

FAQ's

Course Content Information

How do I decide between a 1-credit option or a 0-credit option?

We've designed this course to be flexible to your credit hours for spring of 2017. 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 could consider the 0-credit option, which would allow you to participate in the course without any added tuition costs. If you would like to pay for the 1-credit option above and beyond the 17 credit hours, you would simply pay the per credit price for this course.

NEW for 2017: We are offering three options for a 4-credit course for you in Spring of 2017. This includes:

- (1) An internship option (via BUSA 495), allowing you to earn 4 internship credits for your work in Nicaragua and in the marketing, outreach and crowdfunding components of the program.
- (2) An optional Nonprofit Marketing Special Topics course (via BUSA 388), allowing you to earn 4 internship credits for your work in Nicaragua and in the marketing, outreach and crowdfunding components of the program.
- (3) Options for an Independent Study may also exist. See Dr. Mulder for further information.

**More information will be available at the information sessions or by contacting Professor Mulder (muldermr@plu.edu).

How does grading work for a 1-credit option? What if I don't take this for credit?

A 1-credit option will be graded as Pass/Fail. If you choose to not take this for credit, you will simply participate in a type of alternative spring break program. Note that if you choose this option, you will still participate in the pre-trip discussions/activities and post-trip reflection.

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). Other options exist via BUSA 495 (School of Business Internship), BUSA 388 (Special Topics: Nonprofit Marketing) or via Independent Study.

What will coursework look like?

Coursework will include the following:

- 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
- 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 paper

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

Spanish is definitely important, given it is the language of the community with which we will partner. We encourage:

- (1) Spanish students with 1-2 years of Spanish, and such a great way to serve and learn.
- (2) If you have not taken Spanish, you are certainly encouraged to learn some traveling Spanish (i.e., via a program or App such as Duolingo). While it's helpful, you do not need to be fluent. Our nonprofit partner will have several field staff with us on the trip, and they are willing and able to translate when they are not busy with required duties.
- (3) There's also something beautiful that can happen. 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 know the name for Goose in Spanish. It didn't matter – the children still loved it regardless of the name!

Trip Logistics

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

The study away program will cost a maximum of \$2,680. 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, in past years 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 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. 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.

Where will we stay in Leon?

Our accommodations will be at a Living Water compound area near Leon. Living Water has properties that generally have two homes. One home is for the in country director, his/her family and any staff that stay within the compound area. The second home is for the teams which come to install a well. The compound also houses equipment used for the well installation, and it features 24 hour 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 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!

What does our travel schedule look like?

We will likely depart Seattle on a Saturday morning, and likely fly to Houston 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 (2017 Dates):

Saturday (6/3) – Depart Seattle, overnight (Atlanta, Houston or Dallas area)

Sunday (6/4) – Depart for Managua (early morning flight). Visit Leon area.

Monday (6/5) – Thursday (6/8) Well dig and installation project in the village

Friday (6/9) – Morning visit to see microcredit in action, afternoon visit to a mall for gift shopping, and then an evening stay near airport

Saturday (6/10) – 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, reflections and writing

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.

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 will 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 four PLU study away programs in South America (Brazil, Argentina and Peru) and has been a co-leader of six 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 fourth 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 December 15, 2016 at 6 pm. 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 12/15, whichever comes first. Applications are to be submitted to Becki Torgerson (torgerrm@plu.edu) in the School of Business (x7245).

What is a completed application?

A complete application includes all requested information on the application sheet. A faculty recommendation is also 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.

What are the important dates?

Applications Available:	October 15, 2016
Applications Due:	by November 7, 2016*
Application Review:	November 7 – November 14 2016
Decision Notification:	by November 15, 2016
Visit with PLU Health Center:	April 1-May 1, 2017
Pre-trip meetings:	February 7 – May20, 2017**
	**Most Friday afternoons from 3-5pm
Field Experience Departure:	June 3, 2017
Field Experience Return:	June 10, 2017

**Note that while this is officially the last date to submit, though the course will close when 20 completed applications are submitted. For this reason, it is best to submit applications as quickly as possible.*