Information for Student Participants

Price

$2550

Key Dates

____ 28 March 2019.  Due date for application emailed to Dr. Osborne.
____ 3 April 2019.  Applicants emailed about selection.
____ 8 April 2019.  $150 nonrefundable deposit is due to Business Office before registering for this course.
____ 1 July 2019.  $1000 due to Business Office, specifying Medical Practicum.
____ 1 September 2019.  Passport pages scans due to Dr. Osborne.  Online waiver completed.
____ 10 September 2019.  Get a flu shot.  We don’t want to carry influenza virus to Guatemala.
____ TBA November 2019, 4-6 PM.  Off-Campus Student Orientation.
____ 7 December 2019, 6-9 PM.  Final Trip meeting including dinner for entire group.
____ 2 January 2020.  On campus meetings and packing.
____ 23 January 2020.  Late evening.  Return to campus from Guatemala.
____ TBD February 2020, 4-5 PM.  Students present Science Seminar.
____ TBD March 2020.  Reunion of January 2020 Medical Practicum participants

Passport

If you do not have a passport that will be valid through July 2020, begin the process now. A passport is required for Guatemala. Your passport is always the first item requested at immigration and at many other times during the trip. A few steps about obtaining a passport are listed below, but go to this website for more detailed information, including an application form:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/

____ Photo: You will need two identical passport photos of the dimensions specified by the agency. Passport photos can be taken at most CVS or Walgreens stores and many post offices.

____ Birth Certificate:  Obtain your original, or certified copy of, your official (state-issued) birth certificate (not baptismal or hospital).  If you have an expired passport, then use it and the birth certificate will not be required.

____ Application:  Take the picture, birth certificate, and completed application form to the North Manchester post office, Wabash courthouse, the main Ft. Wayne post office, or one of the many passport offices in the U.S.  Processing currently takes 5 weeks or more, so do not delay.  It has happened before that a student's passport did not arrive in time to participate in the trip.  Also, passports are processed in the order needed, so in the space that asks when you plan to travel,
indicate December 20, 2019 to be sure it arrives in plenty of time. A new passport is good for ten years.

___Electronic Copy: Take a good cell phone photo of the photo page and the facing page and send it to Dr. Osborne and the Medical Practicum Assistant.

Health Items

___Physical Fitness: Exercise regularly in the months leading up to the trip. Good physical fitness will make the trip easier.

___Health Conditions: Let me know of any relevant health conditions you have, such as diabetes, heart conditions, allergies, etc. If you have health conditions that, for privacy reasons, are important to know about only if you become sick, write them in a letter and then seal it in an envelope. If you become incapacitated, I’ll give it to the doctors to open. Otherwise, I’ll return it to you at the end of the trip.

___Malaria: Chloroquine, mefloquine, malarone, or primaquine (after a G6PD test) are recommended for rural Guatemala regions below 1,500 meters, where we’ll be part of the time. A prescription is required.

___Dental Checkup: Have one beforehand, because no restorative work can be done on the trip, although we will have a dentist along.

___Glasses: Take an extra pair and/or contacts, as a backup.

___Personal Medication: If you have allergies or other conditions, take an adequate supply.

Immunizations: None of the following are required by the Guatemalan government for entry or by the U.S. for entry upon return, but they are recommendations. Immunizations are available, of course, at any County Health Department.

___a. Polio and Tetanus immunizations should be up to date, even if you are not traveling. Tetanus immunization is good for 10 years.

___b. Hepatitis A consists of 2 vaccines 6 months apart. Have the first one at least two weeks prior to leaving.

___c. Hepatitis B consists of 3 vaccines 1 month and then 4-5 months apart. Complete at least two of the series before leaving. Note that there is a combined vaccine called Twinrix that is for both Hepatitis A and B, consisting of 3 vaccines 1 month and then 4-5 months apart.

___d. Typhoid oral immunization covers 5 years and injection covers 2 years. Typhoid immunization should be complete before starting malaria tablets.

___e. MMR, for measles, mumps and rubella, should be done twice in your lifetime: once as a child and once as an adult.
Influenza is something we don’t want to carry into Guatemala, especially since we’ll be around patients in the clinic with weakened immune systems. Get a flu shot sometime in late fall.

Additional Notes

Students. Approximately 18 students are going on the trip. They will rotate for a day with each healthcare provider in their various roles, including intake and distributing evenly as much as possible. It’s a wonderful opportunity to interact with a variety of providers.

Clinic. We will have Guatemalan translators for each healthcare provider. The Guatemalan nurse in each village small health clinic (puesto de salud) can follow up with the patients. Patients can be referred to small health centers (centros de salud) or regional public hospitals, with the limitations being lack of money to pay for transportation, travel times, and insufficient staff in the public healthcare system.

Since we purchase many medicines in Guatemala and also move between clinics, we will spend a lot of time packing and organizing supplies and medicines.

Setting. We will be working in the indigenous Maya communities in the Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz departments (states) of Guatemala, cooperating with local, indigenous, community leaders; healthcare providers from the national health care system; and the non-profit, community development organization called Fundenor Ab’Al’Aq (Fundenor).

These indigenous communities involve the following Mayan languages: Q’eqchi’, Pocomchi’, and/or Achi’. We’ll travel with English to Spanish interpreters and then hire Spanish to Mayan interpreters in each village. The furthest village will be about 5 hours from the city of Tactic, depending conditions of the dirt roads. We will stay in each village when we work there, sleeping on school room floors, eating food prepared by local people, and purifying water. Each community has electricity and a small clinic staffed by a specialized community health worker (auxiliar de enfermería), part of the national healthcare system, with whom we will coordinate patient care. This region has relatively large populations of people and insufficient healthcare. While there are some mosquito-born illnesses and parasites, Guatemala is one of the many developing countries transitioning from a high burden of infectious diseases to a high proportion of disease burden caused by chronic and noncommunicable diseases. One of the most pressing global health problems today is the growing disease burden of noncommunicable diseases in developing countries.

Fundenor is a small organization, based in the city of Tactic, doing balanced, wholistic community development focusing on raising fowl, home gardening, nutrition, personal hygiene, women’s issues, and health. We will augment their carefully shaped, sustainable programs.

Travel. A chartered bus will transport in the Guatemala City area and to the Tactic region. Pickup trucks, trucks, and microbuses will take us the 3-6 hours to the two or three surrounding communities in which we’ll have clinics. We’ll stay in each community approximately one week each.

Living Arrangements. We will sleep in a school in each community. There are latrine facilities and bathing by scooping water out of a barrel will probably be most convenient. Electricity will be available sometimes in the clinic and schools. Meals will be prepared by community people. The diet consists of food available locally: tortillas, beans, tamales, rice, cheese, eggs, and vegetables, along with some meat and fruit. Our portable purification systems will provide plenty of drinking water.