



GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT STUDIES INSTITUTE

GESI PRE-DEPARTURE PACKET

SUMMER 2019 | GUATEMALA



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Welcome

Dear GESI Student,

Welcome to the 13th annual Global Engagement Studies Institute (GESI)! GESI began with the idea and perseverance of an undergraduate like you. It has since grown from a small experiential-learning program in Uganda exclusively for Northwestern students, into a nationally recognized model that has trained and sent over 650 students from almost 100 colleges and universities to 13 countries for community development work.

GESI offers students the unique opportunity to apply their classroom learning toward addressing global challenges. Students will spend their time abroad working with, and learning from, our community partners across the world. Northwestern University provides students with comprehensive preparatory coursework and training, ensures a structured and supported in-country field experience, and facilitates critical post-program reflection.

This program will challenge you to think and act differently. To create change you will need to listen, ask questions, and build relationships, not merely provide solutions. We trust you'll approach GESI with the respect, curiosity, and humility requisite to understanding people, their talents and challenges, and the role you can play to support positive social change.

GESI is one step on a path toward your personal, professional, and leadership development, as well as your understanding of complex issues of consequence to the planet and its people. Throughout the program, our professors and student instructors will be in contact with feedback and encouragement; during Final Summit, they will help debrief what you've learned. Even after GESI, our staff will be a strong support system as you use your own unique skills and passions to live lives of global social change.

We have seen this program make a tremendous impact on students' academic pursuits, career paths, and worldview, as well as their skills in cross-cultural communication, project management, and collaboration. We are excited to join you on this journey and to see where it leads. Get excited!

Best of luck,

Patrick Eccles

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Program Information

The Global Engagement Studies Institute (GESI) is a study abroad program that provides undergraduates with the knowledge, tools, and experiences to confront shared global challenges. Through service-learning in Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ghana, Guatemala, Uganda, or Vietnam, teams of students join the efforts of local organizations to advance community-driven change.

GESI was created in response to undergraduates' desires to understand global challenges through an academic lens, and then put that learning into action. The result is an interconnected set of initiatives across several key areas: community-engaged scholarship, project and research funding, and professional development. Learn about the full history of GESI on our website: gesi.northwestern.edu/about/history

Who does what in GESI?

GESI is a program, not a physical institute. Whether or not you are a Northwestern student, the "acronym soup" that surrounds GESI is often confusing. It is important for you to understand the difference between each organization that helps make GESI happen so that you can communicate it effectively to your friends and family, and so you know where to turn for support (now and in the future). There are numerous partners who make important contributions to your academic, cultural, and personal experience in GESI.

Global Engagement at the Buffett Institute

At Northwestern, the Buffett Institute is the office that runs GESI. We include people you've met or spoken with when applying to the GESI program, and others that you'll be meeting along the way:

- Diego Arispe-Bazan and Paul Arntson, GESI Instructors
- Patrick Eccles, Corey Portell, Jessica Smith Soto, and Hà Nguyen, GESI Staff

The GESI team supports you before, during, and after your trip, in the following ways:

- **Program Arrangement and Logistics:** GESI works with the on-site teams to make arrangements for your trip. We also provide you with lots of information and support you during the program application phase.
- **Pre-Departure Orientation and Materials:** GESI provides you with important information about your program to help you prepare for your experience. This includes resources, such as this packet, and in-person meetings related to health, safety, budgeting, travel, and academics, as well as Canvas resources and assignments.
- **Academic Coursework and Credit:** GESI is responsible for organizing all Northwestern coursework.
- **In-Country Support:** Your on-site team will provide support for you while abroad and should be your primary resource, but if you need additional assistance or would feel more comfortable approaching GESI staff with any matters experienced in-country, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Ozaroski, Assistant Director, or Patrick Eccles, Associate Director.
- **Reintegration Support:** Upon your return, we will provide you with resources to help you transition back into campus life, as well as connect you with other returnees and opportunities.

Changing our worldview is an implicit goal of most service-learning programs. Unless we understand how political, economic, and judicial systems tend to favor one group over another, we will be unable to truly assist those in need.

Learning Through Serving: A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines. Ed. Christine M. Cress, Peter J. Collier, Vicki L. Reitenauer and Associates. Stylus, 2005: Sterling, VA.

Program Partners

In addition to Northwestern staff, GESI works with a variety of people to run the program. All GESI partners have unique offerings based on their networks and development models. They each have a commitment to community-led development, provide exemplary health, safety, and logistical support to our students, and are well respected locally and internationally, including by our peer universities.

The GESI team works directly with the global headquarters of five partner organizations in six locations in order to manage the logistics and coordination of the program. These organizations have a long-standing history of preparing and hosting students in communities abroad. Our partners include:

- **Amizade** in Ghana
- **Foundation for Sustainable Development (FSD)** in Bolivia and Uganda
- **Institute for Central American Development Studies (ICADS)** in Costa Rica
- **Kaya Responsible Travel** in Vietnam
- **Social Entrepreneur Corps (SEC)** in Guatemala

Each partner has a **site team** that consists of one to two local people who act as both your 24/7 on-the-ground student support, as well as the long-term relationship builders with their organization and/or an organization where you will work. These staff members will assist you in everything from in-country orientation to homestay placements, from work plan advising to community development consulting. Some site teams hire international coordinators who are not from the local community specifically for the summer to act as cultural liaisons.

In each location, regardless of partner organization, you will have a **supervisor** for the duration of your summer. This supervisor is employed by your **host organization** and will work directly with you and your team to learn about, plan, and develop your summer work. Your supervisor is most often a local person, though sometimes they can be individuals from other countries who have worked with the organization for a long time. More often than not, GESI teams will also work with other individuals who also work at the host organization.

Another key partner in your time abroad are your **homestay families!** While they may not contribute directly to your work, your homestay family relationships are integral to your success. Families offer invaluable perspectives on culture, tradition, history, and life experience in your host location and community.

We would be remiss if we did not include **members of the community** as partners in GESI. Community is a complex and multifaceted word you will consistently hear throughout the program. Who this includes (and excludes) depends upon the situation. We encourage you to think about this word and phrase broadly; in any given site, there are a wide variety of communities with whom you will interact. Sometimes who “they” are will be clear, sometimes it will be very murky. Remember that organizations and your supervisors are members of the community at large, as are the community members the organizations serve. Relationships are at the core of GESI partnerships; understanding, building, and maintaining them are how GESI defines success.

Learn more about GESI’s partners on our website at gesi.northwestern.edu/about/partners



Pre-Departure Academic Information

The core of GESI is the collaboration and relationship building that takes place through students' in-country work and experience. What makes GESI unique is how these interactions are shaped and understood through the rigorous preparation and reflection which provides an academic foundation for their fieldwork. Furthermore, students develop the analytical and interpersonal tools to engage, critique, and understand the challenges of community development at an international level. View program syllabi for GESI's required coursework, **Doing Development: The Theory and Practice of Community Engagement** and **Development in the Global Context: Participation, Power, and Social Change**, on our website at gesi.northwestern.edu/logistics/academics

What is experiential learning?

The following are definitions of various types of experiential-learning. GESI fits most closely into the "service learning" category, though the program incorporates elements of all of the below:

- **Volunteerism:** Students engage in activities where the emphasis is on service for the sake of the beneficiary or recipient (client, partner)
- **Internship:** Students engage in activities to enhance their own vocational or career development
- **Practicum:** Students work in a discipline-based venue in place of an in-class course experience
- **Community Service:** Students engage in activities addressing mutually defined community needs (as a collaboration between community partners, faculty, and students) as a vehicle for achieving academic goals and course objectives
- **Service Learning:** Students engage in community service activities with intentional academic and learning goals and opportunities for reflection that connect to their academic disciplines

Adapted from Cress, Christine et al. Learning Through Serving: A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2005.

What to expect at GESI Pre-Departure Coursework

The GESI pre-departure coursework at Northwestern University is an intense eight days of class. During Pre-Departure, you will often be in class from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. with breaks for meals. GESI alums will serve as student instructors, facilitating class activities and discussions. We will also have many guest speakers supplementing class lectures; **it is vital that you complete all course readings before arrival**. Some nights, we will assign additional (short) readings. You will need to discipline yourself so that you are able to complete these assignments and be alert and engaged for long days of class.

Below is a sample day of class. A detailed schedule will be provided upon arrival on campus.

9:00 - 12 p.m.	Lecture by Diego Arispe-Bazan on Intl. Development
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.	Language lesson
2:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Lecture and group activities with Paul Arntson
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Guest speaker on your host country
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Dinner with group with discussion or on your own
7:30 p.m.	Back to hostel for evening reading and sleep

In-Country Academic Information

In-Country Assignments

We feel strongly that in a foreign context you should look to your local hosts for expert advice. Your interaction with GESI staff and faculty while abroad will be limited. Occasionally, GESI staff, faculty, or student instructors will reply to your weekly updates (and/or other deliverables, as outlined below) with comments, questions, cautions, or feedback. However, given that they are not in-country with you, their written feedback will be limited. Only you, your site team, and community colleagues can truly understand your situation and challenges in-country. Please note that GESI staff are always available to discuss any program, health, safety or other concerns you have.

You will be evaluated based on satisfactory submission of the following (through Canvas):

- 1. Work proposal:** This should be a maximum of two pages; initial proposals are due within the first few weeks abroad.
- 2. External work plan:** These are due at the same time you submit your work proposal. These should be a maximum of two pages and conform to the template provided. Many students will also be required to submit a budget along with their proposal and work plan, while others will have no budget, only proposal and work plan.
- 3. Weekly group reports:** These are due on each of the seven Fridays while abroad. Submit these online on your group's Canvas discussion board. Entries should be a maximum of one page and should answer the following questions:
 - What you accomplished the previous week
 - What you plan to accomplish in the week ahead and who is responsible for these goals
 - What are the barriers/challenges that you are dealing with in terms of accomplishing the work plan, and interacting with your organization, community and your team
- 4. Field notes:** You will be given a spiral-bound notebook upon arrival to campus. It is your responsibility to complete the essays and reflection activities outlined in the notebook each week. You will be assigned some prompts and be able to choose others from a variety of reflection topics outlined in field notebook. While we will collect these from you at the conclusion of Final Summit, you can choose to fold any page you do not want us to read and we will honor your request. We will mail the notebooks back to you after we are done reviewing them.
- 5. Final Reflection Summit Summary:** In order to share your work with your fellow GESI colleagues, you will complete a summary of your work, including your rationale, process, and assessment. This will be shared with all students at the Final Summit to guide discussions.
- 6. Evaluations:** Before you return to the US, the country site teams will complete a two to three page evaluation with you. You will also be required to submit a comprehensive GESI program evaluation electronically shortly after returning from GESI (date will be specified during Final Summit). Failure to complete the electronic evaluation will result in an "incomplete" grade appearing on your transcript until we receive your completed evaluation.

Note: There may be times when you do not have access to Internet or communications. If you are unable to submit any of the aforementioned assignments due to communications issue, do not worry. GESI staff and faculty are accustomed to technological delays and this will not be held against you as long as you submit any missing deliverables once your internet access allows for it.

Final Summit Academic Information

What to expect at the Final Reflection Summit

Upon returning from their host countries, students meet back on campus for a three-day Final Reflection Summit where we will reflect on some of the program's learning outcomes, including but not limited to:

- Understanding ethical, historical, political, economic, and/or social issues in relation to community development
- Analyzing multiple perspectives of the social issues at hand
- Taking responsibility for your own actions as they have an effect on society
- Contributing to society through the application of new field knowledge
- Appreciating ends as well as means
- Appreciating cultural pluralism and global connectedness, as well as their challenges and opportunities

In addition, GESI participants from all sites share and compare geographical experiences while processing their immersion and what it has taught them about global development challenges, culture, and themselves. Students will also consider how to respond to the GESI experience by networking with professionals who are creating social change in a range of fields.

What happens after GESI?

As the program closes, GESI transitions into the role of alum support. GESI aspires to help students lead lives committed to international social justice. For us, this means helping our alums find internships, jobs, or project support opportunities that allow them to continue engaging with the issues they care about most. You may always contact the GESI team for guidance and support.



Cultural Adjustment

Cultural norms and adjustment

Students will experience cultural differences and react to these differences (commonly referred to as “culture shock”) in a variety of ways. There is a lot of helpful literature related to the cultural adjustment process, including common themes and experiences, representing phases of highs (comfort and excitement) and lows (discomfort and anxiety).

It is also helpful to keep in mind that, just as you enter into a new place and experience adjustment, so too do your host organizations, host families, and host communities; be aware that your actions, habits, and words can impact those around you as much as those around you can impact you.

Your on-site teams will be the most important resources for helping you to navigate cultural differences and adjustment, but just keep in mind a few things:

- Culture shock is normal and however you experience it is normal.
- Intercultural adjustment not only varies by individual, but also by program. You may find that some of the traditional “low” phases may correspond with program excursions and produce a “high.”
- Culture shock can exacerbate other mental health challenges or conditions. If you have seen a therapist or psychiatrist for any mental health conditions within the past three years, be sure to indicate this on the required NU Health Assessment Form and meet with your doctor to discuss your condition in light of study abroad. If you require any special accommodations, be sure to discuss your situation with GESI well before departure, so that we can work with on-site staff to determine what—if any—provisions can be made.
- Be aware of what you are experiencing. If you encounter any difficulties or discomfort, which prevent you from participating and being successful, discuss this with your on-site team or GESI staff ASAP.

Encountering culture

For many GESI students, witnessing extreme poverty first-hand causes a great deal of culture shock. Encounters with beggars, for example, can be a deeply unsettling experience. Richard Slimbach offers the following advice:

“Begging may be a deeply flawed method of redistributing wealth, but letting ourselves lapse into callous indifference only injures our moral sensibilities. Whether to give or not to give ultimately must be decided case by case, because much depends on our knowledge of the particular beggar and the larger social context. We simply cannot give to all beggars but neither must we refuse all. Over time, our giving probably will be selective, biased in favor of those who provide some service. Instead of our “gift” reinforcing the notion that poor folk are simply welfare wards of wealthy westerners, it can become a legitimate and dignifying form of payment for services rendered” (Slimbach , p. 188).

Bargaining is another cultural experience that can sometimes overwhelm students. Yet bargaining can be the most enjoyable of experiences abroad and we hope you’ll learn to have fun with it! Remember that if you really want something, you should plan to pay fair price, not the lowest possible price. Bargaining can be a fun way to form relationships with community members. Just be careful not to pay high prices for basic goods because it may harm local people. If merchants can get premium prices for their goods and services from foreigners, they may be less likely to sell to their neighbors at lower, fairer rates. Your host family and site team are great resources from which you can learn what may be a fair cost for you.

Food for Thought

You are passionate about making a positive impact while abroad, yet short-term study abroad can have long-term negative impacts if the traveler and program provider are not thoughtful and reflective about their engagements abroad. These questions are meant to help you think about the unintended consequences of study abroad and foreign travel. Many GESI sites are located in areas frequented by general tourists throughout the year. We encourage you to reflect with your GESI groups, in your personal writing reflections, and whenever you travel abroad again. These questions can help us continue to develop programming that does not harm local communities.

Economic and Environmental Impact

- Upon arrival, figure out where your food/water/housing comes from. Do foreigners/tourists impose any hardship on local people, such as water shortages? What about garbage disposal and pollution? Is land being used for visitors rather than local needs?
- Does the economic impact of study abroad or tourism create economic inequality in the community? Do foreigners or local elites own or manage the hotels that students/tourists frequent? Are guides and drivers outsiders or wealthier members of the community? Do local prices go up as a result of the student visit? The giving of gifts can contribute to similar questions, however well intentioned—can nonmaterial gifts be given instead, or gifts to the community as a whole?
- Do student/tourist visits contribute to economies of dependency on outsiders, orienting those economies to pleasing or providing pleasure for wealthy foreigners rather than to local needs?
- Is there a season for foreign visitors to come to the area, such that student visits contribute to a boom and bust cycle in the local economy? Is there any way to mitigate this effect?

Cultural Impact

- Do outsiders' patterns of consumption contribute to problems in the community? The "demonstration effect" of students bringing high-end travel gear, lots of clothes, spending money easily on restaurants, giving gifts, etc. may create resentment, the perception of American students as wealthy consumers with no responsibilities at home (McLaren 2006), or the desire in local people (especially youth) to leave the community so they can make money to buy similar goods and services. Even traveling on an airplane or traveling away from home can create these problems among people who do not have that option.
- Are local people excluded from any of the areas where foreigners are encouraged or allowed to go?
- Are foreign visitors well-behaved and respectful in terms of the local culture? Do they dress in culturally appropriate clothing, or otherwise commit cultural offenses that will anger, distress, or shock people in the local community? Do outsiders see culture and the "authenticity" of local people as commodities to be consumed? What other cultural impacts result from outsiders' visits? Cultural differences in themselves are likely sources of confusion and conflict in unanticipated ways.
- Do foreigners smoke, drink, or do drugs during their visit? The effect of these behaviors can range from being poor role models for local youth to bringing new addictions to the community.
- Do students/tourists demonstrate other expressions of privilege during their visit, such as doing things "our" way, eating "our" food, playing "our" music, requiring things to be done on "our" schedule?

Identity Impact

- How well are students prepared to understand the community they are visiting? Do they bring damaging stereotypes that can be countered throughout the program? These might be as narrow as "Bolivians" but for most students are more likely to be broader such as "poor people", "indigenous people", or "people in developing countries", as well as racist and exoticizing images of people in other countries.
- Are there human rights issues already present that are exacerbated by the presence of foreigners?
- Does anything about the students' presence or activities reinforce a negative self-image for local people, for example that Americans are smarter, more competent, more attractive? Is there any way their presence could promote a positive self-image instead?

Make the Most of Your Experience

To mitigate potentially negative impacts, we encourage you to honor the host community's independence and encourage self-reliance; to never impose your personal agenda when working with the community; to respect local people's visions and opinions above your own; and to be vigilant of any cultural impacts you might be having and adjust your behaviors and actions as necessary. Here are some additional tips to make the most of your time abroad and to leave a positive impact:

Be Present

- Engage in every activity fully, remaining mentally and emotionally present. Consider going unplugged, leaving technology like laptops aside as often as possible. While technology can be helpful to keep us connected to our world and people at home, many times it ends up restricting our ability to immerse ourselves in the local community or interferes with our ability to make ourselves available to the people right in front of us. Think about ways you will travel abroad with technology and still remember to look up.
- Recognize the value of play and lightheartedness in cultivating friendships.
- Observe, listen, and inquire rather than criticize, rationalize, or withdraw.
- Risk making mistakes.

Own the Power of Your Words and Actions

- Question your and your peers' use of words like "authentic", "real", "rural", "indigenous", and "traditional". ("To suggest the life of a rural citizen is any more or less "real" than that of an urban citizen of the same culture is condescending and can indicate a disturbingly colonial nostalgia for a cultural experience laden with pre-development realities") (Johnson, 184).
- Practice culturally sensitive photography: always ask first. Be especially mindful of children, who are often readily photogenic. Photos of children are sometimes easily taken as we seek to document memorable experiences in the community, but be careful and considerate when taking kids' photos.
- When confronted with a language barrier, speak English as little as possible. Expand your vocabulary, if necessary, actively engaging community members with nonverbal communication.

Keep an Open Heart, an Open Mind

- Take advantage of opportunities to interact with people who are different from you.
- Keep an open mind and heart but avoid romanticizing your experiences in host communities. Remember that below the surface of a seemingly homogenous social structure are power hierarchies, conflicting interests, and patterns of discrimination and exclusion.
- Be a listener, more than talker; a learner more than teacher; a facilitator more than leader.
- "Go slow. Respect People. Practice humility, and don't condescend with your good intentions. Make friends. Ask questions. Know that you are visitor. Keep promises even if that means mailing a photograph a few weeks later. Be a personal ambassador of your home culture, and take your new perspectives home so that you can share them with your neighbor" (Potts, 2008).

Stay Flexible, Mindful, and Adaptable

- Do not try to replicate the U.S. in your host community; avoid demanding the services you would expect at home. Observe the way things are done locally, refrain from judgment, and when you feel yourself getting irritated or judgmental, take a step back and try to understand why the local people do things differently from the way you are accustomed. Speak with local people to understand their viewpoints, listen to be surprised so that your own assumptions are challenged.
- Avoid the "theme park" experience, the places that were clearly designed for foreigners' amusement.
- As you meet people and form strong relationships with your hosts, remain curious about the larger global, national and local structures that exist, that recreate the poverty and inequality you are trying to grasp. Global learning must reach in both directions—toward persons and structures.

When Things Get Tough

Stop complaining and start reflecting!

When you catch yourself complaining, ask yourself: Can we—both hosts and guests—learn to adapt to each other? Can our differences be a source of mutual enrichment rather than separation? When we discover that things abroad are profoundly different from things at home, our natural tendency is to flee away from them. Instead of seeking to understand why certain practices irritate us, our immediate impulse is to simply spurn them as primitive and uncivilized, even immoral...

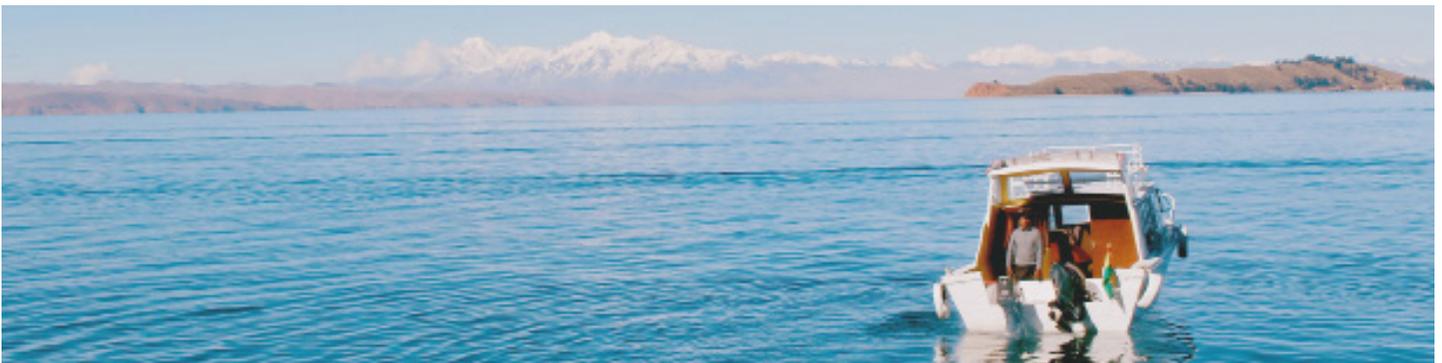
"Doing so justifies our escape from the culturally disagreeable environment into behaviors where we can feel protected and affirmed: calling home frequently, sleeping either too much or too little, reading romance novels, blogging or listening to music for hours, movies...We may not 'return home' in a physical sense, but psychologically we're a world away." (Slimbach, 158-160)

Get out your journal

Writing in an analytic mode helps us to calm down, gain some objectivity, and ask the critical questions: What provoked this reaction from me? How do local people interpret this act or event? And what does my reaction tell me about myself? Especially as we learn to put personal experiences and reactions into a larger social and theoretical context, our writing takes on a distinctive character—one that joins personal expression with cultural analysis—and encourages a more rigorous cognitive process than is common in conversation. Use Open Letters to channel some thoughts, they're designed to provide an analytical space. If you have other thoughts you don't want to share, use a personal journal.

Think About the Six Skills of Intercultural Communication

1. Cultivating curiosity about another culture and empathy toward its members
2. Realizing that effective communication requires discovering the culturally conditioned images that are evoked in the minds of the people when they think, act and react to the world around them
3. Recognizing that role expectations and other social variables such as age, sex, social and economic class, religion, ethnicity, and place of residence affect the way a people act and behave
4. Recognizing that situational variables and convention shape behavior in important ways
5. Understanding that people generally act the way they do because they are using options that their society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs
6. Developing the ability to evaluate the strength of a generalization about the target culture (from the evidence substantiating the statements) and to locate and organize information about the target culture from the library, internet, mass media, people, and personal observation and reflection



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social
entrepreneur
corps
PART II

NEBAJ, GUATEMALA



Letter from SEC

Hello and welcome to the Social Entrepreneur Corps (SEC) team!

My name is Luke Burchell and I am the SEC director for Guatemala. You will be soon be investing your energy, ideas and hard work into creating positive change in beautiful Guatemalan communities. The local Guatemalan team and SEC Innovation Guides will be supporting you along the way. It will feel tough at times, but rest assured that your contribution to the work will be extremely valuable and felt long after you have left. We are very excited about having you as part of the team and we look forward to creating social impact together.

It is difficult to imagine that any other country in the world can offer such a diversity of wonders as Guatemala. Despite its relatively small size, (roughly that of Tennessee) Guatemala boasts landscapes ranging from tropical beaches to highland sierras, jungles to dry lowlands. Sharing this land are dozens of ethnic groups, all with unique cultures and customs, speaking over 20 different languages. The wonderful strength and vibrancy of Mayan culture has survived remarkably well, and its richness and colorfulness will delight any visitor.

Between its dramatic landscapes and warm inhabitants, Guatemala will be a country you will never forget.

The majority of the population lives in the Highlands of the western part of the country where we will be working. The highlands offer incredible mountain ranges, interspersed with towering volcanoes upon which fall clouds and mists. Here is your opportunity to truly live 'above the clouds. The average altitude in the Highlands is over 1500 meters above sea level, producing a climate ideal for the cultivation of all sorts of crops, especially maize, the sacred corn of the Mayans. Many areas (Antigua for example) are blessed with a climate of warm, sunny days and cool evenings, earning Guatemala the name "Land of Eternal Spring". Higher up (Nebaj) and the climate is a little chiller but still with many sunny days. One could spend years exploring the highlands and still not tire of its scenery and cultural richness. Guatemala is truly a special place.

Hasta pronto!

Luke Burchell
SEC Director, Guatemala



About SEC

Program Overview

Through participation in innovative community development work within a challenging cultural, language learning and grassroots environment, Social Entrepreneur Corps ensures that students will:

- Gain insights into the opportunities, inherent risks and limitations involved in world development
- Have ample opportunities to significantly increase language proficiency
- Observe, learn and live in a diversity of cultural settings
- Experience homestay living with local families
- Be offered the opportunity to make a significant contribution

It is the mission of Social Entrepreneur Corps that the selected students participating in this exclusive program leave the program 100% satisfied in their time and financial investment having gained the desired knowledge and experience in a secure, enjoyable and truly enlightening manner. Through classes, case studies, discussions, analysis, living with the local population, as well as through visits and active participation with local organizations and social entrepreneurs, students will make a profound community impact whilst gaining an in-depth knowledge of community economic development.

The desired outcomes for the program are that students:

Culture

- Will have gained an understanding of challenges confronting the rural population specifically
- Will feel comfortable interacting with the local population on a general, family, and individual level
- Will have gained an understanding of the cultural and professional “do’s” and “don’ts” of living and working in development environments such as those of Guatemala
- Will understand how low income populations live, work, and aspire to achieve

Spanish Language

- Will have significantly improved their conversational Spanish capabilities
- Will have gained an understanding of the nuance of language in developing country environments

Personal and Professional

- Empathy
- Collaboration
- Innovation and Problem Solving
- Adaptive Leadership
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Community Building and Engagement
- Resiliency, Growth and Mindset

Social Entrepreneurship

- Will have gained an understanding of the key differences, advantages and disadvantages of varied international relief and economic development models
- Will feel knowledgeable with regards to the challenges and opportunities inherent in the creation of successful social entrepreneurship models, implementation strategies, and tactics
- Will have learned and practiced effective strategies for training, mentoring, and supporting local social entrepreneurs
- Will have contributed to the identification and design of new social entrepreneurship opportunities for local constituents

In-Country Program Outline

Structural Summary

The SEC program is divided into six segments: pre-arrival, orientation and foundation building, initial field work, reflection and analysis, follow-on field work and conclusion, delivery, and presentation.

1. Prior to Arrival

Interns will be directed to resources and documents in the weeks leading up to the program to deepen their understanding of the approach to the work, frameworks used to create and scale impact, and specific engagement opportunities. Interns will be introduced to pre-identified projects serving the priorities of the SEC sister organization, Soluciones Comunitarias (SolCom), as well as the needs of local partner organizations who interns will be consulting for through the Grassroots Consulting or “Asesor por Favor” program. Project outlines will be delivered to groups at least one month before departure so that basic research can be conducted and initial ideas and questions generated. The SEC Country Director will be available to support and answer all of questions throughout the time leading up to the program.

2. Orientation and Foundation Building

Upon arrival in country, all participants will be picked up at the airport and will spend the first segment of their time in orientation sessions, development discussions, language training, and participating in project content and technical training. The focus of this first orientation and foundation building segment is to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills for the field work segment and to begin outlining and working on pre-designated projects. This “ramp up” segment is essential to ensure that participants can work as effectively as possible with our development professionals and constituents in the field.

Note: During this time, the entire GESI team will be working on the same program structure and living with homestay families in communities just outside of Antigua.

Continued on next page



In-Country Program Outline

3. Initial Field Work

Upon conclusion of Foundation Building, the group will travel approximately 6 hours to the rural town (pop. 20,000) of Nebaj. Here students will meet their indigenous homestay families and be immersed in the local culture. Participants will work in their Social Innovation Teams in their respective field-work activities, as well as planned community and organizational visits. Priority projects will be based on the needs on Social Entrepreneur Corps' sister organization Soluciones Comunitarias (SolCom). Developing a strong relationship with the local SolCom team is of great priority and there will be a great deal of opportunity to do this through frequent community visits lead by SolCom leadership and designated time allocations to consult and liaise with local staff on all project work. The local leadership of SolCom has developed and manages partnerships with other local organizations for whom you will also be engaging with and consulting for.

SEC uses a design thinking methodology to creatively address challenges in the field and design its programs. This process acts not only as a catalyst for entrepreneurial activity but also drives incentive to be consistently questioning, learning and developing professional relationships and friendships.

SolCom Regional Coordinators (RC's) are Guatemalan citizens who work year-round to support teams of active entrepreneurs in the field, and are the principal clients for project-related work for SEC programs. RC's identify the national and regional needs for SolCom and generate project requests around those priorities. Grassroots Consulting (Asesor Por Favor) partners are often assisted in identifying their needs by SolCom's RC's and will have requested specific consulting services. For Asesor por Favor (APF) projects, students are likely to engage in capacity building, needs analysis or tool creation. Project identification is carried out before arrival in the interests of efficiency and to be purposeful in execution. Students will focused upon creating/ delivering tools, ideas and strategies that empower SolCom's local leadership and enables them to improve their work and generate a greater level of social impact.

Five Categories of Activities

- **Needs & Feasibility Analysis:** You help us to understand the dynamic of real, perceived and felt community needs through research, observation, surveys and informal conversations. You learn how to ask the right questions, in the right way. And then you listen, record what you learn and communicate your conclusions to our team.
- **Innovation Design:** You help us to modify and design appropriate, dignified, systematic and scalable solutions. Whether it's a new way to reach and educate people, or an innovative technology with measurable impact, it should empower community members to break the cycle of poverty for themselves and their families.
- **Capacity Building:** You will deliver workshops, facilitate trainings and work one-on-one with local constituents and beneficiaries, providing them with critical skills, knowledge and tools that were previously inaccessible.
- **Scaling Impact:** When we find a social innovation that works, we want to scale our impact by teaching it to others. You play a critical role by reaching out to organizations and communities so that we can share our best practices.
- **Evaluation:** Can we do better? You'll find out by talking with individuals, families, communities and organizations that we support. You will help us to better understand what's working, what's not, and how we can improve.

In-Country Program Outline

Most projects are not linear but highly integrated. You may find yourself conducting eye exams at a vision campaign, but also surveying former clients and conducting feasibility studies for mass exams in schools. While you will be given an outline with desired outcomes and suggested deliverables as well as local staff who serve as project mentors, the direction of the project is really up to you as interns. You are given independence and expected to decide the way in which your team approaches the task, delegates responsibilities, and identifies priorities to build out an action plan and work schedule. While you receive more support and structure from SEC in the beginning, after the first few weeks you will be expected to let us know what you need and coordinate your activities as a team. Since APF projects are site-specific, they are presented to local stakeholders at the conclusion of your first fieldsite.

4. Reflection and Analysis

At the conclusion of the first segment of fieldwork, interns reunite to decompress, share best practices, lessons learned and problem-solve. You may be assigned new APF projects for your next fieldwork segment. Typically the larger, SolCom-focused projects are carried on throughout the total duration of the program so that you'll have time to receive ongoing feedback and better plan for your second phase of fieldwork.

5. Follow-on Field Work

Again you will divide back into the same Social Innovation Teams and return to work. Depending on the needs and priorities of local stakeholders, groups may venture out to a new region and satellite site with another homestay family and new APF consulting projects, or they may return to the original community and the same homestay family. You will continue your SolCom project work, similar to the first segment of fieldwork. You'll also wrap up APF round-table discussions with local partners before leaving your site.

6. Conclusion, Delivery and Presentation

Finally, all teams will reunite for the final days of the in-country presentation and which point projects will be completed and presented. Recommendations of the Social Innovation teams will be reviewed with the local SolCom and SEC teams. Wrap-up sessions will be conducted to prepare you for the transition back home.

Note: Meeting Friends on Days Off

If you have friends in Guatemala, you can meet them on your free days with the Country Director's approval, if logistically feasible. You will need to sign a waiver. Visiting program participants assigned to other regions is typically not allowed during your times in fieldsites.



Health

GESI and SEC are deeply committed to student health, safety, and well-being. Our experience in risk assessment and emergency response has enabled us to maximize safety and security for GESI students. We arrange medical insurance with full coverage abroad and emergency evacuation services, and we actively monitor international events that may affect students. We work in cooperation with a team of risk management and legal professionals to ensure comprehensive measures address potential health and safety issues while providing students with 24/7 in-country support. Learn more about health and safety during GESI at gesi.northwestern.edu/logistics/health-safety

As a GESI student, it is your full responsibility to identify and take all necessary health precautions prior to, during, and following the program. Please start your health preparations early, as some vaccinations must be administered as far as eight weeks or more before departure. Providing detailed medical advice is beyond the expertise of SEC or GESI staff so it is very important to consult the resources below as well as medical professionals such as your doctor or local travel health clinic.

Resources

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Recorded information about health risks and precautions for international travelers: 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747)
- Country-specific traveler's health Info: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/
- Malaria Hotline: 404-332-4555

Topics to talk to your doctor or local health clinic about:

- Any pre-existing conditions. Please note that pre-existing conditions--even those that don't impact you on a regular basis in the United States--can flare up while in a new environment due to altitude, allergens, new food, etc.
- Symptoms of the most common illnesses contracted by travelers and appropriate treatment
- Medicines and supplies for preventing and treating common illnesses and maladies (diarrhea, dehydration, sunburn, food poisoning)
- Medicines and supplies for pre-existing conditions (especially important if you need a specific brand or dosage which are not always available abroad, i.e. anti-anxiety or depression medication)
- Yellow fever and typhoid fever
- Malaria (if participants plan to travel to at-risk areas)
- Rabies
- Food and water-borne diseases

What happens if I get sick?

For serious illness that may occur during your program, there are public and private clinics and hospitals available in most areas. If you should become sick, please alert the site team and your host family immediately and they will ensure that you receive appropriate medical care. Don't be embarrassed to speak to your host family or site team about your medical issues; they are there to support you (and have seen worse!), so do not postpone the conversation.

GESI's cost includes comprehensive medical coverage through GeoBlue; your enrollment will be completed for you, and your member number will be provided to you at the start of the program. The illnesses and medical issues you are more likely to encounter may require medical consultations and prescriptions that will generally incur an out-of-pocket cost between \$25 and \$100; these types of expenses are reimbursable through GeoBlue. Please plan for emergency medical expenses and seek reimbursement directly from GeoBlue. SEC and GESI are not responsible for up-front costs or cash-related medical fees.

For more health information, especially regarding what to do if you have a pre-existing condition, visit Northwestern's Office of Global Safety and Security website:

www.northwestern.edu/global-safety-security/health-safety/travel-health/index.html

Safety & Security

SEC and GESI never anticipate significant issues related to safety and security during the program, but we understand that emergencies sometimes occur. We have had experience dealing with a variety of issues for which we can prepare and respond to appropriately. During local orientation, students will hear from program staff about pertinent safety and security precautions specific to the area.

All of our sites are in safe areas. However, similar to any location in the US, certain common-sense safety measures must be taken (i.e. not walking alone at night or wearing expensive/flashy jewelry or clothing). We emphasize that the most important ways to stay safe are to exercise good judgment, to have a strong network of local contacts, and to have a strong awareness of the potential for harm.

SEC will do its utmost to provide a safe environment and a responsive support system to you throughout your experience. We depend upon our staff to serve as a barometer of the local political, social, and economic climates. We depend on our participants to act prudently and to be receptive of instructions and suggestions regarding safety and security.

SEC's responsibilities:

- A safe and secure host community. SEC is run by staff and trusted colleagues who live locally and have years of experience with international students. While the political climate varies, we feel that our extensive local networks of host families and partner organizations provide us with a good barometer of the climate in relation to the safety of foreign volunteers.
- Inform you about safety and security in your host community through materials like this pre-departure guide. We equip you with the information and tools to be aware of the realities of your host community, to avoid situations that would put you at risk, and to manage these situations should they arise.
- Take you to a preferred medical facility in the case of an emergency.
- Support you logistically and emotionally through any emergency situation.

Your responsibilities

- Follow the guidelines and rules your site team and host family provide; they exist to help keep you safe!
- Learn about the history and current events of your host country and community.
- Secure all recommended vaccinations.
- If you are a US citizen, GESI will register your travel with the State Department. If you are not a US citizen, you should register your travel with your home country's equivalent.
- Avoid volatile or risky situations (especially protests).
- Travel with someone you know, and avoid being out alone after dark.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Walk purposefully and act as though you know where you are going.
- Notify your site team of any incidents of harassment, illness, accident, or any other serious event as soon as possible.

The safety and security of our program participants and staff is our first priority. We have rigorous and conservative safety and security procedures, including triaged security measures for students (such as restricted travel, curfews, and buddy systems) should any emergent or potentially emergent event occur. Every site has an emergency evacuation plan (supported by our travel insurance partner) that identifies safe houses, identifies on-call transportation, and provides a variety of options for moving participants out of unsafe area via land and air routes. The vast majority of safety and security incidents are those of petty crime, such as leaving a bag on the table and returning to find it missing and of street harassment, which will be discussed during Pre-Departure and at your on-site orientation.

Visa Info

The recommendations provided here are subject to change at any time. As a GESI student, it is your full responsibility to secure the appropriate visa and ensure the full legality of your stay in the host countries during the program. To do so requires consultation of the following resources beyond the information provided by SEC and GESI.

Guidance (subject to change at any time):

American Citizens:

ENTRY and EXIT: A valid U.S. passport is required for all U.S. citizens to enter Guatemala and return to the United States, regardless of age. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less. That period can be extended for an additional 90 days upon application to Guatemalan immigration (If the initial period of stay granted upon entry is less than 90 days, any extension would be granted only for the same number of days as the initial authorization). U.S. citizen travelers should have at least 6 months of validity remaining on their U.S. passports after the date of entry or they may be turned back by the airline or immigration.

For questions, consult the Guatemalan Embassy website: <http://guatemalaembassyusa.org/>

- If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will need to contact the embassy or consulate of your country of origin to obtain the visa requirements for entry. It is very important that non-U.S. citizens notify us immediately if they require any documentation from us to obtain a visa.

Important Resources:

U.S. State Department: Information for U.S. travelers to Guatemala
<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/guatemala.html>

Guatemala Embassy in the United States:
2220 R St NW
Washington, DC 20008
<http://guatemalaembassyusa.org/>



Packing List

Note: Interns must be able to physically lift and carry their bags on dirt roads and up and down multiple flights of stairs. Do not over pack. Most items can be acquired or replace in-country and their will be facilities to do your laundry. The lighter the better!

Before Arrival

- GeoBlue Travelers/Health Insurance and (2 copies)
- Flight Itinerary
- Valid Passport and 2 color copies (always keep one at home)
- Spending Money (for free time/days, extra food and souvenirs)
- ATM card (be sure to clear foreign ATM use with your bank before departure)
- Any special snacks that you love (trail mix, power bars)

Necessities & Resources

- Documents: passport (original + 3 copies), airline tickets, personal health insurance information, and cash, ATM/credit cards (and copies of each in a separate place)
- Guidebook/ Other publishing
- Laptop (required) and USB
- Camera
- Journal/ Pens
- Books (for downtime, bus rides - bring one, you will be able to trade)

Equipment & Toiletries

- Traveling backpack/duffel
- Daypack (regular or drawstring bag)
- Money belt
- Raincoat/ Poncho
- Small umbrella
- Reusable water bottle
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Toiletry bag and toiletries
- Pepto Bismol or fiber snacks/pills (recommended)
- Antibacterial Hand-gel or Wipes
- Prescription meds
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent (recommended with DEET)
- Towel
- Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)

Clothing

- Long pants (khakis, jeans, etc) (2)
- Long sleeved shirt (1-2)
- Sweater/sweatshirt - Nights will often be chilly and homes are not insulated from the cold! (1-2)
- Short sleeved shirts (2-3)
- One nice shirt/outfit for special events (guys - collared shirts; girls - blouse or other nice top/shirt)
- T-shirts/tanks: girls - you can bring tank tops, but spaghetti straps are not appropriate for work days (3-5)
- Shorts (most people wear long pants. While they are not appropriate for work activities they are certainly useful for hiking and soccer! Leave short-shorts at home! (1-2)
- Bathing suit (1)
- Undergarments
- Socks
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Bandana (opt)
- Nicer pair of dress shoes (girls-nice sandals, flats, guys-loafers, etc)
- Running shoes/sneakers
- Flip flops

Miscellaneous

- 2 small gifts for homestay family
- Pictures/postcards of your family/state/university to share with people and use as conversation starters
- Playing cards/ small games to share

Note: We are not going to be in tropical parts of Guatemala; the highlands are quite a bit colder, expect the temperature to be 40°F - 80°F with sun, rain and wind. It tends to get chilly at night so clothing that you can layer is recommended. Most of all, remember that comfort is the most important! Pack a bit more than you'd need for a week (laundry service is included).

Please include both clothes that are perhaps not your favorites (shoes may get muddy), but are presentable and professional (not torn, stained, or old t-shirts). Homestay families do laundry, and there are laundromats in towns where we stay in hotels, so don't bring an enormous suitcase to last the whole time; however, clothes take some time to dry on the washline and you'll need to plan around field work and travel. Also, please be sure to bring clothing that is relatively modest; a good rule of thumb is to bring things that cover your shoulders and cover your knees, for both men and women.

Money, Packing & Clothes

Money

SEC suggests budgeting approximately \$50 for every week you plan to be in Guatemala for spending money. You may want to add a bit more if you are going to buy a lot of gifts. That being said, you do not need to change money in the US before arriving. You also do not need to bring money all in cash as there are ATM machines in country that are accessible. Our suggestion is to bring no more than \$100 in cash and bring an ATM card for the rest. If you do want to bring travelers checks, please be aware that cashing them may not be as easy as withdrawing money from a checking or savings account.

Note, if you pick up travellers' diarrhoea or need to visit the doctor for any reason you will need approximately \$50 - \$60USD to cover the consultation and medication depending on the situation. (You will be able to apply for a refund with your insurance provider once you return to the USA).

Luggage

No need for a sleeping bag. Our suggestion is that you bring a big backpack or duffel, as well as a day backpack. Suitcases can be a bit unwieldy, and rollers don't really work as the streets are not the smoothest. Please note that you will be moving around a lot – we recommend that you travel as light as possible.

Clothing

No need for any formal attire whatsoever. As well, few people wear shorts. No short skirts please. The key is to be comfortable. Jeans, pants, collared shirts and the like are the norm. You will need a bathing suit as you will go swimming a few times. You will also want to bring T shirts. In the afternoon it may rain so bring a retractable umbrella and raincoat. Also, bring a few sweaters and sweatshirts. With regards to laundry, you will be able to do it in country so don't over pack. Also, wearing the same clothes a few times without washing is certainly not unheard of in our line of work. The "sniff test" will serve you well.

Remember, you will be able to do laundry in country... so don't over pack! If you forget anything, you can most likely purchase it in country.



Electronics & Communication

Should I bring my laptop?

Yes. While much of your time will be spent in the field, initial research, analysis and final crunch time for deliverables will require a computer. In the past, tablets have not been able to meet students' needs effectively and sharing devices is difficult when everyone is working towards the same goal at the same time.

Communication

Each of you will have your own cell phone when you are in country. You can use this to call locally or call internationally and calls are fairly inexpensive. There are no charges for in-coming calls so we would encourage your parents etc to buy a few phone cards at the local convenience store. Internet is ubiquitous and cheap so you will be able to communicate through this means often.

Electricity

Electricity Guatemala is on the same current as the US and uses the US style two pin plug. Three pin plug sockets are quite rare so it is recommended that you use an adaptor that eliminates the ground pin. These can also be purchased once in country. You may also want to bring a small surge protector for valuable electronics like your laptop.



Family Homestay

Guatemalan Family Homestay

All home stay families are trained by Social Entrepreneur Corps. As such, these families understand the needs of the participants and specific expectations of Social Entrepreneur Corps. The home stay is an essential step in helping participants gain an understanding of how local people live and work. It is an invaluable way to improve on classroom Spanish. The vast majority of Social Entrepreneur Corps participants end up forming great friendships during this process.

All of the Guatemalan host families that SECorps works with are enthusiastic about receiving interns in their homes and will treat you like a member of the family. They like to include you in many activities such as cooking, birthday parties, weddings, and occasionally travel. They are concerned with your health and safety and will provide you with lots of advice and recommendations for what to/not to eat and where to/not to go and who it's okay to hang around with. They have been trained on our Emergency Action plans and know it is not their place to offer you medicine, etc.

Learn from your host-mother and do as your family does. Spend time with them. The more you put in and be outgoing yourself, the more you'll get out of it. Be prepared for a fun, yet challenging, experience.

The way to make the most of your Guatemalan living experience is to come with an open mind. Although your time is limited, participate in family life, play games, share stories and share in the responsibilities of being a family member when appropriate. The homestay experience you have will largely depend on you, your attitude, and your friendliness.

The first few days with a new family may, at times, be challenging. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings. The families who host GESI participants are carefully selected and offer their homes out of a genuine sense of generosity and the wish to learn about another culture as well as share their own. Your host family will view you as a member of the family and treat you as such. We hope that you will feel equally at home with your family but we ask that you never forget you are a guest in their home. Please always be respectful of their rules and help out the best you can. Things like offering to help in the kitchen, or making your bed, keeping your room tidy, will be appreciated.

What will my host family provide?

Your family is required to provide you with a private room, three meals a day, purified water and weekly hand or machine-washing of your clothes and sheets. Toiletries and a towel are not provided; you must bring your own but their bathroom should always have toilet paper available. If you know you are someone who needs to eat more frequently or has particular tastes, bring some granola bars from home or extra snack money to pick up chips, cookies, ice cream, etc at the corner store.

What are the living accommodations like?

Living accommodations range depending on each host family's specific situation and the area where they live. You will live in the communities where you work where there is need for SolCom products and services. For this reason, housing and homestays may be a jump outside of one's comfort zone for some. In the rural settings, you will experience more poverty. Houses may be made out of wood, tin, block or a combination of materials. In larger pueblos, most homes are made of block and cement.

Family Homestay

How are families structured in Guatemala?

Like many countries in Latin America, Guatemalan households may consist of a nuclear family, a single-mother household, a retired couple, or multiple generations. It is common for children to live with their parents until they are married, and sometimes afterwards, so parents, grown children and grandchildren may live in the same home. Children in Guatemala, like children anywhere, can be both adorable and annoying, but try to maintain your patience with them in order to integrate into the household. Sometimes young children will be afraid of you for the first few weeks because you are a stranger. Please don't take this personally – be patient and they'll warm up to you with time. More often, younger children will be excited by your visit and want to play. If you have valuables like laptops and smart phones that you don't want to share, keep them locked in your suitcase out of site. Otherwise don't be surprised if your siblings ask to borrow them. If you share once, expect that they will ask again, so know what you feel comfortable with set boundaries from the beginning. If you aren't keen on sharing, don't make a display of using your electronics and keep it for private use in your room.

Some families also employ a housekeeper (empleada) who may support the female householder a few days a week. Common duties include cooking, laundry and cleaning. An empleada's hours and relationship to the family vary - some empleadas may simply maintain a business relationship with the family, while others become more like adopted family members. This won't be seen in the rural areas since families don't have that disposable income, but may be present in some pueblo households.

Do I need to help out with chores?

We ask families to treat you as another member of their family and we ask that you behave correspondingly. This means you will pick up after yourself, keep your area neat, and help out where appropriate. Some families may initially treat you as a guest, but offering to partake in activities like cooking and cleaning will help you to further integrate.

Will I receive my own set of keys?

Each family is different. You may in some instances receive your own set of keys but most likely you'll need to rely on your family to let you in. That's why it's important to communicate what time/where you'll be coming back to the house, at night and for meals. If you are going to be out later than normal, it's polite to ask when is the latest you can be back. There is not an official curfew per say, but you should check with your family first to see what their rules and expectations are. SECORPS leadership will give you more specific guidance once in country.



Family Homestay

Criteria for Social Entrepreneur Corps homestay certification:

- The house is maintained in a clean and orderly state.
- There is a private room for the participant with the minimum of a bed, light, flooring, and ventilation.
- There must be a bathroom with a door.
- The house has an outside door with a lock.
- The family creates a kind, safe, welcoming, and supportive living environment.
- The family agrees to provide three meals a day, a constant supply of bottled or filtered safe drinking water, toilet paper, and the participant should be offered to have their laundry done weekly.
- The host mother completes training on safe food handling and preparation, water sanitation, keeping clean and healthy homes; furthermore, they learn how to provide language, emotional, and cultural support for participants. This training consists of the following key elements:
 - Emergency Plan and 24/7 Communication Chain–Who to call and what to do in an emergency
 - Expectations and standards of hygiene and security of the house, and in particular, the room where the participant is living.
 - Specific best practices for keeping a healthy and safe participant (i.e. food preparations and curfew)
- A formal contract in which families agree to provide the participant with the services required. All families must undergo continuous training on an annual basis and receive positive/participant/ leadership evaluations as a requirement for renewing the contract.
- The family understands the importance of disinfecting fruits and vegetables and preparing food in a way that keeps in mind a participant's stomach.
- The family understands the responsibilities and challenges that come with hosting a foreigner, and is willing, capable, and excited to do so.
- All members of the household have undergone Sexual Harassment Training and are aware of how to form appropriate relationships with students.



Location Overview

Exact locations subject to change

Headquarters: Antigua - "Colonial Capital"

The tight-knit communities in the Sacatepéquez region of Guatemala are best known for their strong traditions, home to the biggest Catholic Holy Week festivities as well as skilled leatherworkers, metalworkers, and furniture makers. The heart of this area is Antigua, an exquisitely pretty colonial town situated in a spectacular setting, nestled below the three imposing volcanoes of Agua, Fuego and Acatenango. It is one of the finest surviving examples in Latin America of colonial town planning, laid out on a grid pattern emanating from the central park, whilst the many fine examples of Spanish colonial architecture have earned it the position of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Satellite Site: Nebaj - "Mountain Hideaway"

Nebaj is the home of the Ixil, one of the most distinct Mayan cultures. The Ixiles are world famous for their stunning, intricately woven traditional clothing. The local culture feels uniquely traditional and vibrant in this region. Nebaj is far from the cosmopolitan sophistication of the capital, but it is also a bustling, lively town. The people are warm, and offer participation in traditional customs such as the local sauna, a tamascal, or the cooking of the traditional food, boxboles. Nebaj is a heavenly place to visit for those who enjoy hiking, sitting as it does in a beautiful valley surrounded by verdant mountains. Exploring the villages around Nebaj will take the intrepid visitor to some of the most remote places in the Americas. The combination of spectacular landscapes and local culture makes Nebaj the favorite spot in Guatemala for many visitors.

Satellite Site: Lake Atitlan - "Nature's Gift"

For many, there is no more spectacular site in the world than the sun setting over the Lake Atitlan as the evening mist descends. English novelist Aldous Huxley described the lake as like "Lake Como with the added embellishment of several immense volcanoes" and decided it was the most beautiful lake in the world. Once one gets their breath back after the first look at the incredible view of the lake, you can begin to explore the trails and nature parks that surround it. The lake itself is great for swimming. Dotted around the shore of the lake are dozens of towns, from busy Panajachel, with its international scene and restaurants, to sleepy indigenous towns such as San Juan La Laguna. Whether for a short visit or a longer stay, the beauty of the Lake will stay with you forever.



Race & Religion

The following contains excerpts which have been borrowed from Peace Corps Guatemala's "Welcome Guide" that prepares American men and women to live and work in Guatemala for two years. We have woven these excerpts into our own advice and perspective related to identity, with a specific focus on the sites that SEC participants will be living and working in.

For more information from the Peace Corps source, check out:

www.peacecorps.gov/guatemala/preparing-to-volunteer/living-conditions/

On being foreign

Our principal work site, Nebaj is a growing town with a population of approx. 20,000 people. It has received Peace Corps volunteers and backpackers for many years. The town although geographically isolated, has also grown its connection to larger cities like Quiché over recent years with improved roads, public transport and economic growth (certainly not inclusive of the entire population). Residents' exposure to the outside world has substantially increased in the last couple of decades. Being foreign in Nebaj is no longer a novel event for local people and it is easy to engage with the very friendly and open local residents. Interacting with children is always safe and easy to do. Hi-fives, soccer, repeating words and phrases in English from old action films are always entertaining activities for children.

In Antigua, Nebaj, and rural villages, Guatemalan people feel a strong connection with the USA. Almost everybody has at least one family member who has been to, or currently resides in, the U.S. Many people will wish to practice their broken English with you.

In more isolated rural communities, 30 minutes+ from Nebaj, there are still populations with very limited direct exposure to other cultures, races, religions, and lifestyles. What people view as typical U.S. behaviour or norms may be a misconception, such as the belief that all Americans are rich and have blond hair and blue eyes.

In general, the people of Guatemala are known for their generous hospitality to foreigners.

On being non-white

Volunteers of color sometimes, but not always, have a different experience than lighter skinned peers. Because of limited exposure, some foreign nationals will expect to see U.S. citizens who are white. Guatemalans do not typically envision the States as a place of rich diversity with various culturally acceptable perspectives, personalities, and characteristics. Thus, a volunteer of color may be questioned about their U.S. citizenship. In fact, the cultural diversity found in the U.S. is a very foreign concept for most people in Guatemala, particularly for people in villages where there is strong traditional uniformity in their lives from birth to death (dress, gender role, diet, occupation etc.).

It is advisable to be aware that Guatemalans typically address or refer to individuals by the color of the skin, or even the shape of their eyes. A light or white skinned person for example is often referred to as "canche" or "huero". "Chino" is a common name given to anyone with narrow eyes. "Moreno" and "negro" are commonly used to refer to people with darker skin. There is no malice behind these names and no understanding of the offence that singling people out for their race, facial features or skin color can cause.

It is important to always adopt an empathetic viewpoint and remember that schools do not educate children on cultural diversity. If you are receiving unwanted attention then it is best action is to try and ignore it and always take the opportunity to talk it through with the SEC leadership.

On religion

Students are frequently asked about their religious affiliation and may be invited to attend a community church. Students not in the practice of attending church may be challenged to explain their reluctance, but it is possible to politely decline if the church or religion is not one of your choice. However, if there is no moral/religious conflict, we highly recommend that SEC participants take the family up on their offer of going to the church. This enables students to learn more about a very important aspect of their homestay families' lives, and of course, to spend more time with the family. It's also a great opportunity to meet and interact with other community members!

Gender & LGBTQ

On being female

In rural Guatemala, there is a genuine division between the roles of women and men. The degree of separation frequently leads people to rely on stereotypical beliefs about people of the opposite sex—men with respect to women and vice versa. This dependence upon stereotypical images lends itself to the dehumanization of relations between men and women and to a situation in which people are viewed as objects. Unfortunately, the image of American women portrayed in many popular television programs suggests that they are sexually available. Additionally, in some regions of Guatemala, male virility is identified with power and social dominance. Catcalling is common, and is certainly a serious issue in Guatemala, with women feeling objectified, or even intimidated. However, during foundation building, SEC staff will help students develop appropriate and effective strategies to deal with these issues.

LGBTQ considerations

Sexual orientation is not a topic that is openly discussed in Guatemala. Please realize that any affiliation or experiences you have at home (especially in the LGBTQ community) may not be regarded with the same understanding or sensitivity while abroad. Please do your best to take this into consideration when conversing with your host family or other members of the community.

Unfortunately many Guatemalans still consider same-gender relations immoral. It is a taboo subject in most of the country. There is a movement in Guatemala to try and educate and change government policy (for example, allow same sex marriages), however this type of campaigning has limited reach and still lacks substantial support. Guatemala is in the early stages of the fight towards a more egalitarian society and at this moment things are not looking too positive. The government is currently supporting a bill to prohibit basic sex and gender education for children and adolescents in public schools.

We recommend that during your time in Guatemala you consistently reflect on your goals and reasons for participating in the program and ensure that you maintain this focus. Accepting the culture for what it is and embracing the countless opportunities to learn, share and engage with community members and homestay families around the culture, life, work and family will ensure a very positive experience.

Miguel, the president of Soluciones Comunitarias (SEC's local partner) says the following, "In your own house you have your own rules and ways of doing things that you expect people to follow and respect. When you visit someone else's house, out of respect you follow their rules and ways of doing things. This doesn't mean that you have to then change the way you do things in your own house, (i.e. it doesn't change who you are), but you may need to adapt who you are or what parts of yourself you exhibit when in someone else's house in order to respect their views. Adapting does not require you to compromise your identity.

A Note on Harassment

We would like to affirm that those who are harassed should not have to feel the responsibility to protect themselves against any type of harassment and that it is not considered their fault or responsibility to avoid it. It is important to note, especially when interacting across and between cultures, that facing harassment of any kind can be confusing. As such, site teams are well-suited to orient you to area norms (including safety precautions and local ways of being), offer a variety of responses (to harassment or other concerns), and are there to support you throughout your experience. Their suggestions come from a long-informed understanding of cross-cultural engagement and local information.

A Note on Alcohol

In Guatemala the consumption of alcohol is heavily stigmatised, especially in rural communities. Many Guatemalans that consume alcohol (almost ubiquitously men) do so in excess, often entrenching themselves and their families in further poverty. "Las Cantinas" in both urban and rural Guatemala are places to be avoided by both foreigners and local families. It is common for inebriated men to be sat or be lying down outside of a cantina, slurring nonsensical comments at people as they walk by. Getting too close, or entering a cantina can very easily lead to verbal or even sexual harassment. This commonly witnessed behaviour reinforces the widely followed Christian doctrine of alcohol as being 'bad' or even evil. Thus, participants walking around with a beer in their hand, or smelling of alcohol will be perceived in a very negative light by local families, including homestay families.

SEC leadership will talk about the consumption of alcohol upon arrival in Guatemala, and the rules that will ensure the safety of program participants and a respectful relationship with homestay families and local team members. Students will be prohibited from being intoxicated at any point on the program, they will not be permitted to go into cantinas, and will not be permitted to consume alcohol in their homestay homes.

Language Guide

Language Resources

<https://www.spanishforimpact.com/>

SEC offers remote Spanish classes via Skype with payments supporting local Guatemalan teachers and community empowerment work. Have an interest in improving/practicing your Spanish while supporting members of the communities where you will work this summer? Check out Spanish for Impact!

http://www.byki.com/free_lang_software.pl (for Spanish)

Free language learning software Before You Know It (byki), based on the flash-card system. The free version of the software contains 17 lists of words and phrases, which include sample phrases for polite conversations, meeting and greeting, and food and beverages vocabulary.

<http://www.studyspanish.com/>

A free Spanish tutorial, Learn Spanish provides a good opportunity for self-study. It contains lessons, audios, and exercises corrected instantly. A section of the site is free, while additional exercises are provided with a subscription.

<http://www.miscositas.com/>

Short stories, links, and other exercises for learning Spanish.

<http://www.e-spanyol.hu/en/>

A helpful summary of online Spanish study resources with links.



Reading & Film Guide

Recommended books on Guatemala:

The Art of Political Murder	Francisco Goldman
I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala	Elizabeth Burgos
Blood of Guatemala	Greg Grandin
Last Colonial Massacre	Greg Grandin
Paradise in Ashes	Beatrice Manz
Eternal Spring Eternal Tyranny (Photo Book)	Jean-Marie Simon
Between Two Armies in the Ixil Towns of Guatemala	David Stoll
For Every Indio Who Falls	Betsy Konefal
Bitter Fruit	Steven Schlessinger
The CIA in Guatemala	Richard Immerman
Unfinished Conquest: The Guatemalan Tragedy	Victor Perera & Daniel Chauche

Recommended books on social entrepreneurship:

How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas	David Borstein
Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty	Muhammad Yunus
Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business & the Future of Capitalism	Muhammad Yunus
The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for our Time	Jeff Sachs
The Blue Sweater: Bridging the Gap Between Rich & Poor in an Interconnected World	Jacqueline Novogratz
The Search for Social Entrepreneurship	Paul Light
Drown and This is How you Loose Her	Junot Diaz
Breath, Eyes, Memory	Edwidge Danticat
The Farming of Bones	Edwidge Danticat

Recommended films on Guatemala:

Puro Mula
Toque de Queda
Marimbas del infierno
Ixcanul

Website Guide

Recommended websites about Guatemala

- US Embassy Website: <http://guatemala.usembassy.gov>
- InGuat (Guatemala Department of Tourism) Official Website: www.visitguatemala.com/
- State Department International Travel Information: <http://travel.state.gov/travel>
- State Department Website (social/political information): www.state.gov
- Guatemala general information: www.countrywatch.com/
- Travel advice and information: www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations
- Official Government Website Links: www.psr.keele.ac.uk/official.htm
- Geographical information and Maps: www.geography.about.com/library/maps/blindex.htm
- Statistical Information from the UN: www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/info.asp
- Current World historical and cultural information: www.worldinformation.com
- Database of Information on Guatemala: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/ca/guatemala/>

Recommended sites about Social Entrepreneurship/MicroConsignment

- Community Enterprise Solutions: www.cesolutions.org
- Social Entrepreneur Corps: www.socialentrepreneurcorps.com
- Soluciones Comunitarias: www.solucionescomunitarias.com
- MicroConsignment: <http://microconsignment.com/>
- NDSG Social Media: Facebook Group- Social Entrepreneur Corps; Twitter- @MCMimpact
- Stanford Social Innovation Review: <http://www.ssireview.org/>
- Ashoka Innovators for the Public: <http://www.ashoka.org/>
- Mini-Lecture, Greg VanKirk: What is MicroConsignment? <http://youtu.be/nrA6gvn5xD0>
- MicroConsignment Story: <http://youtu.be/4ctI0xoA5Uk>
- CNN Money interview with Greg Van Kirk:
http://money.cnn.com/video/news/2010/08/13/n_cc_microconsignment_model.cnnmoney/

Local News Sites about Guatemala

- Prensa Libre: www.prensalibre.com
- Siglo Veintiuno: www.sigloxxi.com
- La Hora: www.lahora.com.gt
- El Periódico: www.elperiodico.com.gt
- Daily/Weekly Updates: plazapublica.com.gt
- Twitter:
 - o Policia Nacional Civil (@PNCdeGuatemala)
 - o CONRED Guatemala (@Conredguatemala)
 - o US Embassy Guate (@USEmbassyguate)
 - o El Periodico (@El_Periodico)
 - o Presna Libre (@prensa_libre)

