MSU Experiences in Latin America & the Caribbean

MSU offers many different opportunities to experience Latin America and the Caribbean. Study abroad programs listed below are academic programs run through the Study Abroad Office at MSU. Freshman seminars to location such as Cuba, Brazil, and Costa Rica may also be offered depending on the year.

Service learning type of programs to Latin America are offered as well. For current offerings, check with Carlos Fuentes at fuentes@msu.edu.

Additional service type opportunities exist for students and alumnae with Spartans Without Borders.

Argentina

Internships in Argentina
Summers
Cordoba is located in the heart of Argentina and is a hub of education, business and finance in South America. This program provides great opportunity for students to enhance their Spanish language and develop valuable professional skills while undertaking a full time internship in this inspiring city. MSU partners with a local placement agency to secure an internship in each student’s area of interest. Internships are unpaid and may include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Arts & Culture
- Education
- Design
- Media & Public Relations
- Health & Public Services
- Tourism & Hospitality
- Marketing & Advertising
- Business & Finance

Barbados, St. Maarten, USVI

Comparative Law and Legal Systems in the Caribbean
Spring
This program, open to all majors, offers a unique opportunity for comparative study of two of the world’s major legal systems: the common law system and the civil law system. Study will cover the basic aspects of constitutional law, criminal law, civil law, court systems, and legal education. Also included are examination of links between law and religion, politics, economics, race and other cultural aspects of the Caribbean region as well as the links between a legal system and both regional and international law. This program has been changed to an every-other-year program and will be offered again spring semester 2015 and spring semester 2017.

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Michigan State University
http://latinamerica.isp.msu.edu/
517-353-1690
**Belize**

**Contemporary Issues in Developing Societies: Belize Spring Break**

Spring Break

The Contemporary Issues in Developing Societies (SSC490) is looking for students who are interested in doing a study abroad during spring break 2015. This two credit course centers on field trips to Mayan archaeological sites, a Mayan village, and a local farmers market. Students will do service-learning at a local elementary and high school for 5 days.

**Entrepreneurship and Development: Agriculture and Environment Studies**

Winter Break

This program focuses on Belize’s farming and food systems, environmental diversity, and sustainability. Students will visit farms, environmental stations, Maya ruins, caves, and islands. Students will also work with Belizean youth on a service learning project.

**Maya Culture Field School**

Summer

This field school program focuses on Mayan culture history in Central Belize through participation in a project of the Central Belize Archaeological Survey. Instruction focuses on Maya history, bioarchaeology, speleology, settlement survey, and lab methods.

**Brazil**

**Brazil Health Exposure Experience in Belem & Braganca**

Winter Break

This program in Belem, Brazil offers College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), College of Human Medicine (CHM) and College of Nursing (CON) students the opportunity to experience pathologies not commonly seen in the U.S. within a completely different healthcare system. Undergrad students are given the opportunity to observe and shadow clinical experiences as well. Clinical experiences for all participants include: tropical and infectious diseases, oncology, pulmonology, OB/GYN, community health and have an enriching cultural experience!

**Healthcare in Brazil: A Public Health Perspective**

Summer

This program gives a firsthand account of all the dramatic changes happening in Amazonia and in Brazil today, of the human impact on the fragile forest ecosystem and of the challenges of promoting human health while protecting the natural resources so dear to the world. The health status of the Brazilian people and the historical, social, political, and cultural factors that have shaped Brazil and influenced their healthcare system will be explored with an emphasis on the health of indigenous Amazonia populations.

**Costa Rica**

**Broadening Perspectives on Health Care**

Spring break

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**Costa Rica: Development, Health and Environment**

**Summer**

This program is an in-depth study of the challenges associated with development, especially concerning health and environment, as played out in the Central American country of Costa Rica. We explore how economic and social development, agriculture, environment and health interact in Costa Rica, both historically and today, and we examine the ethical and policy dilemmas that arise here. Students live with Spanish-speaking families near our classroom in San Jose, but we also travel to rural areas, communities and national parks. Students will also study Spanish.

**EARTH Consortium**

**Summer**

This program offers an outstanding opportunity for students to spend 4-8 weeks in an immersion experience hosted at EARTH University (Escuela de Agricultura para la Región Tropical Húmeda) -- in the lush, humid tropics of Costa Rica. EARTH University is a premier international (undergraduate) university in Latin America dedicated to preparing young professionals to address the major social development and environmental problems of the humid tropics, including rapid deforestation, non-sustainable agricultural systems, degradation of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, poverty, and social deterioration of rural communities.

**EARTH University, Sustainable Development in the Humid Tropics**

**Fall and Spring**

EARTH University (Escuela de Agricultura para la Región Tropical Húmeda) is a premier international university in Latin America, dedicated to the preparation of vanguard professionals to find solutions to the problems of the humid tropics, including rapid deforestation, non-sustainable agricultural systems, degradation of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, poverty and social deterioration of rural communities. Located in the heart of the tropical rainforest in the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica, the 8,342-acre campus includes classrooms, laboratories, academic farms, sports and recreational facilities, student and faculty residences, a commercial banana plantation, reforested areas and a forest reserve.

**Ecological Engineering in the Tropics**

**Winter Break**

This winter-break program explores the design and performance of clean energy and water systems in the tropics. Traveling on the program will be Universidad de Costa Rica peer faculty and students. Ecological carbon, water and energy footprints for bananas, pineapple and coffee will be used to categorize and evaluate system designs for sustainable economic, environmental and social systems. Active-learning, hands-on labs/activities will help in the understanding of design, performance, installation and system evaluation in answering questions like

1. Is biomass energy production sustainable and viable in topical environment where biomass is abundant?
2. What engineering principles and designs can be used to improve energy production while maintaining a carbon-neutral and clean water footprint?
3. What are the biomass, energy and water footprints for commodities grown primarily outside of the US for consumption in the US (e.g., bananas, pineapple and coffee)?

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Environmental Studies in Costa Rica
Winter Break
Website for Costa Rica environment (http://osa.isp.msu.edu/Programs/costaenv.html)
This program, sponsored by the College of Natural Science, is designed to give both science and non-science majors the opportunity to study concepts and relationships in ecology and environmental science while experiencing firsthand the incredible biodiversity and wide variety of habitats of one of the world’s most ecologically enlightened countries. Students will also learn about the role geological history has played in shaping these environments and the species that inhabit them.

Ethics of Sustainable Development
Summer
Costa Rica is widely known both for its efforts towards sustainable development and was one of the first countries to embrace ecotourism and has recently pioneered a new type of tourism -- rural community tourism, which seeks to build capacity in rural communities and protect ecological corridors and watersheds at the same time.

In this program, students will combine the study and practice of Spanish language with the ethics of sustainable development and civic engagement. During the initial four weeks, students will live with Costa Rican host families in the small central valley town of Santa Ana, attend classes at CONVERSA, a Spanish school overlooking Costa Rica’s capital San Jose and visit several tourism sites around the country.

Cuba
Culture and Sustainable Development in Cuba
Summer 2017
An interdisciplinary program being developed to allow students may earn general education credits by observing the differences and similarities between two different political, economic, and social systems. Students will also learn about Cuban culture, arts, and traditions with particular emphasis on music and its role on community identity.

Cuba, Urban Sustainability
Freshman Seminar Abroad in Cuba
Winter Break
This study aboard opportunity is part of a year-long honors research project available to incoming Honor’s College and Academic Scholars first-year students. Participants on this program will study urban sustainability with a specific emphasis on historical and cultural preservation, tourism and economic development by comparing efforts in Havana, Cuba and various cities in the Midwest. The seminar will involve classes and fieldwork in early fall to prepare students for the international travel experience. Field experiences will involve trips to Grand Rapids to visit urban cultural and historical sites—including an overnight to Detroit. Participants, working in teams with a faculty mentor, will design a research project that addresses the program themes, collecting data from primary and secondary sources while in the United States and Cuba and presenting their research at the University Research and Arts Forum in April 2015.
The Cuban Health Care System and Culture
Spring Break
Students are introduced to the health care delivery model in Cuba while experiencing the country’s rich culture. Students will rotate through the three main teaching hospitals in Havana.

Dominican Republic
Leadership in Medicine for the Underserved
Spring
Rae Schnuth schnuth@msu.edu for information about this program that will focus on Human Medicine.

Pre-Clinical Observation, Culture and Medicine
Summer
This program is designed to provide MSU undergraduate students with exposure to clinical medicine and health issues related to careers in medicine, public health, or other health professions. The program is comprised of seven modules and provides a history of medicine and public health and insights on the relevance of culture and the practice of medicine. It offers learners a basic understanding of clinical practice in a foreign setting through clinical preceptors during morning engagements.

Ecuador
Biology in the Galapagos Islands and Amazonia
Summer
Ever since Charles Darwin told the world of his Galápagos revelations, the Islands have been famous for their great numbers of endemic species – and for the profusion and tameness of many of the animals that live there. Students will have almost unlimited opportunities to study the vertebrate and invertebrate animals of the Islands on land and at sea. Snorkeling in clear waters will be a daily activity, enabling students to observe tropical marine invertebrates and fish in great diversity, sea turtles, sea lions, and penguins. Treks on land will provide chances to see Darwin’s finches, marine iguanas, teeming flocks of coastal birds, and unique plants like tree cactuses.

Universidad San Francisco de Quito
Fall, Spring, Summer
This multidisciplinary program, organized in collaboration with La Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), is open to all majors and provides a wide variety of classes that explore the extraordinary diversity of Ecuador’s natural resources, language, culture, and society. MSU participants will attend a combination of Spanish language courses designed for non-natives and regular USFQ classes taught in Spanish by USFQ faculty. MSU students will also have the opportunity to participate in field trips to different parts of Ecuador to experience the varied climate and cultural diversity within the country, including a visit to the Tiputini Biodiversity Station in the Amazon. All participants reside with host families in Quito who will provide three meals a day plus laundry service once per week.

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Guatemala

**COM Medicine International Study**
Spring for 2 weeks
This program will focus on coursework related to Osteopathic Medicine.

Mexico

**Community Medicine in Yucatan, Mexico**
Spring Break
This program combines hospital shadowing with community healthcare and offers students a view of Mayan culture. Students also are given opportunity to: interact with Mexican healthcare professionals, observe common and uncommon pathology, and work in rural healthcare clinics. Some clinical shadowing includes: pediatric oncology, emergency medicine, OB/GYN, community medicine and hyperbaric medicine. There will be limited opportunities available for general surgeries.

**International Engagement in Campeche, Mexico**
Spring break
International Engagement in Mexico is an exciting, meaningful, short-term, intense opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those at the fringes of Mexican society. During Spring Break, students will be active members of a team which will engage with local community members through the provision of needed maintenance and program assistance to Mexican human service agencies focused on children, youth and family service agencies. Additionally, students will explore the foundations of local cultures through visits to cultural/historic sites; connect with community agencies and people; and participate in local special events.

**International Engagement in Merida Mexico**
Spring Break
International Engagement in Mexico is an exciting, meaningful, short-term, intense opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those at the fringes of Mexican society. During Spring Break, students will be active members of a team which will engage with local community members through the provision of needed maintenance and program assistance to Mexican youth, senior citizen, special needs and family service agencies. Additionally, students will explore the foundations of local cultures through visits to cultural/historic sites; connect with community agencies and people; and participate in local special events.

**International Engagement in Oaxaca, Mexico**
Spring Break
International Engagement in Mexico is an exciting, meaningful, short-term, intense opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those at the fringes of Mexican society. During Spring Break, students will be active members of a team which will engage with local community members through the provision of needed maintenance and program assistance to Mexican youth service agencies. Additionally, students will explore the foundations of local cultures through visits to cultural/historic sites; connect with community agencies and people; and participate in local special events.

**International Engagement in Puebla, Mexico**

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517-353-1690
Spring Break
International Engagement in Mexico is an exciting, meaningful, short-term, intense opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those at the fringes of Mexican society. During Spring Break, students will be active members of a team which will engage with local community members through the provision of needed maintenance and program assistance to Mexican (youth, special needs, and other social service agencies. Additionally, students will explore the foundations of local cultures through visits to cultural/historic sites; connect with community agencies and people; and participate in local special events.

International Social Policy and Social Service Delivery in Mexico
Spring Break
The International Social Policy & Practice: Mexico program is a collaborative project of The Michigan State University School of Social Work and Migrant Student Services, with support from the Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF) of Mexico.

Spanish for Healthcare Providers
Summer
This 6-week summer program offers valuable insight into the health care systems in Spanish-speaking countries. It will give participants the opportunity to develop experience through clinical observation and participation in public health care projects, while improving linguistic competence in a Spanish course for health practitioners.

Tec de Monterrey – Queretaro campus
Website for Queretaro (http://osa.isp.msu.edu/Programs/mexicotecq.html)
The Tec de Monterrey, better known as simply the Tec, is more than just one of the most respected universities in Latin America, it is a network of Mexican university campuses offering world-class education in Business, Communications, Engineering, Spanish language and more. Through this program, MSU students can take courses that satisfy a wide variety of requirements and immerse themselves completely Mexican life and culture. In addition, students can work toward the certificate of specialization in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. The Tec – Campus Querétaro offers some courses in English as well as Spanish and has excellent services and facilities for international students.

Nicaragua
Rainforests and Reality
Spring Break
https://www.msu.edu/user/urquhart/nicaragua/
http://jmc.msu.edu/study-abroad/nicaragua.php

Through visits to rainforest, tropical dry forest, cloud forest, mangroves, volcanic lagoons and jungle rivers, students will learn about the diversity of natural and human systems found in Nicaragua. Students will meet local people committed to preserving the rainforests and develop an understanding of the challenges they face.

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Peru

**Internships and Community Research in Huamachuco Peru**
Summer
Located in a poor, Spanish-speaking town, this program provides students with opportunities to directly apply academic, language, and interpersonal skills. Students engage with community organizations by providing research and services to develop community.

**Program in Public Health: Peru**
4 weeks in Spring
This program is a practicum option for MPH students who will work with volunteers on a practicum project.