Ecuador Study Abroad Course

FLEN 404: HON Special Topics: Discover Ecuador from the Andes, to the Amazon, to the Galapagos Islands, 3 HON cr, and 25 days of travel (Wednesday May 20- Saturday, June 13, 2015).

Faculty: Irina Kappler-Crookston (Department Chair Modern Language Department) and Alton Campbell (Director Honors Program) and Karlee Kirking (student leader)

Course Focus:

This 25-day study abroad course will go far beyond the basics to truly explore Ecuadorian and Andean culture through history, art, language, music, dance, cuisine, archeology, and an understanding of indigenous peoples. We will also bring these ideas into the present day with a focus on politics, social justice and current indigenous issues. In addition, we will study biodiversity and ecotourism in some of the most interesting environments on planet earth. The course includes trips to explore the Amazon Rainforest and the Galapagos Islands as well as working, studying, and even living with a host family in the country’s capital of Quito.

We have selected Ecuador as our site for several reasons. We have found that many students tend to go to Europe on exchange. Ecuador’s size and location in the northern Andean region offer students a wide array of geographic and cultural experiences: jungle, coast, highlands, modern cities, provincial towns and indigenous villages all within reasonable traveling distances. Quito is an ideal site for language and cultural experience because of the University of Idaho’s history of collaborative associations with Ecuador through UI alums, Partners of the American and the UI/Pontifícia Universidad Católica del Ecuador (PUCE) Exchange Program. In Quito and in the surrounding area, students will gain first-hand international experience and the opportunity to study contemporary socio-economic, political, environmental, and cultural issues in Ecuador and South America.

Our goal is to take 15 UI Honors students to Ecuador for 25 days immediately after spring semester May 2015. The course credits will meet the following requirements: 1) Honors Certificate and Honors Core Award, 2) Credits for Spanish major and minor, 3) study abroad for the Spanish major, 4) General Education International. As shown on the itinerary, Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Ecuador (PUCE) in Quito has agreed to provide faculty to teach classes, excursions to nearby indigenous towns, field trips to churches, museums and botanical gardens in Quito etc. We are contracting with Ecuador Adventures for the trip to the Amazon and to the Galapagos Islands. If successful, this course would be repeated in future summers. If we fall a few students short of our desired enrollment, we will recruit additional students from the Honors Programs at WSU, UM, and BSU.

For many honors students, this may be the first time they have an international experience, and this program will provide the students the opportunity to study contemporary socio-economic, political, environmental and cultural issues in Ecuador in an organized and safe manner. We hope that this be a bonding experience for these students and give them the confidence to pursue a longer study abroad experience in the future.
Readings, writing assignments, and grading criteria are in development

Itinerary

Wednesday, May 20  Leave early a.m. and fly to Quito

Thursday, May 21  Group arrives at airport/Quito early morning (hotel or hostel) **PUCE will take care of transportation to hotel.**

2:00 p.m. Orientation and tour of campus by PUCE international office, get student IDs, Meet with José Yanez and Juan Carlos Valarezo who will provide an introduction to Ecuador. Juan Carlos will invite his PUCE students to the meeting and will pair them up with UI students. PUCE and UI students will walk to the old part of Quito and have an aperitif (La Ronda).

Friday, May 22  8:45-10:00: Spanish language, “the basics for traveling and interacting”

10:30-12:00: History of Ecuador and Quito (Part I); indigenous people’s scientific accomplishments, culture, and archeology prior to Spanish conquest and occupation.

1:00-5:00 Historical tour of Quito.

Saturday, May 23 – Tuesday May 26  **Travel to Amazon for 4 days:** UI will organize this trip through Ecuador Journeys (Jonathan Hall) Motel night

Wednesday May 27  8:45-10:00: Spanish language and culture (maybe more culture than language)

10:30-12:00: History of Ecuador and Quito (Part II); colonization and impact on culture, community and beliefs

Afternoon after lunch: Casa del Banco (anthropological museum)

Meet host families

Thursday, May 28  8:45-10:00: Spanish language and culture

10:30-12:00: Lecture on Biodiversity and ecotourism in Ecuador

Afternoon: Lunch at Parque Carolina visit to Botanical Garden?

Friday, May 29  8:45-10:00: Spanish language and culture

10:30-12:00 Ecuadorian music and dance (including afroecuadorian/indigenous)

Afternoon performance???

Saturday, May 30  Suggested trip organized by PUCE: Otavalo and boat ride/hike Cotacachi Laguna.

Sunday, May 31  Time with host family
Monday, June 1
8:45-10:00: Spanish language and culture
10:30-12:00: Lecture on Ecotourism: positive and negative consequences on the culture and environment. Katherine Plúa?
Afternoon excursion: Teleférico

Tuesday, June 2
8:45 – 10:00: Spanish language and culture
10:30-12:00: Lecture Indigenous populations/politics/agrarian reform/social Justice. Dr. Juan Carlos Valarezo?
Afternoon: Excursion organized by PUCE to Cochasqui (archaeological site) and rose plantations.

Wednesday, June 3
8:45 – 10:00: Spanish Language and culture
10:30-12:00: Lecture on Ecuadorian art, music and culture
Guayasimin Art Museum

Thursday, June 4
Spanish language and culture
10:30-12:00: Lecture on Food, cuisine, and cooking
Some type of cooking or cuisine activity

Friday, June 5 - Saturday, June 6
(Service-learning/volunteering activities in Quito (soup kitchen, orphanages etc). The UI students would be with host families Friday, June 5 and Saturday June 6 before leaving for Galapagos (June 7-11)

Sunday, June 7 - Thursday, June 11
Galapagos Islands (Ecuador Journeys, Jonathan Hall)

Friday, June 12
Catchup day in Quito with reflection, no need for PUCE as we will stay in hotel.

Saturday, June 13
Fly HOME