

SYLLABUS
NASC-310 Medical Practicum
Dr. Jeff Osborne and Dr. Kristen Short

Course Objective. To provide a work/study program opportunity for students to experience the culture of a rural, less developed area of the world and to learn the needs and challenges in health care delivery systems. Offered on a Pass/No Pass basis only. Some students have made arrangements to receive credit in other areas, e.g. Spanish or Social Work. The course is open to students from any major.

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Location. Río Coco communities in the department (state) of Jinotega, Nicaragua.

Work To Be Done. We will assist in staffing health outposts in both medical and dental services. Students will work with the health professionals who are part of the medical practicum team, assisting in the following areas: patient reception, laboratory, medical, dental, pharmacy, and veterinary.

Expectations of Students. You are expected to actively and professionally participate in all clinical, daily living, and cultural aspects of the three week experience and follow the policies outlined by the instructor. Here is an important rule to live by: “Never embarrass yourself as a human being, Manchester University as your home campus, or me as your professor.”

You will:

1. Assist doctors, dentists and pharmacists, who are part of the Medical Practicum team, in providing health care.
2. Interact with patients of all ages with a great variety of health needs.
3. Become immersed in the culture of a developing country.
4. Experience being a minority, an outsider, and feel the frustration of insufficient language ability.
5. Live for a few weeks without the luxuries often considered to be necessities.
6. Serve the host community.
7. Complete reading assignments, a daily journal, a feedback form, a reflective essay, and a group presentation.

Grading. 3 credits, Pass/No Pass. You will keep a daily journal during the trip and turn in a reflective essay after returning from the trip. Also, you will participate in a group oral presentation in Science Seminar during the Spring of 2015. Evaluation of individual students will be based on a positive response to each of the following questions:

1. Did the student actively and professionally participate in all aspects of the clinic?
2. Did the student actively and professionally participate in all cultural aspects of the trip?
3. Did the student follow the policies outlined by the professor?
4. Was the student a positive representative of Manchester University?
5. Did the student submit a daily journal at the end of the trip?
6. Did the student submit an evaluation and reflective essay of their experience? Did the student adequately discuss how the experience impacted him/her and what he/she learned about the history, culture, healthcare, and politics of the host country?
7. Did the student actively participate in the group oral presentation following the trip?

Travel. We will use a chartered bus in the Managua area. We will go by bus from Managua to Wiwilí (8 hours), in four-wheel drive vehicle to the river (4 hours), and then along rivers in boats for 14 days, boating around 210 miles.

Logistics. We will sleep on hammocks in schools. Showering facilities and latrines will be varied. Electricity will be intermittent if available at all. Meals will be prepared by community people. The diet consists of food available locally: rice, beans, tortillas, vegetables, fruit, and some meat. Our trip and work is being arranged in coordination with Sandra Mejia of NTUR in Managua and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health.