

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

Study Abroad



**SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE IN GUATEMALA**

WINTERIM 2018

Program Guide

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CONGRATULATIONS on being accepted to the UW-Eau Claire study abroad program in Guatemala during Winterim 2018! Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

Building upon existing foreign language skills
Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
Increasing understanding of different cultures
Enhancing personal development
Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
Gaining self-confidence and independence
Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

This program guide is to be used together with the general Study Abroad Handbook. The Handbook has information that is valid for all faculty-led, short-term immersion programs. This guide will provide you with specific information for the **Guatemala program**. It is designed to complement the Study Abroad Handbook, study abroad orientation and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Please realize that although this guide was written to help you better prepare for your time abroad, and that all of the information available at the time of printing has been used, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. We strongly encourage you to contact your faculty leaders, the Immersions staff, and other students on campus with your specific questions. You should also make use of the additional written and web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common objectives of students studying abroad include advancement in future profession; desire to gain fluency in a second language; wish to expand personal and academic horizons; need for a change; wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up, how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in local culture, yet you are going with a group of UW-Eau Claire students, how can you ensure that you do not spend too much time with other U.S. Americans?

The information in this guide was current at the time of printing, though changes may occur at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

This immersion program in Guatemala will allow students to learn about and experience the context surrounding social justice, environmental justice, and sustainable initiatives around the country. By working in solidarity with Guatemalan people around issues of equality, sustainability, and development, you will learn about the varying distribution of resources, influence, and power in Guatemala. You will also get a chance to compare the historic and current events in Guatemala within the context of your knowledge of historic and current events in the United States.

This program also includes engagement and interactions with Guatemalan community members through community-based service learning projects. You will have the opportunity to meet local leaders working to improve the natural environment and lives of people in their community, and investigate firsthand issues of equity and sustainability in several unique cultural settings.

The Location

This program includes travel to four different cities to experience four distinct environments: Guatemala City, Antigua, San Lucas Toliman, and Santa Anita. Starting in Antigua, students will explore a historic tourist town and hike to the top of a hill, meet and work alongside local coffee farmers, and learn from artisan workshops. From there, students will travel to San Lucas Toliman for a service learning project. The group will then travel to Santa Anita for the homestay portion to do agricultural work, learn about the community's cultural traditions and civil war experiences, and take hikes with farmer families. Students will visit Project Safe Passage to learn about waste management issues, and have a final day in Antigua to climb to the top of one of the volcanos that impacts the surrounding communities.

TENTATIVE Program Calendar

January 2: Depart on group flight from Minneapolis to Guatemala City.

January 3-5: Travel to Antigua, meet and work with local coffee farmers, participate in artisan workshops and coffee picking.

January 6-10: Travel to San Lucas Toliman for service learning projects, Lake Atitlan boat ride and visit women's textile collective

January 10-13: Travel to Santa Anita, meet homestay families and live and work with local community leaders, hike to waterfall.

January 13: Return to Antigua

January 14: Hike Volcano Pacaya

January 15: Visit to Project Safe Passage in Guatemala City

January 16: Departure for the U.S. Program officially ends.

ACADEMICS

Program Prerequisites

To participate in this immersion program, you must **be in good academic standing and have the minimum 2.3 GPA required.** We check grades at the end of the fall semester prior to departure. If you are on probation, we will need to check with the faculty leader to see if you will be allowed to participate. If you have been suspended, you will not be allowed to participate in the program.

Pre-departure Orientation & Academic Planning

Attendance at the October 7th orientation plus additional preparation sessions during fall semester of 2017 are required. Times and days will be announced by your faculty/staff leaders. The

preparation sessions will cover various topics including the history of Guatemala, politics and civil unrest following the conclusion of the Civil War in 1996, cultural groups and traditions, and the geography of the country. These sessions will also include research and article sharing in preparation for the program, as well as going over details of travel and the itinerary, and group teambuilding.

UW-Eau Claire credits are not tied to this experience. However, this is an academic program and you will be required to participate in various preparation sessions, complete academic readings and assignments, keep a journal while abroad, and write a final reflection paper.

The program fulfills 30 hours of service learning while in Guatemala.

For students in catalog years through 2015-16, the programs fulfill 3 credits of Foreign Culture upon successful program completion (students earning a B.A., B.F.A. or B.M degree in the College of Arts & Sciences cannot use study abroad to fulfill their foreign language/foreign culture requirement. See the university catalog for details). **For students in catalog years 2016-17 and later**, the program fulfills the Responsibility Outcome 2 (R2): Global Perspectives upon completion of all assignments.

Program Participation

Attendance at orientation and participation in fall preparation meetings are required for your participation. In addition, active participation in all program components while in Guatemala, including service learning projects, lectures, and excursions, is required of all students.

You are expected to actively participate in all activities on the itinerary. During this program, there will be numerous chances to learn from local community leaders and members, as well as visit various cultural and environmental sites around the

country to learn about how these sites influence the lives of the surrounding communities. In addition, you will have the opportunity to carry out service learning projects with Guatemalan organizations working to improve the lives of people in their communities.

MONEY MATTERS

Undergraduate Costs Paid to UW-Eau Claire

Program Fee (including flight)	\$2350
Application Fee	\$30
Total Program Costs:	\$2380
<u>FLIIE Program Subsidy</u>	<u>-\$1000</u>
Total Payment to UWEC	\$1380

Additional Cost Estimates

Passport/photos	\$135
Additional Meals	\$50
Personal Expenses	\$150
<u>Estimated Round-Trip Airfare</u>	<u>included</u>
Total Additional Costs	\$335

Total Costs **\$1,715**

From your total bill to UWEC of \$1380, you have already paid the \$30 application fee and \$150 deposit. **Therefore, the balance of \$1200 is due on December 8, 2017.** You will receive more information on making that payment at orientation.

FLIIE Funding

This program is supported by Blugold Commitment FLIIE (Faculty-Led International Immersion Experiences) funding for undergraduate UWEC students. While students are encouraged to participate in multiple high-impact immersion programs, each student is eligible to receive BCDT (Blugold Commitment Differential Tuition) funding for only one FLIIE experience. Blugold Commitment funding will include \$1000/student towards the program fee in 2018.

Program Fee: What does it cover?

- International round trip airfare from MSP
- In-country transportation between cities
- All accommodations
- Most meals while in Guatemala
- All activities, entrance fees, and site visits in the program itinerary

Souvenirs & Personal Travel

The amount of personal funds to cover souvenirs and personal travel will vary based on your shopping habits, off-program entertainment, personal spending habits, etc. We do not expect you will spend a lot on personal travel as you have limited opportunities to travel during the program due to a full calendar.

Program Refunds from UW-Eau Claire

The \$30 application fee is non-refundable. **The withdrawal deadline for the program is October 1. No refunds are available after October 1, and if you withdraw after October 1, you will still be required to pay all program costs and any funds already committed on your behalf, up to the full program cost.** All withdrawals must be in writing.

Undergraduate students who withdraw will lose their FLIIE funding. As such, they will be expected to pay ALL non-refundable program costs paid to UW-Eau Claire. For example, the FLIIE funding covers about \$1000 of the program cost of \$2350. However, a student who withdraws after the refund deadline would be responsible for paying the \$2350 estimated cost, which is the true cost of the program without the FLIIE subsidy. FLIIE program support is based on student enrollment and can only benefit students actually participating in program.

Currency Exchange

The currency of Guatemala is the Quetzal. The exchange rate as of August 2017 is 7.47 Quetzal per U.S. dollar. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>.

Credit Cards

In addition to the information on credit cards in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should be aware that **credit cards are not as widely accepted in Guatemala as they are in the U.S.** Only major stores, tourist hotels, and travel agencies are likely to take them.

ATMs: Credit/Debit Card Use

24-hour ATMs are plentiful in Guatemala City and Antigua, as well as other large towns. The most commonly accepted U.S. cards are Visa and MasterCard. You can also draw cash as soon as you land at the airport. You should compare the international transaction fee charged by your different banks; the fee can range from 1-3%. Some travelers have reported ATMs snatching back money if you don't remove it within around 30 seconds; others have reported having to wait 30 seconds or more for the funds to be released from the machine. It is recommended that you set up a debit account with a limited amount of funds.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Immunizations

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that travelers to Guatemala discuss several vaccinations with a doctor at least 4-6 weeks prior to travel. Per the CDC, all routine vaccinations should be up to date prior to travel to any location. The CDC recommends that most travelers to Guatemala receive the following vaccines due to risk associated with contaminated water and food:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid

For a full list of immunizations suggested, please visit the [CDC page for Guatemala](#).

UW-Eau Claire's Student Health Services offers immunizations (IG, tetanus, Hepatitis B, etc.) and health education on international travel for a small fee. Tel. (715) 836-5360.

Often, your health insurance will cover the cost of immunizations. **If your immunizations are not covered by your health insurance and you receive financial aid, you may want to meet with the Office of Financial Aid to inquire if these can be added to your total financial aid budget.**

Yellow Fever

There is no risk of yellow fever in Guatemala. However, the government of Guatemala requires proof of yellow fever vaccination if you are arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever. This does not include the US. If you are traveling from a country other than the US or have a layover in a yellow fever country, you will be required to show the yellow fever vaccine. For a list of yellow fever countries, please see the [CDC website](#).

Malaria

According to the CDC, the risk of malaria is present in certain areas of the country, which includes rural areas at lower altitudes but not Guatemala City or Antigua. The estimated relative risk of malaria for US travelers is low.

You should discuss your malaria prevention strategy with your doctor, especially if you plan to travel independently to areas where malaria is present. The decision about what you will do about malaria is one you must make yourself. If you decide to take anti-malaria medication, follow the instructions from your physician carefully. Many anti-malaria medications can have serious side-effects. Remember that malaria is rarely acquired if you've

taken the proper precautions. The best way to avoid malaria is to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes!

To minimize mosquito bites:

- Cover up with clothing. Wear garments with a high neckline (or a bandana around the neck), long sleeves, and long pants.
- Use a DEET-containing insect repellent (such as Off Deep Woods) on exposed skin AND permethrin, an insecticide, on clothing.
- Avoid shiny jewelry and perfumed cosmetics, as they attract mosquitos.
- If travelling on your own, choose accommodations with tidy grounds and air conditioning or with windows having well-fitting screens. Use mosquito netting elsewhere.
- Check that bed netting has no holes or rips. Tuck netting under your mattress.
- Avoid local preventatives. Many are unproven, such as mosquito coils or Avon Skin-So-Soft. While these are popular folklore insect repellents in the U.S., they perform poorly in scientific studies.

If you become ill:

Early treatment is essential if you do contract malaria. Consider any flu-like illness with fever in a malarial area to be malaria until proven otherwise.

Common symptoms of malaria include fever and chills, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches, and dizziness. See a physician promptly! Delay in seeking medical care and delay in diagnosis increases the chances of complications. Malaria can occur as early as six days after being bitten by an infected mosquito to several months after exposure. Inform your physician of recent travel if you have flu-like symptoms after returning home.

Zika Virus

The Zika Virus is a risk in Guatemala, and is spread mostly by the bite of an infected mosquito. There is

no current vaccine or medicine for Zika, and therefore ALL travelers should follow steps to prevent mosquito bites during *and* after their travel. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, headache, joint pain, red eyes, and muscle pains. These symptoms can last for several days to a week. However, many infected people won't have symptoms at all, or have only mild symptoms.

In particular, the CDC recommends that pregnant women should not travel to Guatemala because Zika infection during pregnancy could cause serious birth defects. Partners of pregnant women and couples planning pregnancy should know possible risks to pregnancy and take preventive steps.

Common Health Problems

The most common health problems for U.S. Americans in South America are intestinal upsets. They usually occur as a result of the change in diet, the different meal schedule, and organisms unfamiliar to your system.

A very common ailment is traveler's diarrhea. It can largely be avoided by being careful about where and what you eat, and avoiding dairy products if they are not pasteurized. If you do come down with it, the following suggestions will help speed recovery and guide your decision to seek formal care:

1. It will usually run its course in three to five days. The worst symptoms usually occur the first day. Bed rest may help relieve cramps.
2. The main risk of the illness is dehydration. Be sure to maintain fluid intake. An excellent source of fluid replacement is ORS or Oraltie, a prepackaged liquid sold in many countries. If unavailable, the following recipe will provide similar value: one liter carbonated water, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda (not baking powder), 4 tbsps. sugar.

3. An over-the-counter medicine like Pepto Bismol may help relieve nausea and vomiting.
4. See your physician prior to departing for Guatemala regarding the possibility of bringing along anti-diarrheal medication such as Levaquin or Cipro.

If nausea and vomiting persist for more than 24 hours, if you develop a fever over 101 degrees F, or if you develop severe abdominal pain, a physician should be contacted immediately.

Water

Tap water in Guatemala is considered unsafe. You should drink bottled or boiled water at all times. Brush your teeth with bottled or boiled water, also.

Carbonated bottled water, soft drinks, hot tea, and coffee are usually safe. Be sure to wipe off the top of a bottle or can before drinking out of it, or ask for a straw. By making sure that you are drinking uncontaminated water, you can reduce your exposure to many diseases such as infectious hepatitis, cholera, diarrhea and dysentery. **Where water is contaminated, ice is also contaminated**—you may wish to learn to order drinks without ice. In general, stay away from any bottled water where the plastic of the bottle is not strong or clear, as this may mean the bottle was reused.

Unclean food and water can cause traveler's diarrhea, which can often lead to dehydration. Dehydration can also lead to constipation. Make sure to stay hydrated during the program especially if you are losing liquids through illness or increased perspiration.

Other Keys to Staying Healthy

- Other than malaria, bugs (mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas) can cause a number of diseases, so you should take general precautions such as covering exposed skin, using insect repellent, and sleeping with a bed net if necessary.

- Wash your hands frequently with soap.
- Keep away from animals such as stray dogs, as they may carry rabies.
- If you are buying food from street vendors, stick to breads or fruits that you peel yourself. (The knives used might be dirty.) Fruits that cannot be peeled, fruit juices diluted with water, raw vegetables and salads that have not been washed with disinfected water should be avoided.
- In addition to bringing anti-diarrhea medication, some students experience the opposite effect. It is a good idea to bring along fiber snacks or constipation medication.

Medical Facilities

There are medical facilities in all cities where we are traveling, so medical care will always be within 15-30 minutes. Larger cities like Antigua have larger facilities with more specialties. Our local partners are knowledgeable about quality English-speaking doctors or hospitals in all cities you visit.

Alcohol & Drugs

Alcohol: The legal drinking age in Guatemala is 18. However, if you are of age to drink, it is recommended that you take precautions to be safe while drinking – such as never leaving your drink unattended, or accepting drinks from strangers.

Drugs: Marijuana and other ‘recreational’ drugs are sometimes available in Guatemala, and highly illegal. Courts treat possession of cannabis as severely as possession of heroin. Be aware that the police target foreign drug users in bribe scams. Drug trafficking is a massive problem in Guatemala due to its northern border with Mexico, and penalties for drug trafficking are extremely severe.

Sexual Harassment & Assault

Harassment: Sexual harassment is common place in Guatemala. Female travelers have reported

everything from staring, lewd and suggestive comments to catcalls, and groping. Often these incidents occur in crowded areas such as market places, bus/train stations, and public streets. Women travelers in Guatemala are advised to respect local dress and customs as a way to minimize harassment. When in doubt, dress more conservatively than you ordinarily would while in Eau Claire.

Assault: Crimes against women including rape are reported in Guatemala, thus women should maintain stringent security precautions. Suggestions include:

- Avoid public transport after dark without the company of known and trusted companions.
- Avoid isolated areas any time of day.
- Keep your hotel room number confidential.
- Lock your hotel room and use deadlocks/door chains while in your room.
- Hire only reliable cars and drivers. Avoid traveling alone in cabs at night.
- Keep conversations with unknown men short—getting involved in conversations can be interpreted as a sign of sexual interest.
- Have someone else join you on excursions

Crime

The threat of violent crime in Guatemala is rated by the U.S. Department of State as “critical”. The Embassy has no reason to believe that U.S. citizens are being specifically targeted, although criminals in Guatemala may assume that U.S. citizens and their relatives have more money than average Guatemalans. Longer-term residents and dual nationals are more likely to become victims of serious crimes, as they tend to be integrated into local society and may not reside in safer areas. Tourists seem to be largely shielded from the worst incidents of violent crime, and instead succumb principally to pickpockets and purse-snatchers. However, U.S. tourists have also been victims of rapes, physical assaults, armed robberies and murders.

More Info on Health & Safety in Guatemala

Detailed information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Guatemala is included in the [State Department Consular Information Sheet](#). It is highly recommended that you read through that information carefully before travel to Guatemala. Safety during the program will be discussed in detail during orientation.

Emergency Contacts

General emergency procedures are described in the *Study Abroad Handbook*, and UW-Eau Claire faculty and local partners are available if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card prior to departure; be sure to keep it in your wallet at all times. The information is also on the **Contact Names & Addresses** page of this guide.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport

General passport information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Visa

A visa is official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. If you are a U.S. citizen, you do not need a tourist visa to visit Guatemala if you have a valid U.S. passport and are staying less than 90 days. If you are an international student or citizen of another country, please check with your local government about if a visa is needed to enter Guatemala.

PACKING TIPS

In addition to the general packing information in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Guatemala.

Clothing & Weather

Guatemala has two seasons, the rainy season (May-October) and the dry season (November – April). During January, you can expect some cool nights and mornings in Guatemala, but still very warm in comparison to January in Wisconsin! During the program, you will be mostly in the highlands, which consists of comfortably warm days (70s-80s F). However, the sun can be very strong and wearing adequate sun screen and hats is recommended.

Attire for the program will be casual most of the time. You will feel appropriately dressed in this attire and you will make other people feel comfortable too. Certain cultural visits may require specific items (closed toe shoes, no skirts, etc.) and these details will be shared with you on the final itinerary. It is suggested that you bring comfortable work clothes that you don't mind getting dirty for the service learning projects, as you might be gardening, painting, or cleaning in these clothes.

In general the days will be warm and the evenings cool. Keep in mind that central heating is not common so you should bring warm socks and warm sleeping attire (such as sweatpants).

Take clothing that is machine washable and does not wrinkle easily. Choose a color scheme and bring mix-and-match clothing. Dark colors show dirt less quickly when you travel.

Items to Bring

- Camera
- Pillow case
- Small wash cloth and towel
- Small suitcase lock
- Pepto Bismol, Imodium, Tylenol, Cold meds/ cough drops/tissues, constipation meds, etc.
- Prescription meds **WITH** the written prescriptions (always in carry-on bags)

- *Personal toiletry articles (not all products, especially feminine products, will be available in Guatemala)*
- *Hand sanitizer or disposable wipes*
- *One dressy outfit—slacks/khakis, collared shirts, polo shirts, knee length or longer skirts.*
- *Shoes: One dressier pair, plus one pair of comfortable and broken-in walking shoes, and a pair of cheap shower sandals (to be used in the bathrooms, which tend to stay cold and wet)*
- *Warm socks as the tile floors can feel quite cold*
- *DEET 30 mosquito repellant*
- *Travel umbrella*
- ***Pack Light as possible and pack efficiently as we will be traveling from site to site.***

GETTING TO GUATEMALA

Travel Arrangements

The group will travel together from Minneapolis airport to Guatemala City on Tuesday, January 2, 2018. The flight departs Minneapolis airport at 11:10am and all students must be at the airport at least 2.5 hours prior for the international flight check-in.

- United #3446 depart Minneapolis MSP 11:10am, arrive Newark EWR 2:52pm
- United #1207 depart Newark EWR 6:00pm, arrive Guatemala City GUA 10:20pm

The group will fly home together, departing Guatemala City on Tuesday, January 16th and arriving in Minneapolis at 10:45pm. You must make your own arrangements to travel to your home city or back to Eau Claire campus upon arrival.

- United #1903 depart Guatemala City GUA 1:35pm, arrive Houston IAH 4:35pm
- United #3619 depart Houston IAH 7:50pm, arrive Minneapolis MSP 10:45pm

SETTLING IN

Housing

Over the course of the two week immersion, students will experience several living arrangements. The first half of the program will entail stays within the environments we are visiting including at the De La Gente Guesthouse. While working in San Lucas, students will be housed in a local hotel. Lastly, we will be staying with homestay families in the community of Santa Anita. Remember, you are going to Guatemala. The overall standard of living is lower than it is in the U.S., and the housing may reflect this.

Food

Meals during international travel are not covered in the program cost, but the majority of meals during the program are provided. There will only be a few instances when you have to purchase your own meals, and those details will be shared later.

COMMUNICATION

Telephone Information

From the U.S. to Guatemala: To call someone in Guatemala, you must first dial 011, the international dialing code. Next, you dial 502 (the country code for Guatemala), then the rest of the local number.

Computer/E-mail Access

It is recommended to leave as much technology behind as possible. Internet cafes are readily available throughout Guatemala for a nominal fee. If you choose to bring a cell phone, check with your provider on international plan information. Much of the time will be spent at sites where Wi-Fi is not available. Cameras are recommended however you will be instructed when not to use them.

CONTACT NAMES & ADDRESSES

GENERAL UW-EAU CLAIRE & CISI CONTACT INFORMATION IS IN YOUR STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK.

UWEC ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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Phone: (715) 836-6037

Fax: (715) 836-4948

UW-Eau Claire After Hours Numbers

(715)839-4972 or (715)577-9045

In an after-hours emergency, please call University Police at (715) 577-9045. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day. You may get an answering machine; however, an officer is alerted as soon as you have left your message. Be sure to give the officer the phone number you can be reached at, as well as what type of assistance you require.

OTHER RESOURCES

The U.S. Department of State offers useful travel information on the "Travel and Living Abroad" section of their web site-

<http://www.state.gov/travel/>

Check the "Travel Tips" section.

U.S. EMBASSY IN GUATEMALA

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