

SAFETY NOTICE – EL SALVADOR

March 27, 2015

The U.S. State Department continues to have a Travel Warning for El Salvador, as it also does for numerous countries. The travel warning states that:

“Tens of thousands of U.S. citizens safely visit El Salvador each year for study, tourism, cruise ship visits, business, and volunteer work. There is no information to suggest that U.S. citizens are specifically targeted by criminals; however, crime and violence are serious problems throughout the country.” Please view the [full text of the travel warning](#).

The Center’s staff in El Salvador closely monitors the security situations in El Salvador in which any groups will travel. Programming would be discontinued in communities that are considered unsafe or potentially unsafe, including those where recent violence has occurred. The Center’s recent groups have safely traveled in El Salvador.

Augsburg College has successfully run educational programs in El Salvador continuously since 1988 and is planning to continue with scheduled programs throughout the coming year. The Center would immediately relocate planned program activity should it become necessary to avoid any location that could pose a safety or security risk.

The decision to continue with the Center’s programming in El Salvador has been made with careful consideration of risk. The safety and security of students and program participants is the highest priority of the Center’s programs, and resident staff continually assess the safety and security situation and are prepared to make changes as needed in programming and facilities. In addition, the community engagement model of the program provides staff with contacts and relationships throughout the country that provide helpful information for assessing safety and security.

San Salvador is a large city and precautions have been taken to address the safety of students, as would be necessary in any large urban area. Street crime ranging from pick pocketing to armed robbery does occur in San Salvador, just as it does in many large cities in the U.S. and around the world. CGE staff advise and orient students and program participants to exercise common sense and specific precautions as they engage in program and personal activities. Guidelines (i.e. never go out alone, use only radio taxis, do not use public transportation, access ATMs only during business hours, etc.) are given to students and program participants regarding their personal responsibility in reducing risk. All program participants will be immediately notified of any increased risk to their safety and security. Participants stay either in a guest house adjacent to a police station or in a hotel with on-site security.

The Center for Global Education recommends that all U.S. citizens participating in the Center’s programs in El Salvador enroll in the State Department’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) which provides the latest updates and travel information from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Participants can [register](#) with the U.S. State Department online.

Center for Global Education staff will continue to monitor the situation in all areas of our programming and will not hesitate to cancel or reroute programs, if needed, to secure the safety of students and travel seminar participants.

Please contact us at: 1 (800) 299-8889/1 (800) 299-8889 or gloaled@augsborg.edu if you have questions and want additional information.

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