for radio taxis in each country are included on the Contacts List (see below). Do not flag down taxis on the street.

3. After dark and before sunlight, do not walk or take buses. Rather, take radio taxis when it is dark out! After calling the radio taxi to pick you up, WAIT INSIDE until the taxi arrives before going out to the street and immediately getting in the taxi. We will reimburse any radio taxi expenses related to the program, while you are obviously responsible for expenses in going out on your own when it's not program-related. Our Nicaragua staff recommends not using public transportation at all.

4. Ask CGE faculty and staff and other local people about the safety of places you intend to visit.

5. Avoid going to the bars and night spots unless you have consulted with CGE personnel.

6. At the guesthouse or hotel, do not leave the front doors open and do not let people in or open the front door without first looking or asking. It would be better to let employees do that task.
7. **Do not** give out our addresses or phone numbers to people you meet. Get their numbers instead if you want to contact them.

8. **Do not** buy, sell or use illegal drugs. If you do so, you put yourself and Augsburg College at risk, and you will also be sent home from the program. If you get caught, you will go to jail and CGE cannot bail you out.

9. **Do not associate** with anyone you think may be involved in selling, buying, and/or consuming drugs. Do not go to their homes or businesses. Avoid all contact with them.

10. **Do not drink to excess.** Excessive drinking puts you at greater risk. While the drinking age in all three countries is 18, if you drink, be very careful about how much you drink. Recent studies have demonstrated that students abroad tend to drink far more than they do at home. For your own safety, please be the exception to that rule!

11. **We do not travel after dark,** roads conditions and streetlights are poor in rural areas.

12. **Walking.** During the day you can walk with at least another person. Make sure that you let CGE people know where you are going and when you are planning to comeback. Do not walk at night. If you need to leave the guesthouse or hotel you must use taxis.

13. **Theft:** if someone does try to forcibly take your valuables, do not resist. The potential harm to you is not worth the value of any stolen goods. Exercise caution in taking anything of value with you in public. Keep a low profile with anything of value such as electronics, cash, jewellery. We work as much as possible to minimize the risk of theft, but we can’t guarantee complete safety for any valuables, just as would be the case anywhere in the world.

Despite this long list of “DO NOTs,” please know that students, staff and faculty regularly go out to safe places and have a wonderful time! You are not going to be locked into your houses; you just need to be careful about what you do and where you go so that you can reduce risks as you make friends and explore.

**Earthquakes**

Central America is a seismically active region, and minor tremors are common, although major quakes are less so. However, since Nicaragua recently experienced several rather strong earthquakes we are providing this information in the event a strong tremor or earthquake occurs during the program.

Cell phone and landline communication are the first to be lost. For this reason it is important to follow the instructions of the local communities.

1. **STAY CALM!!!**
2. **KNOW HOW TO REACT.** You should review the following before embarking for Central America: [http://www.earthquakecountry.info/dropcoverholdon/](http://www.earthquakecountry.info/dropcoverholdon/)
3. **FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES.** Please follow the instructions of the community, including the instructions from any governmental offices that provide disaster response. Radios will also give instructions about natural disasters.
4. **BE IN TOUCH.** If you are not with you CGE group, as soon as communication is reestablished, CGE will be in touch with you and you should also try to get in touch with CGE (numbers of program coordinators and on-call staff will provided on-site). If it is a very strong earthquake, also try to be in touch with your family. Otherwise, CGE will also be in communication with them.
GUATEMALA
Guatemala, as the most populous country in Central America, has its share of street crime like most big cities. Urban crime from pick-pocketing, to armed robbery occurs here like it does in major cities of the U.S. and around the world.

Strikes are often accompanied by street demonstrations and roadblocks, which require close monitoring and occasionally rerouting of activities. In these cases students and participants are kept abreast of such civil disturbances. CGE staff advises students to exercise common sense as well as specific precautions as they engage in program and personal activities.

Participants staying with host families in Quetzaltenango have their host families as an extra resource for safety and network. We advise to follow the recommendations from their host families and the “Language School Proyecto Linguistico Quetzalteco.”

Since there has been occasional petty thievery in the neighborhood, students are advised to always walk in groups, never alone or if they are going out at night to take taxis in small groups.

COSTA RICA
Costa Rica is one of the most peaceful countries in Central America. Similarly, San Jose, the capital, is considered one of the safest cities in the region. However petty crime may take place, and as with the other countries we visit, we advise the students to take the same precautions to protect themselves and their property.

NICARAGUA
Nicaragua, while considered to be the safest country in Central America is also among the poorest. Street crime ranging from pick pocketing to armed robbery does occur in Nicaragua, mostly in Managua and other urban areas, just as it does in many large cities in the U.S. and around the world. There are occasional street demonstrations, strikes and road blocks which require close monitoring and occasionally rerouting of activities. Students are kept abreast of civil disturbances and CGE staff advise and orient students and to exercise common sense and specific precautions as they engage in program and personal activities.

Participants stay either at the CGE guest house (which enjoys the security benefits of the presidential police, as it located one block from the President’s home), and in a poor community known as Batahola, a community that CGE has worked with for the last twenty years. Batahola is located a five minute drive west of the CGE guest house. It is a tightly knit community where neighbors know one another and many families participate in the Batahola Cultural Center which is the organization that hosts CGE groups. While there has been occasional petty thievery in the neighborhood, the community is among the safer poor communities in Managua. Students are advised to always walk in groups and never alone and families often accompany students and participants in the neighborhood.

Nicaragua’s spectacular landscape includes volcanos, and occasionally there have been volcanic eruptions of ash that require a rerouting of travel. As it is in a seismically active region, there is also the possibility of earthquakes. All program participants will be immediately notified of any increased risk to their safety and security.
HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Even if you are in perfect health, the rigors of changes in climate and altitude, long hours of travel, exposure to unfamiliar bacteria, adjustment to new foods, and simply being away from normal support systems can make you susceptible to illness. It is necessary to prepare for that. Please read over this information carefully.

Insurance
Medical Insurance: As a Center for Global Education student, you will be covered by Augsburg College’s Foreign Travel Abroad insurance, administered by Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators. This plan includes travel, accident and sickness coverage (a $250 deductible per incident applies). See Benefits Summary and Information Card. Make sure you bring these with you when you travel.

If you do incur medical expenses, you may need to pay for the services up-front, and be reimbursed by the insurance company. If so, a claims form is available from one of your program coordinators, and should be returned to them with all receipts related to the injury/illness. Also see note below regarding payment for medical services.

Personal Property Insurance: Please note that you are responsible for the cost of replacing any personal property that is stolen or damaged. Your personal possessions may be covered by your family’s household insurance, but check to make sure (especially if you plan to bring along anything of value, such as your laptop computer or camera). If you want additional accident or life insurance, most companies can help you with this.

Medical/Emergency Expenses
In the event that you become ill or are injured, and require hospitalization, you will need to have a credit card (not debit card) available with at least $1,000 credit available. Hospitals in the region do not take debit cards, and may require a deposit of at least US$1,000. (If your expenses do not total that amount your credit card would be refunded.)

Reporting
For students from Minnesota institutions: please be aware that recently passed legislation requires your school to report to the Secretary of State all injuries and illnesses (that require hospitalization) and deaths among their students who study abroad. In the unlikely event that these incidents should occur, we are obligated to report them to your home school.

HIV/AIDS
Both HIV and AIDS are underreported in the region although all the ministries of health acknowledge that it is a growing concern. Students need to be aware of the increase in cases in the region and take the necessary precautions during their travels in Central America. Students should consult the Centers for Disease Control webpage for more information.

Inoculations
You should make sure that you are up to date on all of your basic inoculations (i.e. polio, diphtheria, tetanus). No other inoculations are required, but you may find it helpful to call the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (888/232-3228 or 404/639-2572) to listen to their extensive recorded information about health risks and precautions for international travelers, or visit the CDC Webpage. You should also consult with your doctor about health risks and precautions. We recommend that you consider protection against several illnesses that may be present in Central America. These include Hepatitis A and B, typhoid and malaria. Please review the Health Information on the For Accepted Students page for more details on each of these. Consult with your doctor about any inoculation taking into account individual health condition(s).
The Centers for Disease Control recommend that travelers to Central America receive an immune globulin (IG) shot or Hepatitis A vaccine for protection against Hepatitis A. According to the CDC, travelers to Central America are at high risk for Hepatitis A, especially if travel plans include visiting rural areas and extensive travel in the countryside, frequent close contact with local persons, or eating in settings of poor sanitation.

A study has shown that many cases of travel-related Hepatitis A occur in travelers to developing countries with “standard” itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors. Hepatitis A vaccine is preferred for persons who plan to travel repeatedly or reside for long periods of time in intermediate or high-risk areas. Immune globulin is recommended for persons of all ages who desire only short-term protection. The vaccine requires a series of injections, the first of which must take place at least four weeks prior to travel, and the second at least six months after the first. The immune globulin is a single dose shot. Because it offers only short-term protection (3-5 months), it should be administered shortly prior to travel.

Dengue Fever: Dengue is present in all three countries you will visit. No vaccine is available, but travelers can reduce their risk of acquiring dengue by remaining in well-screened or air-conditioned areas when possible, wearing clothing that adequately covers the arms and legs, and applying insect repellent to both skin and clothing. The most effective repellents are those containing N,N-diethylmetatoluamide (DEET).

Malaria: Some travelers to Central America have opted to take a prophylactic medication for malaria. Consult with an international travel clinic or with your doctor about which medicines are prescribed currently. Of the places you are going, the possibility of contracting malaria would be the highest in Nicaragua. You may choose to take this prophylactic for the full semester or just the time you under the greatest risk of exposure. Prophylactic malaria medication can be very expensive and is taken daily a week before, during and after your travel so protecting yourself for the entire semester could be costly. Once again, consult with your doctor. Since no prophylactic will be 100% effective, you should come prepared to avoid mosquito bites with a repellent that includes DEET and with long pants and long-sleeved shirts to wear at dawn and dusk.

Tuberculosis: While Tuberculosis is present in Nicaragua, the CDC does not list it as a significant threat when traveling to Central America. However, exposure to the illness is not uncommon, and several students have tested positive for exposure upon return to the States. Doctors in Nicaragua advise that this is no cause to be alarmed, as the test indicates only exposure and does not mean that the illness has been contracted.

Typhoid: Typhoid fever is transmitted through food and water contaminated with infected human feces, and it is prevented by being careful with what you eat and drink and by proper hygiene. You can get typhoid even though you have been vaccinated though inoculation usually lessens the severity of the disease if contracted.

It is important that you consult with your doctor as soon as possible about the timing for all of the inoculations since some medications are administered months apart. For example, vaccination against Hepatitis B ideally begins six months prior to exposure; tetanus and gamma globulin should not be taken together.

Diarrhea, Cholera, Typhoid and Dysentery Prevention
You will be given more information on this once you arrive in the region, but in general, you should follow certain rules for eating and drinking:

- Drink plenty of bottled, filtered or boiled water (available at the guest houses). Bottled drinks, including soda water, are also safe. Host families have been instructed to provide bottled or boiled water.
- All meat, fish, vegetables should be well cleaned and cooked. Avoid all uncooked vegetables and fruits unless you wash and peel them yourself. If you are served uncooked fruits or vegetables, ask if they have been washed with disinfectant.
It is not advisable to buy food or beverages from street vendors. Sidewalk cafes should have kitchens that are far off and closed to the street since street dust can contaminate food. Avoid ice unless you are sure it is made from purified water.

Check to make sure that milk is boiled or pasteurized and that cheese is pasteurized. Brand-name ice cream is generally safe though homemade ice cream sold on the street is not.

Wash your hands regularly especially when coming in from the street, after using the restroom, and before you eat anything.

Play it safe! You will learn to eat and drink wisely once you’re in Central America. Even exercising caution, at some point during the semester, you may have diarrhea or other intestinal problems. Some students take an antibiotic such as bactrim, a sulfa drug, or doxycycline, a form of tetracycline, to prevent diarrhea.

If symptoms occur, we encourage students to see a doctor and take antibiotics as directed, **for the full cycle of treatment**, unless severe side-effects occur. Hygiene and precaution remain important even if antibiotics are used. Once again consult with your physician.

You should consider bringing along some Pepto Bismol tablets and herbal teas. Also, you may want to bring acidophilus and take a tablet/capsule before eating or drinking anything. It is available in health stores in the U.S. Note: drugs such as Lomotil, Paragoric, Immodium and Kaopectate are not recommended since they can be dangerous in cases of infectious diarrheas, and they can intensify dehydration. In addition, if your doctor has given you a prescription for any antibiotics or other medication for diarrhea, be sure that you know how it should be taken and always take it as directed.

**Other Health Concerns**

Since so much travel will be done overland on mountainous roads and in boats, we encourage you to bring Dramamine or some equivalent if you are prone to motion sickness.

For those students who suffer from asthma, please make sure to bring all the necessary medicines with you, especially inhalers, and carry them with you at all times.
TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE PROGRAM

Your program fees do not cover your travel to and from the region. However, flights will be arranged with STA Travel, a travel agency specializing in student travel. This package will include round-trip travel to the region as well as between Guatemala and Costa Rica (CGE will be arranging travel between Costa Rica and Nicaragua).

Because of the regional travel involved in the semester, we ask that students plan to take these reserved flights. Please contact Margaret Anderson at CGE immediately (612/330-1685 or anderso4@augsburg.edu) if for some reason you do not wish to do so.

If you would like to travel before or after the program, STA may be able to accommodate the deviation in dates.

You will be contacted directly by an STA agent when the flights have been reserved, and information will also be posted on our webpage.

When you book your travel, please be aware that travelers now have to list their complete name exactly as it is shown in an acceptable government-issued ID, their date of birth and their gender at the time of booking a flight. If travelers do not have a name that matches their ID on their airline e-ticket, they will not be able to secure a boarding pass. See TSA information at: http://www.tsa.gov/what_we_do/layers/secureflight/index.shtm.

Arrival in Guatemala City
You will be met at the airport by Center for Global Education Staff. If you choose to travel beforehand and plan to arrive prior to August 17 you will be responsible for your own transportation, lodging and food. You may reserve a room at the guesthouse where the group will stay, but will have to make the arrangements. If you arrive early and choose to stay at this guesthouse, direct the taxi driver to:

   Casa Emaus  
   26 Calle 15-56 Zona 11  
   Colonia Las Charcas  
   Phone: 2485 7620

If you choose to stay at the Casa Emaus you should be aware of certain security issues, such as not going out on your own, particularly in the evening.
LOCALE AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Guatemala
Guatemala is, according to one guidebook, “Central America in an exaggerated form.” It covers an area of 108,889 km (42,042 square miles). The volcanoes are the highest and the most active; the Mayan ruins are the most impressive; its population is the largest, 11,237,196; and it is home to the largest indigenous population, about 65%.

In Guatemala, the division between Maya and Spanish descent (ladino) is fairly strict and has been the source of conflict since the Conquest. While indigenous populations are concentrated in the highlands, you will see people wearing traditional indigenous clothing in the capital, Guatemala City, as well. In the highland villages, people continue practicing many Mayan traditions with regard to food, religion and family life.

Home to approximately three million people, Guatemala City sprawls across a range of flattened mountains and deep ravines. Guatemala City became the capital of Guatemala in the late 1700s after a powerful earthquake destroyed much of Antigua, the former capital. The city is divided into zones (zonas). Zona 1 is where you’ll find the Plaza Major, the National Palace, the central market.

One of Guatemala’s largest cities, but one that has maintained its provincial charm is Quetzaltenango. This city is better known as Xelajú or just Xela (Shê-la). It is located in the highland department of Quetzaltenango at about 7,500ft/2,300m and enjoys a cool climate year around. The indigenous population of Quetzaltenango is comprised predominantly of Quiché Maya.

Costa Rica
This Central American country lies between Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south. The country is divided by a backbone of volcanoes and mountains, an extension of the Andes-Sierra Madre chain which runs along the western side of the Americas. Costa Rica has four distinct cordilleras or mountain ranges -- Guanacaste and Tilaran in the north, Central and Talamanca in the south. Costa Rica is part of the Pacific "Rim of Fire" and has seven of the isthmus' 42 active volcanoes plus dozens of dormant or extinct cones. Earth tremors and small quakes shake the country from time to time.

Costa Rica is home to approximately 4½ million people. Almost 2/3 of the population live in the central valley, where the capital city, San Jose, is located, along with several other major cities. It has both Caribbean and Pacific coasts, lined with white and black sand beaches. It is said to be the safest and most democratic country in Central America, and famous for its biodiversity.

Compared to other Central American countries, Costa Rica had relatively few indigenous cultures, and those that existed at the time of Spanish colonization were diverse and widely scattered. As colonization continued, most fled or were killed by disease or mistreatment; those that remained tended to be integrated into the new social system, and the people are more European in descent rather than mestizo.

San Jose is Costa Rica’s largest city, and center of political, transportation and economic activity. Population is nearly three million people. The architecture of the city, namely theatres, museums and houses in the city centre, is distinctly European in influence.
Nicaragua
Nicaragua has three distinct geographic regions: the Pacific lowlands (where Managua is located), the north-central mountains and the Atlantic Coast. These regions have distinct geographic, cultural, racial, ethnic and religious zones. The population of Nicaragua is approximately five million with 90% of Nicaraguans living on the Pacific Coast and 10% living on the Atlantic Coast. According to the UN Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the hemisphere.

The population of the capital city, Managua, is estimated at 1.5 million. The city is about 70 meters above sea level and is located on the shores of Lake Managua (Xolotlán), which has been an ecological concern for many years given high levels of contamination. In 1972, a massive earthquake destroyed the downtown area, which has not been rebuilt. While millions of dollars of international aid was sent to help Nicaragua rebuild, most of that money went into the bank account of Anastasio Somoza, the president and dictator at that time. Markets, neighborhoods and businesses tend to be decentralized and located on the fringe of the city. Managua is slowing growing towards Masaya (south). Since most streets don’t have names, people describe a location in relation to landmarks. Locations are described in relation to Lake Managua (al lago) and south, east (arriba), west (abajo). This system is challenging for visitors since landmarks are not always obvious and may also refer to places which disappeared in the earthquake.

Climate/Weather
Although the actual distance you will travel from Guatemala to Costa Rica to Nicaragua is not great, you will experience a range of climates throughout the semester depending on the altitude. Average temperatures are provided below:

**Guatemala City/Quetzaltenango:** Both Guatemala and Quetzaltenango are at high elevations so temperatures are generally cool. The average daily temperature range in August – September is 40°F - 70°F. In both cities, mornings and evenings can be quite cold and raining. During the day it becomes warm but during the night it is cool and often even cold. A heavy sweater or coat is needed in the morning and evening and also a rain jacket. Students should note that buildings in Guatemala are not heated.

**San Jose:** You will be in Costa Rica during the cold season, which lasts from September to December, when the average daily high and low temperature are an average low of 80°F and high of 65°F. It is a very humid time of year, and it will likely rain three out of four days. However, it rarely rains all day. Usually the mornings are bright and sunny with showers in mid-afternoon.

**Managua:** In November and December, the temperature averages from 85 to 90°F. This is the start of the dry season and rain is possible but not likely. Humidity is relatively high throughout the year. For trips into the tropical zones rain gear will be needed. In the mountainous areas temperatures can range from 60-85°F

Accommodations
While in Guatemala City you will stay together at guest houses and hotels. Bedrooms and bathrooms will be shared between 2-4 students. You will have most of your meals at the guesthouses with an occasional meal in a restaurant. Some speakers will join you at the guest houses, but most class sessions will be out in the community.

In Quetzaltenango, you will live with local families. The families are chosen by the staff of the language school with input from our Guatemala staff. The families would be considered middle class by Guatemalan standards, which are not the same as those in the US. Conditions will be simple but comfortable. Families live within easy access of the language school, all within walking distance. Each student is placed with a family.
You will have one-on-one Spanish classes at the language school for five hours every weekday for three weeks. In addition, there will be optional excursions through Proyecto Linguístico Quetzalteco de Español. The fourth week, all students will go to a rural indigenous community of Cantel. There the conditions will be simple living with an indigenous family from the Quiché ethnic group.

Costa Rica
For the first few days you will be staying at the AMCA guesthouse. On Friday of the first week you will be moving in with a host family, where you will stay for the remainder of your time in Costa Rica. Classes will be held at Biblical Latinamerican University.

Nicaragua
In Nicaragua students will be living with families in an urban community. In most cases there will be two placed per family, but there may be occasions when more students are housed with one family. CGE maintains a house in Managua for its study programs that will be your home base for classes and other program activities.

CGE Central America Alcohol Policy
Based on our experience with semester students as well as short-term delegation students, we have in place the following alcohol policy. The reasoning for each is explained following the policy provisions.

1. No drinking of alcohol before or during community night. Reason: Community night is intended for community enrichment. If there are students who do not drink, allowing alcohol on community night can lead to a division between those who do and do not want to drink. We’ve seen an increase in students who drink excessively. Even if all members of the community do drink and are comfortable with drinking, our experience has shown us that allowing alcohol at community night generally does not contribute positively to the community enrichment goal of community night. For these reasons, we have adopted a no alcohol policy – before or during – community night.

2. No drinking of alcohol at home-stays – with or without family. Students may only drink with the families during times of celebration (for example, if there is a birthday party at the house, or if the student goes out with the family for dinner). Reason: Alcohol is a very serious problem in Central America and the U.S.; urban and rural communities in Central America suffer gravely from alcoholism, as do many U.S. college students.

3. CGE house alcohol policy – students may drink at the CGE house but they may not get drunk. When at the house, students may drink responsibly. Reason: Students are of age and it is legal for them to drink in Nicaragua. We wish to provide a safe space for students to drink – an option they can take if they do not want to go out for drinks and take a taxi home. However, the house is not a space to be used for excessive, harmful drinking. Also, we recognize some students have alcoholism; the “drink but don’t get drunk” policy seeks to make the house a safe space for drinking but not a space that enables alcoholism or abusive, unhealthy drinking habits.

4. No drinking of alcohol during the day – students may NOT drink alcohol, at CGE or outside of CGE, during the work-day (until 5:00pm) at the Center.
COMMUNICATION

Keeping in touch with family and friends is very important. However, since you will be moving around frequently, especially the first seven weeks of the program, communicating with them will be a bit of a challenge. E-mail is easy to access in cities, and some hotels and cafes have WiFi services. There is a plethora of internet cafes in Xela, San Jose and Managua.

Snail Mail
In general, postal service in Central America is relatively slow and very unpredictable. Allow at least 2-3 weeks for delivery of letters and slightly longer for small packages. Warning: it is often difficult to claim packages at the post office. Import taxes may be charged that are equal to value of package. In many cases, packages don’t arrive or arrive opened with some of the contents missing, so we caution you about having anything valuable sent through the mail. Also, although reliable, special courier services such as Federal Express or DHL are expensive and must be sent to a street address not a post office box. This makes it extremely difficult for students to receive their packages, requiring extra effort and money such as trips to the airport, paying import tax, or having to hire extra services for packages to be delivered to their ultimate destination. For these reasons we don’t advise using FedEx or DHL, and advise using the normal postal service.

Mailing Addresses (Regular mail only. Not for courier or special delivery services)

Guatemala: c/o Proyecto Linguístico Quetzalteco
5a Calle, 2-42, Zona 1
Quetzaltenango, Quetzaltenango
Guatemala

Cost Rica: Universidad Biblica Latinoamericana
San Pedro de Montes de Oca, CEDROS 350 al ESTE de los Perimercados, a mano izquierda portón negro y muro terracota

We do not recommend sending mail to this address, as you will only be there for a few days at the start of the program.

Nicaragua: Centro de Educación Mundial
Apartado RP-44
Monseñor Lezcano
Managua, Nicaragua

During your time in Guatemala and Costa Rica, it will be difficult to receive snail mail since you are in each of those countries for a short time. Thus we advise you to let your family and friends know your dates in advance, so as to send letters and packages with sufficient anticipation. Mail that arrives for you after you have continued on to the next country will not be forwarded.

We suggest that you bring U.S. stamps for letters and postcards since friends of the Center for Global Education or others you may meet along the way who are traveling to the U.S. often mail items for participants, thus speeding up delivery.
Delivery Service
For courier or special delivery services such as DHL or UPS, the street addresses are:

Quetzaltenango: Proyecto Linguístico Quetzalteco
5a Calle, 2-42, Zona 1
09001 Quetzaltenango
Guatemala, C.A.

San Jose: Universidad Biblica Latinoamerica
San Pedro de Montes de Oca, CEDROS 350
San Jose, Costa Rica, C.A.

Managua: Casa Jaime Mayer
de Montoya, una c. al sur, una y media c.arriba #1405
Managua, Nicaragua, C.A.

Computers and E-Mail
If you are accustomed to having a laptop with you at all times, and don’t think you manage without one, you may want to consider bringing it with you. Students have found them to be useful for writing papers, wi-fi is available at many cafes in Xela and San Jose, and there is wireless internet service at our house in Managua as well as a computer lab (although not enough computers for every student, and they are not always reliable).

If you do decide to bring your laptop, keep in mind the risks. It will be your responsibility should damage or theft occur while traveling, and you should consider getting some kind of insurance. CGE cannot reimburse you if your computer is lost, stolen or damaged.

Phones
At all sites there are national, public telephone services available. Because of high taxes, it usually costs twice as much to call from Central America as it would from the U.S. with a card or international plan. In all Central American countries you can access an AT&T operator and make calls using an AT&T calling card. MCI and SPRINT services are not always available.

In addition, students will be able to receive phone calls during family stays provided that host family has a telephone.

Guatemala
Upon arrival, students can let their families know they have arrived by internet; there is WIFI at the guest-house. In Quetzaltenango students generally use Skype or other internet calling services to stay in touch with people at home. Often, students buy inexpensive prepaid telephones so that their family can call them easily as well. There are several public fax and e-mail offices in Quetzaltenango.

Costa Rica
As in Guatemala, students can use Skype or other internet calling services to stay in touch with people at home, or buy inexpensive prepaid telephones so that their family can call them easily as well.

Nicaragua
In Nicaragua you can receive calls at Casa Jaime Mayer (CGE House). Again, using the internet or purchasing a cell phone and loading it with minutes locally are the most common options.
Phone Numbers
While the following dates and/or locations may change slightly before your actual arrival, we provide this information for your family members and friends. In the case of an emergency, you can be reached most easily by phone at the following numbers (direct dial from the US):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 17</td>
<td>Casa Emaus Guest House, Guatemala City</td>
<td>011-502-2485 7620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>Posada San Vicente Hotel, Antigua</td>
<td>011-502-7832 3311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19 – 22</td>
<td>Hotel Los Olivos, Quetzaltenango</td>
<td>011-502-7765 3469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23 – September 12</td>
<td>PLQ Language School, Quetzaltenango</td>
<td>011-502-7763 1061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13 – 16</td>
<td>Rural Language School: PLQ in Cantel</td>
<td>011-502-7763 1061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Hotel Los Olivos, Quetzaltenango</td>
<td>011-502-7765 3469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Posada San Vicente Hotel, Antigua</td>
<td>011-502-7832 3311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td>Fly to San Jose, Costa Rica</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21 – 25</td>
<td>Universidad Biblica Latinoamericana</td>
<td>During business hours: 011-506-2283 4498 or 011-506-2224 2791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 25 – October 16</td>
<td>Universidad Biblica Latinomericanca</td>
<td>During Class Hours: 011-506-2283 4498 or 011-506-2224 2791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17 – 25</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 25 – December 5</td>
<td>Casa Jaime Mayer (CGE), Managua</td>
<td>011-505-2268 2319 or 011-505-2222 4268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For emergencies only our staff cell phones are available, and numbers will be provided for you once you arrive in each country.

Regarding Cell Phones
Students generally have not used cell phones from home in Central America in the past, as each country the program travels to has a different plan, and rates are extremely overpriced. With that in mind, you should feel free to bring your own phone, but it has been our experience that students who did bring their cell phones ended up not using them because it was too expensive for their plans.

Many students purchase inexpensive cell phones in Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua ($15-25 for the actual phone) and pre-pay minutes as they go. Many will also use Skype to call home.

CGE Communication with Parents
If you indicated your consent we will be sending an email and electronic copy of this manual to parents, introducing the Center for Global Education, describing what the semester program is like, extending an invitation for them to visit Managua and the program, and familiarizing them with the staff to contact in Minneapolis with any questions.

Visits by Family and Friends
Family and friends are welcome to visit when you are in Nicaragua. Space will not be available for them in our study center, but nearby hotels offer convenient and comfortable accommodations. Be aware that your program schedule is very full and intense and can make finding time to spend with visitors challenging. We recommend you consult with Center staff before finalizing the dates for any visit. If your family or friends wish to visit you during the program, the best time would be during Fall Break.
TRAVEL WITHIN THE REGION

Program Travel
The group will travel together between countries. Your group flight will include travel from Guatemala to Costa Rica, and you will travel by bus from Costa Rica to Nicaragua. The bus ticket and entry/exit charges are covered by program fees, or included in your airfare, provided that you travel with the group. In addition, there will be times during the semester when you will take short trips away from your home base. These trips are integrated into your course work and are required components of the program. The cost of these excursions is also included in your semester fees.

Fall Break
Students are free to leave on Fall Break after 6:00pm on Friday, October 16. The last meal provided for students will be breakfast on Saturday, October 17, after which time students assume ALL expenses for Fall Break travel, lodging and meals. **If a student is unable to finance the costs during Fall Break they must contact the Study Abroad Facilitator upon arrival in Guatemala in August.**

There is a variety of travel options available, including snorkeling off the coast of Honduras, further exploration of Costa Rica, or hiking the volcanoes of Nicaragua. When traveling overland on a careful budget, $30 U.S. per day is sufficient. You may want to allow extra $100 for souvenir purchases, in addition to the $300 for medical emergencies.

Student Responsibilities Regarding Additional Travel
You must inform the Program Study Abroad Facilitator and/or International Resident Assistant in writing of any personal travel plans during the semester and/or over regularly scheduled breaks. Students may not leave the program without informing the Study Abroad Facilitator and/or International Resident Assistant in writing of their itinerary, including mode of transportation, travel companions, expected return date, phone where he/she can be reached etc. It is not enough to simply tell another student in the group. In the case of a student who has left the program without informing staff adequately, parents will be notified.

Safety Concerns
Undoubtedly, many of you and your parents have concerns about traveling to this region. We want to assure you that the Center for Global Education monitors the situation in each country. The CGE office in Minneapolis is in frequent contact with our permanent resident staff in each country, as well as others in the region. Since 1982 the Center for Global Education has led over 1,000 travel seminars for more than 12,000 participants to Central America, Mexico, the Middle East, South America, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean and the Philippines. We have therefore gained a great deal of expertise in travel to countries in the global south. We would not hesitate to cancel or to revise part of the semester schedule should something occur that made it possibly unsafe to travel there. If you or your parents are concerned, feel free to call the Center for Global Education office in Minneapolis, and we will be glad to respond to any questions or concerns.
MONEY

Your fees cover all living and travel expenses connected to the program, including all entry/exit charges between Central American countries when traveling as a group. (Any individual travel that involves border crossings will require that the student pay the entry/exit fees.) You need to cover the following: the group flight to Guatemala City and home from Managua, Fall Break travel, and your return and exit fee ($32 which must be paid in U.S dollars) from Managua. (Check to see if this is included in the price of your airline ticket.)

Additionally, you should budget $300 U.S. for possible visits to the doctor. An office call, for instance, costs about $50, and you may have to pay all medical expenses at the time of service then request reimbursement from the insurance company.

In the event that you become ill or are injured, and require hospitalization, you will need to have a credit card (not debit card) available with at least $1,000 credit available. Hospitals in the region do not take debit cards, and may require a deposit of up to US$1,000. (If your expenses do not total that amount your credit card would be refunded.)

The amount of personal money you will need depends on how much additional travel you do on your own, gifts you will buy, and extra social activities. Students on similar groups have spent between $700-$1,000. This amount would allow for several trips and purchase of some nice gifts. You may be surprised that some social activities are as expensive in Central America as they are in the U.S. We will meet with artisan groups, women’s economic cooperatives and repatriated communities whom you may want to support. Some past students have found it easy to feel rich and spend freely and quickly. Beware of this tendency! Your money can disappear rapidly!

You should bring about $200 with you from the States. Once you arrive in Central America there are ATM’s in all three countries where you can withdraw cash in the local currency as you go along through the program.

Since the banking systems in Central America are always changing, it is wise to bring a combination of cash, credit cards and an ATM card. You should bring small denominations ($10’s, $20’s and $50’s; $100 bills are increasingly difficult to change), since you will be exchanging money in three different countries and may not want to convert local currency back to U.S. dollars or to another Central American currency.

Traveler’s checks are not very useful, as they are extremely time-consuming if not impossible to cash in each country you will be visiting, and they are almost impossible to change in the bank if you do not have an account.

We strongly urge using money belts or body pouches. Obtaining money once you are in Central America is not as easy as bringing it with you, so bring enough to cover anticipated expenses.

**Traveler’s Checks**

If you choose to bring traveler’s checks be sure to bring American Express checks, NOT Visa. In all three countries traveler’s checks can be extremely difficult and time consuming to cash, and the exchange rate will be less than if you exchanged cash or used a credit card, and there are fees for cashing them. **You may want to bring them only for emergencies and not depend upon them for getting cash.**
Credit and ATM/Debit Cards
Due to the situation with traveler’s checks, we encourage you to bring ATM/Debit cards. A Visa card or MasterCard can be used for cash advances in the local currency at Credomatic offices and some banks. Credit cards may be accepted as well in many of the nicer hotels, restaurants, and shops. ATM machines can be found in all three countries, but access to international networks is still limited. If you bring an ATM card make sure it has the PLUS and/or CIRRUS logo. Also make sure to call your credit card company/bank to let them know you will be using your card(s) abroad.

Currency and Exchange Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Exchange Rate (as of April 2015)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Quetzal</td>
<td>7.64 to $1 U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>532.83 to $1 U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Córdoba</td>
<td>26.93 to $1 U.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT TO BRING

It is essential that you pack lightly given the nature and amount of travel during the semester. We will often have to walk several blocks to or from bus stations. As a rule, you should be able to carry all of your stuff for the semester four city blocks or up two flights of stairs without collapsing. For this reason many students find it easier to bring a travel/hiking back pack instead of a duffel or moderate-sized suitcase. You may be washing your own clothes by hand, although you can also pay for laundry services, available at most of the guest houses.

With regard to dress, neatness, cleanliness and modesty are generally part of Central American culture. For better or worse, such things as short shorts, patched clothes, unkempt hair or revealing clothes worn by foreigners give some Central Americans the impression that we are culturally insensitive, dirty, or promiscuous. Moreover, since we will spend most of our time among people living in strained economic circumstances, most students will feel more comfortable living and dressing simply but neatly. It is also common to dress up here when going out.

Though wearing shorts, particularly bermuda length, is common among urban Central Americans, you will not be allowed to wear them to most program visits. Feel free to bring some shorts or casual clothing to wear around the guest houses. For visits to embassies and government offices, women will need a dress or skirt/dress pants and blouse, and nice shoes (not velcro strap sandals, chacos or birkenstocks). Men should have nice pants and leather shoes, not sandals, and a dress shirt. Avoid bringing clothing that is or looks military, including anything made of camouflage.

It can get cold and rainy at times, especially in the Guatemalan highlands, so bring a few warm articles of clothing and socks. It is best, for example, to have a long-sleeve shirt, heavy sweater, and light to medium-weight jacket that you can layer. Since buildings are not heated, you may want to bring something warm to wear for sleeping. In Quetzaltenango, there are countless second-hand clothing stores where you could buy coats or sweaters that can be left as a donation rather than carrying a coat with you the entire semester.

You will also want to bring a raincoat, umbrella and rubber boots for those times when it gets rainy and muddy in Guatemala and Longo Mia in Costa Rica. Rubber boots can also be purchased once you get to Guatemala. School supplies and U.S. brand toiletries are easy to find in Central America at reasonable prices, so don’t pack lots of big bottles. The exception to this is contact lens solution, which is expensive, so bring a good supply. Other items available at slightly higher prices than in the United States are film, batteries, and tampons.
The electrical current is the same as in the U.S. and Canada, and you do not need special adapters. However, voltage can fluctuate, so if you are bringing sensitive electrical equipment (like a laptop), you will need a good quality surge protector.

If you plan to bring your laptop, please note that you will be responsible for the cost to repair or replace it, whether or not the damage is the result of your action or the action of another student, staff person, or unknown person. It is strongly recommended that you consider property insurance for any theft or damages.

Packing Check List

Essential Things to Pack
- Passport that will not expire before June 5, 2016
- 2 good photocopies of the title/photo page of your passport
- Water bottle
- Small flashlight
- Back pack/small duffle (to pack for weekend visits)

Clothing
- 2-3 pairs jeans/pants (combination for warmer and cooler climates)
- 2-3 pairs shorts (for around the house and sports)
- 4-5 short sleeve shirts/tops/T shirts
- 2-3 long sleeve, warmer shirts/tops
- 2-3 skirts or dresses for women
- Nightshirt or pajama (1 pair of long pajama pants)
- Underwear (always better to pack for at least 1½ weeks)
- 6 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of tennis shoes (for exercise and hiking)
- Another pair of comfortable shoes that are a little dressier (For women: can be flat and simple and not necessarily closed toed)
- Sandals
- Flip-flops/shower shoes
- Swimsuit
- Hat/Bandana (sun protection)
- Warm hat
- Warm sweater or light jacket for layering, warm socks, coat or sweatshirt, winter hat, and scarf (weather in Quetzaltenango will be COLD)
- Rain jacket and/or umbrella
- Towel

Other useful items (optional)
- Spanish/English dictionary
- Travel alarm clock
- Camera and film
- Extra camera battery
- Money belt
- Small locks for your luggage: Though the policy says that “Airlines are not responsible for stolen articles unless luggage is locked,” it is also true that airlines will break the lock if they have to. Locks can be useful for in-country travel (public buses)-optional but recommended
__ International Student ID card
__ Certified copy of your birth certificate (recommended)
__ Small tape recorder and blank cassettes /digital recorder
__ Notebook/book for journal writing
__ U.S. postage stamps
__ Visa card or Mastercard
__ Insect repellent (with DEET/spray for bedbugs or fleas)
__ Dramamine or some other motion-sickness medication
__ Sunscreen (not optional)
__ Pictures of your family/friends/school/neighborhood/work (extra copies to leave with friends you’ll make)
__ Contact lens supplies
__ Any medications you use (in their original containers)
__ Wash-n-Dry moist towelettes or waterless hand cleansing gel (Many places won’t have restrooms with running water and washing hands is key to staying healthy)
__ Water purifier tablets/drops (available at most pharmacies) (optional if plan on backpacking on your own)
__ Small gift/souvenir (calendar/picture book?) from your home state to give to your families in Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua
__ Mosquito Net
__ Ear plugs (recommended for countryside homestays)
__ Laxatives
__ iPod/mp3 player and headphones
__ Any items for hobbies (such as pleasure reading, knitting needles, cards, balls, etc)

Note: NO SLEEPING BAG NEEDED!
Discrimination in Central America

Central America has a long history of conquest, colonialism, and neo-colonialism that has been marked by racial and/or ethnic discrimination. You will find that ethnic, racial and class conflicts are a result of continued colonial power struggles. In North America the white settlers imposed the separation of Indians and Blacks, while in the countries you will visit a process of mestizaje (mixing) took place, thus producing racial gradations. In Nicaragua and El Salvador an apparent homogeneous mestizo national identity emerged after the conquest. In both countries, almost all of the population have been linguistically, culturally and ethnically mixed. In Nicaragua, the people of indigenous or black/Afro-Nicaraguan identity on the Atlantic Coast (approx. 5% and 9%) constitute only a small fraction of the population. Indigenous communities on the Pacific Coast have lost their languages and dress; however they continue to struggle for their land rights. In contrast, over half of the population of Guatemala is indigenous. The division between Maya and Spanish descent (ladino) is fairly strict and continues to be a source of conflict.

In general, throughout the region you will find that racism is still deeply rooted and very much alive. “Masked racism” is manifested in the exaggerated valuation of “whiteness” and a negative vision of Indigenous peoples and blacks. There is prejudice against indigenous people and blacks who continue to be seen as “backward” and inferior. Segregation exists and is manifested in that indigenous people are among the poorest and most abandoned. Meanwhile, poor neighborhoods in cities contain a larger proportion of people with dark skin. In many cases social class overlaps with skin color i.e. the darker the skin, the lower the class.

In Central America, white students from the United States will experience being a minority. To have people point that out to you on a regular basis may be uncomfortable. For example, many white students feel discomfort when Nicaraguans, Guatemalans or El Salvadorans call them “chelita(o)”, “canche” which are terms used in the region to identify light-skinned people. Most people would not consider these terms insulting but rather an identifying characteristic of the person.

Nonetheless, while a small percentage of the population is white, that small group is the most dominant group in terms of political, economic, and social capital. As a result, white students and U.S. citizens and residents in general, are given inordinate amounts of power and privilege whether they want this or not and whether they recognize the phenomenon or not. We want to alert you in advance as you may not be aware when this is happening. We ask that you be conscious to not inadvertently participate in or support practices that are racist and classist.

As you prepare to come to the Central American region we encourage you to think about your power and privilege as a white U.S. citizen or resident. We trust that you will broaden your awareness of these issues and serve as an ally with people who suffer from abuse of power and privilege in the societies where you study.

For students of color it is important to understand that you are still in the minority within the students participating in our programs. Despite the fact that more and more students from the United States are studying abroad, the most recent data from Open Doors (a publication from the Institute of International Education) indicates that out of 205,983 students who studied abroad in 2004-2005, 83% were white students. In contrast, only 6.3 % of the students who studied abroad self-identified as Asian-American/Pacific Islander, 5.6 % as Hispanic/Latino(a), 3.5% as African-American, 1.2 % as multi-racial, and 0.4 % as Native America/Alaskan Native. While CGE has worked hard to recruit more diverse students, our enrollment numbers for students of color continue to be only slightly higher than the national averages. As a result, sometimes students of color feel isolated or alone within a group of white students. In addition, students of color face challenges that might be completely different from those of white students. Be prepared to be identified racially in ways that may completely surprise you.
You may be confronted with different racial and ethnic stereotypes that Central Americans have of people from the United States (i.e: blond, white, etc.). You may be asked direct questions about your ethnicity and the answer of, “I’m from the U.S.” might not satisfy someone asking where you’re from. Central Americans may also give you nicknames that you feel don’t reflect your reality. Asian Americans might be identified as “chinos (as)”, African-American as “negros(as)”. This is uncomfortable to many, but these terms are not necessarily intended to be insulting. Race is constructed and addressed differently in Central America. It is not better or worse, simply different.

Something else that you should be aware of is that in the three countries that you will visit it is much more socially accepted to comment on people’s physical characteristics than in the United States. For example, people who are thin, heavy or short might be called “flaca(o)”, “gorda” or “chaparra”, etc.

Some former students have said that their semester has led them to reassess how they identify themselves with regard to race and ethnicity while others have indicated that it helped them deepen their understanding of their own identity. Many Latino/a students studying in Central America report tremendous educational and personal benefits from exploring countries where their families have roots. Some Latino/a students feel that they are able to blend in the host culture. For many, it is often a journey of self discovery and one of exploring their family’s heritage. They often go back home with a new perspective of themselves as Americans and as Hispanic-Americans.

Studying abroad will give you a rare and unique opportunity to examine discrimination (or lack thereof) in different contexts. In any case, confronting and coping with your adjustment abroad, as painful as it may be at times, can be an important growth experience. It may not always be fun, but it can present a unique learning opportunity that will serve you well in the future.

While student’s overall experiences were very positive and life-affirming, they have also sometimes been very emotional. This is why it is important to have support structures in place before coming to Central America. Some important suggestions are the following:

1. If you haven’t already done so, be sure to reach out to groups on campus for students of color and/or campus staff people who can provide space for listening to students of color. Students emphasize that these support structures and safe spaces are essential to be able to process their study abroad experience with other people of color.
2. Talk with other students of color who have studied abroad in the region. If you would like to talk with former students who participated in a CGE semester program here, please contact us at globaled@augsburg.edu so that we can put you in touch with students who have volunteered to serve as resources to future students.
3. Take charge of your education. While it is a tricky line between being a token student spokesperson and educating by example, trust your gut. If you feel moved to speak out, do it in a manner that feels safe and comfortable to you.

Further Readings on Racism and Discrimination in Latin America

*Ethnic Discrimination and the Mayan Defense.* Kevin Pepper.
[http://www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/where_we_work/camexca/news_publications/art5289.html](http://www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/where_we_work/camexca/news_publications/art5289.html)

*A Region in Denial: Racial Discrimination and Racism in Latin America.* Ariel E. Dulitzky