

FAQ's

Overview

What will the schedule be like for this course and field experience?

For 2016, we will have the course content, preparation, outreach and fundraising during the spring semester. Due to the PLU Spring Break occurring over Easter (and thus, not possible to build a well during that week given family and community celebrations), the field experience will occur the week after Commencement, with in-country time in Nicaragua from June 4-11, 2016.

The benefit is that this will give us more time for outreach, awareness building, partnership development and fundraising. These are very important components of the project, and we can't wait for the experience to begin!

Course Content Information

How do the course options work? What is the difference between BUSA 485 and BUSA 495?

There are two course components.

The first is the BUSA 485 course, which is the study away course. You will be enrolled in the 0 credit course, which confirms your participation in the TAP IN course, and shows on your transcript. This also allows us to establish the course fee (the trip fee) in the PLU system, and to allow PLU's insurance and travel coverage to be a benefit on your behalf (only PLU course travel is eligible for these benefits).

The second is the BUSA 495 internship. You can take the internship for 1-4 credits. 4 credits is highly recommended and the default for all participants. 4 credits is the standard for internships, and the required level for any student participating in the exciting new Nonprofit Leadership Minor. Note that we will work with your credits and seek to maximize the block tuition pricing, as described next.

We've designed this course to be flexible to your credit hours for spring of 2016. If you have 16 or fewer credit hours in the spring, you could elect to sign up for the 1-credit option and your tuition would be covered under PLU's block pricing (PLU offers up to 17 credit hours each semester). If you have 17 or more credit hours, you would simply sign up for the 0-credit option BUSA 485 option, which would not offer internship experience but would allow you to participate in the course without any added tuition costs. If you would like to pay for the 1-4 credit option above and beyond the 17 credit hours, you would simply pay the per credit price for the BUSA 495 internship credits.

The internship option offers some neat experience valued by future employers. Specifically, this allows you to earn 4 internship credits for your work in Nicaragua and in the marketing and outreach of the program. If you have any questions, please contact Professor Mulder.

How does grading work for the internship?

All BUSA 495 internship credits are graded pass/fail. You will complete a variety of projects for the internship. Note that if you choose to not take this for internship credit, you will not only participate in a type of alternative spring break program, and you will still participate in the pre-trip discussions/activities and post-trip reflections. Given the field experience and final reflection

occur after the end of spring semester, an “IP” or “in progress” grade will show on your grade sheet until the course is completed.

Will the coursework be the same for a 1-credit and a 0-credit option?

Yes, the coursework and course requirements will be identical regardless of the credit option.

How will the credit count?

The course is a School of Business Study Away Course (BUSA 485). Internships will be credited via the School of Business Internship designation (BUSA 495).

What will internship/coursework look like?

Coursework will include the following:

- experience in building community partnerships
- experience in outreach, education and partner engagement
- experience in planning and facilitating a fundraising campaign (in-person and online)
- pre-departure meetings and discussions on several topics. These will be led by Professor Mulder or other guest faculty who have expertise in areas related to our work in Nicaragua
- assigned readings
- an innovative, in country experience in Nicaragua
- experience in community building, collaborative projects, and social marketing in Nicaragua with the community
- insights into nonprofit operations in a global environment
- a pre-departure and a post-return presentation (campus or community) about your experience in Nicaragua
- on-site discussion, reflection and applications of related material
- a post-course reflection

I don't speak Spanish very well...will this diminish my experience with the community we're helping?

You are certainly encouraged to learn some traveling Spanish. However, you do not need to be fluent. Our nonprofit partner will have several field staff with us on the trip, and they are willing to translate when they are not busy with required duties. In many cases, we will speak the same language of love, and you'd be amazed at how much a smile, a hug or a high five can communicate. On one trip we played Pato, Pato, Pollo... Duck, Duck, Chicken (instead of Duck, Duck, Goose) because we did not recall at the time the name for Goose in Spanish. It didn't matter – the kids loved it regardless of the name!

Course/Trip Logistics

How much will the study away program cost, and what is included?

The study away program will cost a maximum of \$2,480. This is all inclusive (airfare, accommodations, all in-country transportation, all meals, and emergency travel insurance). We will be actively fundraising, and this will help defray program costs. While every year can be different in the area of fundraising, last year the average program fee was around \$700 per student after fundraising.

Can I fundraise on my own?

Absolutely. You are free to approach friends, family members or organizations to see if others may be interested in collaborating with you to help support this important work. Think about special events or holidays for initial ideas. People often donate their birthday to charity (money goes to the charity in lieu of gifts), and perhaps that could be a way to frame requests for support. You also

have the unique opportunity to show others exactly where their money is going, and to provide a personal report of the experience and upon your return to show just how impactful their gift was for a community in Nicaragua.

How do we share the work? Will everyone have a chance to dig the well and help with hygiene classes?

We will have three teams – two drilling teams and one hygiene team. Each will have approximately four participants.

The drilling teams will trade off duties – one will be working, while the other is building relationships with the village members and playing games with the children.

The hygiene team will be working with a hygiene coordinator and leading discussions and educational sessions to help build awareness, skills and behavior change in the area of hygiene and sanitation. Given the topic areas covered and some cultural sensitivities, the nonprofit requires that the hygiene team is comprised of females for some of the lessons.

The drill team can be a combination of male and female participants. Hygiene team participants are encouraged to jump in with a drilling team to gain the unique experience of drilling the well. Likewise, drilling team members are encouraged to help with arts/crafts and story time with the children when this is offered by the hygiene team.

Who is our nonprofit partner for the well water portion of this trip?

Our primary nonprofit partner is Living Water International. Each year Living Water builds and restores hundreds of wells around the world. In Central America, Living Water offers the opportunity to drill a well in the countries of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Haiti.

Hide the following (for now):

Who is our nonprofit partner for the microcredit portion of this trip?

Our second nonprofit partner is The Working World (also known as La Base in Argentina and Nicaragua). While much of the microcredit infrastructure focuses on individuals (e.g., Kiva.org, Global Partnerships, etc.), La Base works with groups of entrepreneurs and many of which choose to organize into a worker cooperative. In a worker cooperative, each employee has an ownership share and a voice in the company and its decision making. La Base has recently established operations in the Leon area of Nicaragua, which is near where we will be installing the well.

Where will we stay in Leon?

Our accommodations will be at a Living Water compound area near Leon. Living Water has a property with several buildings. One building is a type of “home” where we meet in the morning, eat meals, and where we sleep: Some rooms are for our team, and others are for the in country director and his family. The LWI facility in Leon also houses equipment used for the well installation, and it features daytime and nighttime security.

What will our accommodations and meals be like?

Our sleeping accommodations will be shared. We will have multiple sleeping rooms and multiple people will stay in each room. The accommodations are comfortable but not exquisite.

There is intermittent wi-fi at the compound, **though you are encouraged to unplug and only use wi-fi for quick updates to family and friends.**

We will have breakfast together at the compound in the morning, have lunch in the village, and then dinner together at the compound. The people who cook the food do so with both love and pride, and they think of it like having people over at their own home. They also take pride in the fact that most of the people often go back for seconds because the food is so good. At one compound, the cooks guarantee that people will go home weighing more than when they arrived. In the past, students have said the food is truly a highlight as they taste the great cuisine from recipes passed down from generation to generation.

What does our travel schedule look like?

We will likely depart Seattle on a Saturday morning, and likely fly to Texas or Atlanta. Depending on flight schedules, we may spend the night at a hotel near the airport so we can catch an early morning flight to Managua. Upon arrival at the airport, we will be met by Living Water staff and taken to the compound on Sunday morning. After an orientation and safety session, we will likely have time to visit Leon and learn more about the city, culture and history of the area. We start the well on Monday. On Friday afternoon we will head back to Managua and can do some shopping in a mall area adjacent our hotel. We'll spend Friday night at a hotel near the airport, and then leave Saturday for our return flight to Seattle.

The weekly schedule tentatively includes:

Saturday (6/4) – Depart Seattle, overnight (Atlanta, Houston or Dallas area)

Sunday (6/5) – Depart for Managua (early morning flight). Visit Leon area.

Monday (6/6) – Thursday (6/9) Well dig and installation project in the village

Friday (6/10) – Morning visit to a previous well location or to see microcredit in action, afternoon visit to a small shopping area for gift shopping, and then an evening stay near airport

Saturday (6/11) – Depart for Seattle

What does our daily schedule look like?

We will start the morning with an opportunity for discussion before we head into the village. After that morning meeting, we will have breakfast and finish packing the materials for the day. We will be in the village the entire day, and then return to the compound for dinner.

Our daily schedule often includes the following:

6:45am – morning meeting

7:30am – breakfast

8:15am – depart for the village

Noon – lunch in the village

5:30pm – depart for the compound

6:30pm – dinner at the compound

7:15pm – short evening meeting

How will we travel in Nicaragua?

We will travel in a larger Toyota van, driven by either a member of the Living Water team or a company hired by them to transport us around the area. At least one Living Water staff member will always be with us when we travel. The vans are comfortable and have air conditioning. Some of our travel may be on dirt roads when we travel to/from the village area. The Living Water staff are from the area, and they are happy to answer questions and will share information about the city and nearby villages. The staff will require us to wear seatbelts in the van and will work to avoid driving at night (the exception may be a quick run to Eskimo's after dinner, a real treat that we'll share more information about later!).

What equipment will I need to bring?

Living Water will provide hardhats and clean water for us to drink when we are at the drill site. You will need to wear long pants; at least a short sleeve shirt; sturdy shoes (that can get wet or muddy) – an older pair of hiking boots is ideal, and you will not need any steel toe or heavy duty leather boot (something breathable is ideal); several pairs of thick gloves for use when working near the drilling rig; and a sturdy water bottle. It will likely be hot, so some type of bandana or other shade creating headwear may be helpful.

Can I bring gifts for the village?

We will coordinate this together. We are encouraged to bring items that can be provided to (or used by) the entire village. Footballs and soccer balls work great, and we can use them while in the village, and then they can be donated to one of the village elders for them to allow kids to check out and use (and then return). Items to make friendship bracelets are often popular, as are things for children (bubble liquid, puppets, etc.). Many of these villages are close to one another, and people talk from village to village, as well as within the village. If one child gets something special or unique, it can cause challenges with others and even for the child receiving the item. While we are in Nicaragua for one week, we are part of a system (Living Water groups) and we will respect the potentially complex interactions that may precede us or arise after we leave.

Is Living Water a faith based organization?

Yes, it is. In many ways, it is like PLU. When you go to a PLU event, such as convocation or commencement, the event often starts with a prayer and blessing, and also ends with that as well. It will be that way in Nicaragua as well with the Living Water staff. When PLU was founded, it was started by a group of Lutherans who were motivated by their faith. PLU wasn't founded by Lutherans *for* Lutherans, but it was founded **because** they were Lutheran – they wanted to serve others and make education accessible to the community. Similarly, Living Water is motivated by faith to serve others.

If Living Water is faith based, do I need to be Lutheran or a Christian too?

No, you do not have to have a faith to participate in this course or to complete course assignments. All students of all faiths and of no faith are welcome. Realize that there may be some faith influence in the village (much of Nicaragua has a Roman Catholic heritage), there could be a village pastor, and that the nonprofit staff and perhaps some of your fellow students may be motivated by their faith. Hopefully our shared vision is a strong desire to share love, and love can emerge from so many different foundations. And, one of the beautiful things about Lutheran higher education is that we enjoy sharing and understanding, and we can do so from all perspectives (Lutheran, Buddhist, Agnostic, etc.). Thus, diverse backgrounds and viewpoints are welcomed!

Who will be our PLU faculty member and staff member while on the trip?

Dr. Mark Mulder will be the professor for the course. Dr. Mulder has led five PLU study away programs in South America (Brazil, Argentina and Peru) and has been a co-leader of five well funding and installation trips in Central America (Honduras and Nicaragua). Professor Mulder teaches in the School of Business and is a marketing faculty member. He is an active researcher and scholar in charitable giving, nonprofit marketing and corporate social responsibility, and has a passion for using marketing to help improve people and society. Professor Mulder truly cares for his students and is excited to share this incredible experience with our group. He absolutely loves the culture in Central and South America, and absolutely can't wait to see the smiles of the children in the village.

Becki Torgerson is the Undergraduate Advisor for the School of Business. Becki also coordinates the job and internship postings for the school, and works with many students. Becki has an

infectious laugh and has a real heart for our students. This will be her third well installation trip and she simply cannot wait to be in Nicaragua with our amazing group.

Application & Important Dates

How do I apply for this course?

You will need to first complete an application for the School of Business. This supplemental application is available on the School of Business website and must be turned in no later than October 15th, 2015. However, if you are interested in the course, you will want to hurry as space is limited. Consistent with the Wang Center procedures, once the first 20 applications come in, the course will be closed to new applicants. Application will be competitive, as we have 8-10 spaces for students. Applications will be reviewed once all are submitted (20 fully complete applications) or by 10/15, whichever comes first. Applications are to be submitted to Becki Torgerson in the School of Business (x7245) via hardcopy or email (torgerm@plu.edu).

What is a completed application?

A complete application includes all requested information on the application sheet. A **faculty recommendation is required**, and must have been already requested by the time the application is received. For this reason, you may want to request multiple faculty recommendations so that they at least one arrives as quickly as possible. If this is your first year at PLU, no worries, we will accept a recommendation from a previous teacher (HS or college) in this case.

Is there a background check required?

Yes, LWI will require a background check for each participant. We will send you a link for the background check, and you can upload your information. The cost for the background check is around \$35, and will be paid directly to the background agency. This cost is paid by each participant, and not included in the cost of the course/trip.

This sounds really intriguing! What happens if I'm selected for participation?

There are 5 things that will have to happen in quick succession:

- 1) Once notified of your acceptance, talk with your family and share the good news!
- 2) Confirm your participation to the Wang Center (you'll have 10 days to confirm). The Wang Center will require a \$50 deposit and a form to be signed by you. All of this information will be provided to you by the Wang Center once you are selected for participation.
- 3) Once we have your confirmation that you will join our team (Yay!), you will complete a background check via LWI. We will send you this information with a link for the background check.
- 4) After you are approved via the background check, the next step is to officially register your participation with LWI. As always, we will send you this information at the right time with the appropriate link for registration.
- 5) Once you are registered with LWI, you can set up and begin fundraising through the LWI GiveWell site, a platform you can use for your individual fundraising. Given most donations occur between Thanksgiving and the end of the year, it's a great time to reach out to friends and family to share information about your project and invite their collaboration and support.

What are the important dates?

Applications Available:	September 25, 2015
Applications Due:	by October 15, 2015*
Application Review:	October 15 – November 1, 2015
Decision Notification:	by November 4, 2015

Confirmation and \$50 Deposit Due to Wang Center:	November 15, 2015
Background Check Upon Confirmation or by:	November 15, 2015
Registration with LWI:	November 18, 2015
Set up Fundraising Page and Begin Fundraising!	November 18-20, 2015
Visit with PLU Health Center or your physician:	February 1 – April 15, 2016
Pre-trip meetings:	February 1 – May 20, 2016
Trip Departure:	June 4, 2016
Trip Return:	June 11, 2016

**Note that while this is officially the last date to submit, though the course will close when 15 completed applications are submitted. For this reason, it is best to submit applications as quickly as possible.*